

**VINDICATION OF THE
DOCTRINE OF
JUSTIFICATION
&
UNION BEFORE FAITH**

A vindication of the doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith wherein the great truth of the Grace of our Lord Jesus in his representing the persons of his elect on the cross, of his suffering for them as their Representative is asserted and cleared, and the Eternal Justification and Union of the Lord's chosen people is plainly stated and proved; also the assurance of faith is evidently confirmed; with a clear demonstration of how these precious Gospel Truths do promote holiness and sanctification in the hearts and conversations of true believers.

**By Richard Davis.
Pastor of the Church at Rowel.**

ORIGINALLY PRINTED IN 1698

COMPLETE & UNABRIDGED

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TO THE READER

As there is nothing of greater importance than those great truths of Eternal Justification and the Union of the Elect by and with the Lord Jesus Christ; as it hath its foundation and being in the Everlasting Sovereign Good Pleasure of the Holy God; and as it was managed in that Eternal Covenant of Grace, or Counsel of Peace between the Father and the Son; whose goings forth were of Old, and from Everlasting; wherein the Wondrous Grace of our God doth so marvelously appear to the Praise of his Glorious Name; and whereby the comfort of our souls is established, and through which we are powerfully influenced by the Efficacy of the Spirit of Christ unto purity and holiness; and engaged and enabled through the constraining Power of Divine Love, there in-shining to yield according to the measure of Light and Assistance, a universal and sincere Obedience. So it is that which that old implacable Enemy of our Salvation, endeavors by all his policy, craft, and subtlety, and by his inveterate malice, either to deny or pervert, either by fomenting of such false and erroneous principles as may draw souls off from believing its Sacred Truth; or by obscuring it by many mistaken notions as may darken the evidence thereof. Or lastly, by raising up prejudices against it, partly by some strange consequences as shall be unjustly drawn from it, or seemingly gross absurdities, that by a misrepresenting of it shall be cast upon, as if it were inconsistent with piety and purity. And lastly, by calumniating or reproaching those that by the grace of God are in a measure enabled to own it, and declare it; whereby, well-meaning persons who are inquiring after Truth may stumble at it, or be offended with it; and to those empty professors, from which he doth not lack instruments, even amongst those who would be reckoned among the chiefest of them, who

profess and preach the Gospel. An example whereof we have, in him, who is the author and publisher of the Preface or Introduction to a narrative against the Church assembling at Kilby, at whose instigation it was attributed whereby that breach which otherwise was likely in time to be healed, was thereby made wider and incurable, that Church being thereby necessitated to publish an answer to it. That this author in several such evil practices, may rather be lamented, than encouraged, evidently thereby manifesting to be such a one, that sows or promotes discord amongst the brethren, which is one of the things, which our God hates, Prov.6:16,19; who by his subtle conversation in too many instances, seems to some to be evidently such a one as hath but a form of godliness, II Tim.3:5, for which the Lord give him true repentance. For him to give vent to that causeless, if not malicious envy that was in his heart, by exploiting those exorbitant and very offensive expressions of one David Culy; although those very expressions were dissected and openly testified against by the worthy author of this treatise, which would insinuate; as if he were the favourer or the abettor of him in uttering that abusive and offensive language; or as if it were to be deduced from his doctrine. Yea, though the said Mr. Culy, hath since openly retracted or repented of those exorbitances, should provide any occasion by that Prefacer to report and re-publish the several words and practices, as had been spoken or done by him; he might pre-adventure be found but a little inferior, if not equal in some respect to David Culy. But what can be expected from him, who could so deliberately falsify and accuse in print those churches as to the principles and practices in their beginning, with that which they professed the contrary unto in their Profession of Faith, published before the world, even by those very churches, to whom he himself doth own himself related. Had his repentance been right, he would have owned his shame in every printed book that he hath published since to the world, with his iniquity in

drawing in, {so many well-meaning persons to recommend his book,} without due examination.

They certainly not supposing that they had to do with a person that was so false and daring; in like manner for him to reflect upon, and to nibble at the sound positions of those notable worthies, Dr. Twisse ¹, Mr. Eyre², &c., about the eternal justification of the elect, which they have proved by weighty arguments, without answering of those arguments, was such a presumption, that none as formally inquired after truth would be found guilty of. But it pleases our most gracious God and Saviour to bring good out of evil, to make that which was done for the hindrance of truth, to be for the furtherance thereof; by the occasion that is thereby taken through the assistance of the Holy Spirit, to confirm that truth that was contradicted and reproached.

Whereof we have an instance in the ensuing treatise, whereby, on the occasion of the gainsaying and reproaching of the Prefacer, we have those precious truths of our dear Lord Jesus mentioned in the title page, plainly declared, and solidly confirmed, and with meekness, vindicated with successful evidence from the opposition made by that quarrelsome and contentious writer. So that if he for some time to come, shall go on to calumniate or cavil at such great Gospel Truths, it will certainly show him to have a conscience seared, as with a hot iron.

We wish indeed some words in the treatise, had

¹ William Twisse, 1578-1646, prominent English theologian; presiding officer of the Westminster Assembly, and firm Predestinarian.

² William Eyre, 1613-1670, was a Minister of the Gospel, and Pastor of a Church in the City of New Sarum, now essentially known as Salisbury. Eyre entered Oxford University at Magdalen Hall, aged 16, and was eventually appointed a tutor in that house, which was about the same time that he entered into the ministry. Eyre sided with Oliver Cromwell and the Parliamentary Cause in the time of the Revolution against King Charles I and {according to one source} became "a rigid Calvinist, an enemy to all Church Tithes, and strong opponent of Church Revenues." After the restoration of King Charles II he proceeded in his usual preaching, but in 1662 was silenced for Nonconformity.

been uttered in a plainer dialect or language for the understanding of the meanest. However we do not question, but that the unlearned may receive information and instruction thereby as well as others. Therefore, that the pious worthy author, may be more abundantly enlightened, and confirmed in these glorious truths of the Grace of the Gospel; that with all boldness he may be enabled to declare them; and that he may be instructed into the right way of all the institutions of our Lord and Saviour; that he may make not use of a stone of Babylon, for a corner, or for a foundation in any respect. And that this treatise of his, may be blest to the benefit and advantage of the Lord's dear people, is the earnest desire and request of, **R.S. & J.N.**

A VINDICATION OF THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION AND UNION BEFORE FAITH.

Whereas Mr. Coleman, or his Prefacer, have taken occasion to cast aspersions on the Church at Rowell, and on me {Richard Davis} their pastor, especially with reference to David Culy, intimating, or terming him as one of my disciples, &c., the Lord forgive the author that ungodly speech, with others of like nature, and that root of bitterness in his mind whence they did proceed. Surely he had no cause to make any reflections, or to take up a reproach against the Church at Rowell, and me, because of the offensive, unsound and exorbitant expressions of the said David Culy, forasmuch as we testified against them, and faithfully admonished and reprov'd him for them, which it pleas'd the Lord graciously to succeed unto his conviction and repentance, so that he openly retracted them, and declared his sorrow or contrition for them; and we do not hear that he hath uttered any more such language, or hath used any such expressions since that time.

Therefore there cannot be the least pretense or excuse for his mentioning or repeating that matter as a just cause of blame to us, who had manifested our detestation of them, or of reproach, to David Culy, who hath openly declared his repentance for them, and his recantation of them, except it were to give merit to the malignity of a depraved nature, that lusteth unto envy, and delighteth to the slandering and reproaching, which the Lord help him to be mortifying by the power of his Grace.

Since also the Prefacer hath to his mentioning of David Culy's untoward and grievous oppression, immediately subjoined my erroneous interpretation of Hebrews 2:14,15, as he thinks, with an apparent ill design

to insinuate to the world, that I am guilty of the same gross error which he charges upon David Culy, thinking perhaps that every falsehood may be believed against a man whom the most of professors cry down.

I judge it is my duty to take notice of his reflections, and to vindicate the exposition that I then gave. The scope of that sermon was to prove that Christ on the cross did truly and properly bear, or sustain and represent the persons of the elect. The argument to prove it was this, namely, that Christ was their common Head, Root, Surety and Representative. The foundation of which was, that God the Second Person, according to the Divine Ordination, assumed our nature into an hypothetical union, and not only as singly considered, but as being the common Head, Root, &, of all the elect number. Therefore when Christ assumed the nature of the Election into a personal union, he assumed in that nature, as a common Head, the persons of the Election into a union with Himself, as their Head, Root and Representative. This was then cried down, though perhaps not in the same express words, yet I am sure to the same purpose. This truth was then interfered from Hebrews 2:14, as well as other portions of Scripture.

This he saith is contrary to what any Orthodox minister ever asserted. He means first, either the truth itself; or, secondly, the deduction of it from that passage of Scripture.

If the first, then it is plain the Scripture asserts it, and so several of the Reformers and himself also, even whilst making opposition thereunto. What the Scriptures assert is plainly evidenced in Ephesians 1:10. "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him." In which words they are these terms which ought to be explained.

I. What is meant by the gathering together in one?
Answer: 1. The word imports a gathering of many

scattered sums into one total sum. 2. Of divided parcels of histories and arguments into one summary. 3. Of many Members into one Body, under one Head. And in general, comprehensive of these three, to collect and join together several into one, even in the fullest sense that I intend it for.

II. What is meant by all things? Answer: To wave what is said by others, I judge that the whole Election is principally intended here.

1. Because the elect number in Scripture are styled "things," "but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence," I Cor.1:27-29, nay, "all things," the same Greek word corresponding with this in the text, "but the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." Gal.3:22.

2. The elect number is the predicate here, concerning whom the Apostle treats, namely, such as were chosen, predestinated, and made accepted from eternity in Christ. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." Eph.1:4-6. The whole scope of the chapter is to speak of such in a limited sense, therefore such are those "all things" mentioned in the text, gathered together unto Christ.

Nor does that overthrow this exposition, which is here said, "things in Heaven, as well as things in Earth." For the elect number then gone to Heaven, though they

were united to Christ afore, as the appointed Head of all of the Election of Grace; yet, when he actually and hypostatically united their natures, he did therein unite the person of every elect vessel unto Himself, in a more visible and intimate manner, even in that unity of nature; and of such also as were then gone to Heaven. For it pleased the Father to hang all the glory of his house upon Christ, even the vessels of great quantity, {such as are perfected in glory,} as well as the vessels of small quantity, namely, such as are imperfect pilgrims here, and the meanest of them as well as the greatest. "And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house. And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons. In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off: for the LORD hath spoken it." Isa.22:22-25. And though they were gone to glory, yet could not in this sense be made perfect or complete without us, Heb.11:40, namely, the elect number existing after his Incarnation. "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Heb.11:39-40.

III. What is meant by the "dispensation of the fullness of times?" Answer: In short, the time of our Lord's Incarnation. That is the meaning of that Scripture phraseology. "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Gal.4:4-5. The dubious terms being explained, I shall now raise these

observations from the words poignant, to evince the truth in question.

1. That God, at a certain time, collected and summed up the chosen ones into one sum or body, under one Head.

2. The Center, in which they all met, or the Head, unto which they were reconciled, was CHRIST, that "he might gather together in one, all things in Christ...even in him," again reiterated.

3. That this special time of gathering of them into One, was in the fullness of time, namely, when the Eternal Word was made Flesh; for that individual nature united, was a public, common, representative one, and by means of that blessed bond, united thus hypostatically, he brought into near Union to his own Person, the persons of those chosen in him before the foundation of the world. "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." Jn.17:21-23. Whence 'tis evident, our nearness and union to God is founded {as to the means} in this middle chain, God assuming the Second Man into his own personality, as a public Head, that had a numerous seed in himself, even in his loins, not in a natural way of generation, but in a special way of transcendent Union. Now all these put together, establish the truth greater than the pillars of Heaven and Earth, namely, when God the Second Person took the natures of the Election into a personal union, he took their persons also in that common nature, into a union to Himself, as the Root, Head and Representative. Again, those Scriptures that assert Christ to be a common Head, Root, &c., compared with those that declare the foundation {as to the means} to be laid

in the assumption of the nature of the Election; besides what was mentioned, John 17:21,23. "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." Heb.2:10-11. So 'tis evident, that this precious truth, contained in the Holy Scriptures; and there needs not this restraint made against it.

Most of the sound divines {according to the formal style of the day} that I have read, in maintaining Christ's common Headship, and the aforesaid foundation, not only assert, but strenuously defend it. To pick out two or three, Keckermann³, a German theologian, says in his system, "that Christ taking our natures, is the actual foundation of other sorts of unions of our persons to him."

Rutherford⁴ maintains that, "Christ and we are not only both, namely, mankind, {for Christ and Pharaoh, Judas the Traitor and all the sons of perdition are one, *specie & natura*, true men,} but one in brotherhood, with special eye to Abraham, Heb.2:16, that is, to the elect and believers, for with them he is bone of their bone, and is not ashamed to call them brethren, Heb.2:11,12, Psal.22:22, denoting a legal union between Christ and them, that God made the Debtor and the Surety one in

³ Bartholomaeus Keckermann, 1572-1608, German writer, Calvinistic theologian and philosopher, who studied in Wittenberg, Leipzig and Heidelberg. His years at Heidelberg, 1592-1601, were divided between study and teaching. Keckermann taught Hebrew and Theology. He is known for his Analytic Method. As a writer on rhetoric, he is compared to Gerhard Johann Vossius, and considered influential in Northern Europe and England. His major theological work is the *Systema Sacrosanctae Theologiae, Tribus Libris Adornatum*, published in 1602.

⁴ Samuel Rutherford, 1600 -1661, Scottish Presbyterian pastor, theologian and author, and one of the Scottish Commissioners to the Westminster Assembly, taking part in formulating the Westminster Confession of Faith completed in 1647, who after his return to Scotland, became Rector of St. Mary's College at St. Andrews.

Law, and the sum one in so far as he laid our debts on Christ, Isa.53:6, II Cor.5.21, a union Federal, God making Christ our Surety, and he being willing to be our Surety, and to assume not only our nature in a personal union, but also our state, condition, and made our cause his cause, our sins his sins, not to defend them, nor to say Amen to them, as if we might commit them again, but to suffer the punishment due to them." Again, "Christ is chosen and predestinated the Head, the first born of the house, and of the many brethren, and says Amen to the choice, and we are chosen in Him, as our Head, and he was fore-ordained the Mediator, and the Lamb before the foundation of the world was laid, to be slain for our sin."

Goodwin⁵, on Ephesians 1:10-3:17, &c., "but these two acts of justification, {eternal by Covenant Transaction and actual by Christ's substitutionary death upon the Cross,} are wholly out of us, immanent acts in God; and though they concern us, and are towards us, yet are they not acts of God upon us, they being performed towards us, not as actually existing in ourselves, but only as existing in our Head, who covenanted for us, and represented us...their justification before faith, in the sight of God, is of them not as actually existing in themselves, but only as they were represented in their Head; for their persons, as considered as represented in Christ, did in him, as their Head, receive justification, and all blessings else, but not in themselves do they receive them actually as existing until faith; as we are said then to be condemned and corrupted in the first Adam, when he sinned, as representing us, but we are in our own persons not actually corrupted till we exist and are born from him. So

⁵ Thomas Goodwin, 1600-1680, Independent Minister of the Gospel, tutored by Richard Sibbes, chosen a member of the Westminster Assembly in 1643, chaplain to Oliver Cromwell; from 1660 until his death, he lived in London, and devoted himself exclusively to theological study and to the pastoral charge of the Fetter Lane Independent Church.

as to conclude this, they are said before faith to be justified in Christ by representation only, and not as in themselves." "Jesus Christ in election is head of the elect. He was from the first considered and ordained by God as a Common Person to represent us. thus in choosing Christ God looked on him as a Common Person, as a second Adam, and chose us in him." "It is because the Son of God was chosen as Head of the elect in eternity that he assumed our nature and came to redeem the people of God in the fullness of time. But even prior to the incarnation Christ acted as Mediator of the Covenant of Grace. He was a Common Person to the fathers under the Old Testament, forgiving their sins by virtue of the atonement he would one day perform on their behalf." He went on to state that this "union of Jesus Christ and his saints is a great and eminent mystery of the gospel, and the greatest hope of glory."

Again, Goodwin says, "the first progress or step {in the order of justification} was at the first covenantmaking and striking of the bargain from all eternity. We may say of all spiritual blessings in Christ what is said of Christ, that their goings forth are from everlasting. Justified then we were when first elected, though not in our own persons, yet in our Head, as he had our persons then given him, and we came to have a being and interest in him. You are in Christ, saith the apostle, and so we had the promise made of all spiritual blessings in him, and he took all the deeds of all in our name; so that in Christ we were blessed with all spiritual blessings, Eph. 1:3; as we are blessed with all other, so with this also, that we were justified then in Christ."

Crisp in his sermon on Christ alone, our Mercy Seat, says, "you know well, in respect of men, who are elect, they are from all eternity in the purpose of God, made nigh by the virtue of the blood of Christ, that in time should be shed; which virtue is effectual in the eyes and thoughts of God from all eternity; so that though, in

respect of the nature of wicked works, there be a separating and an alienating, yet in regard of the efficacy of the blood of Christ, being in force with God, the elect are nigh to him in purpose, from eternity."

'Tis true, I should not be necessitated to produce authorities, even of great and good men, because there is a tendency in professors to have their mouths sooner stopped with what men say, than what the Word of God says; whence 'tis very likely to ensue, that men's faith is determined from human authority, as the complaint was of such after some assaulted truths were being determined by General Councils, instead of the express testimony of Holy Scripture; and so this manner of proceedings doth indeed impress a deeper gangrene upon our holy profession, than it pretends at present to heal. But hereunto I am now necessitated to give my check to their peremptory allegation, that what was then delivered was contrary to what any Orthodox minister ever delivered.

Having manifested 'tis not contrary to Scripture in the sense afore explained, nor to the sense of sound divines, it will be no hard matter to make it appear, that it is not contrary to his own judgment, from the objection he states, to make the dirt stick all the more, namely, in his affirmation that, "he only meant Christ assumed their persons representatively." I shall further take notice of the objection, and his own answer, more fully. At present, I only set forth this, what therein he himself seems to grant, that Christ did assume the persons of the Elect representatively. Secondly, if he means, that never did any deduce that truth from that portion of Scripture, or else both, I then ask him. How does he know that? Has he read all the writers of Divinity down from the Greek and Latin Fathers, to the smallest modern authors in our days? If he has, yet has he indeed known all that every Orthodox minister that has, or does now live in the world, has preached or discoursed on this matter, or deduced from that text in the Hebrews, then how with a conscience

tender of truth, can such a thing be thus universally affirmed?

I have already quoted one, namely, Mr. Rutherford, that infers what's tantamount from the same Scripture, in his book of the Covenant, quoted by Dr. Chauncey⁶, in his book against Mr. Williams, page 223. Mark what he writes, "that Christ, and the Election, are not only one nature and species, but in brotherhood too, he assuming the nature of man, with a special eye to Abraham, that is, the elect and believers," proving it from this very place, "God from eternity constituted and ordained Christ and all the elect, to be as it were one body, one lump, wherein Christ is the Head, and they are the Members; Christ the Root, and they the branches. They are given to Christ, John 17, to be in Christ, Ephesians 1, being they are called his seed, before they are called, John 10, Christ's seed, Isa.53:11, Heb.2:14, brethren, 'for both he that sanctifieth and they

⁶ Isaac Chauncey, 1632-1712, Independent Minister of the Gospel. He was the eldest son of Charles Chauncey, Minister of Ware, in Hertfordshire, a Puritan, who sought a sanctuary from persecution in America, where he was appointed president of Harvard College. Chauncey himself entered Harvard College in 1651, where he studied both theology and medicine. Returning to England, he completed his education at Oxford University, and was subsequently given the Rectory of Woodborough, Wiltshire, where he resided until ejected by the Act of Uniformity in 1662. From there he removed to Andover, where he was, for some time, pastor of a Congregational Church. He came to London, soon after the recalling of King Charles's indulgence, with a view to practice medicine, which was hereditary in his family; but, after the death of Mr. Clarkson, he was, in the year 1687, induced to accept the pastorate of an Independent Meeting-House in Bury Street, St. Mary Axe, over which he presided for fourteen years. This is the same pulpit which was occupied in recent years by Joseph Caryl, John Owen, and David Clarkson. During the 1690's, Chauncey was the main spokesman for the old 'Calvinistic' position in the Neonomian Controversy, arguing against Arminian tendencies within dissent; he was a voluminous author, but is best remembered for his work in 3 parts entitled, "Neonomianism Unmasked; or the Ancient Gospel pleaded against the other, called a New Law, or Gospel, &c.," which represents a collection of his anti-Neonomian tracts.

who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,' Heb.2:11, that is, as some add, of body or lump. And by virtue of this union it is that the obedience and satisfaction of Christ descends particularly unto them, and not to the rest of mankind."

And pray what is this less than I have asserted? But suppose none ever had, yet still it is no argument to me against the exposition. Do not we pray for, and expect great light to break forth in the last days, and that this light will help the saints to see further into the word of God, than any other of his servants since the Antichristian apostasy? What offense should be then, if the meanest of God's servants should be taught from a particular Scripture, what others of his servants have not seen before? However, I shall lay down the reasons that moved me to expound the words so, and leave them to the censure of the discerning Christian.

1. The design of the context is to set forth the union between the Election and Christ, as their Head and Root. He positively asserts it in the eleventh verse, and proves it in the subsequent verses, by these mediums. 1. That he owns them as brethren. 2. As children, expressions of denoting great nearness of relation. 3. His living by faith, as their Head and Exemplar which mediums are confirmed by the authority of the Old Testament. See Heb.2:11-13. Next he argues it from the proximate cause thereof, namely, Christ being made very Man, which he also proves. 1. From his believing, verse 13. 2. From the necessity of his being so, in order to attain the ends of Representativenesship, verses 14-15, "forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same," &c. This 16th verse seems to me again to repeat this medium, and so draw the conclusion, namely that, Christ having assumed the nature of the Election, he is thus qualified to be a United Head and Representative to them; and this is further confirmed by the subsequent verse, that therefore he is apparently a

suitable High Priest, which is the same with a Representative. For that was one of the designs of the priest under the Law, in reference to the people, namely, to represent them in sacrificing, and in the high priest entering into the holy of holies, with the names of the tribes engraven upon his breast-plate. "And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial before the LORD continually." Exod.28:29.

2. I argue the reality of this inference from remarks on the words themselves. 1. The word "nature" is not in the original, and there is no need of having it so understood. The actual word covering a genitive case, as well as an accusative, without altering the sense, as is evident not only in heathen authors, but in the New Testament, Heb.8:9, implying there such an apprehension, as signifies taking the hand to himself, as the word from the etymology must needs, and does import. Then the sense will be that Christ assumed not to himself the seed of angels, but the seed of Abraham. 'Tis plain in Scripture language, that it signifies not only the nature, but also the persons in that nature into such a union as may be between a Representative and those that are represented by Him.

These premises duly weighed, it will follow, that the consequences of the Prefacer's argument is very illogical, and wrested greatly beyond the rules of logic and right reason. He may as well argue, because the Second Person took the nature of the Election into an hypostatical union, that therefore he took them into the essential union, and because he made them one person with himself, therefore he deified them; so as to argue, because he took the persons of the Election into a federal union in that common nature of theirs, he took them into personal union with himself, and so 'christed' them all. I bless God that I abhor the position as well as himself. Nor {though he does most

unchristianly insinuate it} can he by any solid argument make it out, but by guessing at my meaning, which is like some of those fallacious remarks of Mr. Williams, concerning Dr. Crisp's Writings. The reason given why I must thus mean is, because it was not brought in under that head of Christ's Representativenesship, but with submission, unless he can prove it was brought in under that particular head, that laboured to prove that Christ assumed our persons into an hypostatic union with himself, and so made 'Christ' of them all, he does nothing. I appeal to his conscience, whether any such thing was technically laboured to be evidenced in that Sermon. But further to clear it, that that, and no other could be my meaning, I must trouble the reader again with a rehearsal, namely, that the whole scope of that sermon was to answer a question delivered to me in writing, which was, whether Christ did truly and properly sustain and represent the persons of the Elect on the cross. It was affirmed as a glorious Truth. The chief argument then used to prove it was this, that if Christ was the common Head, or Root, Surety and Representative of the elect number, then he sustained their persons, &c., but the Scriptures of truth did assert Christ to be a common Head, Root, &c., and that two ways. By styling our Lord so in precise and express terms, as to Head, Root and Surety, but also by ascribing to Him, in reference to the elect ones, the highest and most peculiar things, that the notion of a Root or Head, Surety and Representative does import amongst men. Then I came to show that the foundation of such a relation between Christ and elect persons, was laid in his assuming their natures into a personal union with himself.

The Prefacer says, that I brought it not in under that Head, wherein I showed, that whatever is included in the notion of a representative amongst men, is applied to Christ in the Scriptures. But what if not? And what he brought in under any of them, is it not the same? What if it was brought in under the head of Christ's being held

forth as a Root, Surety, &c., is it not the same import? And can he upon fair construction raise my meaning to a higher strain from thence? Dare he in the presence of the Lord, the Searcher of hearts, say, that my meaning was to prove that all the elect number by this union are 'christed' with Christ? If not, I would appeal to his conscience, when it is nearest the throne, whether it be in him an act of unfeigned brotherly love to insinuate this of me in print to the world? And whether he could be so served himself? If I had delivered anything ambiguous, it had been a Christian part in him to question me personally about my meaning first.

Lastly, the quotation from Dr. Owen⁷ is as trifling, as the imaginary consequence that I am loaded with; Dr. Owen only denying {as I also do} that the second Person assumed the persons of the Election in an hypostatical union with himself, as he did our natures. But neither here, nor elsewhere denying, that in such an assumption of the nature of the elect, as a common nature, or common Head, Root, &c., he did also assume every individual Person of the Election into a natural, federal and legal union with himself, {as Mr. Rutherford phrases it,} which is the truth

⁷ John Owen, 1616-1683, was an English Nonconformist church leader, theologian, and academic administrator at the University of Oxford. His first publication, "The Display of Arminianism," 1642, was a spirited defense of the Doctrines of God's Sovereign Grace in Christ. In 1647 he again argued against Arminianism in "The Death of Death in the Death of Christ," which drew him into long debate with Richard Baxter. At the outbreak of the English Civil War he sided with the Parliament; and was chosen to preach to Parliament on the day after the execution of King Charles I, which task he fulfilled without directly mentioning that event. Became Chaplain to Oliver Cromwell, who took Owen to Ireland, that he might order the affairs of Trinity College, Dublin. In 1650 he accompanied Cromwell on his Scottish campaign. In 1651, Cromwell, as Chancellor of Oxford University, made him the Dean of Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford and Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University in 1652. Upon Cromwell's death in 1658 Owen lost his Vicechancellorship and took a leading part in the Conference of Independents which drew up the Savoy Declaration, the doctrinal standard of Congregationalism, which was based upon the Westminster Confession of Faith. Died in 1683, and was buried in the Non-Conformist burial ground Bunhill Fields, London, that same year.

between us under debate. Therefore it is as unfair to insinuate that Dr. Owen speaks against me, as 'tis to insinuate, that I meant what I never did. Though the authority of Dr. Owen {whom I honour as a learned good man} if it were so, would be but a mere human authority.

And hence an occasion is offered unto me to declare, against the practices of writers in these days who are adversaries to the truth. 1. That they hide their principles under an ambiguous form of words. 2. That they wrest the positions of their adversaries, and put them to the rack to speak what they would have them to speak. 3. That they quote a few sentences of those they deem as Orthodox, that in a slight reading may chime a little towards their own opinions, to patronize assertions which they know they abhorred, and make the credulous people, {whose faith they know to be determined by great names,} believe such and such great men were of that judgment. But if they would examine these practices by the rule of God's Word, they would find it first to be a falsehood, with intent to deceive. The second, a wrongful accusing and condemning of the innocent, by a tyrannical force put upon their words, with an intent to destroy their reputations. The third, a forcing good men to be false witnesses against their own will and design, all which I reckon to be foul immoralities, which must be accounted for to the Judge of the quick and the dead, at his appearing; being they are also refined, yet malevolent persecutors of the glorious Gospel.

The Prefacer has also hereupon taken occasion to nibble at the book⁸ by Mr. Eyre's, but he stands in need of

⁸ *Vindiciae Justificationis Gratuitae* or Justification without Conditions; or the Free Justification of a Sinner, Explained, Confirmed and Vindicated from the Exceptions, Objections and seeming Absurdities which are cast upon it, by the Assertors of Conditional Justification; more especially, from the Attempts of Mr. B. Woodbridge, in his Sermon entitled, "Justification by Faith;" of Mr. Cranford, in his Epistle to the Reader; and of Mr. Baxter, in some Passages which relate to the same Matter. Wherein also, the Absoluteness of the New Covenant is proved,

no great defense from such an assault, for his arguments stand yet untouched for ought that can be perceived. Yet some few and minor animadversions may indeed be necessary for stating the Truth {if it may be} and put some end to such controversies and clamors, if it be the will of God.

I judge it not necessary to speak both to Union and Justification, which the Prefacer has jumbled into one. Mr. Eyre's assertions {which are opposed} are in his book about Justification.

Though Mr. Eyre's, and others, have explained what they meant about Eternal Justification, and though these explanations have not been disapproved of, nor judged by any to be unsound, yet a strife has been kept on foot under the shield of a few mere words that only have been rendered odious to the vulgar, by a mere noise and clamor, for to uphold parties in Religion, and make those {whom Christ does and will own as his ministers} abhorred in their names, writing, and preaching, by the generality of professors and others.

Notwithstanding all these discouragements, I shall once more attempt to see how Mr. Eyre's, with others, and their revilers, can be brought to an agreement, to mean however the same thing, if they will not, ask the same thing; that so {if it be the will of God} controversies may be ended, unnatural heats and animosities amongst brethren extinguished, and peace and prosperity flourish in the palaces of Zion.

The Prefacer declares, that he, Mr. Coleman, and others hold. 1. That all the chosen of God are declaratively justified, &c., from eternity. 2. Virtually, at the Death of Christ. 3. Yet, that no adult and elect person is really and actually justified before he doth believe in Christ.

As to the first, I find Mr. Eyre's agrees with him, and so do I, provided his meaning and ours be the same.

And therefore I shall speak the truth in love to those of our brethren {being, notwithstanding all our differences, yet members one of another in the Lord} with the premise of these distinctions.

Justification and the act of being justified, are in a sense relatives, mutually inferring one another; and in what sense soever God's Decree of Justification is the Justification of the one being justified, in that sense the elect person is eternally justified; but yet justification is twofold, either active or passive, according to those sound in the truth of Scripture. Justification active is God's act towards, or upon the person, towards the person, as an act of his secret or concealed will, going forth towards the object {the elect sinner} in Covenant Representation. "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Rom.3:24. "That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Tit.3:7. Thus as considered in his actual existence more secretly applied to his person, as then actually existing, or more sensibly and manifestly, by terminating the act on his conscience.

Justification passive is the effect of God's act towards, and upon the person; which is the discharge that the sinner receives and possesses by faith as revealed and sealed upon his conscience. We take justification in this latter sense as passive, for there is a real difference between God justifying the person, and of the person being justified, for God may actually justify a person, whether he receives or perceives it not; but he must efficaciously receive God's Act by faith before he can be thus justified and discharged in his own conscience. And the sinner being thus actively justified, doth now necessarily perceive not only his actual state of existence, but his certain state as a justified sinner, and now by faith his certain arraignment in the court of conscience, in order to such an actual sense and perception of discharge.

These distinctions premised, I shall plainly give my

sense from Mr. Eyre's own words, as to what I apprehend that he means by God's Eternal Act, declaratively justifying a sinner, and what he means by a sinner being declaratively justified from eternity. Moreover, I shall give my own sentiments, with as much plainness as I can set down in words.

Mr. Eyre's distinguishes justification into an act of *pro volitione divina* {the will of God,} and *pro re voluta* {effect of God's will,} for the will of God, not to punish or impute sin unto his people; and, for the effect of God's will, namely, his not punishing them or setting them free from the Curse of the Law. He says that by decretive justification, he means the former of these, being of the same sentiment therein with Dr. Twisse. "I look upon Dr. Twisse⁹, and his judgment in this point as most accurate, who places the very essence and quiddity of Justification in the will of God not to punish sin. What is it that the remission of sins, and our acceptation, signify, if not inward and immanent acts in God; acts of which kind do not arise in God anew?" Eyre's continues, "justification and absolution, as they signify an immanent act of the divine will, are from eternity; but the external notification of the same will manifest itself in a judicial and forensic absolution, which is made by the Word and Spirit, at the tribunal of every one's conscience, being that Imputation of Christ's Righteousness, Remission of Sins, Justification and Absolution, which follow Faith. For hereupon absolution is pronounced, as it were by the mouth of a judge, and so that internal purpose of absolving, which was from eternity, is made manifest." Also in regards to the agreement between the Father and Son from eternity, Mr. Eyre's says, "the Lord therefore did non-impute sin to his people, when he purposed in himself, not to deal with them according to their sins, when the Father and the Son agreed upon that Sure and Everlasting Covenant, that his

⁹ William Twisse, "Vindiciae Gratiae," 1632.

elect should not bear the punishment which their sins would deserve." And this is more than justification in the decree, for it is justification in the compact also. This appears plainly to be Mr. Eyre's judgment about God's justifying elect sinners in eternity, of whose judgment I profess myself to be in this matter.

Now 'tis plain also, that Mr. Eyre's means elect sinners are justified from eternity in that representative being they had in their Head, set up by the Decree from Everlasting. "The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." Prov.8:22-23. As the decree gave a sure and certain future to the whole creation, so the decree, as it was the Sovereign Pleasure of his Goodness, gave also a sure and certain Representative to the New Creation or the Election of God, which is higher than a mere prospect of futurity. For the good pleasure of his will, Eph.1:5, did effectually constitute and call those things that are not, as though they were, being His pre-determinate council to save to the uttermost all those chosen in Christ. "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Isa.46:10. Besides, as they were covenanted with him from eternity, in their Head and Redeemer, they received in Him, as such a Head, {namely, he receiving it for them,} the promise of eternal life, wherein was included Justification of Life. "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." Tit.1:2. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." II Tim.1:9.

Now therefore this meaning of eternal justification, the Prefacer and his fellow Opposers, either approves or disapproves of. If he disapproves thereof, why has he not set about a solid refutation of a doctrine he apprehends to

be so dangerous, instead of lashing out at it with invidious consequences, that follow no more from the premises, than if one should argue thus, the umbrella stands by the chimney corner, therefore it must be raining outside.

But secondly, if he approves of this explication of justification by decree, {as he styles it,} why does he not say so, and not so represent Mr. Eyre's and others, as persons harboring dangerous heresies, and assign no other grounds thereof; for Mr. Eyre's has so weightily answered objections against this eternal act of God's will, being called Justification, when also this author makes not the least attempt to enervate his answers, or to show the weakness of his arguments; or that he infers from Mr. Rutherford, {that great enemy of Antinomianism,} that the elect before conversion and faith, stand actually reconciled to God, justified before Him. For if God has by an act of his, pardoned their sins before they believe, {as Mr. Rutherford says,} then as Reconciliation is an act of God, then on his part they thus stand actually reconciled, or justified in his sight, as before the throne of his satisfied justice before they believe. Or thirdly, because he has asserted that this was the certain and actual effect of the death of Christ, that the elect were thereby freed from the Law, delivered from the Curse, reconciled unto God, made perfect and complete in the sight of God, namely, in Christ, as their Head and Surety, in whom there was, upon his Resurrection, made over to them, an unquestionable right to all these afore named blessings, &c., as he explains himself in several places in his book, but particularly from page 98, to the end of that chapter, but more of this, perhaps hereafter.

But to bring this matter in debate, into some narrow compass again for the ending of it, I again affirm, that what we intend by Eternal Justification, must be looked upon by those who smite us, to be either truth or error; and if truth, yet very ill worded or else why all this noise? What we mean has been plainly expressed, both

privately and publicly; and if the Prefacer, and the rest, judges it to be an error, let them manifest it from God's Word, and sound arguments deduced from thence, and they shall be attended to, either by recantation, if convinced, or else by reasons given to the contrary.

I shall therefore again, as I promised, repeat plainly, what I apprehend Eternal Justification to be, namely, that it is God's eternal will and decree, not to punish the elect sinner, though he would transgress, and his will not to punish is formally pardon, in the mind of God in the non-imputation of sin.

'Tis I grant you his decree, but this decree is such a principle of active pardon that has its completeness of being in itself from eternity, even before the elect began to have a being, &c., given as the act of Election and Reprobation, as Mr. Rutherford says, "this act doth no more presuppose the existence of its object than the decree of Election doth."

As God's eternal purpose to set apart a determinate number for himself from eternity, was his actual election of them, and setting of them apart, as an act in his own bosom, so in like manner, his eternal sovereign pleasure, not to punish them, though offenders, is as complete an act of pardon, in his own bosom, and of his secret will, as can be.

Again, I think Eternal Justification is the eternal good pleasure of His will, that the elect should be completely righteous in the righteousness of another, namely, in his Son Jesus Christ, and this is a complete judicial act, eternal and immanent, as Mr. Rutherford affirms. This absolving sentence, as conceived in his mind is by the decree of justification, as Dr. Ames¹⁰ asserts, for

¹⁰ William Ames, 1576-1633, an English Protestant theologian, who spent much time in the Netherlands, and is noted for his involvement in the controversy between the Calvinists and the Arminians; who wrote his "Marrow of Sacred Theology" a manual of Calvinistic doctrine, in 1627.

observe what he says, "that in the very decree of justification there is the actual sentence of absolution or justification, though not pronounced, conceived, ratified and recorded, in that Sovereign will that is the Supreme Law and High Court of Chancery." "Justification," saith he, "is the pronouncing of a sentence of absolution in a judiciary way, declaring a man just and righteous in CHRIST. It is an actual release, discharge, and setting at liberty. It is God's act, and it is a justifying act towards the soul. The inward thoughts of the judge concerning a criminal, are neither condemnation, nor justification; but his passing or declaring sentence according to law, is so." And in another place, "all they for whom Christ in the intention of God, hath made satisfaction, are reconciled unto God."

'Tis this eternal pleasure of his good will, that is the fundamental reason why a sinner should be made and pronounced righteous in the righteousness of another. This does not arise from the nature of the Covenant of works, nor any other transaction, but that everlasting one between the Father and Son. The faith of a poor creature must be upon good ground for receiving this mystery, namely, his being completely righteous in a righteousness outside him, that is inherent in another. And where can it receive original satisfaction, but from this Sovereign act of God's will, as revealed and declared in the Word of his Grace? What answer must be given to sense {yea, spiritual sense} and fleshly wisdom in this matter, but this, that a gracious God has so ordained it as an act of Sovereign Grace, which is that original act, that constitutes and makes persons, whilst in themselves imperfect and sinful, completely righteous in the eye of Justice and the Law, in Christ Jesus and his Righteousness, through a mysterious communication of persons.

Lastly, I think eternal justification, is that eternal grant of the Father, to the Lord, as Head of the Election, upon his engagement to perform conditions perfectly, of

Grace, and amongst the rest, of this of justification to life in Christ and his elect seed, in that compact ratified in eternity between them both. Thus was the promise of eternal life given forth to us in our Covenant Head, before the world began, Tit.1:2, and thus there was not only Grace purposed in God acting essentially, but Grace given forth from God acting subsistentially, by way of Covenant Transaction for us, before the foundation of the world. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." II Tim.1:9.

This is all that I plainly mean by justification from eternity, and do sincerely affirm, that thereby, I do not mean, that the actual payment was made by Christ from eternity, {though He engaged, and his word was taken by the Father,} nor do I mean, that the elect had any eternal being, except of futurity and representativenesship; nor that God's act was applied to them as personally existing from eternity, in no other manner to them personally, than in that representative being they had in their Covenant Head. Nor that this Eternal Act hindered their being rooted in the first Adam, or placed for apparent felicity upon the bottom of a covenant of works; nor did it keep them from falling thence into a state of sin and misery, in reference to the first Adam and that Covenant; and this, in subserviency to the Covenant of Grace; nor that Divine Ordination in this Eternal Act was enough to rescue them from the visible curse of the Law, and manifest displeasure of Divine Justice, without a Righteousness suitably wrought out and brought in for them. Nor was this Secret Eternal Sentence sufficient to satisfy their consciences, till as declared and pronounced by ways of Divine Appointment, as received into the conscience of the sinner actually existing, and actually arraigned at the bar of conscience by the faith of God's elect, wrought in them by the irresistible power of the Spirit of God.

Thus have I explained my meaning of eternal justification; if I am erroneous, this Prefacer, or Mr. Coleman, or any other, from God's Word, may endeavour in the spirit of meekness, to amend my conviction. But if the Prefacer, and our opposers dodge the fault only to lie in the wording thereof, then I say, why this heat and commotion merely about words? And especially, when they that affirmed, that these aforementioned acts of God, may be properly enough styled justification, were men eminent in godliness, reading, learning, and skill in Polemical Divinity, such as Pemble, Twisse, Rutherford, Ames, &c., besides Mr. Eyre's, who are to this day remembered warmly by the godly learned, to be as celebrated men as England bred, and never branded with Antinomianism, except by Mr. Baxter, and his admirers; and not only them, but when these also gave such reasons for their judgment, as I have not seen hitherto answered.

I say that the Prefacer had done well to have seriously weighed Mr. Eyre's reasons, pgs.89,90, &c., why the eternal will of God not to punish the elect, could be styled actual justification; and if he had not liked his arguments, like a Christian, and an honest disputant, from Scripture and sound Reason, should have endeavored to show their weakness and absurdity. He should have considered, whether justification be only the declaring of a sinner righteous, or the constituting also a sinner, and making him righteous; and given his reasons, why 'tis only the former, and not the latter, and answer what is alleged, for making or constituting a person righteous. As, that is justification to which definition of justification does agree; but the eternal act of God's will reckoning, and so constituting the elect righteous in Christ's Righteousness, is according to the definition of justification; therefore, &c., the proposition is an undeniable maxim. The assumption leans, first on that definition that the Scriptures gives of it, Psal.32:1,2, Rom.4:6,8, as explained by Mr. Eyre's in his book. Secondly, on the usual acceptation of it amongst

men, for forgiveness amongst men is principally an act of the heart; as when a man purposes in himself not to take revenge, then he doth forgive.

But, the word 'justify' doth signify in its etymology, and common acceptation in the Civil Law, to make one just, as well as to declare one just, and sinners cannot be made just, but by two ways, first, either infusion; or secondly, imputation of righteousness. The first we deny, as Popish and false, for, none by infusion are made perfectly righteous here, so as to answer the demands of the Law; yet if so, it would not do, unless also satisfaction was made to Justice for violations of the Law, by sufferings of an infinite Nature. Then it must be by Imputation, and that fundamentally being an act in God's Mind, is granted to be from eternity.

God will not declare persons righteous, but those that are so in some real sense or other, for the judgment of God is according to truth, Rom.2:2, therefore the making or constituting persons righteous, is as necessary an ingredient unto justification, as the declaring of them to be so, and they are made righteous in the sight of God, only by Imputation, as before proved.

The acts of God's secret will may have the same name with those of his revealed will; nay, the acts of his revealed will borrow their names from the acts of his secret will. Thus God's manifesting his love, is called his love in the language of Scripture, but yet it takes its name from that everlasting good pleasure of his will towards his elect, and so his eternal act is called his Election, and in like manner the outworkings of that act may be so likewise.

And why should not his will to declare sinners righteous upon the account of another's righteousness, be called his imputation of righteousness, and consequently also, his justification of them?

But instead of this there is nothing offered to invalidate Mr. Eyre's essential points and arguments, but, that letter frequently builds, in other words, the difference

between the decree and the execution; a misimproved similitude; and illogical consequences.

The objection started by him to make way for an answer, is not clearly stated, and no real answer given, though consisting of many lines, yet all may be summed up into this, namely, that there is a distinction between the decree to justify, and justification itself, as God decreed to create the world from eternity, but did not create it until time, to which I answer.

That though there be a difference between the decree, and the execution of the decree, yet may not both be called by the same name? As God's eternal will to confer all manner of blessings on such and such, is called his eternal love towards them. "The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." Jer.31:3. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Eph.1:4. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us." Eph.2:4. So the manifestation of God's love in purpose, is called his love, or loving of them. God's eternal will to bring them out of misery, is called his mercy. "But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children." Psal.103:17. His actual bringing of them out of an estate of misery, is also called, his having mercy on them. "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Rom.9:15-16. God's eternal decree to call persons out of misery unto himself, is called his actual Election of them, Eph.1:4, and so his calling of them forth in time, is called in Scripture language, his Election, Jn.15:16, &c., whence the distinction amongst learned divines of eternal election and effectual calling.

We must distinguish between God's decree of a relative change, and that of an actual change; the foundation of such relations existing in the immutable purpose of God, and the relation existing as soon as the foundation, and in this respect does not only presuppose the actual existence of the connection, but 'tis sufficient, if they have a being of futurity or representativenesship.

God in willing persons to be righteous in another's righteousness, doth not will to will, or count to count, but 'tis one continued act in him from eternity, and from eternity, the whole being completed in itself, as the act of Election, &c., according to Mr. Rutherford, &c., "these acts of imputing, and not imputing, are immanent acts in God, and therefore eternal." 'Tis true, God's will to create or sanctify, is his act, but the actual accomplishment thereof, namely sanctification and creation, is his work, and therefore different from his decree to justify, and the execution of it taken in an active sense.

For his decree to justify is his act, so the execution thereof is, and take the execution as God's act declaring; but which way you will, it is still but a copy of the original in his own mind. Whence is inferred {if you will} this plainer distinction, that there is a difference between his will to act an act concerning us; for his very will is the very act in substance; and his will to work a work upon a subject. The difference between the decree, and the execution thereof in the former, being no more than this, that it is so, and the appearance of it to be so. In the latter, the execution is a physical change wrought upon the subject, and therefore the inference from the one to the other will not hold, for the similitude halts.

All similitudes in general do not prove; and so this particular similitude our Prefacer brings to confute Dr. Twisse and Mr. Eyre's definition of Justification does not illustrate anything to the purpose. The definition it meddles not with, but only faintly strikes at another assertion of Dr. Twisse, namely, that justification {I think

the doctor has it Christ's Righteousness} is ours before we believe, in respect of right, &c., but though not in actual possession and enjoyment. The Doctor here distinguishes truly between a bare right, and a right with a possession. The Prefacer, to overthrow this distinction, uses the very same himself, for he says, "can that child be said actually to have the possession of that estate long before it is born?" No, Dr. Twisse denies that, as well as he, and only affirms that there is an undoubted right for them, but not a actual possession until they believe. And the very same thing is said by the Prefacer, to invalidate the Doctor's distinction. The difference would be quickly compounded, if he stopped here, but he advances such distinctions in attempts to overthrow the Doctor's, as subtle differences never found out. He distinguishes between right and proper right; personal right and virtual right; yet seriously this is but mere trifling to please the common sort of a party, and not solid argumentation; for such distinctions are without foundation, which I prove by these reasons. That it is a known maxim amongst the learned, that every name of a thing put alone, is to be taken in the most comprehensive sense of that thing, so that the word 'right' comprehends all manner of right, even personal, proper, actual, &c., wherefore there can be no distinction between right, and actual, proper, or personal right, for the members of a distinction ought not to be subordinate to each other.

The members of a distinction ought to be opposite to each other, therefore the opposite member to a proper right is not right, but improper right, and then his distinction runs thus, a child before he is born, has an improper right to a state conveyed to him by the firmest conveyance in law, but not a proper right; therefore, the elect before they believe, have an improper right, but not a proper right to Justification. So again, the lawful opposite members of the distinction to personal, in this position before us is impersonal, or else I know not what, for

though it be a good distinction to say, to possess by, or in our own persons, and to possess in and by a Head and Surety, believers now possessing Heaven by their Head, the Forerunner for them entered, yet in their own persons they do not possess Heaven yet; but notwithstanding it is no lawful distinction that's framed between having a right in our person, and a right in our Surety, as all right to spiritual blessings are in an Head, and are to persons that are his spiritual seed and members; nor is the question concerned with whether they exist or do not exist, for it is to persons in actual representation, as well as in actual reality; and the persons of the Election {in the same sense} have a right to spiritual blessings, amongst which is justification of life, and that alone, by and in a Head or Surety; so that his argument founded on this distinction must run thus, as a child {who is an heir} before he is born has not a personal, but an impersonal right; so the elect, before they believe, have only an impersonal, and not a personal right to God's justifying Act. What then I ask, did God, when he justified them in their Head, did he justify them only as things or names, and not as persons? I leave it to the Prefacer himself now to judge, whether there be anything of solid argument in these two distinctions, when they are made to appear obvious in all their strength and weakness?

And now I pass on to consider his third objection, between right and virtual right. The due opposite of virtual or potential {which is one and the same} is actual, and then his distinction runs. The elect before believing have a potential right, but not an actual right to Christ's Righteousness, for though actual and virtual, or potential, be opposite members of a distinction, yet that distinction cannot be applied to right, as being that that subsists in God's actual grant; and as is the grant, so is the right. And I cannot see how there can be any right, comparable right, but that which is actual. This will yet appear more plainly, if we inquire into the nature of right amongst men, as it

relates to this, that the Election have to blessings in a spiritual sense, even before they believe. A right is that equity and justice that entitles a person not yet born, to an estate by virtue of a grant from him, who has full power to grant it, contained in documents legally signed and sealed, and conveyed by way of lineal descent, or otherwise. This grant is either conditional or unconditional; if conditional, the fulfillment of the promise is suspended until the conditions be performed, and no right does arise to the party until then; but if unconditional, the right then stands undoubted, as soon as the grant is legally confirmed; unless the granting party has no legal power to make such grants, or intending to deceive, leaves irreparable flaws in the writings, and in this respect the inheritance is nullified, or at least dubious; so that this sort of right may be divided into true or false, dubious or undoubted, conditional or unconditional.

But there is no color to distinguish them, with our author, into proper or improper, personal or impersonal, actual or potential; and after the same manner, the right of the elect number to Christ's Righteousness, and other spiritual blessings is founded, and does arise from God's eternal good pleasure in Election, his engagement in the Eternal Compact, published to them in a free and sure promise, ratified and sealed by the Blood of Jesus, the Grand Purchaser. In this Eternal Grant in the Decree and Compact, God had the individual persons of the whole election in his eye. So had the Lord Jesus in his eye every individual person of them in his engagement and purchase; so that the right is in itself actual, proper, real and personal; the grant being actually and really made to the persons of the election, as considered in Christ their Head.

Let the Prefacer therefore speak out what he means, when he affirms the right to an impersonal, improper, and only potential inheritance; for certainly it cannot be 'tis a false right, for that would reflect on God's

Sovereignty, or Faithfulness, or the security of the Covenant, God's Word and Oath, or the value and worth of the Obedience and Blood of Christ. Does he mean that the right is doubtful? A doubtful title does arise from the aforementioned flaws, and I cannot think that he means this, namely, that it is doubtful in itself, but only to the conscience of a sinner through unbelief. But if by those words are meant that the grant is conditional, then that is out of doors also, since the Death and Obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ performed all conditions fully, and rendered complete and perfect satisfaction. But perhaps it be to fulfill a new law with milder terms and conditions; and so it appears by such quibbling distinctions, that he more truly fights with shadows, than with Mr. Eyre's, or Dr. Twisse; and let me tell him, that reflection upon Dr. Twisse, and Mr. Eyre's, might have been better spared. Their learned adversaries will not account them triflers, and would judge it falsehood in men of learning to do so. What then must that censure be esteemed as dropping from the pen of Mr. Coleman, and his Prefacer, men whose education is well known amongst their neighbors; I fear no less than empty vanity. But in fine, Dr. Twisse, and Mr. Eyre's assertion concerning eternal justification, receives not so much as a scratched face by this similitude. Even more so does he fail in his attempts to overthrow it in his interspersed false consequences at last, as shall be manifested in its due place.

Thus far have I laboured to examine how far we can agree in the Prefacer's first position, namely, that all the chosen of God, &c., are decreatively justified from eternity. I shall proceed now to the second point, namely, that the elect are virtually justified at the Resurrection of Christ, and here I maintain. 1. That God the Father's act towards Christ then, was his actual justifying of Him, as our common Head and Surety. 2. That Christ, as our Surety in our room and stead, was actually justified from all the sins of the chosen of God charged upon him. Hence

he was unloosed from the bands and chains of death judicially, and made to sit at the right hand of the Majesty on High. 3. That by this act passed upon Christ, all his spiritual seed were actually justified in him, in respect of God's act, and Christ's actual and perfect acquittal in every sense, as their Covenant Surety. 4. But yet they are not actually justified {personally & experimentally} with Christ, until their believing; wherein they are made in some measure conformable unto the resurrection of Christ. Till then they are not brought out of the dungeon of a natural state; nor are the fetters of spiritual death knocked off, till they receive, by faith, that justifying act passed upon Christ in their own consciences, whereby they are made to rise with him; and therefore, to be brief and plain, I thus word it, that the chosen ones are actually justified in Christ ever since his resurrection; but virtually only with Christ until they believe, and so Dr. Goodwin explains it. The Prefacer knows best whether we agree herein. However, this is my present light, and I have worded my judgment as plain as I can; only here I must subjoin, that faith possesses in the conscience, that justifying act of God passed upon Christ, as the sinner's Covenant Head and Surety. Here I forbear to argue, because I know not, but things being thus explained, the Prefacer and I may be of one mind.

The Prefacer asserts, that no adult elect person is really and actually in union with Christ, and actually justified, before he doth believe on Him. To which I say, that I shall presently defer answering, that being the subject handled by Mr. Eyre's, and somewhat already being addressed previously, and which may perhaps taken up to a larger extent later.

I understand not that limitation, namely, to adult elect persons; for this plainly infers that infants may be really and actually in union with Christ, and actually justified before faith; and then it will need explanation; whether all infants or just those that die in their infancy?

And if infants in general, how come that those that live to be adults, cannot lay claim to their actual union and justification, until recovered by faith? But take it in the lowest sense, and it plainly implies, that there are two sorts of actual unions and justifications, one to elect infants, or at least them that die in their infancy, and another to adult persons elect, which I confess I do not understand.

He grants himself real and actual union, which is union on Christ's part before they believe; and yet thus far I agree with him, that no person is actually justified before he doth believe; that is, if you take justification as God's act terminated on the conscience, as received by faith.

Or secondly, if you take justification in a passive sense, as the effect of this act of God, namely, the soul being actually brought out of the dungeon and fetters of its natural state {as rooted in the first Adam} into the liberty of Christ Jesus, raised from the death of sin, and quickened with Christ, and so in some measure made conformable to the Resurrection of their Head Christ.

But if he means thereby, first, God's eternal, non-imputation of sin, was not real and actual; or that Christ's Satisfaction upon the cross was not an actual payment; or, that Christ when he rose from the dead, took not out an actual, formal and legal discharge of justification, for himself, and all his seed, the chosen of God; or, that he was not actually justified in every sense, as their Surety and First-fruits; or that God's actual discharge pronounced thus unto Him, was not a actual and real discharge in the Court of Heaven, and at the tribunal of public justice, that had been wronged, to the elect, by the denomination and in the place of the elect, though not yet actually brought into the conscience of this or that individual elect person, until faith is wrought in. If I say, he means these, or any of these, by being actually justified only when they believe, then I must declare my dissent from him; and besides too what I have given already, and am ready to give further

reasons for my dissent, if required by him, or anybody else. In the meantime, I forbear to press forward.

He says that Mr. Eyre's, &c., seems to say, that neither God's Justice, nor his Holy Law, doth charge sin on any elect person, though under the power of unbelief, and vile or profane, to which I answer.

If by charging sin upon the person, he means the condemning of sin as sin; we say, God's Justice and Holy Law considers sin as sin, wherever it may be found, though it be found upon the persons of believers themselves, whose persons must grant to be actually freed from condemnation. If by charging sin upon the persons is intended, that whoever breaks the Law, is a breaker of the Law in his own person; for we say that believers themselves are in themselves found transgressors of the Law, and break it daily, and come under the guilt of its breaches in themselves; and that therefore their righteousness, that answers the demands of the Law, consists not in their own personal obedience, either in whole, or in part, but in the Obedience of their Head and Surety. How much more do we say, that the Law does charge sin upon the elect in a state of nature in this sense?

We judge the Holy Law charges Sin upon the person of the elect unbeliever, as he is considered in himself, in that relation his person had to the first Adam. But we do also say, that neither God's Justice, nor his Holy Law can charge sin upon the person of such a one, {an elect child of God not yet regenerated into newness of life by the direct power of the Holy Ghost in Divine Quickening,} as the eye of Justice views him in Another, in that Relation he stands to his Surety and that Eternal Covenant whose Conditions are perfectly fulfilled for him by that Glorious Surety; for under such a consideration his transgression is finished, his sin made an end of, reconciliation made for him, and an Everlasting Righteousness brought in to cover him. "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to

finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy." Dan.9:24. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Rom.8:32-35.

We do also say, that the Law does charge sin upon the consciences of the elect; for in every execution there is a charge pre-supposed; and whether the conscience of an unconverted sinner be under security or despair, it is a Law execution there, the one being more sensible, the other more insensible; and in that sense the whole man is charged with Sin by the Law, as he stands at the Bar of Conscience. But as the same person stands at the Tribunal of Justice in the Court of Heaven, he cannot be there justly charged, for Justice was there received for him in full Satisfaction, and given out to him a full Discharge by his Surety about 1700 years ago.

Thus have I also endeavored to state this question aright, for I have no call yet to argue, until opposition be made by the Prefacer, and others, to the truth as thus distinguished.

The reason the Prefacer gives for his thoughts, concerning Mr. Eyre's, and others in this, is that Mr. Eyre's had asserted that all the elect before conversion and faith, stand actually reconciled to God, and justified before him. In what sense the elect may be said then to be actually justified, has been before explained; and Mr. Eyre's has done it substantially in his book. His explanation thereof might have easily been taken by the Prefacer, if he pleased, and his arguments answered foot to foot, {if he

could, or else silence, and not continued accusation,} had appeared most lovely in him. But to clear up Mr. Eyre's meaning, that the elect stood actually reconciled to God, &c., it is to be observed, that Reconciliation in Scripture is twofold. First, on God's part, towards the elect sinner; and secondly, on the sinner's part towards God. The former again is twofold. That eternally in God's bosom, that is, his electing love, for if he loved with such a love from eternity, it is inconsistent with hatred and irreconciliation.

Objection: But he loved them from eternity only with a love of good will; but not with a love of complacency.

Answer: This distinction is not right; and even if so, it would not invalidate the argument.

The distinction is not true, for according to the former rules hinted about distinction, the members of the distinction are not opposite; for the love of goodwill {as Dr. Goodwin well proves} comprehends all in it, and therefore he chooses sometimes to call the latter, the love of friendship, commerce or communion. This debate would be soon ended, if it was plainly stated, as to what is meant by this love of delight. By it must be meant, as far as I can judge, God's eternal will to show forth by way of union into the highest creature communication. Or, God's sight or vision from eternity to eternity, viewing the persons of the elect number in Christ their Head complete; or, God's accepting and delighting in the approaches and services of such persons; or, his manifesting Himself to them, for to be enjoyed by them. Now therefore, if the first is intended, the members of the distinction are not lawfully opposite, the one being subordinate to the other, and included therein. For what is the eternal love of God towards a person, but his will to give all spiritual good to that person that he shall be capable of receiving? This is his love of goodwill. The principal good that he decreed to give, was Himself in our nature, for eternal communion, this call {if you will} is his complacency towards their persons; so that

in willing to give all good, he willed to give himself in Christ, to be eternally enjoyed. So that here is no difference, and therefore no ground for such a distinction.

It distinguishes between God's will and prescience, which distinction is good in itself, but ill applied to this matter, for it is false nonsense, to limit his prescience, which is one eternal view in Him, in which all things are from eternity to eternity present to him, that he willed to be, to any time at all, but especially to limit them to the time of a person believing; as if his glorious knowledge of vision never saw the elect sinner in his Son, before the sinner by faith sees and apprehends it in his conscience.

But if 'tis granted that the distinction is true, it being between love, as it is an affection of God, and the manifestation thereof in time, or between the decree and the execution of the decree; and the latter branch thereof, well-timed and limited to conversion; but then the wording of it thus is very exceptionable. 1. For without a constant limitation, it confounds his love, and the manifestation thereof. 2. It has a tendency, {to the understanding of the hearer,} to part and parcel out the glorious love of Election, and to depreciate it to the minds of the multitude, which to my grief I know to be practically true. 3. The most blasphemous errors about God's electing love have shrouded under the distinction as thus worded, {which I know to be true,} and therefore would it not be more according to the plainness and simplicity of the Gospel to word it thus. God does not manifest his love to sinners but in a way of believing; or, that he never accepts or delights in their approaches and services before faith; or, that there can be no communion had with him before they believe.

I am not soon persuaded to reject an old received distinction or expression used by godly men with a good intent; but when it is made use of to darken the counsel of God, and becomes a word without knowledge; and when it is perverted to stumble the weak, to confirm the

ignorant, to shelter errors, and to darken the truth, 'tis time to reject it, especially this that is so anti-scriptural. The Scriptures of Truth affirm the contrary, namely, that God declares himself well pleased with elect sinners before they are given faith. It was the sum of the Gospel that the Angels preached at the Incarnation of Christ, Lk.2:14, "glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." The word 'good will' is best rendered well-pleasingness, delight or complacency; and so the word is rendered by the same translators, Matt.3:17, "this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." It is the same word here as in Luke, only here it is a verb, and in Luke it is a noun. Other places might be added, but let this plain proof suffice to evidence, that it is an untruth against the very letter of the Scripture to say, that God loves not his children before Conversion, with a love of Complacency, when the angels at Christ's Incarnation, in their heavenly anthems, warbled it forth, and when the Father himself declared it towards our Head and Surety, at his baptism, Matt.3:17, and consummately at his transfiguration, Matt.17:5; and whatever he declared to his Son, as the Surety of the Election, the same, at the same time, he declared to the Election in Him.

Thus have I proved this distinction, as commonly used, to be faulty; but yet if it were admitted, and taken along with it, in the sense wherein several that use it hold, electing love from eternity towards the persons of the chosen ones, it would not rerate the edge of the argument in the least, namely, that whomsoever God loved with such a love from eternity in his own bosom, he could not possibly hate, and be unreconciled unto them; but 'tis true, {past all sober contradiction,} that reconciliation on God's part was in his blessed mind to them from all eternity.

The second branch of the distinction is God's act in declaring and manifesting his reconciliation unto them, which again is twofold. Reconciliation declared to them in

general, by their Surety, when he had perfectly fulfilled all Covenant Conditions in their room and stead. "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." II Cor.5:19. "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy." Dan.9:24. And when it is declared to, and revealed through the organ of faith to the conscience of a sinner. "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord, walk as children of light." Eph.5:8. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." II Cor.4:6. "And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." Rom.5:11. All this may be fitly styled actual Reconciliation on God's part.

But secondly, there is in the Scriptures a reconciliation said to be on our part; and here, pray observe, that the Scripture dialect bends most this way, to show that God has reconciled sinners to himself, and not himself to sinners, as might be manifested at large, if brevity were not intended.

But this distinction on our part may be also distinguished into that, that which is radical and fundamental, namely, in our Root and Head, which consists in the actual atonement we made in our Surety at his death. "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Rom.5:10.

Or, that which on our part is actual in our consciences, namely, when we are made by Grace to lay aside our enmity in part against our blessed God and Father; and to be sure this cannot be, until faith is wrought

in the heart. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Rom.5:1.

Now it is evident that Mr. Eyre's means that which is on God's part actually declared at the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, even that actual reconciliation obtained by the complete satisfaction of our Surety, {as Dr. Twisse proves against Arminius very substantially,} and therefore his words cannot be tortured and wrested to another meaning, without breach of Christian love.

The same answer may suffice to what is excepted against some passages of his, as on page 46, where he asserts, that "the elect were thus freed, delivered, made complete, &c., in Christ their Surety and Representative, and justified in that actual justification that he received for them in their stead, though they personally receive it not into their consciences until faith."

What follows in the preface, page 6, to explain the Prefacer's meaning, I approve; and were it not for those odious consequences that he has insinuated to spring from Mr. Eyre's notions, {who has so accurately, solidly, and plainly declared his judgment about the timing of justification,} I should in that explanatory instance of his, have given him the right hand of fellowship, and so have ended this debate.

But the absurdities that he pretends to fix, savour not of a Christian Spirit, which moves me a little to review them. Our principle of eternal justification at the time of Christ's Resurrection, and by faith have been so plainly opened and stated, that to the godly it would be a superfluous thing to vouchsafe a particular examination of his wild consequences; for they can easily see that they are all nothing to the purpose. But for the sake of weak ones, {who judge that enough is said to a position that suits their dark minds,} when nothing is said at all to any good purpose; and, {when no answer is given to a fallacious argument, they judge that it cannot be answered,} I shall enter upon an examination of those

absurdities, which he alleges, and follow from our understanding of justification.

The first absurdity charged is, that it confounds Election and Justification; the Decree, and the Execution of the Decree.

Answer: Both these have been answered already; but as to the first, to what has been already said, I shall subjoin Mr. Eyre's answer in his own words, page 92, where he saith, "it follows not they may be both of them immanent, eternal acts, and yet not confounded; for Election and Reprobation are Eternal and Immanent Acts in God, yet they are not confounded." Indeed, all different immanent Acts, are but one simple Act in God, in whose Decree there is no priority or posteriority; {as Hilary speaks,} all being infinitely consistent, {the infinity consisting of eternity with God - all things are uniform,} yet in our consideration they receive sufficient distinction from their various objects, and our various applications of them; and thus Election and Justification are distinguished. Election includes both the end, which is the glory of God's Grace, and all the means from the beginning to the end, conducing thereunto. His will not to punish, includes precisely, and formally, only some part of the means.

To the second you may remember what has been already alleged, that 'tis not confounding the Decree and Execution, namely his secret and revealed will, to call them by the same name. To constitute one righteous is essential to God's justifying a sinner, {as has been proved,} as well as pronouncing him righteous. There the one belongs to the decree, and the other to the execution, and are not confounded; for to constitute righteous, and to pronounce righteous are two distinct things, and do differ as effectual and general calling; and as in calling effectual and general, there is no confusion of the decree, and the execution thereof; so 'tis in eternal justification and justification in time.

Justification, as being the thing willed, is twofold. The same God acting as one in essence decreatively, in the same act of eternity, acting substantially, passes the decree into a Covenant Transaction, between the Father and the Son, with the whole Election, his seed considered in Him; in which Covenant the Father promised to the whole Election, by their Head set up from everlasting, justification of life. This Covenant transaction is under some considerations, the effect of the Decree, and therefore the thing willed as it was in eternity.

The thing willed in time, namely, is an act passed to the whole Election by Christ their Surety, Rom.8:34, when raised from the dead; and this act also is terminated on their consciences upon believing. Now there is a difference between God's act of willing in eternity, and the first effect of his Sovereign Pleasure, which is a Covenant Transaction between the blessed Persons in Eternity. 1. The first being an act of God considered as One in Essence. 2. Secondly, an act of God considered as Three, in the manner of subsisting, or Three Persons. 3. The former advances his Love and Sovereignty, the latter, together therewith, his Faithfulness and Truth. 4. This act under the former consideration, sets up an Everlasting Mediator, but under the latter consideration supposes him as set up already; so that where there is such material ground for distinguishing, there can be no confusion.

Again, there is a difference between objects in eternity, even in the eternal compact, and objects in time; even this Eternal Covenant promulgated divers ways, and at sundry times, but consummately in the public, visible transaction, between the Father and Jesus Christ {actually existing in our natures in the fullness of time} even from the cradle to the throne of the Majesty on High. The one is an act secret, the other revealed. The one an act eternal, the other in time; so that besides the decree being eternal, the thing decreed, in a sense, is proved to be eternal and differs from the manifestive execution in time. So that 'tis

plain, that the assertion of justification in the eternal compact, does not confound the decree, and the execution thereof. This absurdity of the Prefacer seems to have most weight in it of all his others, therefore I have repeated and urged it anew, what answers were cast interspersedly before.

His second is, then the elect never fell in the first Adam, &c. 'Tis intended for an hypothetic syllogism, and thus it should run. If the elect fell in the first Adam, and there was a time when they were under the guilt of sin, and were children of wrath, then they were not actually justified from eternity; but the former is true, and therefore the latter. To which I answer.

This syllogism is false. For from affirming the antecedent, it proceeds to deny the consequent; and in all hypothetic syllogism that concludes negatively, the rule is, to advance from denying the antecedent, to deny the consequent, and the contrary therefore is faulty, and so is this syllogism of our antagonists. The connection is false, as it does not follow; for it should have been a particular negative branch of an universal negative, but it is not so. That which is understood by justification from eternity, is distinct from what is intended by justification in time. And so non-justification from eternity is distinct from that which is non-justification in time. The former is Reprobation, the latter is God's judicial sentence of condemnation. And the former of both is not comprehended under the latter of both. But enough of this, for 'tis my duty to make it plain to the capacities of God's children, if the Spirit strikes in with it.

Let the godly reader know, that we hold not the actual existence of the creature from eternity; nor that the Election, as actually existing, was actually guilty of the breaches of a published Law; nor that the blessed Mediator had, as existing in our flesh, actually, publicly, and visibly performed Covenant Conditions for them; or that they had received an actual discharge into their consciences, for all

these tenents we abhor; but only, that God's eternal imputation of righteousness to them, was an Act of God, and therefore there is no need to load us with such direful consequences. And unless they can prove these to be our principles, their consequences are to no purpose, but mere forged slanders cast upon persons and truths. And I cannot but think that this they know in their consciences, that we hold no such principles; and how they will acquit themselves of throwing calumnies upon the truth and us, will be known one day. But I will repeat again our sentiments concerning Eternal Justification. It is an act of God's Sovereign pleasure, constituting persons righteous in the righteousness of Another, and eternally promising to the Lord Redeemer, a discharge to them in every manner, upon his engagement to perform Covenant Conditions perfectly for them. Now let the impartial reader judge, whether it can follow from these premises, that the elect must not fall in Adam? No, but the contrary is true.

1. This sovereign Will and Compact of God that unalterably fixes the end, fixes the means conducing thereunto; and this is one of the principal means, that they should of themselves lose their own personal righteousness in Adam their Head, so that they might be alone completely righteous in the Righteousness of a Redeemer.

2. So far as they are to be understood to have a representative being in their Everlasting Head, so far as considered in Him they were never otherwise than righteous. And this hinders not, but in that relation they had to Adam their Head, since the fall, they are guilty and unrighteous; since believers themselves, here, as in Christ have no condemnation; but as considered in themselves, or Adam their natural root, they have the sentence of death and condemnation.

His third consequence is this, namely, that actual justification is not, and cannot be declaring, pronouncing, &c. The force of his argument lies here, namely, that actual

justification is only the declaring and pronouncing an ungodly, guilty, and condemned sinner, just and righteous through Christ's Righteousness; and therefore there cannot be in any sense actual justification from eternity. Whereunto I thus reply.

1. That there is a justification from eternity, which he here grants.

2. But he would not have it actual; and if by actual he means an actual discharge in the conscience, and an actual conformity {in measure} to Christ's Resurrection, I am of his mind. But if he means it in reference to God, the sentence conceived in God's mind {as Dr. Ames says} from eternity was actual, it being an act of God. And when we speak of justification analogously, 'tis generally understood of God's Act, and of that particular act which the Scriptures call accounting sinners righteous in the righteousness of another, which is indeed an act of his blessed Mind. And therefore I know not why persons should be offended at the word actual justification from eternity? For if there was any justification at all from eternity, it was only God's act in his own bosom, and therefore could not be anything but actual.

His fourth consequence is, that by this notion the elect are twice justified, &c., and it makes a posterior and collateral act in God, which runs thus, that since there is no posterior or collateral act in God, therefore there can be no actual justification from eternity.

To which I answer, that what we mean by actual, has been already explained. But I know not what he means precisely by posterior or collateral acts; and by such a joining of them together in his argument. We make justification, as it is an act in God, to be one continued unchangeable act from eternity, {entirely bound up in the Person & Work of Christ,} which appears to be a plain consequence from our positions. It is this very thing which makes us contend for justification from eternity, because justification really is fundamentally an act of God's mind,

{based upon the redemptive work of Christ,} and all acts of his mind are eternal and unchangeable. The blasphemous inferences of acts arising as new in God's mind, towards elect sinners, we endeavor to fence against, by asserting the eternal nature of Justification. And the position, as we hold it, effectually destroys them; and yet must the principal be accused of countenancing and indulging those horrid things that it is directly shaped to oppose and squash.

Justification from Eternity, and Justification at the Resurrection of Christ differ only as God's secret and revealed will does; and there is no other distinction between them. God's secret and revealed will are not two acts in God; his revealed will being but the declaration of the acts of his Mind; and that act is but one and the same with his one eternal purpose in Christ. An acquittance in the heart of the creditor, and in a paper; a pardon in the heart of a Prince, and enrolled {as Mr. Eyre's well says} is one and the same; 'tis manifested, and the other secret.

Justification pronounced may be at sundry times, and in divers manners, and yet but one and the same act. And as Mr. Eyre's adds, pg.105, though there are never so many copies written forth in several hands, they do not make many acquittances, or many pardons, being but the transcripts of one original. And though God's love in his bosom, and this love as testified and manifested divers ways and times, both in Old and New Testament, multiplies not acts of love in God, but is one and the same act of love in him. The same may be said of justification as it is an act of God's secret will, and as it is an act of his revealed will, and as revealed at various seasons, and in a variety of ways. Good men, counted sound, pious, learned and intelligent, have differed amongst themselves in ascribing justification to several periods, yet for the most part judged not one another Antinomian; nor this inference just and lawful from thence, namely, that there are posterior acts in God. Alfred, Pemble, Twisse, Rutherford,

Ames, Eyre's, Crandon, &c., judged that God's eternal act, that is, his act of volition, might properly enough be termed justification, and yet denied not all the various acts of his revealed will.

The rest, that limits justification to an act of his revealed will, yet have vastly differed as to the timing thereof. Dr. Maccovius ¹¹, a Professor of Divinity at Franeker in the Netherlands, judges it to be then, when the first promise of Grace was given forth to Adam and Eve.

Dr. Goodwin, though he says that we are virtually justified in Christ, in respect of our consciences, yet he asserts, that Christ as the sinner's Surety, took out at his resurrection, a real, actual, formal discharge, in his own name, and in the name of the whole Election; which is {the sum and substance of} that great or original discharge they receive into their consciences in believing. According to him 'tis in Christ actually as a Root; and it follows, if the life of a tree be actually in the root, that tree may be properly enough be said to be actually alive.

If I mistake not, Witsius compounds both together, alleging that justification was initially in that promise, diversely afterwards, with gradual proclamations declared, but consummately at Christ's Resurrection. Dr. Crisp times it to the first actual being of the elect sinner. Dr. Burgess periods it first at infant baptism, which he affirms is an initial justification at the tribunal of Christ and his church; where he makes his initial to mean little less than our actual; and indeed, it can be no less than an act of Christ ministerially by his church, according to that, Matt.18:18, "whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." If this church act ministerially be not founded upon an antecedent act of God, published concerning the seed of the godly indefinitely, it is

¹¹ Johannes Maccovius, 1588-1644, was a Polish Reformed theologian.

altogether insignificant. I confess, they that are not for infant baptism, are not so much girt by this, as they that are for it. However, he quotes for his opinion the primitive fathers, the confessions of the reformed churches, the Protestant divines abroad of the chiefest note, and of the most eminent at home, and lastly, the doctrines of the Church of England, established by law; so that they need be silent as well as others.

Others again have fixed the timing immediately before faith, in order of nature, though not of time. Mr. Cotton, quoted by Dr. Chauncey, to whom seem to agree Calvin, Luther, Austin, Mr. Walker, &c., and what if there be some that give its first period to the infused principle, rather than an act of faith. But lastly, several affirm, that justification is after faith.

And after all, it might be no hard task to reconcile all these opinions, and show how various aspects of truth consists in each of them, depending like links in a chain one upon another. But my design in reciting these is to show the different opinions of men, generally counted very sound, about the timing of justification, and that it is so indeed, no understanding godly person will deny, that these made divers acts or collateral acts in God concerning justification.

The godly reader may see this objection fully answered by Mr. Eyre's, page 105, and yet the Prefacer throws it in again, without taking any notice of Mr. Eyre's arguments to overthrow it; either because he would say something, or because he thinks anything said on this subject will pass as current reason; but this is not to answer Mr. Eyre's, but a resolution to have the last word of him; and so he, and them of his system, may easily have of us, for were we fond of drawing the sword of contention merely for the sake of the last word, we have neither leisure nor money to do so, but I pass on to his next.

His fifth is rather a new charge than one in the

catalog of absurdities; for it is propounded {as by one of late in a public debate} for the sake of another consequence in its bosom; but however, this is my answer. That the Protestants have made a distinction formally, between faith justifying, and being justified by faith; or between faith which justifies, and the faith whereby we are justified. But let it pass, as he words it, with a candid construction. Faith justifies, or we are justified by faith, must be understood properly, or improperly; improperly, or by a metonymy, then the meaning is that the object of faith justifies; and in this sense we abhor to say, faith only justifies declaratively, for so taken it justifies materially, &c.

If faith be understood in a proper sense, 'tis in reference to, it's habit, it's act or both. If faith justifies properly in reference to its habit, it can be none other than a supernatural light of life, going along with the object manifesting, or his divine beam, as forming its own image within, and so impress upon the soul. And take it in the latter sense {which is most genuine to an inward principle} yet still I would fain know, what is it but a divine living light infused, which both light and eye conveyed by the applied object, suited to view the object as precious, for the manifestation or declaration of itself? And again, what is this object but God's justifying act through Christ, and his righteousness? That the object of justification is such is taken for granted; being not the matter in controversy. That the infused principle of faith is an impressed light of life, manifesting the object to the blind soul, to be suitable, precious and excellent, is as plain and evident from the Scriptures of Truth. The holy Scriptures do attest, that God the Father is working this inward principle, and this by discovering or revealing. "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are

delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Matt.11:25-27. "And Jesus answered and said unto him, blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Matt.16:17. And that this is not bare outward, but inward revelation, appears by comparing these places, with Galatians 1:15,16, "but when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me," which expressions do evidently declare, what the Father does in infusing the principle of faith. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." II Cor.4:6. "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints." Eph.1:17-18.

These do set forth, that the second Person, as he conjoins in this infusion of the principle of faith, does it by revealing, declaring, discovering, &c.

They further evidence, that the Spirit, as the immediate efficient, works this inward principle, by revealing or discovering, &c. "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." Jn.15:26. "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak, and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." Jn.16:13-14. "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding,

that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." I Jn.5:20.

These also bear witness that the Gospel preached, as the principal, external means, operates also by Divine Revelation. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith, as it is written, the just shall live by faith." Rom.1:16,17. I might add more, but let these suffice, which I draw up into this argument. If all causes that produce the inward principle of faith, according to the Scripture, be said to operate by revealing, declaring, or words of the very same import, then it follows that faith, if it may be said to justify as an infused principle, can justify no other way but declaratively, &c.

But the former is true {as hath been already manifested} and therefore so is the latter; to which I subjoin one argument more, that if the proper effect of such causes as set forth in Scripture language by manifestation, declaration, or words of the same signification, that is, if the infused principle of faith expressed by no other words in the book of God than manifestation, declaration, &c., or words of the very same import, then faith, if it justifies properly as a principle or habit, can justify no otherwise than declaratively, &c., but the former is true, {and I challenge him or anybody else, to produce me a scriptural instance to the contrary,} therefore the latter is true. So these contemptible men may with boldness say that faith in this respect only justifies declaratively in the conscience.

Yet, if faith be taken in a proper sense for the act of faith, whether that more insensible and secret, or that more sensible and perceivable, it must either justify conditionally, or manifestively and declaratively in the conscience. If conditionally, it infers a new remedial law of

Grace, and so it justifies as a condition of that law, and justifies as a work. I have no call here to enlarge at present on this, that faith justifies not conditionally, it being not my antagonist's assertion, nor the matter of the present debate given to us. And besides, it would be but to act that matter over again, that has been done boldly and skillfully, by the learned Dr. Chauncey, in his answer to Mr. Williams, and Mr. Eyre's, in his book lately printed, pages 128-145, which the reader may pursue; and therefore it is sufficient for me here to take the Prefacer's grant, namely, that faith justifies not conditionally; and thence to conclude with him, therefore faith is taken properly {as to the act} declaratively, manifestly, &c., in the conscience.

But he, and others with him, I know will reply, that there is a third thing, namely, that faith justifies instrumentally, to which I answer. That instrumental causes subserve their principal efficient two ways, either in producing things, or in effecting the knowledge of a thing already produced. In the former sense the sword has an efficient concurrence with the hand that yields it, in afflicting a wound on a person; the trowel, saw and axe, with the builder, in setting up an house, &c., in this sense I deny that faith justifies instrumentally. For then it would effect and produce justification by a way of concurrent causality with God himself, and therefore it would have a greater hand in the business of justification, than as a condition, in the sense that many hold it; and there would be no avoiding the force of this argument, namely, if faith justifies instrumentally, it is either as God's instrument or man's; if as God's instrument, then it must follow, that it is God that believes unto the justification of the sinner; and if it is man's, then man justifies himself, and not God; both which are horrid absurdities.

Faith has no manner of causality in producing Justification; as it is God's Act, whether it be that gracious sentence, first as conceived in his mind from Eternity; or secondly, as promised to Christ the sinner's Surety at his

Resurrection; or thirdly, as this Act is terminated on the sinner's conscience. For the act of God, as qualified in the last sense is the object that faith lays hold upon and therefore must be in order of nature complete before the act, and any conversant acts add nothing to the completeness of the object. Nor secondly, has it any causality in producing the matter of our Justification, as that is the complete performance of Covenant Conditions, upon which complete performance of Covenant Conditions, the justifying of God judicially passes; which complete performance, &c., as engaging such a justifying act at the Tribunal of Justice, was done by Christ our Surety perfectly many hundreds of years ago; and therefore the sinner's faith can add nothing to the being thereof. So that justification, the object of faith, cannot have the least instrumentality from faith to effect or produce its being. Whence we conclude that faith does not and cannot justify instrumentally, as an instrument subservient to the being of the thing, at least in an active sense.

Therefore it follows {for there is no third} that it instrumentally justifies, as it furthers or promotes assurance, as it is a conscience instrument, whereby the conscience receives God's gracious sentence of absolution, produced heretofore to Christ, as a Surety, and now manifested in the conscience, which comes to the practical knowledge and persuasion thereof to its self. Mr. Rutherford will allow it to be set forth by the similitude of an hand taking a thing nearer to itself, that is at a distance; but of a hand that only receives the gift put into it, which hand is given and opened to receive, at the same time by the same Giver. Says he, "I would have this, that faith does not instrumentally make the eternal remission of sin, as an immanent act, but attests to that which is done already." Again, "not that faith by any instrumental causality produces Christ's righteousness, or by any real act attracts the righteousness of Christ," &c., whence does

emerge another declaration, that no act makes its object, but it is complete before the act is put forth; therefore justification, as 'tis the object of justifying faith, cannot in the least be instrumentally affected by itself.

Lastly, that no work can justify, but only declaratively so; and faith, though a grace, is yet but a work, and therefore can justify no otherwise, but declaratively. The proposition is plain from Scripture. "It is God that justifieth." Rom.8:33. This is a prerogative that the Supreme Judge has reserved unto Himself, "that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Rom.3:26. The Jews counted it blasphemy in Christ to forgive sin by his own proper authority, esteeming Him to be a mere man, Mk.2:7, and had he been but a mere man, they would have been in the right, as founded on that undeniable maxim, "who can forgive sins but God only," and so also warranted from that portion of Scripture, Isa.43:25, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." The assumption is most true! That faith in the believer, though an excellent grace, is yet a work; and it would sound harsh to say that faith forgives sin; faith imputes righteousness, or faith justifies, in no other manner than declaratively. Therefore it is undeniable that faith justifying as an instrument, justifies only evidentially. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Heb.11:1. It is the instrument of the awakened conscience whereby it receives and records God's justifying act to the conscience, through Jesus Christ, and his righteousness. I grant indeed that faith is the instrument of justification; but such an instrument as Calvin herein asserts, namely, "we shall now have a full definition of faith, if we say that it is a firm and certain knowledge of the mercy of God toward us, founded upon the Truth of the free promise in Christ, which is revealed in our minds, and sealed on our hearts, by the Holy Spirit." And such as Dr. Chauncey defines, namely,

"a spiritual organ in a quickened sinner, whereby he sees, tastes, and feelingly lays hold on Christ and his Righteousness for Justification." The sinner is sensibly and practically made to know God's justifying Act to be passed to him in Christ his Surety, upon the account of that Righteousness which his Surety performed.

I might multiply in what sense the first Reformers took faith as an instrument; namely, as an instrument wrought by the Spirit in an awakened, quickened conscience; whereby under the sense of vileness and condemnation in itself, it receives the glad tidings of great joy, namely, that God counts and declares him guiltless and righteous in the Righteousness of Jesus.

I further prove from the scriptural expressions that define faith, that 'tis instrumental to the conscience-knowledge of justification as it's object. Conscience-justification is opposed to the conscience-knowledge of sin, Rom.3:20, &c., and thus I argue that conscience-justification, is by faith opposite to that conscience-condemnation, which is by the Law. Conscience-condemnation, which is by the Law is the knowledge of sin, or the practical conscience-knowledge in a man, that he is sinful, guilty and unrighteous, as in the first Adam and under the first Covenant. Therefore on the contrary, that conscience-justification is a knowledge in the conscience of imputed righteousness, and it's being counted righteous and discharged therein. 'Tis the Apostle's own syllogism, as in the fore-mentioned place, as the godly learned may easily perceive. 'Tis set forth by the word 'knowledge' in other places. "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied, by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." Isa.53:11. "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." I Cor.2:2. "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." I Cor.2:12. "And they shall not

teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord, for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." Heb.8:11. "We are of God, he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." I Jn.4:6. "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." I Jn.5:13. But I grant, 'tis not simply an intellectual or head-knowledge, but a conscience-knowledge. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son." I Jn.5:10. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Rom.8:16. Not a bare knowledge of the object, but of the object, as suited to my necessities; and, not of this object for others only, but for me also in particular; and this founded upon the truth of the promise of Grace in Christ infinitely free; and therefore it is not a knowledge only, that enlightens the understanding; but more so a knowledge that establishes the heart. "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." I Jn.5:20. Hence also explained by confidence, or a fiducially recumbency; which is the soul's trusting to the Righteousness of Christ as its own for acceptance, and therefore upon the account of his going to God with boldness. "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Heb.4:16. "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." Heb.10:22.

Faith in the Scriptures is defined as "the evidence of things not seen," namely, God's justifying act passed to

the soul in Christ and his Righteousness. The word signifies a convincing demonstration; namely, to the Conscience, of things not seen; namely, of the Righteousness and Strength that is in Christ; not by reason understood, nor sensibly felt to be in me, but evidenced by Faith; as this Righteousness is mine in Christ. It is not the only and highest evidence, for there are others; and the Spirit of God is Supreme. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Rom.8:16. It is not the revealing, but the receiving Evidence. "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." I Cor.2:12. The Spirit reveals to faith, and faith receives. The Spirit witnesses with our spirit, that is, our grace of faith or first fruit of the Spirit within us. The sun, day, and window may be said to lighten the room in diverse respects. The sun lightens by dispensing light, the window by receiving light; thus the Spirit justifies in the conscience by manifesting God's Act unto and upon man, faith by receiving this manifestation and applying it to the conscience.

Faith as justifying is set forth in Scriptures by a witness, or testimony, or record; being in the original the same word, Jn.3:33, I Cor.1:6, II Thes.1:10, Heb.11:4, and such a witness as is in the soul and conscience. I Jn.5:10, I Cor.1:6, Gal.1:16. A judicial act to the sinner arraigned at the bar of conscience. It is a court record brought down by the Spirit from the Court of Justice in Heaven to the Court of Justice in the conscience, {like the white stone of old given to the arraigned person, as a token of his acquittal from the judges,} that there is Justification of life in Christ. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth

it." Rev.2:17. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Rom.8:1. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." I Jn.5:10-11. And this record as received in the conscience honors God, by setting seal to the truth of this Declaration. "He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true." Jn.3:33. So that faith absorbs this Record in the rolls of conscience.

Faith is defined by the Holy Ghost as Manifestation, Revelation and Declaration, Jn.14:21, Eph.1:17, Rom.3:25, Jn.16:16, Rom.1:16, but it is such a Manifestation, Revelation or Declaration as is inward and applied to the Conscience. II Cor.4:2, Gal.1:16. Such a manifestation as unveils, declares and reveals the blessed Object of Reconciliation and that Righteousness already prepared and appropriated in Christ, a Root and Surety to the poor sinner seeing that he is guilty and unrighteous in himself and in the first Adam, and cannot be otherwise therein. Is.45:24, II Cor.5:19, Mt.22:4. Not a revealing, but a receiving manifestation, as afore distinguished in the notion of evidence; it reveals, manifests, &c., not as the sun or day lets in light to a room, but as the window that takes it in, or the eye, that lets in the object to the brain to affect the fancy. Therefore in a proper sense Faith is only instrumental to the practical and applicatory Knowledge of Justification in the conscience.

Faith is termed acknowledging the Son, I Jn.2:23, Eph.1:17, II Tim.2:25, Jn.8:32, which further confirms faith to be the instrument of the quickened conscience. Faith is set forth in Scripture as a holy confidence in the conscience, or assurance which must amount to this, that there is such a fullness of Grace in Christ, and it is for me, Is.32:17, I Thes.1:5, I Jn.3:19, Heb.3:6,14, 10:35, &c.,

but more of this hereafter. Faith in the Word of God is called persuasion, Rom.4:21, 8:38, I Jn.3:19, {where it is in the original, 'persuade our hearts before him,'} but it must be a conscience persuasion of the reality of the Object; namely, his Christ, and his Grace, and that in reference to the sinner, which also evidences faith to be only an instrument to subserve to the practical conscience knowledge of Justification.

The proper nature of an act of faith is expressed by the Spirit of God by the term receiving, Jn.1:12, Rom.5:17, from whence I consider, that this receiving is an act of the soul or conscience; it is not an outward receiving, as of the hand, but a conscience receiving. The act is equated to the object; and the object is God's gracious act of counting and accepting sinners righteous in Another's Righteousness as declared, which is the report of the Gospel, the glad tidings of great joy. Faith therefore as conversant about this Object must believe, and that for itself the glad tidings. To believe a report for myself is to know that for truth in reference to me, that I knew not before, and this must affect my conscience, as it removes guilt and makes it free, for 'tis knowledge of self. Filth and condemnation {which intensely affects the conscience} is the sore that the plaster of free justification is provided for. If therefore the Scriptures of Truth, thus define and explain faith, as has been aforementioned and proved, then it undeniably follows, that faith is instrumental not to the essence of justification, but the effect of justification, as 'tis the object of faith.

'Tis true, I grant, that according to the language of Scripture, oftentimes things are said to be, when they appear to be. As God is said to love, when he does manifest his love as before proved; so that in this sense faith may be said to give a being to justification instrumentally, when in the conscience it makes it appear to be; and in this respect, justification cannot be said by any means to be before faith; but according to this notion,

persons are then said to be justified in God's sight, when they know they are.

That faith as it instrumentally conduces to the knowledge of justification, so as it is God's act, so to the benefit or well-being of it in reference to the conscience, as the latter is the fruit. Know then, that justification according to divines, is either active or passive. Passive is God's sentence of absolution conceived eternally in his mind, pronounced to Christ the sinner's Surety, and terminated on his conscience in believing. Passive is the effect of this upon the soul, whereby the person is made actually conformable to the resurrection of Christ in some measure. "And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith, that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." Phil.3:9-10. God's first judicial act towards Christ our Surety as a Judge, was rolling away the tombstone, to which he conforms us, by removing the coercive power of the Law from off the conscience, by which we are irresistibly forced to bring our own personal obedience for our justification in a natural state, Rom.7:1-5, which is a opening of the prison doors. He took off the grave clothes that bound him, to which we are conformed by breaking the force of the guilt and reign of sin in the soul in some measure. He quickened them, {which should indeed have been first,} for hereunto he makes us like unto him by infusing spiritual life and light into our souls. "And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live." Ezek.16:6. He brought him out of the grave, and to this he conforms us, by translating of us out of a state of doing for life, to believing for life. "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." Col.1:13.

The sum of all this is, that by all these acts, an actual discharge was given him as our Surety, and herein we are conformed in the actual discharge wrought and affected in our consciences, we being therein quickened, brought under Grace, made to believe, and the guilt and reign of sin removed from our consciences. Hence it follows, God the Father making him to ascend to Heaven in triumph, "thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell among them," Psal.68:18, &c., welcoming him there, "the LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool," Psal.110:1, and setting him to sit down on the throne of the Majesty on High, forever to intercede, Heb.1:3, to which he conforms us, by causing us to rejoice and triumph over Sin and Satan in the righteousness of Christ Jesus.

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Heb.7:25. "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." I Cor.1:30. And giving us the privilege and boldness of near approaching, and access in him, as dear children to a beloved Father, through the blood, purity, and obedience of his Son, in acts of holy fellowship with prayer and praise. Jn.1:12. "For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." Eph.2:18. "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus." Heb.10:19. This justification differs much from the other. 1. For, this is passive, and the other is truly active, according to sound divines. 2. This is improperly so called, and the other most properly. 3. The former alone is the adequate object of justifying faith, namely, God's gracious act, through the Redemption of Christ Jesus, however diversified; and the latter only the product thereof. 4. Though infused light be the fruit of

justification in the Court of Heaven; yet it antecedes this passive justification {which as has been afore described is so-called by good men} or the inseparable concomitant thereof; but all the other acts confirming the soul to a risen Christ, are consequential of faith. 5. The former {as divines say} is complete at first, {for the Lord never repents of his act,} and the latter gradually so, notwithstanding this makes not a first and second justification in the Popish sense. This latter I grant, faith instrumentally produces and gives a being to; but to the former, 'tis instrumental unto in no sense, but to the conscience-knowledge thereof.

But if it still be objected, does faith justify only declaratively or manifestively? I answer, take faith for the object of faith, and it does abundance more; for it justifies also materially, formally, and efficiently; but if you take faith in a proper sense, whether for a habit, act, or both, it justifies not conditionally; and I have abundantly proved, it justifies not instrumentally as producing the being of justification in the former sense, but only instrumentally as to the conscience-knowledge of this active justification, and instrumentally as to the producing of the passive experience thereof in the soul of the believer. So that I judge it no heresy to affirm, but a most glorious truth, that in reference to God's justifying act terminated on the conscience, through imputed righteousness manifested, it justifies only declaratively, &c., but if the reader would have further satisfaction in this matter, he may pursue Mr. Eyre's book from pages 106 - 145; and I wonder that the Prefacer would take no notice of Mr. Eyre's explanations and arguments upon this very point.

My second answer is, that suppose this was such an heresy; yet how does it follow from eternal justification in the sense afore explained? 'Tis enough for me to say, that I deny his consequence, and require him to make it good; but that has been the least of his care, to evince his consequences to be lawful and genuine. Yet I would fain

know of him, how does this accursed principle follow more from our tenent of eternal justification, than from what he and others hold in common with us; namely, that God actually loved his chosen ones from eternity; actually elected and predestinated them, and since eternal justification in our sense, is a branch thereof thus diversified, from that respect it has precisely some part of the means predestinated in order to the end, as aforementioned?

I answer, though a notional faith floating only in the head, changes not the state, nor course of life, but may give encouragement to drunkards and whoremasters through the deceitfulness of lust to continue in their wicked courses {as some of old would continue in sin, that Grace might abound, Rom.6:1, and turn the Grace of God into lasciviousness, Jude 1:4,} yet that faith that is of the saving operation of the Spirit, purifies the heart and walk, "seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit," I Pet.1:22; obeying the truth here, is by a periphrasis put for faith. Hence it is frequently styled in Scripture a holy faith; and to prove this truth from each of its particulars, for 'tis plain from Scripture, that all parts of holiness are carried on by faith in exercise. Thus mortification of sin is in all its parts, as. 1. Saving conviction of sin, Isa.6:5, the Spirit as a Comforter, savingly convinces of sin, and that by convincing the soul of judgment and righteousness. "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." Jn.16:8. 2. Saving compunction and sorrow for sin. "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn." Zech.12:10. 3. True and Evangelical loathing of self and sin; for this made Isaiah cry out on account of his vileness,

Isa.6:5; it made Job after all, {though a perfect and upright man,} abhor and repent himself in dust and ashes. Job 42:5-6. See further Ezek.16:53-54 compared with verses 60-63; also Ezek.36:24-31 compared with verses 31-32. 4. Right Confession of Sin. "And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner." Lk.18:13. 5. Forsaking of Sin. "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace," Rom.6:11-14, and as Mortification of Sin in all its parts, is carried on by faith, laying hold and applying to itself the Grace of Christ, so faith receiving sensibly into the conscience superabounding Grace in Christ, and the Righteousness of Jesus as a free gift, causes that soul to reign in spiritual life by one Christ Jesus, Rom.5:17; and thus faith in exercise, carries on positive holiness in all its branches, and this throughout the whole man in thought, word, and deed.

Faith in exercise produces a Heavenly Conversation, compare Phil.3:20 with verses 8-15, which further appears in considering, that this heavenly conversation is a holy fellowship maintained with the Father and Son. "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." I Jn.1:3. "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." I Jn.1:7. And this will be clearer yet, if we view how this holy communion in all its particulars must be carried on by

faith in exercise. 1. As 'tis the souls approach unto God, "for he that cometh to God must believe that he is," &c. Heb.11:6. 2. As 'tis a coming to God as a reconciled God and Father through the appointed way Christ, his purity, obedience and blood. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Jn.14:6. Heb.10:10,19,20, &c. There is no coming to God, but through Christ, for only "through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." Eph.2:18. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Heb.7:25. Nor is there any coming to Christ, but through faith. "Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Acts 20:21. 3. As 'tis a viewing and admiring his boundless eternal Love and Grace manifested in the Son of his love, and together therewith the love of the Redeemer in our nature. "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." I Jn.4:16. To dwell in God, and to have God dwell in the soul, is to have communion with him. But says the Holy Ghost here, to dwell in God, &c., is to know and believe the love that he has unto us in Christ. 4. As 'tis a prostration of the soul and conscience at the throne and footstool of this free love of God in Christ, which cannot be managed, but in a way of believing. Thus the prodigal, Lk.15:11-32, believing God was his Father, still bowed down in holy reverence and admiration before him. 5. As it makes returns of love again, for no soul can love God, until he first believes God's love through Christ to his own soul. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." I Jn.4:10.

As a Heavenly Trade and Holy Conversation, consists in a diversity of holy thoughts and meditations, concerning God and Christ, his Kingdom, Glory, Ways,

Commands, Church, &c., they are all exercised, promoted and directed by a lively faith, because no thoughts of God are right, but of God in Christ; nor any thoughts of Christ truly spiritual, but those that spring from faith. They that would exercise thoughts, as persons risen with Christ, must exercise them in believing. They whose meditations, would seek things above, must seek them above where Christ is, namely, at God's right hand, and 'tis faith alone that can seek them there. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." Col.3:1-3. Thus have I proved from the Scriptures of Truth, that faith carries on the great work of heart holiness.

Faith in like manner promote holiness of lip; and what is that, but confessing with the mouth, what we believe with the heart. "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Rom.10:10. So 'tis undeniably true, that holy profession which is a lip labor, consists in professing with the mouth, what we believe with the heart concerning God and Christ, and their things, and our interest in them; and concerning ourselves, what we are in ourselves, and what we are in our Head, and the relation we stand in, to God as our Father, and this in prayer, praise, and holy conference, &c. All our speech that ministers grace to the hearers, Eph.4:29, ought to be in the round of our holy profession, and this holy profession cannot be maintained without faith, and faith in exercise. We must hold fast our faith, if we hold fast the profession of our faith. We must not only know, but believe, or our aforementioned profession will be vile, hypocritical, and not the holy language of Canaan. Thus also this truth is confirmed, that holiness of tongue must flow from lively faith in exercise.

No less does faith manage holiness of life. When

the Apostle urges Timothy to the performance of divers holy duties, he directs him to "be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus," II Tim.2:1, and there is no being strong therein, but by a strong and firm conscience-persuasion thereof. 'Tis putting on the Lord Jesus Christ by faith, that is, believing on him as our Head and Surety, and thereby destroying all bare designs in the soul for self and sin, for this obstructs making provision for the flesh to fulfill the lust thereof. Rom.13:14. A holy conscience-persuasion of the spiritual privileges we have in Christ will make us careful to maintain good works, Tit.3:8, in the way of believing. The Grace of God as received by true faith to reign in the conscience, teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live righteously, soberly, and godly in this present world. Tit.2:11-12. All outward religious performances towards God are acts of worship and religious service, which must be done in faith, as Abel's was, or they will not be accepted, for without faith it is impossible to please Him. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous...but without faith it is impossible to please him, for he that cometh to God must believe that he is." Heb.11:4-6.

All worship, if True and Evangelical must be in Spirit and in Truth. "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him." Jn.4:23. As of old worship was typically true, if in the place Divinely appointed; if offered in the appointed Garments, and on the consecrated Altar; so now the Worship is substantially true, if our gifts be offered in the Temple opened in Heaven; that is, the Person of Christ manifested there; and the worshipers by faith putting on the Priestly Garments of Christ's Righteousness, and offering their gifts on that Altar, the purity of his Nature advanced to an infinite value by the Grace of Union; and without this worship cannot be true. All outward acts

thereof, if they flow not from these inward holy acts, though externally according to Rule; yet it is but false worship in God's account. Now thus to offer, as has been mentioned, requires not only faith, but strong faith. Evangelical worship must be in spirit too; and where the Spirit assists to the performance, he does it is a spirit of Adoption; witnessing with our spirits that we are the children of God, and teaching us to cry Abba Father. Rom.8:15-16. If we are led by the Spirit of God in our worship, we act as sons of God, {"for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God," Rom.8:14,} we pray as children to a Father, we praise him as our Father; we hear him in the Ministry of the Gospel as a Father, and we do all to him as a Father; and all this cannot be done, without Faith in Exercise; for all acts of Worship are Testimonies of Love to Him, or they are not right; and we cannot testify love to Him, nor can we love Him, unless we believe upon Him.

But, all duties of temperance and sobriety towards ourselves, of justice and mercy towards our neighbor, are but a wretched legality, and painted hypocrisy, unless done in Faith. This is a rule universally extensive which the Holy Ghost gives us; for "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Rom.14:23. All duties, if not performed in love lack the life and soul of holiness; and it must be love to God as our Father, and to Christ as our Husband. It has been proved that there can be no such love in our hearts, but that which is wrought from a sense of our Father's love unto us, and this sense of his love is acquired only by Faith. Thus I have proved by particulars, that holiness of heart and life is produced by a lively faith.

Observe reader, that without such a faith there can be no Evangelical holiness for all must flow from Gospel principles, urged by Gospel motives, done by Gospel means and performed for Gospel ends. Now I will make it appear that none of these can be without faith in exercise.

The primary principles must be infused Light, II

Cor.4:6, Life, Ez.16:6, and Love, II Cor.5:14, these being the chief principles. Now the two first of these, in their first flowing in from Faith, and their influx is continued by the Exercise of Faith; which is that bucket that draws water out of the wells of Salvation. Jn.4:11-14. The third is always the effect of sensible Faith; and faith is that great channel or conduit pipe through which they are conveyed to the soul.

The motives are from the Free Love and Grace of God manifested in the Person, and undertakings of Christ Jesus. All which are apprehended by faith; for faith alone apprehends the record that God gives of his Son, and of that Eternal Life in and by Him Alone. "And this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." I Jn.5:11.

The means by which holy graces are exercised, and works of holiness done, is by virtue of Union to the Person of Christ; and this I grant and affirm, that this Union is not influential, or at least sensibly influential if not apprehended by Faith. In Christ we must spiritually Live, Move and Act. All our spiritual movements must be as members of Him, and by virtue of Implantation into Him. "I am the vine, ye are the branches, he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, for without me ye can do nothing." Jn.15:5. As my finger moves every time in the life of my body, and in the face of the spirits, that reside in the head, so the members of the Lord Christ, when they move and act aright, move and act in the life and fullness that's their Head, and faith is the alone instrument of this influential implantation, and of all spiritual actings in the virtue thereof. The principle and initial life of our spiritual acting, is the fullness of Grace in our Head. II Tim.2:1. That is the fountain that sends down continual rivulets into the soul, and faith is the ground-way of conveyance, so that a soul cannot perform what is good by the right means thereof, but in faith.

The end of all our works should not be to purchase,

procure, or obtain any of the Lord's favors, but only for the Praise of the Glory of his Free Grace, and to the sole honor of Him, "who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous Light." I Pet.2:9. "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." Eph.1:6. Now it is impossible for any soul to have these right aims and ends in good works without faith in exercise. Either a soul must act to gain spiritual life, or act from that Life already received; and there can be no third motivation. The former he cannot, because the hypothesis supposes him without Life, and therefore unable to stir or move; consequently, it must be the latter; that is, from Life received; and wherever there is Life received, it supposes Faith.

The service must be either servile or filial, either for wages, or because of an inheritance given and made sure. The former is not a true service for it is against the current of Scripture and the nature of Evangelical Holiness; therefore the latter is true; and it follows, that he that serves as a son has received the charter or grant of adoption, which is received by faith, Jn.1:12, and the spirit of adoption which is consequential of believing. "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." Eph.1:13-14.

If the end of all duties be to the Praise of Free Grace and to the Honor of a Father and Husband; then this infallibly supposes faith in the subject that has already received grace, Eph.2:6, and that does practically know and acknowledge God to be his Father, and Christ to be his Husband.

Then upon the whole, if without faith, and faith in exercise, there can be no right, principle, motive, mean or end of good works, {and consequently without these or

either of these, the most splendid works for outward show cannot be holy,} then faith is not the way to licentiousness. But it has been proved without faith in exercise, there can be no true holiness; and this truth the first Reformers earnestly contended for, and the Homilies of the Church of England excellently set forth; and {I am most confident} is the Prefacer's own judgment; then why such a scurvy reflection on faith; whereas I am satisfied, that he knows in his conscience, 'tis not a notional and hypocritical faith that we mean or contend for. Though we say, faith in the proper sense, justifies in the conscience only declaratively; yet we affirm, that in so doing it has other great uses, the greatest whereof is to produce holiness of conversation.

Observe, as faith, and that as 'tis justifying, purifies the conscience; nay the whole man and his conversation, so it is faith, as it evidences to the soul its free justification in Christ, justifies in the conscience declaratively, {which is the assertion that the Prefacer ridicules,} that promotes holiness of heart and walk, which I thus demonstrate.

Many grant, that faith of assurance is a duty, and to be pressed after by the saints. Because there are many duties that cannot be performed without it, for unless we know that we have Christ, we cannot sensibly and confidently rejoice in Christ, as our own; without which we cannot perform that duty, "rejoice evermore," I Thes.5:16, and have strong consolation, as the will of God is, that we should. "That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus." Heb.6:18-20. Furthermore, we can never praise God aright without a strong assurance, for who can bless and praise him for Christ and his Righteousness, and the eternal love of God to him, but he

that is persuaded in his conscience, that Christ and his Righteousness belongs unto him, and that God's eternal love in Christ is towards him; for 'twas this which made David break forth into praise, Psal.103:1-22, and into triumphing, Rom.8:35-39, and caused John and the New Testament saints to break for into songs of thanksgiving. Rev.11:17, &c. In addition, without this assurance of faith, no soul can perform aright the duty of self-examination, for 'tis the duty of every believer to examine himself, whether he be in the faith, and what manner of stuff he lays in his building; whether wood, hay, or stubble, or else gold, silver, and precious stones; and whether he be built upon apostolic foundations, and Christ himself as the chief corner stone? "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." Eph.2:19-21. For to what purpose is it, for a person to go on in doing good works {as so-called} and not know whether they are so indeed; to go forward still in building, and yet not know whether their building will abide the fire? Nay, I shall prove hereafter, they cannot be very good, unless a person knows they are so. Blind work men and blind work are not well pleasing in God's sight. Now since 'tis an undoubted truth, that no work is holy, but that which flows from faith in exercise, and that directly, how can a person know, that this or that good work flows from faith then in exercise, unless he knows that then he does believe? But of this more hereafter. By what has been said, it appears that several holy duties cannot be performed without this assurance of faith so much decried.

There is no work or duty inward or outward, that's rightly done without it; and that for these reasons.

1. For as long as the conscience is defiled with guilt, every action of the whole man is defiled. "Unto the pure all things are pure, but unto them that are defiled and

unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled." Tit.1:15. The conscience is only cleansed by the sensible removal of guilt off of the conscience, which does include, and suppose a conscience-knowledge, and persuasion of pardon. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" Heb.9:14.

2. The conscience must put a man upon service, either as a justified or a condemned malefactor in chains; either as a slave for fear of stripes, or as a loving son. To leave the matter uncertain is not only uncomfortable, but rather engages the soul to serve as a slave or a condemned malefactor. The service done in the spirit of freedom and adoption, that is holy and acceptable service. And without a sensible removal of guilt by faith, assuring the conscience of pardon and justification already in Christ, none can serve God in a filial spirit, but merely out of slavish fear, which is base and hypocritical service.

3. The Spirit, as bringing forth in the soul fruit unto holiness, is said not to be the spirit of bondage, but the spirit of adoption. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." Rom.8:14-15.

4. 'Tis impossible to have the motives, means, aims and ends of a duty aright, {and without faith a duty cannot be right,} without this holy persuasion of conscience, that Christ and his Righteousness is ours, and God is reconciled to us in him, as has been proved afore.

5. The faith, that the just {or the justified} is said to live by, is this holy conscience-confidence and assurance in the Lord and his Salvation, Heb.10:38, by the living of the just here and elsewhere is intended, also their spiritual and holy walking, and what this faith is by which

the just lives, is expressed in Heb.10:35, "cast not away therefore your confidence, &c.," but yet more plainly in the 22nd verse, "let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, &c."

More might be added, but these are sufficient to prove, that faith as evidently declaring pardon in the conscience, does not only include the change of the state, but has the highest tendency to mortify sin, and to quicken unto righteousness; nay, that without this, holiness cannot be carried on, as it should be; and so far is faith, as it justifies in the conscience, declaratively, from confirming persons in their wickedness, to all which I add this consideration.

That such a faith as this changes the estate, and begins as well as carries on holiness of life, which I thus evidence, premising some considerations. 1. That the soul, is wholly passive in God's first saving work upon it 2. That God in this first saving work infuses a supernatural principle of divine light and life. 3. That this infused living light is subservient to a true conscience-arraignment, as well as conscience-justification. Hereby the soul at the same time comes to see and feel, 'tis without righteousness or strength, and a discharge in itself considered in the first Adam; but at the same time is assured, that there is justification, righteousness and strength freely for condemned, vile, impotent sinners in the second Adam. "Surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength; even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed." Isa.45:24. 4. That by this saving discovery, that there is such a remedy freely provided in another; as well as the prevalency of the disease in one's self, that the soul is kept from sinking under despair, under such a conscience-condemnation. 5. That this sight of the remedy in respect of heavenly influences, admits of degrees, sometimes it only keeps the soul from quite despairing,

whilst guilt and conviction of sin lies uppermost in the conscience. Sometimes the soul is kept in an indifferent poise between hope and fear. 6. That which keeps the soul in hope is, that at the first manifestation of the object under a sense of condemnation, the soul secretly leans on Christ and his Righteousness; whence the distinction of the twofold acting of faith on Christ; that which is more secret and insensible; and that which is more sensible and perceivable. 7. That this secret leaning on Christ discovers itself in an approbation of this way of Salvation in willing and desiring to have an interest in this Righteousness, and to draw nigh to God therein, in his own appointed way, with a great sense of the absolute need thereof. 8. That proportionable to these efforts of a secret leaning on this Righteousness, there is joy and holiness in the seed thereof, but not in the real lively and apparent fruits. 9. That justifying faith as the Scripture urges is such an application to the soul, as sensibly removes guilt and condemnation from the conscience; and therefore is a more sensible act of faith, than what was afore described. 'Tis the souls receiving Christ and his Righteousness as its own, and God's justifying act through Christ to himself. 10. That though the estate be initially, yet not consummately changed, until such an act is put forth, that believes this Righteousness as its own, leans upon it as its own, and goes to God in it as its own; pleading it alone for acceptance, and welcoming it as its own. These things considered, I simply assert that, that faith that consummately changes the state is that, that is more or less sensible or assuring, and in a proper sense justifies in the conscience declaratively.

For, if faith in a proper sense justifies in the conscience no way, but declaratively, then it follows that the first actings of justifying faith has more or less of this conscience-assurance in it, but the former is true, {as hath been already proved,} and therefore the latter.

That faith, which the Scripture describes, of such

as see their need of Christ, is this sensible acting of faith, as "we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end," Heb.3:14, "whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." Heb.3:6. "Behold, the LORD thy God hath set the land before thee; go up and possess it, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath said unto thee; fear not, neither be discouraged." Deut.1:21.

It appears, that the Scriptures requires {as the LORD himself provides} of the sinner such faith at first for his personal justification, as settled and perceived in his conscience; because, it require such an act of faith, as removes sensible guilt from the conscience, that the soul might serve the living God. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" Heb.9:14. "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." Rom.7:4. "That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life...to give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." Lk.1:74-75, 77-79.

The terms that the Scripture gives to justifying faith, that fruit with the lowest experience thereof, do include in them more or less of assurance. Looking to Christ, coming to Christ, leaning upon Christ, if saving acts do imply this assurance. To lean on Christ, is to lean on him as my own; so to come to him, is to come to him as my own; to look upon him, is to look upon him as my own;

or else it were no more than the looking of devils and damned persons. They look unto him as a glorious Saviour, {whose Salvation is infinitely full and free,} and yet, because they cannot behold him as their own, their looking does but the more torment them, but more of this hereafter. The word in the New Testament for faith, comes from a root word meaning to persuade, indicating justifying faith, to be a holy, practical, conscience-persuasion of the truth of the Gospel.

But a third argument is, that God hath given such clear faith to desperate sinners, that served dumb idols at first conversion, so that such a faith cannot be heterodox. The Apostle affirms, that the Gospel broke in at first upon the consciences of the Thessalonians, not in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance, &c. I Thes.1:5. If it be objected, that those were extraordinary times, and that an extraordinary work, I answer, but yet, was not that faith wrought in them at first conversion, the faith of effectual Grace; therefore what was then, maybe still and ought to be; for no faith is pretended to be ceased, but that faith of miracles.

And so many were preached unto thus to believe, and with such a faith they believed, says the Apostle to the Corinthian church, "moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand." I Cor.15:1. In the third verse, he rehearses, what the Gospel was, whose declaration they believed; for says he, "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures." This was his first faith, that Christ died for his sin; this he declares to them, that Christ died for their sin; this he says they did receive by faith, that Christ died for their sins; and so it must follow, what these each individually received, namely, that Christ died for his sin, and all this according to the Scriptures. The sum of the whole is this, that the faith that changes the estate, carries in it more or less of

assurance; and therefore in a proper sense, justifies the conscience declaratively.

From all these truths laid together, it appears, that the Prefacer flourishes concerning the state of drunkards, whoremongers, &c., and what follows most invidiously, is not the consequences of either of their principles, but an old threadbare slander newly vamped up, and only varied a little in the expression thereof; for he knows well enough with others of his kindred, that we contend not for a notional head knowledge of our being justified in Christ, but a saving practical conscience-knowledge therein; and therefore such virulence against the precious faith of God's elect might of been spared; and unto Satan, that acts in their tongues and pens, {as he of old on Peter's tongue,} we say the Lord rebuke him. Matt.16:23. As for the persons of these our brethren, we love them, and pray for them, that this sin not be laid to their charge, but that divine light may shine in upon them, to the acknowledging of the truth.

His sixth argument against eternal justification is this, that it inevitably infers, that assurance is of the essence of saving faith, and the comfort of it inseparable from it; and of the consequence will be discouragement to the godly, who truly believe; and yet, do not know and feel in their own consciences they do so. This is the substance thereof, though not his exact words, to which I give as before a threefold answer.

Premising some distinctions, I judge that it is a great truth, that true justifying faith hath assurance in its very essence; for I first distinguish between comfort, as flowing from the act of faith; and secondly, as flowing from the Object apprehended.

So I distinguish between consolation, as impressed upon our spiritual feeling, which is the same as spiritual enjoyment. As accompanying the sense of faith, the latter may be, where the former is wanting. The sensual perception is inseparable from faith, but more or less

according to the proportion of faith. The former the soul cannot feel, though strong in faith in the absence of spiritual enjoyment. As to faith being a conscience-assurance, I thus distinguish.

There is an assurance of the object, and the assurance of the act. The former belongs to each, but not the latter. There is a bare assurance of the object, and an assurance of the object with relation to my need. Faith is not only a bare assurance of the object, for devils and hypocrites may have that, but an assurance of the object with relation to myself. 'Tis not only a bare conscience-knowledge, that beholds all righteousness in Christ, but that this righteousness in Christ is for such a needy sinner as I; and this assurance in relation to myself is either perfect, excluding utterly all manner of doubts, fears, and questions; or else, that which is imperfect, admitting of a contrary mixture; I do not mean assurance in the first sense, for that would suppose faith to be perfect here without the intermixture of the least grain of unbelief, and no saint is perfect in believing. For when they act very highly, they find a weight still pressing them down, and they wonder that they are not more affected with the things they believe, there being more of the head than the heart in the best acts of faith they are enabled to put forth. Matters being thus explained, I affirm that assurance in the aforementioned sense is the very nature of faith, and if enough has not been set to prove it, I shall add somewhat more.

1. If the contraries to faith be staggering, Rom.4:20, wavering, Heb.10:23, doubting, Matt.14:31, fearing, Mk.5:36, then the nature of faith consists in confidence and assurance. But the contraries of faith are so, as the former Scriptures hold forth, therefore there is in faith, confidence and assurance, for contraries do very much illustrate the nature of a thing; and so do the contraries of faith explain the nature of faith.

2. The experience of the Old and New Testament

saints, show that faith has assurance in it. Witness Abraham's faith, Rom.4:20-21, David's, Psal.18:2, Moses and the churches of old, Exod.15:2, and the prophets as representing the Church, Isa.12:2. In the New Testament days witness the faith of Paul, Gal.2:20, Paul with the church of Corinth, I Cor.15:1-3, &c., the Apostle John, Rev.1:5-6, the saints, Rev.5:9-10, &c., all which express assurance; which may be evidently seen by pursuing these places of Scripture with several others.

3. The faith, which the saints expressed under darkness and desertion contained assurance therein. Witness David's sore trials as expressed in Psalms 31:9-10, &c., yet verse 3, "thou art my Rock, and my Fortress," vs.14, "I said thou art my God." So, Psalm 42, for therein read his great desertion, sorrow, and trials, verses 2-7, nevertheless he cries forth, verses 8 & 11, "yet the LORD will command his lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life...why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me, hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." Psalm 88 is a most doleful psalm, yet it begins with this exclamation, "O LORD God of my salvation." Direction is given to any in darkness to stay on his God, "who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God." Isa.50:10. Let the godly reader judge, whether these be not great expressions of holy confidence in a dark and desolate hour; and if then such confidence must be expressed, when faith is stripped of all its crutches, it undeniably infers that in the nature of faith there is holy assurance.

4. As has been alleged afore, there is the afore specified assurance in every Scriptural expression that sets forth faith. A soul made truly sensible of its own guilt, and the wrath that sin deserves; of its own vileness,

impotency and total incapacity to satisfy the Justice and Law of God, cannot be put off with a mere assurance that there is a remedy for others, if he has not a dram of assurance that it is for him. A soul thus awakened, will not trifle with a general view of a complete righteousness in Christ, but be serious and urgent in the matter; and take no rest, nor find any peace, without believing 'tis for him. A conscience loaded with the sense of guilt, will not be unburdened without some settled assurance and distinct knowledge that there is pardon for him purchased by the blood of Christ, to which I add.

5. The definition that our modern divines {as they think more prudently} have given of faith, does also contain the afore-described assurance therein. In a fiducial recumbency, as an act of the will, there is a confident leaning on Christ's righteousness as that, that does indeed give acceptance. Faith as 'tis said to assent and consent to the way of acceptance alone through Christ and his Righteousness, with a great relish and delight, must include assurance more or less in the conscience, that there is acceptance for him in the Righteousness of Christ; or a conscience truly awakened, without some holy trust and confidence, in this durst not expect acceptance, nor draw nigh to God without delight. The same may be said concerning faith, as defined to be an assent and consent to the way of Salvation by Christ with an acquaintance of the soul therein; which must imply the acquaintance of the soul, for its own justification and acceptance in the righteousness of Christ; for as was said before, how can a conscience truly awakened, acquiescence in this, that there is enough in Christ of pardon and righteousness for another, but he knows not, whether there is a dram for him? The soul rightly sensible of its own particular need and want of pardon and justification cannot acquiescence that there is enough in Christ for sinners, unless the conscience arise to some well-grounded assurance, that this all sufficiency in Christ is for him a miserable sinner

also. So that however {for some ends} good men have wrapped up and hid the nature of faith in a variety of scholastic expressions more for to oppose faith, as an assurance for confidence; yet that assurance in our sense, that is, of the being of faith does yet shine forth through all their eclipsing definitions.

6. And lastly, all hold, that particular application is of the soul and essence of saving faith, and hereby the point is granted; for I would fain know what in plain English is a particular application of Christ's Righteousness to my soul, but a believing that there is a righteousness in Christ for me, a filthy unrighteous sinner; and therefore, I dare come to God as my Father, firmly trusting for acceptance herein. Let divines define particular application, by whatsoever metaphysical terms they please, the honest plain Christian will take it for no less, than a believing Christ and his righteousness is his, that Christ hath rendered full satisfaction on his behalf, and that God hath pardoned and justified him in Christ his Surety. From all the foregoing, I conclude that conscience-assurance is of the very essence of saving faith, in the sense as hath been explained; but they that would see this more fully proved, may pursue Marshall's¹² excellent treatise of sanctification, particularly from page 168 to 193.

But, I likewise affirm, if it were granted, that this were an error, yet how does it follow from our notion of eternal justification, no more than from what we hold in common concerning eternal love, predestination, election, &c., especially since we affirm, eternal justification in our sense, is no more than a branch of Election, as it refers to some part of the outworkings of that purpose.

Furthermore, I deny his consequence, namely, that our definition of faith has a tendency to discourage the saints; whom says he, may have true faith, though they know it not. The thing I grant is true, that they may have

¹² Walter Marshall, *Gospel Mystery of Sanctification*, 1692.

so; but that they know it not, 'tis for want of better instruction; and they may thank such ministers, from whom they receive their lessons, who will keep them in ignorance, and not instruct them.

What must be the ground of their faith and conscience-persuasion, namely, not qualifications, marks, or signs in themselves, but the infinite fullness of the Grace that is in Christ for sinners so suited to their needs, and the infinite freeness thereof, as held forth in free, absolute, and unconditional promises; and the authority of God who commands sinners as sinners, in the sense of their absolute need of Christ and his righteousness, to take him as their own, and to venture upon him as such; not from any motives whatever in themselves, but from motives fetched from the object, and the faithfulness of the Promisor, and in obedience to his great command of believing.

In the nature of their own actings of faith, which these {ministers of the Gospel so-called} would hide from them; but rather show them, that in what they experience in themselves of the lowest acts of true faith, there is real assurance of the object in relation to themselves. That in their looking to Christ with pleasure and support, they do really look to him as their own; or their thoroughly awakened consciences could have no ease nor peace, with bare looking to him without any persuasion of their interest; or that in their coming to Christ, their consciences come to him indeed, as the only way to the Father; and that in leaning upon him and his righteousness, their consciences are in some measure persuaded, that they are in him and his righteousness, and as in him justified and accepted, &c.

That they do not instruct them, that 'tis their obligation to know their own acts, and to bring them forth to act before the conscience, with as much clearness and plainness as possible; and that 'tis their duty to charge their consciences to speak out plainly, and without

stammering. If leaning on Christ for acceptance, be the same with a spiritual persuasion, that God does accept me in Christ, and that it is the same with this, that I am now justified and accepted in Christ. The last is the most plain, and effectual for consolation and holiness; so why are not the consciences of the saints directed and charged to speak on, till they speak out very plain; so that they may be understood by themselves and others. Conscience in the language of faith, should not only say, in the Lord there is righteousness and strength for sinners, and I have some little uncertain hope that it is there for me; but it should boldly say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength; and not rest there, but go on and say, in the Lord above, such a vile sinner as I, am completely righteous; such an impotent sinner, as I, am very strong. Poor souls should be persuaded to urge every direct act of faith, into a reflex act of faith, and not only lay hold on what is in Christ for them, but be persuaded, that they also are in Christ for them; and not only so, but what they are in Christ. Even their person and duties too, how fair as beheld in the virtues of Christ, now accepted in the Beloved. 'Tis faith driven up to this head, that will bring peace, joy, light, life, and love down into the soul, even in a time of desertion; and not only so, but bring forth fruits unto holiness, unless in the acting 'tis abundantly more an head work, than a heart work.

But they may thank them, {blind leaders of the blind,} who keep them in ignorance, by terrifying them also from this holy, practical, conscience-persuasion, with bugbear names and false insinuations. This holy assurance called nowadays Antinomianism, fancy, delusion, and rendered suspicious of feeding souls with false hopes, and teaching licentiousness, till they are drowned in perdition; whence poor souls are made to shun their duty and happiness, worse than the plague and Satan himself; and endeavor to hide all manner of persuasion, that Christ is theirs, for fear of growing loose thereupon. Indeed I do not

know, what some mean by keeping poor souls in such ignorance about the nature of faith, their own acts and their state, unless they judge, that popish maxim to be a doctrine according to godliness, namely, that ignorance is the mother of devotion; and therefore the more ignorant they are and doubtful they be about their state, the more it will put them on working. And so indeed sometimes it will, but what sort of works will they be? No other than first covenant works for life; dead works that must be purged off the conscience by the blood of the Lamb, if ever they would serve the living God aright, Heb.9:14; dead and unprofitable works, that they need a repentance from. Heb.6:1. "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will." II Tim.2:25-26.

They may thank them for laying before their consciences, such a doctrine of assurance as is false, impractical, uncertain and corrupting. It is false for true assurance has Christ and his fullness, that is above for its all-consuming object. Their assurance has partly Christ, and partly inward qualifications. Scriptural faith of assurance is founded upon the truth of free promises in Christ Jesus; and this assurance of theirs upon additional promises. 'Tis Grace infinitely free, that true faith is encouraged from, and doth embrace; but that spurious sort of assurance embraces only conditional Grace, and is encouraged from supposed conditions as procured from a legal walk. The former reason of true assurance of faith is a extemporaneous obedience to the command; but of this sort, is a confidence claim upon performance of conditions. So the assurance commended to poor souls, has nothing to do with the nature of faith therein, for the nature of faith is to receive Grace as freely promised in Christ, and so consequently it is false.

This false assurance is impractical, as it is defined.

'Tis setting up qualifications, to judge of the truth of faith by, in their light; whereas the light of faith must judge of them, whether they are right or no. If no qualifications be right, but what flows from faith in immediate exercise, I must necessarily know first, I then truly believe, before I can tell, that such qualifications are the real product of my exercised faith.

Furthermore, this false assurance is always uncertain, for though a Pharisee may soon arrive at comfort thereby, even where there is not the least spark of true Grace, that may be very long ere they come at the first drop of consolation; and it is soon lost, and at best but very dark. Were not the saints willing to be flattered into false hopes, they could have no stable joy therefrom. But true assurance may be obtained at first and continued under desertion. Says Calvin, "unless we will have our faith to be trembling and wavering, it is necessary we be founded on the free promises of Grace in Christ."

This form of assurance is corrupting in its nature, for it does not truly purify the heart, lip, nor life; the joys and comforts that flow from it make the soul but the worse; whereas true assurance of faith purifies all, as has been proved. That sort of an assurance has a tendency to neglect spiritual communion and holy walking. It does not awe sin and quicken to holiness, by abiding in the presence of the Father and the Son. It does not derive supplies of influences from the Fountain; just as it does not exert the graces and influences of the spirit, for souls embracing this cloud, instead of true faith are prone to fall into spiritual security. If they come hereby to a presumption, that they have escaped hellfire, and are secure for Heaven, they can indulge themselves in a pursuit after the world, self-seeking and sin, provided that they can keep their consciences quiet, even whilst keeping up their reputation among other professors. Hence it appears, that all comforts fetched from an assurance built on marks and signs, make the soul rather worse than better, and have a

tendency to licentiousness. Therefore how dangerous is it to take away from souls the right assurance of faith, and give them this instead of it, that is not true, but is impractical, uncertain and souldefiling. Now let the godly reader judge, which definition of the assurance of faith, is the helper of the saints faith and joy, and which is the destroyer thereof? So that the consequence fixed on us, returns on its own principle.

His seventh argument is, that 'tis directly contrary to the express Word of God, to which I answer. This is not true, and I challenge him and all to produce one Scripture, through the whole Book of God, that contradicts, that that sentence conceived in God's mind from eternity, towards elect sinners pronounced unto them on Christ their Head, when he arose from the dead is no justification. The place which he alleges certainly does not. For, there is a condemnation, which is the same with suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, from which they are fundamentally secured by God's Eternal Will not to punish them. "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." I Thes.5:9. So, there is a condemnation at the public Tribunal of Justice in his promulgated word, and that again is twofold. 1. Condemnation of all that fell in Adam in general, Rom.5:16, as they were Adam's race, unless Covenant conditions be performed by them, or by One for them, and public, and complete satisfaction be given to the Law and Justice. Now from this, the elect number, and Christ's seed were fully delivered, when Christ died and rose again. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Rom.8:33-34. 2. A condemnation of their estate, or of them in reference to their state. Justice on the throne of the published word pronounces, "for as many as are of the works of the law

are under the curse," Gal.3:10, that is, the whole man is defiled, and whatever they do is accursed; their state is a cursed state, because a state of doing for life.

Justice on that throne requires a twofold bringing in, and pleading of satisfaction. First, that satisfaction be pleaded by their Surety which was done, when he entered Heaven, and had a discharge put into his hand for his whole seed; but secondly, justice requires that conscience bring in, and plead it out, as conscience has the discharge put into its hand, or else it holds him fast in reference to his state and condition. And this brings me to the third sort of condemnation, which is a consciencecondemnation that is, in the two latter senses, the elect sinner lies under condemnation, which is in reference to his state as considered in the first Adam, and in relation to the first Covenant; and secondly, as he stands at the bar of his conscience. But not in reference to condemnation simply taken. But the Prefacer would have the sinner freed at the bar of his own conscience. 1. Because his conscience does not always feelingly condemn and rush him into a state of despair. 2. Because a conscience in a natural state, cannot condemn of the sin of unbelief. To both which I propose these things. 1. 'Tis his mistake to think there is no consciencecondemnation, but where there is guilt and despair. Security and hardness of heart, and death of the soul, are real executions served from God's bar, 'tis the conscience, which always does suppose condemnation. For every execution legally served, does necessarily follow condemnation going before. 2. This execution is served on the conscience for the sin of unbelief, or for rejecting Gospel Grace more eminently, {to wit,} security, hardness of heart, blindness of mind, brawniness of conscience. "But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear. Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets;

therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts." Zech.7:11-12. "Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed." Isa.6:10. See also, Matt.13:14, and the other evangelists. Jn.12:40, Acts 28:26, Rom.11:8. And this must necessarily suppose a law-condemnation there for that very sin of unbelief, even for refusing to believe what the God of truth declares in the Gospel.

So I conclude that the elect sinner may be under condemnation in his conscience, and in reference to his state, when he is not under condemnation in the court of Heaven; so that, that condemnation mentioned, Jn.3:18, if taken in the two latter senses, may mean the elect sinner; but if condemnation there be understood simply and analogically it cannot mean the elect sinner at all, unless we vacate God's will, and the death of his Son; and so I conclude 'tis not true, that the principles as held by us, are contrary to the express word of God, but are in harmony thereunto.

According to Ephesians 1:6, "wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved," Dr. Goodwin proves undeniably that, that act of God {that of making us accepted} is to be referred to Eternity as well as Election; and making accepted in the beloved, whether it signifies precisely justification, or somewhat more, to be certain it includes it. So that it plainly follows, that God from eternity justified his chosen ones in the Beloved. I shall not here repeat, what I have before quoted to this purpose, but add here unto his fifteenth negation, because near a kin, that it contradicts those Scriptures, that assert justification by faith. Hereupon I ask him, does the object of faith, existing before the act, destroy the act or hinder the object to be for the act, when the act itself does also exist? Does the sentence of justification as conceived in God's mind from eternity, pronounced to Christ at his resurrection as the

sinner's Surety, make void the terminating of this on the sinner's conscience, and the receiving thereof by faith? Sure one would think, that there could be no justification by faith, if you take away the eternal will of God, and the gracious sentence out of his mind; and deny the pronouncement thereof to Christ our Head. Indeed then, there could be no object for justifying faith. So the Apostle argues, "and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ, whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not." I Cor.15:14-15. Such an argument of consequences, I am not fond to understand, as is this in this little pamphlet. The explanation of this head is nothing to the purpose, and falls not under my notice in any way of argumentation.

His eighth argument is, that 'tis a contradiction to affirm, that a man to be actually dead, and {he should have added} actually alive; and {to point his argument for him} actually condemned, and actually justified at one and the same time.

I answer, that I have told him, there is no contradictions in assertions, unless all the conditions of opposition be punctually there. If there be a failure in one, there is not a lawful opposition; as for instance, a man may be said to be actually alive, and actually dead at one and the same time; but yet in diverse parts and manners. He may be said to actually be alive in his body, but spiritually dead in his soul. Actually alive as to bodily life, but actually dead as to spiritual life. So a tree may be said to be actually dead in the branches, but actually alive in the root. And thus a man may be said at one and the same time to be actually pardoned by the king and council, and this pardon actually entered into the court of the king's bench; and yet this same person at the same time, for the same crime may be actually condemned at an inferior court in the country, and continue so judicially, until the

pardon comes down, and sets him discharged at the bar. And no less may an elect sinner be said at one and the same time, to be actually condemned as in the first Adam, in respect of the Covenant that he is under, and at the bar of God in his conscience also; and yet actually justified by virtue of that secret relation he has to the second Adam, as a Surety and Root, and that actual justification which he has in him, which his Surety has received for him, which he has a right to in him, though not a possession of in his conscience. And this involves no contradiction at all as has been before manifested; and therefore I need not add, but only this, that such seeming contradictions are in a believer. He may be actually condemned by sensible guilt in his conscience; and yet as the Prefacer will also himself grant him to be then actually justified at the same time at God's Bar above. The truths that faith receives are a mystery and seeming contradiction to the flesh. "I am black, but comely," Cant.1:5, is a contradiction to flesh and blood, but faith reconciles it completely, black in myself, but comely in the comeliness of my Head. Thus again, "when I am weak, then I am strong," II Cor.12:10, says faith; and this may appear as nonsense to the wisdom of the flesh, but faith can make good sense of it, and unfold it thus, that when I am most emptied of myself, and see my inward spiritual weakness most, then do I go forth to act most in the fullness of Christ, and in that strength in him above, can do all things. So 'tis language of faith, "having nothing, and yet possessing all things," II Cor.6:10, which again seems very absurd to carnal reason; but yet 'tis the truth that faith feeds upon, for when it sees it has nothing in its spiritual sense; but that, that is quite starved; and yet, then it possesses all things by faith in Christ the blessed Root and Head above. The things of faith are mysterious, and above proud reason; therefore, if this Prefacer and others, bring down the truths of the Gospel, the peculiar objects of faith to the bar of carnal reason, and the wisdom of the flesh; we as the

ministers of Christ, in the name of our Lord and King enter a caveat there, and protest against the jurisdiction of the wisdom of the flesh, over the sublime mysteries of the Gospel. "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." I Cor.1:18-21.

His ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth arguments are but one and the same, therefore I shall put them all into one, and cast them into this form for him. Actual justification has inseparably annexed to it, as concomitants, and immediate consequences, a change of heart, effectual calling, sanctification and holy communion with God; but in a state of nature and before faith, there is none of these in the soul; and therefore, none actually justified, until he does believe.

To which I answer, that this syllogism lies liable to many attacks, but I shall content myself to distinguish upon his proposition. There is a twofold actual justification, as hath been already proved. The one, the elect sinner has in Christ, ever since Christ received an actual justification for him in his room and stead, as his Surety and Representative. So, there is an actual justification brought down into the conscience, and received by faith. The former belongs to the sinner, whilst in a natural state, nay even before he has a being. The latter only, is the sinner's by faith; and 'tis to the latter, that those blessings of renovation, sanctification and communion are inseparably conjoined. So that his proposition is false, without the aforesaid limitation, and understood therewith, he does but beg the question, and disputes against that, which is

not denied him.

His thirteenth argument is against union before Faith; and it runs thus, union before Faith supposes there may be union between two parties, when but one assents, which he says is an absurdity.

I answer, this again is begging the question, for we do not affirm that, that union which is founded on consent of parties, {as the marriage union consummated between Christ and the soul,} is before faith, but grant 'tis formed up by faith. But will he deny all manner of union to be before faith? No, he grants union, which is union on Christ's part, and that real too, to be before the consent of the soul, and therefore he himself has answered his own argument. I do also hope that he will grant this, that all mankind were united to Adam when he was yet alone as their Root and Representative; and before ever any of them had a being to ask their consents; and that this union was so real, that they are really affected with what befell him, and that by virtue of this union they sinned in his sin, were condemned in his condemnation, and in a sense executed in his execution. Rom.5:12-21. And who dare say that they were not really one with him? After the same manner, the elect number were united to Christ when he took their nature upon him as a Surety, Head, Root and Representative; and the union between Christ and them, was so real that they were really arraigned, condemned, sentenced, and in a sense executed in Him, when the threats of the Law were verified on them individually, as considered in their Surety. The soul that sins shall die; so again, they were really made to rise together in him, Eph.2:6, and discharged in his discharge, Rom.4:25, as compared with Rom.8:34, &c. This union Mr. Rutherford calls a Natural, Legal and Federal Union; and it is this that we affirm to be before faith, and requires not the consent of the parties in union to make it up; and I am apt to think that the Prefacer will not deny this.

His fourteenth argument, that this notion of

justification tends to put man upon slighting the holy law of God; and renders the doctrine of repentance needless, or a mere legal doctrine.

Answer: I'm amazed at such logic, for 'tis enough for me to say here, that I deny his consequence, and desire him to prove it. For my part, I cannot see how this argues a shadow of consequence with it, as some of the rest do. But he might as well have inferred thus, if this doctrine of justification and union before Faith be true, it puts men on a strong temptation to go on foot, when they should ride; and such fopperies, that are not to be named, lest we provoke till laughter in serious matters. Of all his consequences, this to me appears widest and wildest. Nor can I tell therefore where this inference should be brought, unless it were to make way for to expose David Culy, the church of Rowel, and myself. If he infers from David Culy's slips, as formally the hot zealots of New England from the falls and strange opinions of some amongst them, that union or justification before faith, is the Trojan Horse that had them all in his belly; I would have him seriously consider, that this way of arguing is like the papists of old, arguing against the Reformation; because amongst the reformers that left them, there were Socinians that denied the Godhead of Christ; and some, that denied the Law to be a rule of holy walk; and anti- paedo-baptists, that held strange principles, and had stranger practices; that therefore the doctrine of Free Justification, and that concerning their Mass and Images being idolatry, were licentious, and erroneous doctrines. And does he think in his conscience they did do well? There is no end of accusing principles, from the falls and mistakes of some that profess them. All parties have done it, and it has always returned upon them. But to what he has done of that kind, I have answered already.

His last is, that this tends to lead people to venture on Christ presumptuously, and conclude, that they are satisfied, though they continue wicked, &c. This is the very

same with his fifth absurdity, and therefore the same answer shall suffice; and the reader must pardon me, if I have gone over again and again the same answers as to the substance, for he necessitated me thereunto, when he had cast but the same topic into diverse shapes and phrases.

From his arguments, I pass to his authorities, and the first he brings is the determination of the messengers and pastors of 106 churches in this point of doctrine, where they give their objection to the doctrine of justification before faith, whereupon I remark. 1. That though I have a great deference for the judgment of so many churches, yet human authority has not footing firm enough for my faith. 2. It was not the churches themselves, but their messengers which determined the point; and they indeed carried the question to their respective churches, and thereupon a solemn debate after prayer, each particular church had come to such a resolution, which might have passed for the judgment of the churches. But I understand no such warranty from Christ's Churches, in having to handpick messengers to determine matters of faith for them; nor what rule they have to delegate their sense and judgments to them; nor by what authority they set up the understanding of twenty good men or more, to be the representative understanding of 106 churches. So that to me, the determination of those servants of Christ, meeting at their assembly at London, is no more than their own particular judgments; and no further to be received, than it has God's Word for its warranty; and no more is the judgment of any man, or any number of men in the world.

What he quotes out of other learned and godly men, makes nothing to his purpose; for in the places quoted, they speak not a word against union or justification before faith, but that there is union and justification by faith, which we also grant.

His question proposed, and by him answered, I

grant true, as to the main; but determines nothing as to the present controversy, for still it runs on a mistake of the question; and seems to be brought in to expose David Culy, so I will pass over it.

Lastly, he desires us to consider, what profitable use can be made of justification before faith. I answer thereunto, I do desire him to consider, what profitable use may be made of the doctrine of eternal love, of predestination and election, of a complete satisfaction given in for us by our Surety, and of his taking out a discharge in our name and stead? The same can we make of justification before faith. We cannot press people to believe on an object that is not already provided; and I must say, if the sentence of justification was not conceived in God's mind from eternity, and pronounced upon us in our Surety at his Resurrection, before it is terminated in the conscience and received by faith, our preaching is in vain, the faith of God's children is also in vain, for they are yet in their sins.

I take notice of one thing more, and conclude, for he says, page 10, why then does this man make this astute division in the churches? I answer, that I have challenged those who have slandered and reproached me to make good these charges, but they have not made anything good to this day. Since he has again charged me publicly in print, I do require this Prefacer to make good the same charge, in respect of any church that I have caused divisions in; nay, whether I have had the least hand in their differences at Kilby. I will appeal to them, whether I did in the least insinuate to them, or any of them jealous or disrespectful thoughts of Mr. Coleman; though I confess I was troubled to hear him once deny very warmly God's predeterminate design, immediate to all creatural actions, explaining himself by this similitude, that God set up man like a clock, to move and act by a general and indifferent design; being also informed, that he ridiculed in a certain place, God's immediate design to a natural action, to which

sin doth cleave, by the instance of a drunkard lifting up the glass to his mouth several times, when he was at the same time directed to consider that answer in the Assembly's Catechism about God's Providence. All which to me seems to be Pelagianism or Arminianism, and I was made to fear sometimes, that he could not be sound in spiritual matters, since he was so corrupt in the fundamentals of natural religion, whose principles seem greatly to diminish the dependence of the creature upon its great Creator; yet imputing this to his ignorance in scholastic terms and controversies; I kept this in my breast, till of late, and aggravated it not to the witnesses then present, so far was I from working up their minds to a disesteem of him. Again, I put it to Mr. Coleman, or any of them, that are gone off with him to instance, that I urged amongst them the tenents now in controversy, but only preached Christ and him Crucified to them; and if for this, I am hated and reproached, I do herein greatly rejoice. Again, I say, that I do not expect the Prefacer to make good his charge or else he cannot clear himself of being a false accuser of a brother, and a poor servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. If he and others continue sadly to accuse without making proof thereof, I shall receive these wounds in the hands of friends, as the subtle sort of persecution for Christ's sake and his Gospel; and shall, I hope be helped therein to rejoice, and to be exceedingly glad, yet with pity towards and prayer for their persons; and this with other things will be a matter of joy unto me, that this smiting of fellow servants is an undoubted sign that my Lord is near at hand. Amen. Even so, come quickly dear Lord Jesus.

FINIS.

APPENDIX #1

A Letter from Richard Davis to Mr. John Beart, as it
was published in the book by Maurice Matthias
entitled *Monuments of Mercy*, 1729.

Dear Brother Beart, I was charged with holding eternal justification before ever I thought on the subject. Being thus charged, I weighed the matter, and searched authors until my judgment was settled in no other eternal justification than in the sense that Twisse, Ames, Rutherford, Pemble, Crandon, Goodwin, and many other sound divines, do hold it. And though I hold, with them, that God's immanent act may be called justification, in a sense; yet it is God's transient act in time that completes his justifying act to the sinner. But I perceive that good people run into two extremes; some, because the elect sinned in Adam their common Head, in his first transgression, and came really and actually under condemnation; and also execution in part, being by the sentence of God, in his righteous Law, made to forfeit their original uprightness, whence of course succeeded the depravity of their entire nature, do judge that therefore there was no Eternal Covenant Transaction, concerning them; nor can they see how the elect sinners being really under the Law, and its actual real curse and condemnation, can consist with his Eternal Acceptation in Christ. Others think that if they be thus eternally elected, and in a sense justified and accepted, they cannot possibly be under an actual curse and condemnation from the righteous Law they had broken. The ground of the mistake of both is, that they cannot take in the mystery, how the same persons, at the same time, should stand in relation to Two Common Heads. The latter also do mistake the nature of eternal justification, or acceptance; not considering that eternal acceptance is but a branch of eternal Election, and turns on the same hinges with it.

Election to the End, is God's predestinating a certain number to eternal glory, for the praise of the glory of his grace; but the same eternal act of election predestinates them to the means also; which is the election of them in time, out of the world, by effectual calling to receive to themselves Christ and his Righteousness, to be justified and saved therein; and therefore undeniably supposes their Fall, Guilt and Condemnation, and the exhibition of Christ in our nature, and the bringing in an Everlasting Righteousness by him for them; and consequently, the effectual application of this Lord Jesus and his Righteousness to them. And yet this Eternal Act in appointing the end, and the means to the end, set them actually apart for his glory, and this glory for them, in Christ their Head. Thus eternal justification, as a branch of this Election is the Father's Eternal Purpose and Agreement with his Son, that the elect should be Everlastingly Righteous in his sight, in the Righteousness of His dear Son; in which Act he Constituted and Ordained them so to be. Notwithstanding, this was as firm an Ordination to the means, which is Christ's Righteousness wrought out, and applied by faith to each of them; which does infallibly suppose their fall in Adam, and coming under actual condemnation by the just sentence of the Righteous Law. However, this Eternal Act was complete in itself, as predestinating Christ's Righteousness only for them, and them only for Christ's Righteousness. But yet, as in the general act of Election whoever separates the means from the end, and denies such ought to be effectually called in time, overthrows the whole doctrine of Eternal Election; so, as to the special act of Eternal Justification, whoever puts asunder what God has joined together; namely, the Means and the End, and denies Christ's Righteousness to be imputed and effectually applied to sinners as sinners, ignorantly overthrows the doctrine of Eternal Election and Justification. And whoever denies the Imputation of Adam's first sin to the elect

sinner, and the Law charge of sin upon him, for that sin, and for his personal pollution and transgressions; and consequently, his being put by the Law under an actual curse, condemnation and execution also, in part, for those sins, overthrows the doctrine of Actual Justification in time by Christ's Imputed Righteousness effectually applied to him, the individual sinner, and received by faith. And in overthrowing that, effectually overthrows the doctrine of Eternal Justification, which he would so strenuously maintain. For the sinner's fall in Adam, his actual condemnation in him, the pollution of his nature, his actual transgressions flowing from thence, his being actually condemned in his first Head and natural state for them all, Christ's Righteousness wrought out for him, Imputed and Applied to him, and received by faith, are but One Complete Mean to the Great End of his being Everlastingly Justified and Saved in Christ's Righteousness. Now to deny this is to overthrow and make void the Ordination and Constitution of God in his Purpose and Agreement before time, which I take to be the whole of Eternal Justification. Now the means and the end, and the particulars of the means among themselves are but one golden chain; take out but one link and the chain falls in pieces. Truths in their connection and mutual dependence on one another are thus nicely and delicately interwoven. This will evidently appear, by examining the particulars of this connection; for he that denies the elect sinner being in a state of nature under actual condemnation for Adam's sin, and his own inherent and committed iniquity, must consequently deny the imputation or charge of sin in any sense. He that denies the imputation of sin, denies the imputation of Christ's Righteousness; he that denies the imputation of Christ's Righteousness, must deny any application of it to the elect sinner, or any receiving it by faith; and consequently, any right Manifestation of God's Justifying Sentence to the elect sinner's conscience; and so no justification or salvation for him in Christ's Righteousness.

And, he that denies Justification and Salvation for him in Christ's Righteousness, denies God's Eternal Will, Compact and Constitution that it should be so in time, and overthrows God's Eternal Act, setting apart the elect alone to be Partakers of Christ's Righteousness, and setting apart Christ's Righteousness for the elect only; which is the Substance of Eternal Justification, in my sense of it. This argument will be yet more illustrated by examining this chain of particulars in the positive form. The soul that is made to believe, and in measure to feel, that by nature, and as under the Law, he is under the Imputation of Adam's sin, and under the power of inherent original Pollution, can only in a right manner apprehend the Doctrine of Imputed Righteousness, and therefore only is qualified to see his Need of Christ's Righteousness imputed freely to him; and it is only such an one can truly receive Christ's Righteousness as freely Imputed and Applied; and it is he that thus receives Christ's Righteousness, can only receive God's Sentence of Justification to his own soul and conscience {and thus, by the way, Justification in time is more than a bare Manifestation of it to the Conscience,} and it is he that thus rightly receives God's justifying Sentence to his Conscience, can only truly receive this Act as it was in God from Eternity; that is, his Eternal Purpose, Agreement and Constitution. Herein appears the admirable Wisdom and Prudence of God in making known the Eternal Mystery of his Will to an elect Sinner, through and unto faith in the blood of Christ, which is the great Price of his Redemption. It appears hence, that they who rightly believe the Imputation of Adam's first Sin to the elect sinner; and his actual condemnation, as under the Law, for that and other of his transgressions, do only rightly establish the doctrine of Eternal Justification in the sense aforementioned; because they establish the eternal Act, in reference to the End and all the Means. It is for lack of due consideration of this, that good people err on this hand, and attribute too little to the miserable Ruin the fall

of Adam has brought upon elect sinners; and consequently too little to the Redemption of Christ Jesus; and so our precious Lord loses the Glory of his redeeming Love. From hence flows another consideration, which they do not also duly weigh; and that is, as hinted, that the elect Sinner fallen stands at the same time in relation to two common Heads; and consequently, related to two Covenants at one and the same time¹³. Though our gracious God blessed the elect number with all manner of spiritual blessings in heavenly Things in Christ Jesus, chose them in Him, predestinated them to the Adoption of Children, and made them accepted in the Beloved before the Foundation of the World; and consequently, they had an eternal Relation to Him, their eternal Head; yet as He willed in the Election to the Means, he accordingly executed his Will, and placed the same elect number in Adam their common Head, that they might bear his image, who was the earthly Man, as wrapped up in his loins, in his uprightness; and consequently, in his fallen, sinful, and ruinous estate. {I Cor.15:45-49} And then it follows, they fell in him, and sinned with him, in his first transgression. {Rom.5:12,19} Now to bear his image implies a firm Relation to him as a common Head and Surety. The elect were in his loins, as children in the loins of a parent. Partakers with Adam in

¹³ The actual & legal Justification of all the elect of God - as far as they are concerned; or in other words, in relationship to their actual sin & guilt being imputed to Christ their Surety, Representative & Substitute, and Christ's Righteousness imputed to them, whereby they were constituted perfectly righteous and savingly {completely} justified was in time - at the cross - on the sole basis of Christ's accomplished {finished} work alone; though in a true Supralapsarian consideration of God's pre-creation purpose of Grace to glorify Christ, and according to the harmony of Redemptive Revelation, there must of necessity, be a sense in which the elect of God, as such, in relation to their union in Christ - their Eternal Surety, Spiritual Head & Covenant Representative were always viewed {based upon Christ's Representative Work} in a state of perfection in Christ, and to imply otherwise would diminish the eternity of God, avert the Eternal Covenant of Redemption {wherein the complete salvation of God's elect on the basis of their Eternal Union with Christ was everlastingly provided for in Christ their Eternal Surety,} and to open a direct door to Arminianism.

his first sin, "wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned," {Rom.5:12,} the last clause which our Translators render 'for that all have sinned,' Dr. Goodwin translates more aptly thus, 'in whom all have sinned;' therefore sinners by Imputation, because Adam's first sin is Imputed to them. Likewise, partakers with him in his Condemnation; so "by one man sin entered into the world," that is, in its Guilt upon all Adam's race, so explained in verse 16, where we read, "for the Judgment was by one to Condemnation." This is confirmed by that in Hebrews 9:27, "it is appointed," it is a Statute-Law of Heaven, recorded, {says Dr. Goodwin regarding this passage,} for men once to die. This Statute-Law of Heaven to which this place alludes, we never read of in the Old Testament, but in that passed on Adam as our common Head, "for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." {Gen.2:17} Executed with Adam in his execution; to lose in him, and with him, all original uprightness, to have our whole nature depraved as an horrid fountain, sending forth all sinful thoughts, words and deeds. As the Apostle also argues, "wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men." Death spiritual and temporal, as the Execution in part of the Sentence of the righteous Law. This he repeats, "if through the offence of one many be dead;" and again, "for if by one man's offence death reigned by one." {vs.15,17} And explains, "for as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners." {vs.19} So that this death was a death spiritual in part, consisting in the loss of uprightness, and the depravity of nature; for it is opposed here all along to a Spiritual Life and Holiness. We see here the Execution is real and actual; fallen man is tainted with a real and actual inherent Pollution, then the Sentence of Condemnation must be real and actual; for a real Execution cannot proceed from a feigned Condemnation. It is further to be

noted, that this sinful, ruinous, miserable image of the first Adam, the Elect themselves must first bear altogether till converted, and then they begin to bear the image of the heavenly Adam, by virtue of their Eternal Election in Him, and Relation to him. This is God's Ordination, as appears; "howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual;" {I Cor.15:46;} compared with verse 49, "as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." What the Apostle speaks here as true of the Body, is as true of the Soul. And he does assure us, that the souls and bodies of the elect in their order, are at first altogether like the first Adam, before the Blessings of Eternal Election take place on them. The Sum of the whole to me appears to be this; that the Elect were really united to the first Adam, fell in him, and became really and actually like him in Sin, Condemnation, Execution, Ruin and Misery. Whence for a further confirmation does arise this argument; that though by virtue of the Eternal Election, and consequently the Relation and Union of the chosen ones to Christ, as their Everlasting Head and Surety, they were in Him and with Him one in the Eternal Covenant; yet this hindered not their being planted actually first in the first Adam, and being brought under the same Law, and upon the same covenant bottom with him; because the Eternal Covenant did, by eternal mutual Word and Oath, fix this as the grand Means to the grand End. Therefore the Scriptures of Truth assert it plainly, that the elect being united in a marriage union to the first Adam, they were under his Law as much as he, being their Marriage Law and Covenant, called the Law of the first Husband. "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth; for the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth,

she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.” {Romans 7:1-4} The Apostle says expressly that they are under this Law. It hath a dominion over them as long as they live all together in the first Adam, and bear his image; {vs.1;} they are really and actually bound by this Law; {vs.2,3;} and there is no actual nor real freedom from it but by Christ, and Marriage Union to Him. {vs.3,4} If Adam had stood, they would in him, and with him have been all blessed with blessings according to the tenor of this Law; {but this was not to be, because their Everlasting Father had provided better things for them;} and therefore Adam falling, by virtue of marriage union to him, and the Law of this Husband, they sinned in him. His first sin was really and actually imputed to them all, as has been proved from the real and actual dreadful Effects thereof, inherent original Pollution. And being really and actually under the same violated Law in Adam, and with him, they are really and actually charged equally with him for his first sin; and also for their inherent Pollution, and all their actual Transgressions. The Apostle undeniable proves this in Romans 3:9-20. {1} He shows there, that all are under Sin, and none righteous, and all gone out of the way, the elect as well as others. The Law equally charges all that are under it alike. “Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law.” {Rom.3:19} Now the elect before Conversion are under the same Law with others, and thereby the Apostle's argument under the same charge of the Law. {2} Being the elect are under the same Law, and under the same Charge, they are actually and really under the same guilt with others. “That every mouth,” the mouth of the elect

sinner himself, by virtue of any plea, short of Christ's Redemption, "may be stopped, and all the world," elect sinners in an unconverted state, as well as others, "may become guilty before God." {3} They being under the same actual real Guilt, must come under the same Condemnation, and consequently Execution in part, as has been proved. I add execution in part, because the elect sinner before effectual calling is secured from eternal wrath, and also from abiding under the Law, and its curse till death, &c., by Election and the Redemption of Christ Jesus. By the way, let me on this portion of Scripture note this, that the Apostle chiefly means the elect sinner to be under this heavy Charge of the Law, because he means such as are freely justified by Grace, through the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus. {vs.23,24} Hence it is, that though it be a great Mystery, yet it is a great Truth, that the elect may be at the same time truly related, and in the same sense United to Christ in their Election, yet by virtue of their union to their fallen head, {Adam,} may be said to lie in that wicked one really and actually, until united to Christ in a Marriage-Union by Faith; and that they may at the same time be so far discharged in the Eternal Covenant in God's Sight, as that He should look upon them his people and children, his Son's members and sheep; and yet then be actually cursed and condemned by the sentence of the righteous Law they are under. Hence it is, that though the Scriptures say the chosen of God were blessed and accepted in the Beloved from all Eternity in their eternal Predestination, and therefore as elect before conversion, named the children of God, members and sheep of Christ, vessels of mercy and honor; yet some at the same time are by the Scriptures of Truth called sinners, ungodly, enemies in their minds through wicked works, children of wrath, without Christ, and atheists in the world, and therefore actually condemned and pronounced accursed. The former is true of them, because God says so; and the latter is true of them at one and the

same time, though not in the same respect, because God says so. It is a Truth that they are justified before Faith, because God makes it to be so; {based upon Christ's accomplished work on the cross;} and it is a Truth that they are justified when they believe, {as pertaining to their personal experience thereof,} because God makes it, and declares it to be so; and therefore great is the Mystery of the Gospel. It is a truth, that they are really Justified in Eternity in God's sight and account, {'in God's sight and account' is a very pertinent statement,} who calleth those things that are not as though they were, and to whose View all things he wills, whether past, present or to come, are always present with Him, and are as real in the Divine Mind as when they exist to us; and it is as great a Truth that they are not justified, but condemned before they have a being, and after they have a being, until they believe; but it is not in the same manner and respect, and therefore these two truths are not contradictory. Though they were Justified in God's sight in eternity, yet really condemned in Adam, till the righteousness of Christ was actually wrought out, {in time,} and this and that elect sinner under real condemnation, till it appears to be so otherwise, by the revelation of Christ's Righteousness through faith. His actual {personal} Justification does not exist, until God applies the Righteousness of his Son, and it is received by faith; forasmuch as according to the declared Will of God in his Word, things are then so to this and that sinner when they appear to be so. Though an elect sinner is loved from Eternity, yet God's love does not exist to him, until He makes demonstrations of it in Christ to him, more or less, in the sundry ways of his own Appointment. And therefore thus must those Scriptures be reconciled. An elect unregenerate sinner is really a child of God in respect of the eternal Decree and Covenant; for God has made him so to Himself; but at the same time he is really and truly a child of wrath in respect of himself, and all created beings; until rescued thence by the

application of the blood of Christ. To deny the Imputation of Adam's first sin, and the actual condemnation of the elect sinner by the Law he is under, is to make void the Gospel of Grace. The Foundation of the Gospel of Grace is God's Eternal Election and Acceptation of a certain number in Christ their Eternal Head. But he fore-determined that these should be suffered to fall, and be miserable in the first Adam, that by the Intervention of Christ and his Undertakings they should be Justified, Sanctified and at last Glorified. Now, if there be no real Imputation of Sin, there is no need of a real Imputation of Righteousness. This therefore clouds the Glory of the Gospel as revealing Christ's Righteousness, lessens his Redemption, makes little of the Grace of Conversion, and clouds the Grace of God in many ways. It was God's eternal will and pleasure that his Grace should be glorified in the Gospel, in the Exaltation of Christ and his Redemption, in the way of regenerating, converting, justifying and sanctifying elect sinners, and that by the Gospel; therefore to lessen man's misery by the Fall, is to lessen the great things of the Gospel. As to what our brother seemed to assert, that faith was only a manifestation of our being justified from eternity, I judge, according to my thoughts of eternal justification, he mistakes in several things. Manifestation is God's act, but faith is our act, which receives God's declaration or manifestation, which is all one. Herein also he seems to separate the means and the end; for though the ultimate manifestation of God to, in, and by our faith is to make known unto the elect sinner the mystery of his will, according to his good Pleasure, which he hath purposed in Himself; and the very end of the Gospel is to declare the wisdom of God in a Mystery, even the hidden Wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory, to show that eternal Life which was with the Father; yet faith must come at the manifestation of this to the soul by appointed means, and by such steps as these. {1} Faith must take in the Discovery of Man's Sin, Guilt and Misery

in a natural state, and the suitable Remedy that is alone in Christ and his Grace, for such a guilty, filthy, miserable soul; so that the poor awakened soul may come to see Christ absolutely needful for himself immediately. {2} Faith must take in the Manifestation of God's Will and Pleasure to the soul; which is to receive this Christ and his Righteousness as freely set forth in the Gospel indefinitely to Sinners as such; and this a soul may do, and be really pronounced justified, according to the great Charter of the Gospel, though it does not then take in the Manifestation of its present Justification, much less of its eternal Justification. {3} A soul by faith obeys the command of God in the Gospel; namely, to come alone in Christ and his Righteousness, renouncing his own righteousness to God for Justification. {4} By faith the soul receives God's present justifying sentence to itself, in pronouncing it then righteous, in the righteousness it brings and pleads, and then infer, that this sentence now pronounced in the Word was that which was pronounced on him in Christ his Surety, when Christ arose again from the dead; and conceived in the Mind of God towards him from Eternity; and past then into a federal Agreement between the Father and the Son. Which is, I suppose, what our brother means by a manifestation of his being eternally justified. Now, by this it appears that Faith itself is not the Manifestation, but an obediential receiving of God's Manifestation. And it does not only receive the Manifestation of God's eternal electing and accepting the person in a blessed Head, but it does receive the Revelation of Christ and ourselves, and the way to God by him and in him, and also the Manifestation of God's present Act of justifying us in Christ's Righteousness, before we can receive aright what was done in Eternity concerning us. I do hope our brother daily knows experimentally, that he comes as a perishing Sinner to Christ and his Righteousness, in every prayer to God for present Pardon and Justification; and when he is helped to

receive this present Declaration, he then can reflect with comfort upon the Eternal Thoughts of God his Father towards him. And if he witnesses this experience to the Church, they may be certain he holds Faith to be something more besides the manifestation of his being eternally justified, however he may express himself. Thus I have delivered you my judgment with all the plainness and sincerity that I am capable of; and shall be glad if the Lord blesses it to reconcile your differences; and therefore I hope I shall not be wanting to second it with my prayers. I rest, Richard Davis.

APPENDIX #2

THE SUBSTANCE OF A CHURCH COVENANT

A Church Covenant or an Account of the Doctrine and Discipline of Mr. Richard Davis of Rothwell, and those of his Separation, 1696.

We profess that by Faith we laid hold of the Eternal Compact, made with our Lord the Redeemer, as our Root, Surety and Representative and with us in Him and ours also, that were of the true Israel, {Is.59:21,} which words though they be spoken by God the Father, to our Lord Jesus, the Surety and Dispenser of the New Covenant, and Testament; to His Seed and Seeds Seed in Him; yet He therein is also the Messenger or Angel of the Eternal Compact. And the New Covenant itself, in its most glorious Administration is but a fuller Copy thereof, promulgated and published. We profess to lay hold of this Eternal Compact, as promulgated in a more comprehensive way in the Old and New Testament, as running with Noah, Abraham, the Patriarchs, David, the Righteous, the Godly, the Church, and their Seed. We chiefly engage ourselves to that first and great command of the Gospel, {John

6:29,40, 3:16,18,36,} namely, believing on the Person and Righteousness of Christ for Eternal Life {Heb.12:2,} Acceptance with God, Peace of Conscience {Rom.5:1,} Spiritual Light, Life and Strength {John 6:53,56,57,} and everything else necessary. Therefore being greatly ashamed {Jer.3:13} of the constant and notorious breach of the command of living by Faith, and our turning aside from the Living God {Rom.1:17, Gal.3:11, Ezekiel 20, Heb.3:12,} the Fountain of Living Waters {Jer.2:13,} to our own cisterns, that will hold no water, being under a deep sense of the Guilt of our Spiritual Adultery, and Idolatry with the World, and the things thereof {John 2:15,} our own legal Performances {Gal.3:1, Jer.2:37,} or that called Gospel Obedience, our Inherent Qualifications and Spiritual Enjoyments which we advanced in the room {I Cor.2:2} and throne of the Mediator, his Blood and Righteousness. We now constrained from a sense of His pardoning Grace, and in the strength and virtue of the Blood of the Everlasting Covenant {Zech.9:11, Heb.10:14,} sprinkled on our Consciences, do resolve to abide by Faith in exercise in the Person, {John 15:4 &c.,} Love {I John 4:16,} and Righteousness of Christ {Ex.28:35-43, Ps.89:15,16,} and as we have received Him our Root, Surety and Representative; so walking in Him by Faith {Rev.7:14,15,} that we may continually walk with Him in the Fellowship of the Spirit, {Phil.2:1,} constantly beholding ourselves by Faith {Jam.1:25,} in the Glass of the Perfect Law of Liberty, Members of His Glorious Body, complete in Him {Col.2:10,} and presented by Him in the Body of His Flesh through Death {Eph.5:27,} not having spot or wrinkle, or blemish, but always holy, {Col.1:22,} unblameable and unreprieveable in His, and His Father's sight; and hereby deriving all Influence and Virtue {John 1:16,} from His Fullness for all manner of holy Conversation, and Walk; that thus acting continually in His presence, constrained by His manifested Love, {II

Cor.5:14,} encouraged by the blotting out of Guilt, and Imperfection from our persons, graces and duty, {Heb.4:14,15,} and they made perfect in Him and His grace; we may always seek those things that are above, where Christ is, having our Conversation in Heaven, {Phil.3:20,} whence we look for the appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and being all the day {Rom.8:5,13,} thus spiritually minded, watching over our vain wandering thoughts, we may continually make mention of His Name, {Ps.71:16,} Righteousness and loving Kindness, {Is.63:7,} having our speech always seasoned with Salt, {Mt.5:13,} administering Grace to the Hearers. And being as the Salt of the Earth, and of the Families we dwell in, we may be day by day dying to Sin, and living to Righteousness, denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, {Tit.2:12,} and living righteously, soberly, and godly in this present world; and with a conversation becoming the Gospel of Christ. {Phil.1:27} We also do believe this direct acting of Faith on the Person of Christ for all things, is the Faith of the Gospel, the Faith once delivered to the saints, {Jude 3,} which we ought earnestly to contend for, and to resist all oppositions thereto, even unto blood, {Heb.12:4,} whether in our souls, in the Churches, or other Sister Churches, from the World and Carnal Professors. Hence therefore, laying hold on the strength of Christ, {though we know Unbelief will cleave to the best of our Performances,} yet we will not plead for it, nor indulge it {Unbelief} as a little Sin, much less as a Virtue or Grace; but continually watch against it, mourn over and loath it, and slay it on the head of the Sacrifice, as the greatest Immorality, because it gives the God of Truth the Lie, and treads the Blood of the Covenant underfoot {Heb10:29;} and more especially the greatest Unbelief of questioning {Mt.14:31,} the Ability and Fullness of Christ to save us to the utmost. And though we think it our present Duty not to reject all Preaching, whose Doctrinal part treads in the steps of the first Reformers;

though the Application be mixed with some felt Darkness and Legality, a putting difference between them and others, pulling them out of the fire by love and familiarity; yet detesting every Garment of Doctrine, so far as it is spotted with the Flesh {Jude 22,23,} of Man's Wisdom; yet notwithstanding all those, under what Name or Denomination whatsoever, whose Tenants corrupt the Doctrine of the Person of Christ, either denying or lessening His Godhead, His Human Nature, or mystical Union of both Natures in one Person, or else separating the Natures, or confounding them. As likewise all those that add the least mixture to Christ's Righteousness, though it be their own acts of Faith in point of Acceptance, Acquittance, and the obtaining of Peace of Conscience; who also make Faith and Repentance foreseen as Conditions of the Eternal Election, and the Redemption of Christ Jesus; and Faith and Repentance, actual in the Soul, the preparative federal Conditions of possessing the Blessings of Election in Christ our Head; whether it be Christ's actual influential Union to us, Justification, Adoption, or any other Grace whatever; but especially the Perverters of the Gospel, those most refined and subtle reserves of Antichrist, singled out to support its tottering Cause in this his last War with the Lamb, in these last days, who pervert the Gospel {Gal.1:7,} turning it upside down, asserting Faith, Repentance and Holiness to be given to the Soul before the Person of Christ, and His Righteousness, denying that blessed Order of the Gospel, which is first the Son of God {Rom.8:32,} freely, and then all things freely with Him; refusing Him and His Righteousness to have the preeminence {Col.1:18,} in all things; even in their actual bestowment {I John 5:12,} as they ought to have. And besides all this, wickedly intruding a new Law of their own Invention, requiring imperfect Faith and Repentance, and Gospel Obedience on Man's Part, as the imperfect and sinful Conditions of Gospel Justification; thereby vacating the good old righteous Law

of God, {Rom.3:31,} setting up Terms of obtaining Spiritual Blessings, exceeding derogatory to the Holiness of God's Nature, Ways, and Laws; and contrary to the freeness of His Love and Grace, from the Eternal Purpose thereof in Election, even unto the Execution of Electing Grace here and in Glory. We do declare and protest against them and their Doctrine, and likewise all those that teach us to glory in anything but the Lord, {I Cor.1:31, II Tim.2:1,} or be strong in any other Grace, but that Grace that is in Christ Jesus. And do resolve in the strength of Christ's Grace to testify all manners of ways even unto our Blood, against all other Doctrines than those that are according to Godliness, {I Tim.6:3, Tit.2:1,} and if Men most noted for Knowledge and Holiness, or an Angel from Heaven {Gal.1:9,} preach any other Gospel, and maintain those Tenants before mentioned, we do in the presence and strength of Christ promise and engage to witness against them by public Preaching, and declaring against such Principles, by withdrawing from them, and not receiving them to our Houses, nor bidding them God's Speed, according to the command of the Lord, II John 10. We do also resolve as a Royal Priesthood in our Profession, Ordinances, Walk and Conversation, with the loss of our Names, Lives and Liberties, our Reputations and Estates, and everything that is dear unto us; to bear our Testimony against all false Churches and Worship whatsoever. Namely; against the Mother of Harlots and all her Daughters; and we likewise protest against Idolatry, Superstition, Imposition and Persecution, wherever and whatsoever; and in love to Him, and Honor of His Crown, who first loved us, we resolve and engage by the assistance of the Grace that is in Him, to have nothing to do, nor go near their false Worship, unless it be to testify against them, that we will withdraw from them, and that we will not join with those that join with them, who are confederates against Christ. And this Testimony we engage in Christ's Presence to bear every way, and in

every place whatever, even in Courts of Judicature, and at the Place of Execution if called thereto. Furthermore, we being convinced and humbled, that we and our Fathers have either selfishly neglected or cowardly betrayed the Interest of our Blessed Lord, as King of Nations; and do humbly, waiting for His Coming in His Strength, resolve that we shall from time to time, as He enlightens us, leads us, and calls us to be ready to part with our all, in asserting and maintaining all his Royal Prerogatives and Rights, as King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, against all Enemies and Opposition whatever to His Crown and Dignity, to whom the Kingdoms of the Earth belong, and that we shall faithfully testify against any that shall thus betray His Cause and Interest. Richard Davis

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