

Thomas Edwards

Salvation & the Righteousness of God

None but he who is God, and that by Nature, can save. "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." Isa 45:22. For I am God, and there is none else; Intimating, that if ever polluted, forlorn and rebellious Wretches would be saved, they must look for the same from a God of such infinite Perfections, whose very Nature and Essence is not only Holiness, Justice and Righteousness itself, and yet saves as such, as well as Love, Mercy, and Grace; but also that will not save without a complete regard unto the whole of His Attributes in the uttermost, immense and incomprehensible Dimensions of the same, and that not by a new-formed milder Law, curtailed Covenant, nor by entire or parted whole, or sophistically scraped Conditions {an Arminians Crutch or Wooden Leg} and all this attended with the squinting reserves of annihilating an eternal Law, expressive of as eternal a Righteousness; which had he done, or should he do, he would not only impair and eclipse himself in this very Property of his Divine Nature, but without a due, full commensurately adequate regard unto the same, bring an indelible Stain upon the rest of them. "The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works." Ps.145:17. For to save from a precedent Act of Grace in God, which our Adversaries themselves will acknowledge {or they are horn-mad} and yet to do this without as equal a regard unto a precedent Act of Righteousness in the same God, I suppose, is highly irregular, and not suitable in the least to a Covenant well-ordered and sure. Thomas Edwards {Baxterianism Barefaced, 1699}

Eternal Covenant Settlements in Christ

If this justifying Righteousness both as to its Matter and Merit be without us, how shall we attain unto it, unless the same be given unto us as previous unto our Qualification for our reception of the same? An Heir is an Heir, and that by Law, even before he enjoys his Estate, Gal. 4:1, chap. 4:5, 6, Eph. 2:4, 5, 6. And when he comes to claim Possession, what does he do it by? Is it because he is qualified by his attaining unto such a number of Years? Not at all, he is thereby qualified it is true to plead his Right; but how does he do it? It is by producing old Deeds of Settlement, pleading ancient Covenant-Contracts, former Conveyances, ratified, sealed and confirmed even before he was born, and that from a mutual Compact betwixt Party and Party upon valuable Considerations, which though founded in a free act of Donation, yet is transferred over unto him in a juridical sense, by which he pleads, carries on his Cause, and enters upon his Right. And although nothing can be freer than a Gift, yet I suppose no way safer for our reception and retention of it, than by attending upon the Intention of the Conveyer, in his dispensing and communicating of the same. Unless the Name of God in the whole and complete dimensions of the infinite Attributes of the same, be more glorified in the Salvation of a Sinner, than the said Sinner can possibly be benefited thereby, he cannot either unreservedly or unfeignedly rejoice in God, and consequently find any solid Peace and Comfort in his own Soul; 1 Cor. 1:30, 31, Rev. 1:5, 6, chapter 4. 2, 8, 9, 10, 11. Thomas Edwards {Baxterianism Barefaced, 1699}

Free Justification in Christ Alone

Therefore says the Apostle, Gal. 5:2. "If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing." Now the Question will arise, Whether does the Apostle intend, that this Ordinance of Circumcision in its bare external Administration, by a mere literal cutting off of the foreskin of the Flesh only; or, that in its spiritually figurative relation also, as holding forth the change of the Heart, would be so far from contributing anything, either in whole or in part, towards their Justification, if relied upon for that end, that even Christ himself thereby would be rendered of no effect, or unprofitable unto them? I suppose he means it chiefly in the latter sense, the former being too gross a piece of Hypocrisy, even for those false Teachers themselves who had crept in among the believing Galatians, to insist upon; and so palpably absurd, that it is hard to imagine how Peter, Barnabas, and other good Men should be caught by it; but that though they brought in a Heart-renovation, or a Circumcision of the Heart, shadowed forth by their actual compliance with its outward Application in the use of that Institution, yet if as to any part of the matter of their Justification, they excluded Christ thereby. Therefore Circumcision, the Law, and the Works of the Law are convertible terms with the Apostle in this case, as totally expunging and abhorring them from having any share or part in this Doctrinal Point and Concern; for a spiritual Circumcision is the Law written in the Heart, which if either more or less relied upon as to the aforementioned end, will absolutely make us Debtors to do the whole Law, by which we must be either acquitted or cast, Gal.5:2,3,4. But the Apostle, whatever others might do, durst not trust unto this, Rom.7:22,23,24,25, and therefore says, Phil.3:3. "We are the Circumcision which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the Flesh;" compared with ver. 9. Thomas Edwards {Baxterianism Barefaced, 1699}

Justification and the Righteousness of Christ

The completeness of God's Act in Justification both in its negative and positive form, without any respect to an inherent Qualification, is conspicuously held forth in the Vision that Zechariah had of Joshua's typical Representation of the Church, whom though Satan accused, yet the Lord, as we find, does not excuse {as appears from his owning that he had filthy Garments upon him} by either pleading his Graces, or extenuating his Faults, from a new compiled and pretendedly purchased Law, but from a change of his Station. "Is not this a Brand plucked out of the Fire?" But how? By removing him from a state of Sin and Guilt unto Death, in taking away his filthy Garments, and thereby causing Iniquity to pass from him, which includes the dying Obedience of Christ, and by clothing him with change of Raiment, which is that Righteousness that springs from the Life-obedience of Christ, and thereby entitling him unto Glory; whence it is that a fair Mitre is put upon his Head, which principally has a relation unto Christ's Priestly Office, intimating that in his death Joshua overcame the Accusations of him that had the power of Death, which is the Devil. Thomas Edwards {Baxterianism Barefaced, 1699}