

Henry Denne

{1606?-1660}

Christ & Antichrist

There is a great question as to who is Antichrist, and diverse answer, many things diversely; everyone according to his thoughts; some thinking that the Pope of Rome is Antichrist, some the Bishops, some the Turks ,&c; but give me leave to tell you what I conceive, that to tie the name of Antichrist to a particular man, or to any particular succession of men is to confine him unto too narrow a bound. I will not deny but that the Pope is a principal member of antichrist, of the man of sin, the Head, if you please; but I do believe the Pope and Antichrist to differ, as the part, and the whole, as the head, and the body; and I conceive the great Antichrist to be that mystical body of iniquity which opposes Jesus Christ. Antichrist is as much as to say, against Christ; whosoever doth seek to destroy that which the Lord Jesus hath built up, or to build up that which the Lord hath plucked down, the same is against Christ, and is so much a member of the great Antichrist. It cannot be denied, but that he that will endeavor to set up sin in the conversation of the people is indeed against Christ, and so a man of sin, a limb of antichrist; but yet our Savior hath declared unto us, that the great man of sin, the great Antichrist, shall not be so palpable as to set up sin in the conversation; but that he shall come unto us in great holiness, zeal, and strictness, with eyes and hands lifted up to heaven, as though his conversation were indeed there. Thus is fulfilled that which was forespoken by our Lord. "Beware of false prophets, which come unto you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravaging wolves." {Mt.7:15} Like those prophets of old, who did wear rough garments to deceive; {Zech.13:4;} "for there shall arise false Christs, and false Prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; inasmuch that if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." {Mt.24:24} "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ; and no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." {II Cor.11:13,14} They are zealous, as they "make a fair show in the flesh." {Gal.6:12} The coming of the man of sin is "after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness." {II Thes.2:9,10} "He doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men;" {Rev.13:13;} even bringing many excellent truths of God, kindled at the flames of his altar. One thing more observable is that such shall be his carriage, that he shall not only deceive others, but himself also; so that in his own esteem he shall be none other than the servant of the true God, and his Son Jesus Christ. We are deceived within ourselves, if we look for Antichrist to come like the heathen Bacebus, staggering up and down in the streets, wallowing in his own vomit; we are deceived, if we look for Antichrist among the lewd sons of Belial, roaring in the taverns. No, we shall find him in the Temple; rather, find him in the Pulpit; you shall find him at devotion, with great zeal, inasmuch that whosoever hath not the spirit of discerning shall presume that he is one of an excellent spirit. How often do those men lie unto deceit; who have no other touchstone for doctrine,

but the zeal and holiness of the conversation. This must needs be true, say some, for I heard a very holy man deliver it. Alas poor soul; dost not thou know that beast-like doctrine which drops most often from men of holy conversation? Dost not thou see that the man of sin is as tall in the holiness of conversation as the true saints of God; as the Apostles of Christ themselves? His garment as rough, his countenance as steadfast, the supplications as frequent, his zeal as great. Oh then beware of false prophets, search the Scriptures, try all things. But you will say, if it be so, how shall I know the man of sin if I meet him? Is it not said, "by their fruits you shall know them." {Mt.7:16} If such be the fruits of the man of sin, how shall I be able to discern him? To this I answer; that there are two sorts of fruit; the fruit of conversation and the fruit of doctrine; the fruit of the lips, and the fruit of the hands. "I create the fruit of the lips." {Is.57:19} Now the surest way to discover Antichrist is by the fruit of his lips, by the discipline of his mouth; for if we look upon the apostles of Christ and the man of sin, we shall find both of them holy in conversation; yea so holy that who can discern them, the one from the other. Therefore must we inspect the voice, and ponder the doctrine. "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed." {II Jn.10} "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." {Gal.1:8} When a wolf cometh in sheep's clothing, how shall we discern in the flock, which is the wolf, when both are fleeced alike? Must we not wait until they utter their voices, and then we shall discern that the one bleats and the other barks. We read of a beast, {the Lord to deliver us from him,} who hath horns like a Lamb, and who speaks as a dragon. {Rev.13:11} Though we cannot discern him by his horns, yet we may easily know him by his dragon-like voice. What was the course that Jephthah took to discern the Ephraimites from the Gileadites, at the banks of the Jordan, for their faces were alike, their harness alike, their colors alike, their garments alike; and yet he discerned them by their tongues. "And the Gileadites took the passages of Jordan before the Ephraimites; and it was so, that when those Ephraimites which were escaped said, Let me go over; that the men of Gilead said unto him, Art thou an Ephraimite? If he said, Nay; then said they unto him, Say now Shibboleth; and he said Sibboleth; for he could not frame to pronounce it right. Then they took him, and slew him at the passages of Jordan; and there fell at that time of the Ephraimites forty and two thousand. {Jdg.12:5,6} This will be the trial of the man of sin, of the members of antichrist, when they that have their senses exercised, shall discern them to cry Sibboleth in the doctrine of godliness. Sure it is that this is the only certain way of discerning. There is indeed another way, which is very probable, but not so certain in a double respect. It is a by his scarlet coat or gown; for the woman that sits on the beast is arrayed in purple and scarlet color, {Rev.17:4,} the beast himself was scarlet colored, {vs.3,} the great dragon is for color red, {Rev.12:3,} and that great city was clothed in fine linen, purple and scarlet. {Rev.18:16} Henry Denne {Man of Sin Discovered, 1646}

Christ the One Foundation

Let us have a care to lay a sure foundation, and to make a right application, that we may clear the way unto the distressed conscience, in the light of the knowledge of God. Far be it from us, to think the duty of a minister discharged, by crying out against Sin, Drunkenness, Adultery, and the rest. These things are to be done in their order; but we must know that there is a difference between a minister of the Gospel, and a moral Philosopher, between

Plato and Paul, Aristotle and Apollos. Alas what profits it to salvation if we have reclaimed men from sin to virtue, from drunkenness to temperance, &c. not having laid a sure foundation? Have we brought them any whit nearer the Kingdom of Heaven? Nay, have we not made them seven times more the children of Hell than they were before? Publicans and Harlots enter into the Kingdom of God before you. Far be it from us to build without a foundation! Henry Denne {Doctrine and Conversation of John the Baptist, Delivered in a Sermon on Dec.9, 1641}

Contending for the Faith

What is become of Apostolical zeal of primitive courage; when we are so careful and so fearful, that we dare not inform truly, rebuke boldly, for fear of displeasing our hearers, for fear of losing, or hope of getting advancements. Let us put on resolution and go forward boldly, like men that neither care to rise, nor fear to fall. Henry Denne {Doctrine and Conversation of John the Baptist, Delivered in a Sermon on Dec.9, 1641}

Eternal Suretyship of Christ

I come now to show you the taking away of sin considered in the third respect, as it is taken away out of the sight of God; the design of Christ by the appointment of the Father, to take away sin, out of the sight of God. Christ is set forth unto us as a Propitiation and a Lamb of Atonement, an Offering for sin. "It pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand." {Is.53:10} Our first consideration will be to set forth that Christ offered an offering to God. The second will be, to declare the end and effect of that offering. First, that Christ offered a sin offering to God. Christ was made by God our High Priest. Now every high priest is ordained for men in things pertaining to God to offer up sacrifices for sins. {Heb.5:1} This Christ did once, when he offered up himself. {Heb.7:1} That is, he once offered for the sins of the people, which is confirmed unto us. "Who through the Eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God." {Heb.9:14} By this it appears, that Christ Jesus was an offering unto God. But what was the effect of this offering? Even to make atonement, to make peace, to redeem us from the curse of the Law, from the tribulation, anguish, indignation and wrath which the Law had threatened, and must have of necessity fallen upon us, had not Christ been made a curse for us. But in him the Father hath declared himself well pleased; I say, well pleased in Him, that so through Him the Father might manifest unto us, his eternal pleasure; and we again, might through Him have boldness of access before the Throne of his Grace. Here comes a difficult question to be discussed; whether wrath and indignation did now lie upon those, for whom Christ stood as Eternal Surety, for sin in respect of God. I answer, No; and my reason is, because we have an High Priest over the house of God, which is without beginning, and end of days, between whom and the Father all things are acted and transacted before the world began; and therefore we read of eternal life promised before the world began. {Tit.1:2} But if this be so, how is Christ said to deliver us from wrath? I will show you in the words of the Apostle, who saith that, "Jesus which delivered us from the wrath to come," {I Thes.1:10,} which must have fallen upon us, if Christ had not been a Mediator. Give me a time wherein his priesthood and sacrifice were not present and effectual with the Father;

and I will grant, that at that time, the creature lieth under wrath. But that you may see that these things were transacted with the Father {according to his good pleasure} before the Messenger of the Covenant had offered himself upon the cross, you have the witness of the Father from heaven, "this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." The Son had not yet actually suffered, his blood was not yet shed upon the cross, and yet the Father saith, I am well pleased, I am contented. The Father is well pleased, but it is in the Son, and that before his sufferings, to show that he was a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. But if the Father were well pleased before his sufferings, what need was there that his blood should be shed. The Justice of God revealed in the Law did require that his blood should be shed, and that the Father manifests himself well pleased in his Son before his passion, doth presuppose {I lack words to express what I would} his death and sufferings {that in respect of man was yet to come} to be perpetually present with the Father. Great is the mystery of godliness, and who is sufficient for these things? Henry Denne {Man of Sin Discovered, 1646}

Faith & Works

Thus you see the office of your faith and works. Because we say that God loves us as well before conversion as after, do we therefore make faith and works void? God forbid! Must I needs put out my fire, because I will not set it on the top of the house? No, I will keep it within the chimney, which is the proper place. Woe be to that City, where the fire shall overtop the houses, for fire is precious in the chimney, but dangerous elsewhere. Precious is the gift of faith, if kept within its own sphere; but if we shall begin to lift it up, and place it in the throne of Christ, what fire more dangerous to the soul? The Brazen Serpent was a great blessing so long as Israel looked at it by God's appointment, to be healed of the bites of the fiery serpents; but when once Israel shall burn incense unto it, let it be Nehushtan, a piece of old cankered brass, II Kings 18:4. Henry Denne {Grace, Mercy & Peace, Printed 1696}

Free Grace in Christ

That we may yet more admire the Grace of our God, the Lord is pleased to use familiar expressions to declare unto us that it pleased God to betroth unto himself a wife, whom he would admit into so much favor as to call him, Ishi, my Husband, unto whom he would vouchsafe so much honor, as to call her his spouse, his love, his dove, &c., and to betroth her unto Himself forever. "And it shall be at that day, saith the LORD, that thou shalt call me Ishi; and shalt call me no more Baali." "And I will betroth thee unto me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know the LORD." {Hos.2:16,19,20} Who is it unto whom the Lord vouchsafeth such Grace? What person is it to whom the Lord will take to be his spouse? Was there ever such a thing as this heard? That poverty should sue unto riches? That deformity should sue unto beauty? And with reverence and trembling be it spoken that the mighty God of Heaven betroths unto Himself, and swears unto vile, poor, deformed, sinful, diseased and loathsome man. When man intending to take a companion of his love, some aim at nobility, some at beauty, others at riches; these are the three that commonly attract the liking and love of man; but it is not so

with God. Look we at the nobility of his spouse, at her parentage, from whence she is descended? "Thus saith the Lord GOD unto Jerusalem; Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite." {Ez.16:3} She is base born, a daughter of whoredoms. But it may be that beauty might recompense the baseness of her birth. Look we at her beauty; her native beauty is blood and pollution, a deformed creature; her artificial beauty, neither washing, nor swaddling, nor salting. But peradventure, that which was lacking in birth and beauty might be supplied in riches and plenty; {for riches make many marriages;} but let us survey her riches. Behold, instead of an habitation, "thou wast cast out in the open field, to the lothing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born." {Ez.16:5} Instead of illustrious raiment, nothing but nakedness. "Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness; yea, I swore unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord GOD, and thou becamest mine." {Ez.16:8} Here is a spouse that hath not wherewithal to buy herself a wedding garment. O the depth of the riches of the mercy of God! Neither noble, nor beautiful, nor rich; and yet the Lord hath set his love upon us. Nay, here is one thing exceedeth all this that hath been spoken. So miserable was our condition that it hath cost the Lord a great dowry; and the Lord must buy us unto Himself, not with silver or gold, not with two hundred foreskins of the Philistines; but with the precious blood of the Son of God. I desire to leave you in admiration of this transcendent love. Here are the queries of thy burdened soul answered. What goodness must I find in me? What conditions? What qualifications, before that I believe God to be a Father to me in Christ? What must I do to be saved? Thou seest here the freeness of God's Grace, the glory of his Reconciliation; and I will be bold to say unto thee, as Moses speaketh unto Israel in another case, "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will show to you today." {Ex.14:13} He came to call sinners, not righteous to Repentance. Oh what injury do we unto the Grace of God in that we imagine God to be like unto some niggardly man, who will not bid us welcome to his house, unless we bring our cost with us; for the Lord looks for nothing at our hands to obtain his favor. Henry Denne {Grace, Mercy & Peace, Printed 1696}

Justification & Faith

Question - When is the time that sin is taken away out of the sight of God? Answer - Remission of sins is even as ancient as satisfaction for sin and at what time Christ Jesus taketh our sins upon Himself at the same time are the persons of God's elect justified before the tribunal of Almighty God. Question - Sir, please show us authority for this, for I have always thought that faith itself, is first in order of causes before our actual Justification in the sight of God? Answer - The act of our Faith is a consequent of our Justification, and not an antecedent is plain; for God justifieth the ungodly; and we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son when we were enemies. {Rom.5:10} Now believers cannot be called enemies, but friends; but we were reconciled when we were enemies. {Is.32:17} The effect of Righteousness is assurance; and they that are engrafted into Christ Jesus are justified; but we must be engrafted into Christ Jesus before we can believe, therefore we must be justified before we can believe. To believe is a good fruit, but we can bear no good fruit until we be engrafted into Christ Jesus. "Ye are the branches...for without me ye can do nothing." {Jn.15:5} The branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it be incorporated into the Vine. -

Know that Christ is made ours by God's Imputation or Accounting, {Rom.4:3-9} Look by what way or means our sins were made Christ's; and after the same manner, and by the same means, his Righteousness is made ours; but our sins became his by God's accounting, as the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all, so by the same account of God, {who calleth things that are not as though they were,} his Righteousness is made ours; and just as he became sin for us, so are we made the Righteousness of God in him; thus are we justified freely by his Grace, by his blood; and thus it is God that justifieth. Question - How are we said to be justified by faith? Answer - Faith is taken two ways; first, for the Object of our Faith; that is the thing which we do believe, as also hope is taken, {for Christ is our hope,} so we are justified by faith; that is, by the blood of Jesus Christ. Secondly; faith is taken for the act of our Faith beholding the glorious Object and so we are assured of our Justification; justified before God by the Object of our faith, assured by the act of our faith, appropriating this Object. Question - I perceive now that they only are righteous whom God accounteth righteous, whose Salvation is wrought in Christ Jesus; but how shall I know whether Christ hath satisfied for me, and so whether God accounteth me righteous or not? Answer - The knowledge of this comes by Faith, for the promise is made to believers; and this is the proper office of faith, {assurance,} to be persuaded of God's mercy to us in particular. Henry Denne {Conference Between a Sick Man and a Minister, 1643}

Justification & Faith

The foundation being laid, the next that follows is the right application of this foundation; and this is the greatest task; for I find that the greatest difference between the Protestant and the Papist, is not about the foundation, who it is, but about the true and right application of this foundation. How this Christ becomes ours, before, or in the sight of God; for what learned Papist denies Christ to be the only foundation? What man so impudent, that subscribes not to the verity of this proposition? There is no other name under heaven whereby men must be saved, &c. Yet so great is their absurdity in the application, of this foundation, that they do no other thing but indirectly deny that which before they did directly confess, and so cannot shake from them that character of antichrist, to deny Christ coming in the flesh. They imagine a Christ prepared of God for us, and {I dare not say given} sold unto us, upon certain conditions, by us to be performed. They will say I do them wrong, I will therefore ask the wise Jesuit, How we come to be partakers of Christ's Righteousness; and I am sure I shall hear this answer, by Sacraments, by Penance, Faith and other good Works, which are as means to apply Christ unto us. This is the doctrine of the Papists; and I know you are not ignorant, that there is no small difference between the Protestants themselves about this matter. I appeal to your judgments, how they differ from Papists, who say that Christ's righteousness is made ours before God by Faith and true Repentance, which is by them defined to be a sorrow for sin, and amendment of life. I frame this argument, that which makes Christ's righteousness ours in the sight of God, may be said truly to justify us before God, or at least, to concur actively to our justification; so Faith, and sorrow for sin, with amendment of life, make Christ's righteousness ours in the sight of God; therefore {fearful be the conclusion!} - faith and sorrow for sin, with amendment of life justifies us before God, or at least concur actively to our justification. I believe you judge these, not to deserve the name of Protestants! Some Protestant 'holy' men, do say that Christ is made ours {in the sight of God} by Faith alone; Christ being the

garment, our Faith the hand that putteth this garment on, yet me thinks that here is Christ set forth, upon some conditions, and not so freely given. I must profess my ignorance, that I cannot conceive how faith should put on Christ, apply Christ or make Christ ours in the sight of God. I therefore profess myself openly, to lean unto them that say, that Christ's righteousness is made ours in the presence of God, before God, by God's imputation, before the act of our Faith, and therefore necessarily without it. Even as our sins were made Christ's, so is His righteousness made ours. Now how were our sins made Christ's? Let the Prophet Isaiah speak, the Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all; so that God, which calleth things that are not as though they were, makes us righteous by His imputation of Christ's righteousness. But it will be objected, How then is Faith said to justify? I answer, if we take Faith for the object of our Faith {that is Christ} then Faith is properly said to justify us, for by Him we are justified, he being our righteousness. If we take Faith for the act of our Faith, apprehending this Object, then we are justified by it, declaratively in our Consciences. Henry Denne {Doctrine and Conversation of John the Baptist, Delivered in a Sermon on Dec.9, 1641}

Justification in Christ Alone

He that is in Christ is justified; but we must be in Christ before we can believe, therefore we must be justified, before we can believe. The major is plain and the minor is proved, that we must be in Christ before we can believe, for to believe is a fruit of the Spirit. Likewise, we must be in Christ before we can bear fruit; therefore we must be in Christ, before we can believe. "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me." {Jn.15:4} Secondly, if Faith be a good fruit, it is required that men must be good trees before they can bring it forth; otherwise, grapes should be gathered of thorns, and figs of thistles. {Mt.12:33} If you will, the argument may be stated thus; he that hath the Spirit of Christ, hath Christ; but we have the Spirit before we believe, therefore we have Christ before we believe. - We were made sinners in the first Adam, before we had done good or evil; therefore we are made righteous in the second Adam, before we have done good or evil. This consequence is proved; "therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." {Rom.5:18,19} If you will place the emphasis of this text in 'all' and 'many,' you will cause the hearts of the Universalists to leap for joy, which you would not willingly do; therefore we must be forced to place the emphasis in 'as' and 'so.' As we all sinned in the loins of the first Adam, so were we all made righteous in the loins of the second Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ; and this agrees with the Ministry of Reconciliation; namely, "that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." {II Cor.5:19} Where there is full satisfaction made in the parties offended accepting that satisfaction and contented to rest therein, there must needs follow perfect remission of sins; but in Christ crucified {before we believed} was full satisfaction made and God was contented to rest in that Satisfaction. Therefore there will follow perfect remission of sins, &c. "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." {Heb.10:14} That God is content to rest in that satisfaction, we have the witness of the Father. "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." {Mt.3:17} "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall

be satisfied." {Is.53:11} If we are not justified in his sight before we believe, then are we unjust sinners, workers of iniquity; then doth the Lord hate us, for he hateth all the workers of iniquity. {Ps.5:5} You know what absurdities will follow, if you say that we must believe before God can love us; but if God hate us today and love us tomorrow, let Arminius with his disciples hear this and wonder, why they should be blamed that say, we may be loved today and hated tomorrow; children of God today and of the devil tomorrow; when they who would seem their greatest adversaries, will not spare to say, we may be hated today and loved tomorrow; the children of the devil today, and of God tomorrow. But that God loved us first, before we believed, when we were enemies, in our blood, &c., is so plain that I will not willingly so dishonor you, as one to conceive that you will deny it. Again, this proposition, that we are justified by Faith is very ambiguous; for he was not a fool who {a hundred years since} said, that this proposition was one of those things hard to be understood; which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest as they do other Scriptures to their own destruction. {II Pet.3:16} I would that our age had not proved it true, that the misunderstanding of this proposition has turned upside down the doctrine of Justification amongst puddling preachers. There is in this proposition two words ambiguous and doubtful; the first, 'justified' which sometimes in Scriptures signifies to be reputed, reckoned or accounted just; as, "it is God that justifieth." Sometimes it is taken for to be declared or manifested to be just. If you take 'justified' in this sense, then I say that we are justified {that is, declared to be just} by believing, faith manifesting to our conscience, that we are just before God; by faith understanding that God hath freely justified us in his Son. Another word ambiguous in this proposition is 'faith' which is diversely taken; sometimes for the act of Faith, or believing; and sometimes for the Object of Faith, the thing believed; as, "Faith was reckoned unto him for Righteousness;" {Rom.4:9;} that is the Object of Faith; so that it is all one as if he had said, God or Christ was reckoned to him for Righteousness. If we understand the act of Faith; then I say, as before, that we are not reckoned just by the act of our Faith; if by Faith we understand the Object of our Faith; then I say, that we are reckoned or reputed just by God, in, by, or through Christ Jesus, our Faith. Henry Denne {Seven Arguments to Prove, that in order of Working God doth Justify his Elect, Before they do Actually Believe. 1643}

Law & Gospel Distinctions

What is the reason that amongst men professing the same Christ, and reading the same Scriptures, so many irreconcilable controversies do daily arise? Is it not chiefly from hence; that men distinguish not rightly between the Law and the Gospel? He that shall search into the most material controversies, even between the Protestant and the Papist, and look into the original of them, he shall find the error of the Papists to arise chiefly from hence; the want of distinction between Law and Gospel. From this fountain proceeded the troubles of the Church of Antioch, Acts 15. From this fountain proceeded the apostasy of the Church of Galatia; and from this fountain proceed the perverse disputations of the Popish Schoolmen about repentance. And what heresy is it that hath not a part, either more or less, in this? Henry Denne {Doctrine and Conversation of John the Baptist, Delivered in a Sermon on Dec.9, 1641}

Law & Gospel Distinctions

God hateth all the workers of iniquity, and God loveth the ungodly, are both in Scripture, and therefore both true; yet in a different sense. The first, The Lord hateth all the workers of iniquity is the voice of the Law; the other, the Lord loves sinners, is the voice of the Gospel. Now the Law and the Gospel speak divers things; the one being the manifestation of God's justice, tells us what we are by nature; the other, being the manifestation of God's mercy, tells us what we are by grace in Christ Jesus. The Law saith, that every sinner shall be accursed. The Gospel saith, Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. The Law saith, God will by no means clear the guilty, Ex.34:7. The Gospel saith, God justifieth the ungodly. The Law showeth wrath without forgiveness. The Gospel showeth Mercy, Grace and Peace in Jesus Christ. Thus far is the objection answered; but yet all difficulty and scruple not removed; for the Law, you will say, is an eternal verity, whatsoever it saith is true. I confess it so, and one jot or tittle thereof cannot fail. But I say, with the Apostle, that whatsoever the Law saith, it saith to them only who are under the Law, and to none other. I say again, that the righteousness of the Law is fulfilled by Christ for us all; yea in all that walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, Rom.8:4. So that although the elect of God are sinners in the judgment of the Law; sense, reason, yea, and oftentimes conscience; yet having their sins translated unto the Son of God {in whom they were elected} they have the righteousness of the Law fulfilled in the Mediator, and so become to be accounted righteous in His sight, that as God on the one side delivered the innocent to death, as though He had been a sinner, being made accountable for our sins. So on the other side, God loveth, justifieth, cleareth the guilty and sinners, as if they had been holy, righteous, and blameless. The sum is this, that as Christ was no sinner indeed, and yet a sinner by imputation; so they that are Christ's, are no sinners by imputation, and yet sinners indeed. Henry Denne {Grace, Mercy & Peace, Printed 1696}

Law & Gospel Distinctions

It is the part of a faithful minister, to divide the word aright, which in Martin Luther's exposition, is aptly to distinguish between Law and Gospel. It was prophesied by Luther, that after his time the difference between the Law and Gospel should be neglected. Our age hath proved him too true a Prophet, for it is a thing not ordinarily observed. But will some say, what; shall not the Law now be preached? I say not so. I wish we could hear it oftener than we do; for I know that the Law is good, if a man use it lawfully; but the fault is not rightly to apply it; as when we apply it to troubled consciences to give satisfaction. Let us take heed of mingling these two, and so producing a confounded and compounded doctrine. Let us not sow the Lord's field with mingled seed, nor clothe them with a linen woollen garment {Lev.19:19}, for whom the Lord hath provided a vesture of fine linen. Take we good heed that we present not unto the sheep of Christ water, that we have puddled with our feet, Ezek.34:19. What are puddled waters? What is a linen wollen garment? What is mingled seed; but confused and obscure doctrine? Henry Denne {Doctrine and Conversation of John the Baptist, Delivered in a Sermon on Dec.9, 1641}

Law & Gospel Distinctions

It is a design of Christ to purge the conversations of his chosen and called people; for the smock of hell hath sometimes said, "if I be elected, I may live as I list;" but what saith the Spirit of God, "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." {I Pet.1:2;} That God that hath elected thee in Christ Jesus before the world began, hath elected thee unto obedience, and not unto disobedience. Thou are not chosen to be like the Prince of darkness, to walk in the vanity of thy mind; but to walk in holiness as becometh saints; and to contend for the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ, as to free it, and the Revelation of the Riches of his Grace from that cloud which doth eclipse it from the eyes and affections of very many, because it hath by reason of the evil tongues, and credulous ears incurred an unjust suspicion of liberty and licentiousness. But is this so? We call heaven and earth to record that the Gospel teaches holiness, sobriety, temperance and whatsoever is of good report; yea it teacheth to avoid even the occasions of evil; yea, we call heaven and earth to record whether the Gospel do not draw us unto an holy obedience with as forcible {I will be bold to say, more forcible,} and effectual cords than any doctrine whatsoever; for the true Gospel draweth with the cords of love; which is as strong as death, for nothing can be able to resist it, for "many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it; if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned." {Cant.8:7} I call again, heaven and earth to record, whether any Doctrine can confer such power, {if I speak improperly I will be contented to alter my speech,} whether the Spirit of God do works so powerfully in the soul by any doctrine as by the Doctrine of the Gospel. The Law indeed shows us what is to be done, threatens us heavily if we do not, rewards us plentifully, {in things pertaining to this life,} if we do it; but all this while it ministereth unto us no quickening power; but leaves us dead, yea the more we hear it, {if we hear it aright,} the more dead we are. "For I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died, and the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death." {Rom.7:9,10} But the Gospel, the word of Grace, is the ministration of a quickening Spirit, not only calling upon us to do, but also giving power to perform. Therefore is the word of Grace called healing words, "even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness." {I Tim.6:3} But if these things be so, how come so many foul accusations, so many heavy charges are cast upon this Doctrine of Grace? I answer, the servant is not greater than his Master, "for they shall say all manner of evil against you falsely," for Christ sake. {Mt.5:11} I must say of these men, as the Apostle of the Jews, "had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." {I Cor.2:8} But now, "they speak evil of those things they understand not." {Jude 10} I desire to pray for them, in the words of our crucified Savior, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." The Law of man exempts all blind men from going to war, lest they should do more hurt than good, and be rather burdensome than profitable; and likewise, the Law of God admits of no blind priest to serve in the sanctuary of God. Men used to scare their children with a blind priest, {a very terrible thing,} the builders are ignorant, and therefore have they rejected the chief corner stone. Therefore have they refused the fountains of living waters, and dig unto themselves cisterns which will hold no water. They speak evil of the Gospel, both preachers and people, {like priest, like people,} because they know it not. Henry Denne {Man of Sin Discovered, 1646}

Mysteries of the Kingdom

But some may object and say, why doth not the Lord speak in plain terms? I answer, who art thou that wilt correct the Lord, and teach Him to speak? I answer again, in our Saviour's words, when His Disciples ask the question, "Why speakest thou unto them in parables?" Mat.13:10. His answer is, "Because it is given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to them it is not given." As if he should have said, in respect of you, that are my people, I need not speak more plain for you {being taught of God} are able to understand the mysteries of the kingdom. In respect of others; I will not speak more plain, because to them it is not given to understand the mysteries of the kingdom. Henry Denne {Grace, Mercy & Peace, Printed 1696}

Prayer & Assurance of Pardon

The judgment of Interpreters in the Protestant Church, upon a like place, is occasioned by an argument urged by Cardinal Bellarmine {Robert Bellarmine 1542-1621 an Italian Jesuit and Cardinal} and other popelings, against the Protestants, on this wise: If, saith he, the Protestants have pardon of all their sins, in such wise, as they say they have, why do they yet pray, forgive us our trespasses, if they be already forgiven? The Protestants answer with one consent; that they do beg at the hand of God, greater certainty, and assurance of His grace towards them; the Petition forgive us our trespasses, may well stand with assurance of pardon. The condemned person that is upon the ladder, having received the pardon of a gracious Prince, hears it read, is assured of it, and rejoices in it, yet this person being called into the presence of the King, if he should fall down and say, Pardon me my Lord the King; who could lay folly to his charge? So, we having received the free pardon of sin at His hand already, yet as oft as we come into His presence we cry to the glory of His grace, forgive us our trespasses; for while we beg at the hand of God, that which we have before received, we do magnify His grace, that hath freely given it. Again; who so sure, and certain of pardon, but that he either needeth a greater assurance, or at least that assurance to be by God's mercy continued. Henry Denne {Grace, Mercy & Peace, Printed 1696}

Reconciliation

Consider what is written; "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." {II Cor.5:18,19} Now compare we this with that which we find in the next verse; "We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." {II Cor.5:20} In the former place the Apostle told us we were reconciled; and in this place, he beseecheth us to be reconciled. To take up this difference, I say that in the former he speaketh of our original reconciliation, wherein our nature was reconciled to God by Christ, in the second I say, he speaketh of our actual reconciliation, wherein our consciences become reconciled to God, through the apprehension of the reconciliation which Christ hath wrought for us. When we speak of our original reconciliation, I lay down this proposition, that we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, without any previous conditions in us, or performed by us. You see it is the act of

Christ upon the Cross, it was done by His death; the Lord Christ taking our nature upon Him; and we are said to do that which He did, and to have that done unto us which was done unto Him. As in the first Adam we all sinned before we were, or had committed any actual transgression; so in the second Adam we were reconciled. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Rom.5:19. I say we are said to do that which he did, as to be buried with Christ, by baptism into death, Rom.6:4. We are said to be crucified with Christ, as our old man is crucified with Him, Rom.6:6; to be dead and alive with Him. Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord, Rom.6:11. We are said to be risen with Him, Col.3:1, which is elegantly set forth by the Prophet Hosea, speaking of the resurrection of Christ. He speaketh on this wise, "After two days will he revive us; in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight." Hosea 6:2. Yet more we are said to be placed together in heavenly places with Him, Eph.2:5,6. This is that which I call original reconciliation; whereby we see that not only God was reconciled unto us, but also that our nature was reconciled unto God by the death of His Son, without any condition, or qualification wrought in us. Thus much for our original reconciliation; now follows our actual reconciliation; namely, the manifestation of God's reconciliation to us. Let us learn to distinguish, when God speaketh of His reconciliation to us, and when He speaketh of our reconciliation to Him. Let us learn to distinguish between the actual event, and the manifestation thereof; the want of which distinction, breedeth an horrible confusion in the interpretation of Holy Scripture. Henry Denne {Grace, Mercy & Peace, Printed 1696}

Repentance

What is true mortification, but the apprehension of sin slain by the body of Christ. What is vivification but our new life? The just shall live by Faith. I have observed some to confine Repentance, within the bounds of our conversation, and make no difference between the Repentance which was taught by the Prophets, and that Repentance which was taught by the Son of God, and his Ministers, whose error doth sufficiently appear by that which hath been already spoken. I know this seem strange to some; and yet will they still say, they must agree with men in this, that Faith is a part of true Repentance. Otherwise, what will become of that Doctrine, so often heard in your pulpits; namely, that repentance washes away sin? I demand how and where? Out of the sight of God? No, for it is God that washes, it is God that justifieth; as before, and the blood of Jesus Christ washes us from all sin. How then does Repentance wash away sins out of the Conscience? This is Faith's office to purge the conscience, by declaring the favor of God in Christ Jesus, and neither the office of sorrow, or reformation, which may purge the conversation, but not the conscience. - To preach that tears do wash away sins, out of the sight of God is blasphemy against the precious blood of Christ. Besides the hideous effects that this Doctrine works in the Church of God; for the simple people being asked how they think to make satisfaction to God for sin, they have answered by lamenting and amending. Good people hearken, it is dying, not crying, that must give satisfaction for sins - without blood there is no remission. And it is not the blood of bulls or goats, or the flood of tears that can give satisfaction, but only that water and blood that issued from the side of the wounded Saviour. Henry Denne {Doctrine and Conversation of John the Baptist, Delivered in a Sermon on Dec.9, 1641}

Repentance & Faith

The Gospel propoundeth unto us a Sacrifice already offered, Propitiation, Atonement and Reconciliation already made, sin already finished, and then by the Ministry of Reconciliation calleth upon us to repent unto remission. This is the Ministry of Reconciliation; namely, "that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." {II Cor.5:19} Christ is our Priest, our Sacrifice, our Atonement; he offered for our sin, he made peace through his blood, and calls upon us to believe this peace and atonement made. But this will more plainly appear, when I shall prove unto you, that not only remission, but even Faith, {the knowledge of remission, whose Object is remission of sins in Christ,} must needs be before godly contrition. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." {Rom.14:23} All contrition that proceeds not from Faith is no better than sin; but godly Repentance is not sin. Therefore it is not before Faith, but from Faith; we do not therefore believe remission of sins because we repent; but we therefore repent, because we believe remission of sins in Christ. Again the question is, whether or not, Repentance is not a sacrifice of thanksgiving? If so, it presupposes the knowledge of a benefit received. I would not be understood, as though I thought the Faith of God's elect to remain any time in the soul void of Repentance; but my meaning is to show you the order of the work of the Spirit of God who produces not Faith by Repentance, but Repentance by Faith. Doth any man declare unto you Repentance as a means to obtain remission and forgiveness at the hands of the Father? These are the footsteps of the man of sin, of the son of perdition; and you have seen how contrary this is to the Grace of God manifested in the sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ; and how contrary to the voice of the glorious Gospel, which "through this man {that is Jesus Christ} is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." {Acts 13:38} Let us then learn to be wise, let us learn to discern this wolf by his bark; let the opinion, the show, the profession of holiness be never so great; yet if they bring this doctrine, {Conditionalism} believe them not, for it is the man of sin, the limbs of antichrist, a wolf in sheep's clothing that seek not to feed you, but to feed upon you. Take heed and beware! Henry Denne {Man of Sin Discovered, 1646}

Sin & the Conscience

The design of the Lord Jesus Christ to remove sin from the consciences of his called people, whereby those whom the Lord hath called may have the answer of a good conscience towards God; {I Pet.3:21;} and that the consciences of these who are called of Jesus Christ are made clear, white, pure and undefiled from sin and transgression through the apprehension of the efficacy of the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, whereby they are begotten "unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead," {I Pet.1:3,} whereby they may have boldness before the throne of grace, even the throne of that God who hath eyes that will behold no iniquity, before the throne of that God, who is a consuming fire. {Heb.12:29} This is the effect of the faith of God's elect, to purify the heart. "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith." {Acts 15:8,9} What can here be meant by the word 'heart' other than conscience? Now if the conscience be pure, it is without spot; if it be not without spot, then is it not pure. That by heart is meant nothing less than the conscience is proved by other places of

Scripture. "A sound heart is the life of the flesh." {Prov.14:30} "A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance." {Prov.15:13} But lest some should say, that by the word 'heart' is meant less than conscience, I shall desire to speak plain, the Apostle showing the weakness of legal sacrifices and services, saith, that these "could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience;" {Heb.9:9;} but the Priesthood of Christ Jesus, the Mediator of a better Testament, established upon better promises, hath done that which the Law could not do. "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} The Law could not make perfect as pertaining to the conscience, but what the Law could not do in that it was weak, through the infirmities of the flesh, that Christ Jesus hath done by his sacrifice of himself. We reason thus; if Christ did not purge the conscience, then is it yet impure, then is not his purgation as pertaining to the conscience of more efficacy than legal purgations were, they purged not the conscience, no more than he. But it is plain that he did purge the conscience. Now if he did purge, as pertaining to the conscience, then is the conscience pure and undefiled, and if it be not pure and undefiled, then he did not purge it. But that Christ did purge the conscience is plain because, "the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins." {Heb.10:2} It is the drift of the Apostle in this place to show the reason why the Law sacrifices did cease to be offered, because they could not make the comers thereunto perfect, and that they were not made perfect is proved because they had conscience of sin. But now the offering of Christ hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. {Heb.10:14} If they be perfected, then are they purged, and if purged, the comers thereunto must have no more conscience of sin. Now they "draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith," having their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and their bodies washed with pure water. {Heb.10:22} By this we may understand what is meant by those metaphysical speeches which we read of in Rev.3:4, 4:4, 6:11, with many other places, where the saints are set before us in white raiment, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot. This white raiment signifying not only that purity and cleanliness which they have before God, but also that purity and cleanliness of conscience, consisting in the apprehension of that glorious estate and condition whereunto they were stated by the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. I think it is sufficiently proved, that the consciences of the called people of God are purged and purified from all manner of sin and uncleanness, and that it would be lawful for me to proceed, did there not an objection lie in the way, which may be an occasion of stumbling, unto those that are weak, and have not their senses exercised in such manner of questions as these are. The objection is this: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." {I Jn.1:8} "If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." {I Jn.1:10} "For in many things we offend all." {Js.3:2} Now saith the objection, if we have sin, how can we be clean; and if we be cleansed, how is it that we have sin? This objection is easily answered by the words immediately going before us; namely, "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin;" {I Jn.1:7;} and then presently follows, "if we have no sin, &c.," {vs.8} Now here will lie the difficulty; for if we be cleansed from all sin, how have we any sin remaining? If we have yet any, how are we cleansed from all sin? For the clearing of an answer, I must entreat you to consider of sin in a twofold respect, as hath been spoken at large before; namely, sin in the conversation and sin in the conscience. The called of God are not quite purged from sin in conversation, for all our righteousness are as an unclean thing.

{Is.64:6} The called of God are quite cleansed from all sin in conscience. I shall be speaking a riddle to some, to whom it is not given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, but you to whom it is given, will understand what I shall say. The thing is this, that as it is possible, for a man that hath been beyond comparison strict and upright in his conversation to have a foul and polluted conscience, a heart clouded with ignorance, and estranged from the life of God; so is it possible, for a man that hath been an exceeding sinner, and is not yet wholly cleansed from all wickedness in conversation {which no man is} to have a conscience, as white as the snow and as pure as the wool; and if this seem a mystery unto you, that sin in the flesh, should stand with purity of conscience, take these reasons to make it plain. If purity of conscience could be found nowhere but where there is purity in the flesh, a pure conscience could not at all be found upon the earth, in regards to the fact that there is none that doeth good, no not one. {Rom.3:12} Again, purity of conscience doth not take its rise from purity of conversation; but purity of conversation ariseth from purity of conscience. The original of purity of conscience ariseth hence, from the apprehension of all our impurities and uncleanness to be laid upon Christ; {Is.53:6;} to be taken away by Christ. {Jn.1:29} Herein doth the conscience of a believer rest in Christ Jesus crucified and made sin for us. This that hath been spoken, may serve to open unto us a door of understanding, whereby those places which seem so contrary may be made plain. "If we say we have no sin, &c.," and yet it is said, "he that is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God." {I Jn.3:9} What have we here? Is not the Apostle born of God? Are not they to whom he writes born of God? Yes, without contradiction; yet doth he confess, that he and they have sin, and again he saith, "he that is born of God cannot sin." It is not unknown unto many that shall read this, how many windings, and turnings, how many unsound, and unfavorite distinctions, have been invented by the wit of man to reconcile these places, which are easily reconciled by that which hath been spoken. The called of God {even the most upright of them} have sin in the flesh, they have sin in the conversation; but they have no sin, neither can they have any sin in the conscience; for the true faith of God's elect and sin in the conscience can no more stand together than light and darkness. Let this that hath been spoken become a touchstone to try our faith by. Doth thy faith purify the heart through the apprehension of the blood of Christ? Doth it cleanse thy conscience from all sin, so that not one remaineth behind? Then hath it this property of a true faith. But when the soul shall thus conceive within itself, that this sin, or that sin lieth yet upon me, if it were not for such, or such a sin, {greater it may be than ordinary,} I should judge myself in a happy condition. Give me leave, with patience, to declare thine error. Surely Christ cleanses not imperfectly, he doth not wash away some stains, and leave others; if he cleanse thee not from this sin, he hath cleansed thee from no sin whatsoever. If he hath not cleansed thee from any one sin, surely he hath washed thee from none at all; for he hath perfected forever them that belong to Him. "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." {Heb.10:14} But thou hast one sin yet unpardoned, not washed away? I demand of thee, who shall wash it away; and when shall it be washed away; seeing that Christ dieth no more, he sheddeth his blood no more, he offereth no more. I confess a man that knows not Christ may presume of the pardon of all his sins, and see his conscience purged by a false Christ; but I will be bold to affirm, that he that seeth not all his sins taken away, has never known the true Christ. Thus have we seen the design of the Lord Christ to purge the consciences of his called people, that they shall have no more conscience of sin. Now if this be so; do you

desire that I should show you a place where joy and gladness dwell; where sorrow and sighing {in respect of unpardoned sin} have no more place; but everlasting comforts rest upon their heads. Behold, it is the conscience of God's called ones that are brought unto the apprehension of the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, whose joy cannot be taken away and whose comforts cannot be spoiled. Now blessed, thrice blessed are the people that are in such a case. Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound, who have their rest in Christ; who hath showed unto them the "path of life;" in whose "presence is fulness of joy;" and at his right hand "pleasures for evermore." {Ps.16:11} Henry Denne {Man of Sin Discovered, 1646}

Spiritual Idolatry

What foolish fancies have possessed our souls? How often have we thought God to be like unto ourselves? How many times have we imagined an angry God, a wrathful Majesty; and sought to appease His indignation by fasting, by prayer, by alms, by tears, and such like things? O foolish man! If God's wrath should not be before appeased, what creature could stand in His sight? Do we not see when some lion-like man is incensed, the whole house trembles, not one servant, no not a son dares come into his presence, before his wrath be over? If we so fear the unjust wrath of man, how terrible would the just wrath of consuming fire be? What great presumption were it for the creature to come into His presence, if His wrath were not appeased? We complain of idolatry crept into our unhappy nation. We complain of bowing, of cringing, of crossing, and many such {Popish} fopperies. Search we, I beseech you, if idolatry have not hitherto crept into your hearts, if you have not set up a great idol, and bowed unto that image, with all it worships. Learn to make clean the inside as well as the outside of the cup. Learn to banish out of the soul those foolish and vain conceits; learn to see the glory of the face of God in Christ, and to worship Him in spirit and in truth. There cannot be a greater idolatry committed than to conceive a possibility of gaining the love and favor of God, by works wrought in the creature. This is as great an idol as that which was set up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon, threescore cubits high. Daniel.3:1. This is the Beast that hath made the whole earth to partake of her fornications. Henry Denne {Grace, Mercy & Peace, Printed 1696}

True & False Religion

There is but one true Religion, but there are many false; the false Religions seeming to differ exceedingly amongst themselves, in very many things even in the object of worship, and in the matter, and manner; yet be they never so different, there is one common foundation, wherein they do all agree, and wherein they differ from the true. The true Religion declares unto us a God in chief reconciled, pacified, pleased - a justice already satisfied, a propitiation made, sins taken away; and we have not one jot, not one apex in all the new Covenant to be found of reconciliation to God. The new Covenant manifesting unto us a God already reconciled to us, and the whole ministry of reconciliation propounding our reconciliation to God. Now this is the common character of all false religions of what sort whatsoever, Jews, Turks, Papists, Pharisaical Protestants, Heathen; yea all propound to some degree or other, an angry God, a deity not reconciled, and then prescribe certain means and services whereby to appease his wrath, and to quench his displeasure, and to

obtain his love and favor. Man does not oftener seek after salvation, but he naturally stumbles upon this principle; 'What shall I do to be saved?' The world would be saved by doing. Luther speaking of this difference, does more than once compare the false religions unto Sampson's foxes, Judges 15:4; their heads looking divers ways, but they were fastened together by the tails. They differ indeed in some circumstances, but in the main substance they agree in one. Do we not see some men contending with the Papists, with wonderful eagerness? Do we not see others tugging, and halting, one one way, the other another, one for this ceremony, and another for that, as though there were a mortal difference between them; yea the difference so great, that it is sometimes the greatest reason for one side to refute this or that because the other uses it. Now he that shall search into the innermost secrets of these antagonists, shall find, them that so eagerly differ about circumstance, {who could have believed it?} to agree in substance. Like ships that sail in the sea a great way asunder, yet all tending to one haven. All tending to this end, to win or obtain the favor of an angry God. This that hath been spoken may prove a help to administer a spirit of discernment unto the simple, in these distracted times, wherein the Commonwealth is not more distracted than the Church. Now among so many diversities of opinions, how shall we know which is the old and the good way, that we may walk in it? One saith I am Christ, another nay, but I am Christ; for thy direction, search for that religion that abaseth man, that giveth the glory of grace to God; that propoundeth the free love of God in Jesus Christ, without mixture of anything in the creature, that is the true religion, all the rest are false; that is the true way, and strait line, all the rest are counterfeits, and crooked. Henry Denne {Grace, Mercy & Peace, Printed 1696}

True Person & Office of Christ

There being indeed, no doctrine more available to the manifestation of the glory of God, more comfortable to the souls of the people, more profitable to the edification of the Church than the doctrine of true Repentance truly taught and learned. There being also no doctrine more destructive to the Truth of God, and the comfort of his people, then that cloudy and misty doctrine of Repentance taught by the factors of Rome, whereby they seek to overthrow at once, the whole building of the temple of God. The summation of all is this; that whereas God saith that the justice of his Law is fulfilled, and he is well pleased in his Son to declare that sin and iniquity will be remembered no more; this man of sin will be more just than God, and say, that the Law is not fulfilled until you repent, the Father will not be well pleased in his Son, until you have repented of your sins. Thus you see how the man of sin exalts himself above the Justice, the Mercy, the Wisdom, and the Truth of God; and indeed it will be found true, that there is not any one attribute of God, but he hath sought to depress and to exalt and lift up himself, and his own doctrine; and that by this means he might fulfill that which hath been foretold of him; namely, that he "opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God." {II Thes.2:4} As it was fore-spoken of him by the Holy Ghost; "and the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished; for that that is determined shall be done. Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall magnify himself above all. But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces; and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with

precious stones, and pleasant things." {Dan.11:36-38} He will say; it is written, "who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son." {I Jn.2:22} "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist." {II Jn.1:7} From hence Rome, and all her children will argue, that they are not antichrist, that they are not the man of sin because they confess that Jesus is the Christ; yea whosoever shall deny that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, they hold him accursed. For the better clearing of this, and the opening of some places of Scripture, we must take it into consideration what it is to deny and confess Christ coming in the flesh. There are two things necessary to be believed unto the constitution of the Faith of God's elect, and if either of these shall be found wanting, the faith will be found lame and imperfect; yea, altogether no faith at all. The one is to believe rightly the office of the Mediator and Redeemer; the other is to believe rightly the true Person of Christ; now he that believes the Person, and denies the Office, what doth he else than deny Christ coming in the flesh? Again, he that confesses the Office, but denies the Person is as faulty as the other. We do not lay unto Rome's {or Arminians,} charge that they deny the Person of Christ; we have not any controversy with them concerning the Person of Christ, but we charge them with a denial of his Office, with denial of the effect of Christ's death and resurrection. {These two are inseparable, for if we deny the office of Christ, we indeed deny his true Person as well!} For when it shall be declared that the effect of Christ's death requires on our parts a condition, and that Christ's death is not effectual unto us until the condition on our parts be performed, we say that this is to deny the office of the Messiah, this is to deny the Priesthood and Sacrifice of Christ to take away sin and to finish transgression; and unto us it doth appear, that the pre-requiring of a condition doth diminish the glory of the efficacy of Christ's work. Henry Denne {Man of Sin Discovered, 1646}