

John Eaton (1575-1641)

False Apostles of Christ

Such false teachers do in their hearts dignify, and in their words magnify, extol, and exhort with legal arguments a preposterous sanctification, repentance, mortification, grace, and graces, popishly and falsely understood; new life, holy and righteous walking, universal obedience to all God's commandments, sincerity, humiliation, uprightness, fastings, regeneration, popishly also and falsely understood; and such like works exhorted with legal arguments, or a hope of rewards and blessings well, if we do them; and with fear of punishments and blessings ill, if we possess them not; which how much the more they are thus preposterously exacted and legally exhorted, so much the more under terms and titles of the Gospel, such preachers teach but the light of nature, the pride of works, and the vain glory of man; and so do withdraw people from Christ to hang upon their own works and doings; by resting upon the popish rotten pillar that God accepts {whereby their own sincerity is trusted to instead of Christ} the will for the deed, and so do drown Christ's glory, free justification; do destroy faith, waste and consume the Church of Christ, teach a false bastard sanctification, and are those dangerous seducers of souls, that the faithful are commanded {as they will continue chaste virgins to Christ, and not to be beguiled with Eve by the subtlety of the serpent, and seduced from the simplicity of their faith that is in Christ} to discern and take notice of, as they are described; {II Cor.11:13-15;} where the Apostle fore-warns and thereby sufficiently fore-arms all the children of wisdom by thus plainly describing these seducers. They profess themselves apostles; that is, sent forth of God; but they are false apostles, and they are great workers, but deceitful workers. How deceitful? Transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ; that is, as if they were the true ministers of Christ, and taught the true Gospel of Christ; and no marvel for Satan himself is transformed into a messenger of light, and therefore it is no great thing if his ministers transform themselves, as though they were the ministers of righteousness; that is, calling earnestly for all works of righteousness, and their end shall be according to their works and righteousness; that is, though they seem to be the principal men that shall be saved, yet the same Apostle threatens to them certain destruction; which he warns on purpose that we may not

believe every spirit, but rather try the spirits whether they be of God. {I Jn.4:1} Seeing these are the wolves whereof Paul gave warning, {Acts 20:29,30,} that should arise up out of the very midst of them, and should teach not seeming false things, but only preposterous things, or true things out of order, setting the cart before the horse; that is, caring more to call for works and a good life, than they care whether the people have assurance of the sound faith of their free and perfect justification; whereby, although the people bear them record, and applaud them, that they have the zeal of God; yet it is not according to the knowledge of free justification in Christ, because {by a carnal understanding of justification} they being ignorant of the righteousness of God, must needs go about to establish and set up the golden calf of their own and the people's own righteousness, of their supposed sanctification, works, and well doings; and by thinking secretly in their heart with the Papist that justification is easily learned and is ready to open the gate to the people to live wickedly and loosely, they seldom and slightly preach justification, and thereby show that they have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God. {Rom.10:2,3} John Eaton {Discovery of a most Dangerous Dead Faith, 1641}

False Professors of Christ

The second way how these do see many things, but they keep them not, consisteth herein, that what they profess that they know, they keep not in life, practice, and conversation; their life, conversation, and action nothing agreeing with that which they profess, and seem to know and see. As for example; such as are in the mere literal knowledge of Free Justification, do find by reading, and thereupon do profess, that Free Justification is the strong Rock and Foundation of Christian Religion, the head Article of salvation, the sole saving grace of Christ, the cause of sanctification, and of all godly living, the advancer of the true Glory of Christ; but yet because by this bare literal knowledge of it, they feel not the truth and power thereof in themselves; therefore whose feet do such labor to fasten upon this strong Rock of Christian Religion; whose house of Religion is built upon the sands of their repentance and holy walking; having this rocky foundation laid in their hearts no more in a manner than the Papists lay it. Although such seem to hold strongly contrary to Papists; yet they are, in this chief point of salvation, of the Papists minds, coming forth with the Papists objections against it; and although it be the only sacred ordinance that God in his high wisdom hath appointed to be the only cause and means to make men to live

truly devout lives; yet such refrain not in their rotten wisdom of reason to belch out this blasphemy, that it opens the gate to all loose and wicked living, and are so far from continually pressing this point, by showing the horribleness of the least sin in the sight of God, and the excellency of this benefit, perfectly healing us from all sin in God's sight, and so planting it soundly in men's hearts to effect these happy ends, that almost they never speak of it, but find themselves grieved with them that do; or if their text chance to press them to it, they lightly touch it, and soon pass it over, being as it were glad when that text is past. Is this to keep to those foresaid most glorious truths of the excellency of Free Justification, which they so gloriously profess in words, and is it not rather before God and men a denying them in deeds; and thus do they in all the rest; for these that are in this literal knowledge, first, either they live ungodly lives; or secondly, but outwardly civil honest lives, caring for nothing more than their profits, honors, and pleasures; or thirdly, at the best, which is worst of all, do but delude the simple blind devoted people, with a legal zeal of holy walking for fear of punishment, or hope of reward, and speeding well for the same; seeming, yea, and being as hot as burning embers against outward vices, and earnestly calling for all active moral duties, which they call holy walking in all God's Commandments; as if herein did consist the main point of salvation; {do this and live;} and yet abound themselves with all manner of inward hidden corruptions, as envy, calumniating, slavish fear, and glorious outward painting of their old rotten Adam. All which is notably testified by the Doctrine of our Church, taught by the Martyrs and first Restorers of the Gospel in this land, saying thus, "By outward shows of good works they appear to the world." How? The most religious and holy men of all others, making the outside of the cup and platter {that is, the outward appearance both of their persons and vocations} so clean, that they seem to the world most perfect men. Wherein so perfect? Both in teaching and living; and yet because the inside is not clean, Christ {who sees their hearts not justified with his own righteousness} knows that they are in the sight of God most unholy, most abominable, and farthest from God of all men; their judgment being preposterous, their doctrine sown leaven of mingling the Law and the Gospel together, and so marring both; and their life the hidden secret hypocrite; that is, not suspecting themselves of hypocrisy, they delude their own selves with supposed sincere hearts, respecting {as they think} only God's glory; being inwardly full of all manner of filth, as pride, envy, covetousness, ambition, vain-glory, hatred, disdain, unbelief, conceitedness

of themselves, contempt of those whom they like not, calumniating them, and such like; and yet so adorning and painting their old Adam that reigns in them, with such a fair outward new coat, not of Christ's righteousness; {alone sufficient utterly to abolish their corruptions freely from before God;} but of their own righteousness, that they seem not only unto others, but also to their own selves in all respects amiable and excellent men; and such were they, that because they excelled in great learning, and were zealous towards God, {Rom.10:2,} in following righteousness by holy walking in all God's Commandments, {Rom.9:31,} serving God instantly day and night, {Acts 26:7,} said hereupon unto Christ, in the high conceit of their literal knowledge, "Are we blind also?" {Jn.9:40} Unto whom Christ answering, said, "If ye were blind, ye should have no sin; but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth." {vs.41} And thus much of the description of the bare literal knowledge, whereby men only sophisticating about the mysteries of Christ, would be Doctors and Teachers of the Word, but by not understanding what they say, nor whereof they affirm, {I Tim.1:7,} they neither in word, nor deed keep to that which they seem to hold, but speak flat contraries. John Eaton {Honeycombe of Free Justification by Christ Alone, 1642}

Gospel Objectors Exposed

One sort of objectors to free justification are such as being in name Protestants, and professing themselves utter enemies to Papists, in that {as they say} they will not give the least piece of justification to works and holy walking, and will seem both to themselves and others to hold free justification perfectly; and yet, because of their being in the dead faith, they do not spiritually understand it; and because by conceiving it after a carnal human witted fashion, they feel no sweetness therein. Therefore declining in affection unto the establishing of their own righteousness, they not only nullify the truth regarding justification, and make it as good as nothing; but also making the light of nature, {described in Rom.2:14,15,} and natural reason their chiefest guide, they thus weaken the faith of others, by running into the very objections of the Papists; and shake hands with them in the main points of salvation, with whom they profess to be at utter variance. And all this because they lie in a dead faith, whereby they understand not the nature and excellency of free justification; and yet one such may do us

more harm in weakening our faith than many Papists; not only, because they profess to be one with us and the same confession in letter, and so are like homebred flattering enemies; but also, because by great literal learning and teaching, they may bear a great name, as such as are alive, when by their false faith they be dead indeed. {Rev.3:1} Therefore that these objectors do not weaken our faith, we must learn to discern these underminers of truth. Peradventure some will say, how may we discern them? I answer, by knowing and diligently marking the nature of dead faith; which is this, to hold the very truth of God's Word after a sort, as far as the light of nature, good memory, and good human wit can reach; and herein to think themselves rich and increased in goods, having need of nothing; {Rev.3:17;} being ashamed not to hold as contrary to what a sound profession is thought to hold, sticking fast to such phrases of Scripture as seem to agree with their human wit and reason; but because such by hearing, do hear only after a literal manner, but do not understand; and by seeing, do see after a carnal human witted fashion, but do not perceive; {Mt.13:13,14;} therefore they talk of that which they hold, as men talk of things in their sleep, and can say Sibboleth, but not Shibboleth; {Judges 12:6;} that is, can say something, but not make a clear and perspicuous confession of the mysteries of Christ. – Then with Nicodemus they count it absurd, and do judge it very foolishness itself, {I Cor.2:14,} and cry out, “What thing is this? What new doctrine is this?” {Mk.1:27} “How can these things be?” {Jn.3:9} Then they fall a wrangling with Nicodemical conclusions, and do not keep neither in word nor deed to that which they hold; but speak like men in a spiritual frenzy with flat contradictions; and then fall to sophisticating, raging and calumniating; that is, to a changing and wresting one's words and meaning; and finally, if at length they be not renewed and changed with Nicodemus, they fall to railing and persecuting. {Acts 13:45-50} Thus by the excellency of Christ's benefits laid open, the thoughts of many hearts are opened to be very bad, that seemed a long time by an appearance of holy walking to be very good. {Lk.2:34,35} John Eaton {Honeycombe of Free Justification by Christ Alone, 1642}

Gospel Zeal for the Glory of Christ

With true faith that worketh by love, there follows inseparably a true right evangelical zeal of God's glory, whereby we feeling how by our original corruption, and by breaking the tenth commandment, and thereby the first commandment, and all the rest in our good works, whereby that saying of

James is true regarding our best works, "that whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all;" {2:10;} we find both ourselves and all our works and best actions to be so shut up under sin, {Gal.3:22,} that being truly humbled with a vile esteem of ourselves and all our best works, we do grant not with lip and tongue only {as many bastard Protestants do,} but do feel in our hearts in deed and truth, that all our righteousness is as foul, stained and filthy rags. {Is.64:6} Whereupon our hearts are so inflamed with such an high prizing and only esteeming of the wedding garment of Christ's obedience and righteousness perfectly justifying us, and all our works; that not only every true minister of the Gospel, but also every true Christian ceases all contention about works, and is carried with a zealous affection to know nothing among God's people except Jesus Christ and him crucified to justify them, {I Cor.2:2,} by which they are made such true burning coals of God's altar, so inflamed with this holy fire of Christ's love from heaven, that they cannot choose but inflame and kindle all others that come near them, caring for nothing but to be found ourselves, and to cause others to be found in Christ; that is, not having our own righteousness in esteem, which at the best is but man's glory before men only, {Rom.4:2,} but in the most precious robe of Christ's righteousness. John Eaton {Discovery of a most Dangerous Dead Faith, 1641}

Imputation

God's imputation of his Son's righteousness; for which cause the Apostle Paul saith, blessed is the man "unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works." {Rom.4:6} Hereupon he makes mention of this word 'imputing' and counting righteous, no less {as I take it} than eleven times, in that fourth chapter of Romans; which not only shows that it is an action wrought immediately by the very thought, as it were of God himself; and thereby must needs be very spiritual and mystical unto us, far above our reason, sense and feeling; but also it must needs be wrought upon us very freely, without any working of ours. So likewise we must mark that this imputing being an immediate act, proceeding; as it were, out of God's own breast, is not a light, small, weak and imaginary thing, like man's imputing, as the Papists imaginarily and scoffingly conceive; but God's imputation is a lively, mighty, operative and real working imputation, and compared to nothing like ours; for man may impute, and count a thing to be so or so, and yet the thing, if it were not such before, becomes such, never the more for our imputing or counting it, to be so; but God's imputing and counting,

being Almighty gives a real being and true existing of the thing before himself, as he counts it; for God did but count that there should be light, and there was light; and God did but count that his other creatures should be, and presently they were so as he counted; so God doth impute his Son's righteousness unto us, and counts us perfectly righteous in the same, and this imputing doth so operatively and really convey the righteousness of Christ upon us, as Paul testified; saying, "the righteousness of God, by faith of Jesus Christ," that is, not only unto all, but also upon all that do believe. {Rom.3:22} Though mystically above our sense and feeling; yet not imaginarily {as the Papists prattle against us,} nor yet only outwardly like painted tombs {as they likewise cavilingly object,} but truly both inwardly and outwardly are clothed with the same in the sight of God, and richly robed, and decked and adorned in the same; as the faithful soul in the prophet Isaiah joyfully confesses; saying, "I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God." Why? Because "he hath clothed me with the garment of salvation." What garment is that? Why, "he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." {Is.61:10} Hence are the Saints said so often in the Revelation, to be clothed with long white robes washed in the blood of the Lamb. John Eaton {Honeycombe of Free Justification by Christ Alone, 1642}

Imputation

This heavy laden conscience thus looking up to Christ for help and ease, being like the wounded Israelites looking up to the brazen serpent. God imputes to such his Son's righteousness, as the Holy Ghost testifieth, saying, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." {Rom.4:7} But because God's imputation is an immediate act of God himself, it is not a weak imaginary thing {as the papists blasphemously scoff} like man's imputation; but it is of such a strong and powerful real working, and effectual operation, that it conveys {as the sun conveys its beams into a dark house} that perfect righteousness of Christ, to be {as Paul saith,} in us, and upon us; {Rom.3:22;} so powerfully that we thereby are made of unjust, just before God; but how? Not inherently, and actively; but objectively and passively, as the dark house is made light with the sunbeams. For the Lord Christ {being of the Sun of Righteousness, Mal.4:2,} doth in such sort communicate his righteousness to us, that after a certain marvelous manner, he pours the force thereof into us, so much as

serves to satisfy the justice of God. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners," before they have done any evil work, "so by the obedience of one {Christ} shall many be made righteous," before they have done any good work. {Rom.5:15,19} "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many {that is, make many just and righteous;} for he shall bear their iniquities." {Is.53:11} John Eaton {Honeycombe of Free Justification by Christ Alone, 1642}

Kingdom of Heaven

Hence it is, for this inestimable greatness of glory wrought, though mystically, yet truly and spiritually, upon the children of God by justification, fully revealed and exhibited in the Gospel; {Rom.3:21;} that the state and condition of God's children, under the time of the Gospel is everywhere in the New Testament called the Kingdom of Heaven; which when it began to be preached, suffered violence, and the violent took it by force; {Mt.11:12;} for who would not press with all violence into such free given glorious righteousness, so certainly placing us in the kingdom of heaven in this life, and in the kingdom of glory in the life to come? For which cause Christ himself testified of John the Baptist; saying, "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist." {Mt.11:11} Why? Because he passed all the other prophets by preaching and sealing by baptism a fuller exhibiting of the glory of Free Justification, by pointing to Christ, and saying, "behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world;" {Jn.1:29;} and was filled with joy in hearing the voice of the Bridegroom; that was now come to the bride to effect the same; {Jn.3:29;} whereby, even in his days "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence," and the violent took it by force. Yet "notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." By which kingdom of heaven he doth not mean the place of glory above, but the time from which Christ, groaning out his own blood and life upon the cross, cried out, that the very thing which John the Baptist spake of was finished, {Jn.19:30,} namely, that the 70 weeks of years, whereof Daniel prophesied, that Christ should die to finish transgression, and to make an end of sin, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, was now fully accomplished, because with that one offering of Himself upon the cross, he hath made perfect forever all them that are sanctified. {Heb.10:14} Whereby {as Calvin truly saith} for the inestimable flowing forth of grace,

and the un-comparable strength and glory that, above the days of John, at length appeared in his resurrection; it is now not without cause said, that the heavenly kingdom of God is erected upon Earth, for the bringing in of such an everlasting and glorious righteousness, as makes us in the sight of God perfect forever; making also the true believer, that by the eye of faith, sees and enjoys the same, to rejoice with joy unspeakable and glorious. {I Pet.1:8} John Eaton {Honeycombe of Free Justification by Christ Alone, 1642}

Justification

Justification is when we feeling what lost creatures we are in our own selves, and in all our works and holy walks by reason of our sins, and a looking up unto Christ, are by the power of God's imputation so clothed with a wedding garment of Christ's own perfect righteousness, that of unjust we are made just before God; that is, all our sins are utterly abolished out of God's sight, and we are made from all spot of sin perfectly holy and righteous in the sight of God freely; and this is God's pardon or forgiveness {which few truly understand} great above man's; glorious and wonderful like God himself. {Acts 13:38-40} John Eaton {Honeycombe of Free Justification by Christ Alone, 1642}

Justification

The first part of free justification is that, whereby we being by the power of God's imputation so clothed with the wedding garment of Christ's perfect righteousness, that of unjust we are made just before God; have thereby all our sins that we feel daily dwelling in us, so {above our reason, sense, and feeling, that it may be by the faith of God's power} quite taken away from before God, and so utterly abolished out of his sight, that we have not one spot or wrinkle of sin, or any such thing in the sight of God; because the blood of Christ doth make us clean from all sin; as the Scriptures following do abundantly testify: "In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found;" {Jer.50:20;} but how comes this to pass? Thus, "behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." {Jn.1:29} Here he lays forth briefly; yet plainly, the chief office of Christ; namely, by the sacrifice of his death, he reconciles men unto God; as if he should say, whatsoever unrighteousness there is that may alienate or estrange men from God, by Christ is taken away. This is the sum of all

blessings, upon which all the rest depend; for out of this Fountain do the streams of all good things flow forth upon us. But how does Christ take them away? Objectively and passively to us; that is, we being no agents and doers in this business, but mere recipients; because his righteousness wherewith he clothes us, doth as perfectly abolish from before God all our sins, as the sun beams abolish darkness out of a dark house; as Christ testifies by the prophet Isaiah saying, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins; return unto me; for I have redeemed thee." {Is.43:25 & 44:22} – It is the nature of faith to feel nothing; but letting go carnal reason, closes her eyes, and opens her ears to that which is spoken by God, and cleaves to the Word spoken both living and dying; and thus glorifies the Word of the Lord, {Acts 13:38,} which indeed works effectually in them that believe. Therefore although the feeling of sin is left within us, only to the end as it drives us to Christ, and to make faith the more abound; yet hath Christ taken away our sins from before God and utterly abolished them. John Eaton {Honeycombe of Free Justification by Christ Alone, 1642}

Justification by Christ Alone

Let us know for a certainty that free justification is the very head, heart, and soul of all Christian religion, and true worship of God; without the true and joyful knowledge thereof, our religion is headless, our profession and worship heartless, and our very zealous conversation is a mere corruption of the Gospel, and rottenness, like a body without a soul that stinketh before God. Briefly in a word, as the perfect righteousness of Christ is only worthy to be acknowledged for the wedding garment; because all the righteousness of our imperfect sanctification is {as the Prophet saith} as filthy, menstrous, stained rags - Isaiah 64:6; so true faith of free justification, being the having on of this wedding-garment, because it alone doth truly abolish all the filthy nakedness of our sins out of God's sight, and it alone doth make us perfectly holy, and sufficiently righteous in the sight of God freely, without works. Therefore it alone doth make us fit brides, and is only meet to marry us to so glorious a Bridegroom, as is the King of glory - Christ Jesus. John Eaton {Honeycombe of Free Justification by Christ Alone, 1642}

Justification by Christ Alone

An effect or fruit declaring the utility of Free Justification is that it worketh a good judgment, and right discerning of all religions, works, and worships to the utter overthrowing of all superstitions, sects, and schisms; and doth reduce people from their contentions, and dangerous by-paths, and doth rectify their blind legal zeal mentioned in Romans 10:3; declining to sundry sects, and contentious opinions; and brings them to the pure, and sincere worship of God, in spirit and truth; that is, in one faith only, and one baptism, Eph.4:2-6; unto which they cannot be won, but by understanding the excellency of free justification, and how complete they are made by it alone before God, Col.2:10; as Paul testifieth; saying, I bear them record, they have a zeal of God. - True, but yet they were ignorant of one main point, by which they were ignorant of all; for they only knew not free justification, which is the form, soul, heart, and life of all the rest; because that alone giveth, both unto God, and unto Christ their full glory. John Eaton {Honeycombe of Free Justification by Christ Alone, 1642}

Justification by Christ Alone

Only are people newborn again truly, and Christ is formed truly in them, when for the assurance of their salvation, they wholly rest in the joyful knowledge and full sufficiency of their free justification; for then is Christ rightly formed in them. This is the antidote and preservative against all the sweet and poisonous doctrines of our works, and vain-glorious well doings; this is the preservative against these infections and contagious times; this is the ark of Noah, that will bear us up above all the floods and billows of these tempestuous days of sundry sects, schisms, and straggling opinions; this is the anchor whereunto the cable of our faith being firmly fastened will make us to stand strong against all the violent ways and winds of Satan's blustering temptations, both on the right hand, and on the left. Let us know for a certainty that free justification is the very head, heart, and soul of all Christian religion, and true worship of God; without the true and joyful knowledge thereof, our religion is headless, our profession and worship heartless, and our very zealous conversation is a mere corruption of the Gospel, and rottenness, like a body without a soul that stinketh before God. Briefly in a word, as the perfect righteousness of Christ is only worthy to be acknowledged for the wedding garment; because all the righteousness of our imperfect sanctification is {as the Prophet saith} as filthy, menstrous,

stained rags - Isaiah 64:6; so true faith of free justification, being the having on of this wedding-garment, because it alone doth truly abolish all the filthy nakedness of our sins out of God's sight, and it alone doth make us perfectly holy, and sufficiently righteous in the sight of God freely, without works. Therefore it alone doth make us fit brides, and is only meet to marry us to so glorious a Bridegroom, as is the King of glory - Christ Jesus. John Eaton {Honeycombe of Free Justification by Christ Alone, 1642}

Justification by Christ Alone

The Necessity of Righteousness - "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe. Rom.3:21,22." Here he handles the principle and chiefest point of salvation, which is concerning Christian Righteousness, or concerning Christian wisdom, or the glory of Christ. For if we seek at God's hand for salvation; that is, for life, we must first seek for Righteousness; by the which being reconciled unto God, we being thus in His favor, do obtain life. For that we may be beloved of God, we must first of necessity be righteous, seeing he hateth unrighteousness. For whereas the Gospel is said to be the power of God unto salvation, even therefore, because it reveals the righteousness of God, we must therein mark the necessity of righteousness unto eternal life; such a necessity antecedence there is of righteousness, as that without it there is no hope to be saved; God's justice inclining him to punish, his purity to hate all unrighteousness. For God is of pure eyes and cannot see evil, he cannot behold wickedness, but he must needs destroy the sin or the sinner. Habak.1:13. Because God being the sovereign Righteousness, he must needs hate us, whilst he sees us in our sins; then standeth it in hand for us to be made righteous, before we can be in God's favor. Yea, I add further, that it must be with such a righteousness, so completely perfect, as that it may endure the strict censure of God's justice. Gal.3:10. Now then the exhortation of our Saviour easily followeth; that we should therefore first and principally above all things seek the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, Mat.6:33. Such a righteousness as may stand before God, and endure the trial of his justice. Therefore is Justification the very sum of the Gospel; yea, this is the sum of all the benefits of Christ; for with them that are made righteous and reconciled, God is present; he endues them with new light, and with eternal life, he hears them, and defends them in all their troubles. Therefore he handles here the principle

and chiefest point of our salvation; namely - Justification; the pure knowledge whereof alone saveth the Church; for it is the knowledge of the truth and of life, for which the Gospel is called the power of God unto salvation. On the contrary, when this knowledge of Justification is lost, together with it is lost Christ, and life, and the Church; neither any judgment of doctrines or of spirits is left, but darkness and blindness possesseth all things. Therefore it is the duty of a good Pastor, that he suffer not himself to be drawn away with any disputations from the daily and continual handling of this point. So strange it is to carnal reason, so dark to the world, so many enemies it hath, that except the Spirit of God from above doth reveal it, learning cannot reach it, wisdom is offended, nature is astonished, devils do not know it, men do persecute it. Briefly; as there is no way to life so easy, so there is none so hard. Easy to whom it is given from above; hard to the carnal sense not yet inspired. The ignorance thereof is the root of all errors, sects, and divisions in the world. Yea, I do therefore so much beat upon it, because I know that Satan goeth about nothing more, than that he may take away this knowledge from the sight and minds of men. Hitherto principally tend all the stirs which he raiseth up both publically and privately, that men busying their heads in new disputations, should forget this article; for Satan feels the force and power of this article. For Justification, by which of unjust we are made just before God, is the strong Rock and foundation of Christian Religion. Upon this foundation of God's free promise and grace first builded the patriarchs, kings, and prophets. Upon the same foundation also Christ the Lord built his Church. For this doctrine advances and sets forth the true glory of Christ, and suppresses the vain glory of man; this whosoever denies, is not to be reputed for a Christian man, nor for a setter forth of Christ's glory, but for an adversary to Christ and his gospel. By the preaching of this doctrine the Devil is overthrown, his kingdom is destroyed; the law, sin, and death, {wherewith as most mighty and invincible tyrants, he hath brought all mankind in subjection under his dominion} are wrested out of his hands. Briefly, his prisoners are translated out of the kingdom of darkness, into the kingdom of light and liberty. Should the Devil suffer all this? Should not the father of lies employ all his force, and subtle policies to darken, to corrupt, and utterly root out this doctrine of salvation and everlasting life? Indeed Paul complains in all his epistles, that even in his days the Devil showed himself a cunning work-man in his business, by darkening and hindering this doctrine of justification. Now for us, let this suffice in this place, to stir up God's children by these and the like reasons,

to fortify their judgments in this main point of Christian faith. The Article of Justification is the very sum of the Gospel; that once corrupted, there can be no soundness; that truly and thoroughly understood, and believed, and applied, arms against all assaults of Satan; and let us be exhorted, as to edify ourselves in all other points of our most holy faith; so specially in this, which who so holds not aright, surely he holds not the Head, nor ever can be saved. Thus we see the necessity of earnest teaching, and diligent learning of this doctrine of Justification! John Eaton {Honeycombe of Free Justification by Christ Alone, 1642}

Justification & Faith

Let us therefore come unto their objections; whereof because they would gather an whole army, and do rank them into three bands; as first Scriptures, secondly Examples, and thirdly Reasons. Let us set upon some of the principal objections, as it were upon the chief captains, and the rest like rascally soldiers will soon take them to their heels. The first, whereof is this: What; do you define justification to be such a strange and powerful imputation of Christ's righteousness unto us, that of unjust it makes us just before God; that is, perfectly holy and righteous from all spot of sin in the sight of God freely? Yea and so perfectly righteous, that God sees no sin in his justified children as your Scriptures would seem to press? Why, but sins we have in us, which is undeniable; for, who can say that his heart is pure? {James 3:2} If any man say he hath no sin, he deceives himself, for in many things we sin all; {I Jn.1:8;} and therefore shall not the Lord, who is omnipotent and omniscient, and the searcher of all hearts and reins, {Jer.17:10,} shall not he see sin in them? Why, can anything be hid out of God's sight? It is a madness to think so. Assertion: Unto which I answer, and grant, that we all have sin in us, and that in many things we sin all; yea, I say more, that we all sin, not only in many things, {as you say,} but even in all things, and {which these objections cannot abide} that all our very righteousness of holy walking is as a unclean rag; that is, mortal and damnable sin, if God should behold it out of Christ; for this sinning in all our actions is our misery before God; and he that desires not to be delivered of these evils in the sight of God, exposes the very ground of his hypocrisy; namely, that he never yet understood, much less felt, what a horrible thing the least sin is in the sight of God; for this is our spiritual leprosy before God; this is our spiritual plague, and sickness unto death. Shall any man therefore conclude that because the justified children of God have sin, and

see sin and feel sin in themselves, therefore they have sin in the sight of God; and that he sees sin in them, when by making them perfectly holy and righteous from all spot of these and all other sins before himself, he hath utterly abolished them out of his sight. Is not God able to abolish those sins that we feel daily dwelling within us, out of his own sight; although he doth not abolish them out of our sight that we may here live by the faith of his power? Certainly, this were to have as much faith as an ox or horse, for they believe but what they see and feel; but it is the true nature and the very essence of faith to believe clean contrary to that which we see and feel in ourselves, if God hath spoken the contrary; and hath God not only spoken the contrary, saying to his Church and justified children that indeed feel, see and complain of their spiritual blackness; "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." {Song 4:7} God sees no iniquity in his true spiritual Church, nor does he see transgression in his true justified Israel; and hath not only with admiration expressly spoken it; but also given the means to effect, and bring it to pass; namely, that the blood of Jesus Christ his Son doth make us clean, even from that which doth defile us before God, {Mk.7:21,22;} that is, from all sin itself. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." {I Jn.1:7} And hath he not only spoken, and given the powerful means to effect it; but also sworn it, saying, "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. 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. In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." {Is.45:23-25} As indeed, there can be no greater glorying that we are justified than this, that God sees no sin in us; by reason that being clothed with Christ's righteousness, we are made thereby perfectly holy and righteous from all spot of sin in the sight of God freely. And when, not only God the Father hath thus spoken and sworn, but also Christ the Son hath really given himself to make us holy, and hath made us clean that he might make us to himself a glorious Church and people, not having {now at this present time, as both the Greek and Latin particles signify} one spot or wrinkle of sin, or any such thing; because by his death upon the cross he hath made us so holy, that we are without all blame and without all fault in his sight; continuing as rooted and grounded in this faith. {Eph.5:25-27, Col.1:22,23} And hath the Father not only sworn it, and by his Son wrought it, but hath also sealed the truth and power of the same upon us, by his own

seal; and not only to seal it upon us, but also confirmed the assurance thereof unto us by so many faithful dispensers of God's mysteries, as with a cloud of witnesses. Shall we, notwithstanding all these sayings and doings of God say in the secret of our hearts by unbelief, "hold thy peace God; hold thy peace Christ; you may say what you will, but I can by a subtle distinction of mine own brain make innovation from all this, and will believe my sins, sight and feeling rather than you." Is this faith? Is not this to make God no God; and to make our reason, sense, and feeling our God? If we had no sin in us, and if we did see, and feel no sin in us, what place were there left for faith to believe these sayings of God, that we have no sin in the sight of God? But now because we have sin in us, and do see it, and feel it; therefore should we so much the rather upon these sayings of God believe the clean contrary to our sense and feeling, that we have no sin in the sight of God. This is true faith, and where there is reasoning from sense and feeling there is not faith. - If we believe that God is able above our reason, sense, and feeling by his own Son's blood and righteousness utterly to abolish out of his own sight all our sins, and that he doth make us whiter than snow, from them all; so that we have not now one spot or wrinkle of sin that defiles us, nor any such thing in the sight of God, and that he is faithful to do this, as he hath spoken it, {Eph.5:26,27,} contrary to our reason, sense and feeling; then have we true faith; then should we truly glorify God in Christ, and find sanctification and all other blessings both spiritual and temporal with a fuller hand than we do; which people do much fail of, because they mark not, that there is a twofold making of us clean and abolishing of our sins made mention of in God's Word, and testified by his Spirit. First, a mystical and secret abolishing of our sins, and wrought only by Christ and his righteousness in the sight of God only, mentioned, John 1:29; saying, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world;" and, I Jn.1:7, "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin;" and in many other suchlike places of Scripture, which is called mystical, because it is wrought, seen, and apprehended above reason, sense and feeling; that is, by faith only, and is the glory of Christ's Godhead. {Heb.1:3} Secondly, a palpable abolishing of our sins, wrought within us by the aid of God's Spirit, to our sense and feeling by sanctification {that is, mortification} as mentioned by Paul, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God;" {II Cor.7:1;} and John, "every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure;" {I

Jn.3:3} which latter way we shall never feel to be perfected in us, until the life to come, that there may be place for the first way, and for faith; for, as I said before, what place were there left for faith, to believe that Christ hath made us perfectly holy and righteous in the sight of God freely, if we could see and feel ourselves to be so in the sight of God? But if sticking only to this latter sense, we idly prattle and talk by the light of nature, of God's power and presence, and all seeing and all searching nature, after a Gentilish and Heathenish manner, to the frustrating of his Word and promises; because we see and feel the contrary; as if God were not able, or cannot abolish that sin, which we daily feel dwelling within us, out of his own sight above our reason, sense and feeling; then we reject faith, dishonor God, rob him of his power, spoil him of his truth and find him to be no more our God than the Gentiles and heathens did; although they also talked goodly and vain-gloriously of his power, providence, presence, all seeing and all searching nature. For that saying of the learned is most true, that it is not the light of nature, or reason, talking and discoursing of the all mighty power, providence, and presence of God that gives him the glory of his Godhead; but it is faith only, placing God's power, and all seeing nature in the fulfilling of his promises, and verifying the truth of them to be in us and upon us, {which unto the natural man seems foolishness;} and gives him truly the glory of his Godhead; whereas the contrary seeming to glorify him, doth indeed rob him of the glory of his grace. John Eaton {Honeycombe of Free Justification by Christ Alone, 1642}

Justification & Perfect Cleansing by the Blood of Christ

Hereby are overthrown all the other benefits of the Gospel; as first, God being the Fountain of all justice and righteousness; as God cannot but detest and abhor us, as long as he sees us in our sins; the filthiness thereof is such in his sight, until we be first made clean from it. Secondly, the Holy Ghost will not come to dwell in such a foul swine of ugly sin. Thirdly, Christ will not knit such soul ugly members into himself, as the members must be suitable to the Head. Fourthly, Christ will not marry unto Himself such a sow, or filthy swine, until he have washed her clean from that which doth deform and defile, which is the ugly sin itself. Fifthly, God will not acknowledge, much less adopt for his sons and daughters, those whom he sees full of the image of the devil. Sixthly, no unclean thing can enter into the kingdom of Christ, which is the kingdom of heaven here on earth; for except a man be born again; that is, made a perfect new creature to the eyes of God by

justification, and declare the same by being made a new creature to the eyes of men by sanctification, he cannot see the kingdom of God, because the kingdom of God is nothing but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. {Rom.14:17} Thus have I stood more largely in confusing this objection; because I find by daily experience, that this cavil against the excellency of free justification doth stick so fast between the teeth of natural reason, sense, and feeling, that many stumbling {as I said before} at this block of their sense and feeling, do greatly endanger the breaking of the neck of their faith; and so make it a dead faith, good for nothing, in no wise to glorify God. John Eaton {Honeycombe of Free Justification by Christ Alone, 1642}

Justification Truth

This joyful right knowledge is wrought and attained by this means; namely, by marking and often rubbing the memory, and by deeply meditating upon God's Word of grace, and the testimonies of the faithful Expositors thereof, as they express the excellency of Free Justification in the truth of faith. For as it is necessary that we dive into the knowledge of this benefit, that our understanding may be enlightened and possessed with this most wonderful truth of God; so it is necessary that we look into the excellency thereof; in order that our will and affections may be ravished and carried after the goodness and excellency of the benefit; this being the right true means of increasing true faith, and of going with a right foot to the truth of the Gospel. – Be careful to keep and hold fast this precious benefit; and not only to keep it, but to also keep it pure, without the mixing and mingling of works with it, resting wholly upon it for thy full, free, and perfect salvation; lest thou lose, with the foolish Galatians this main truth of thy free salvation; and to that end meditate much and often upon the excellency of free justification in Christ, and ponder the sayings of the learned writers; and mark their reasons of true faith grounded upon the Scriptures; and believe according as God speaks in these eminent Scriptures; and decline not from them to the conceits and reasons of reason. John Eaton {Honeycombe of Free Justification by Christ Alone, 1642}

Laborers Together in Christ

My second answer to this objection, that other Ministers do speak, and seem to hold the contrary, is this; that it is an undoubted truth, that although all brethren in the Ministry, may be enlightened with one and the same truth;

yet all are not enlightened with one and the same measure of truth; who thereupon may argue about a matter, but not be of a contrary judgment and resolution, flatly to hold the contrary. And it is possible that one may have labored more, and so see further in some one point than another; though he come behind many others, which are rich in all other gifts, and of excellent learning; who yet should show themselves to be of Cain's brood, and Devils incarnate, if we should willingly and willfully envy an higher talent in our brother in some one gift; and we be all of us set and appointed by God to be, by our particular gifts, mutual helpers of another, but not hinderers and enviers one of another. John Eaton {Honeycombe of Free Justification by Christ Alone, 1642}

Law and Gospel Distinctions

This is to preach the Gospel, this is to make our feet beautiful in bringing the glad tidings of peace, and the glad tidings of good things. But if we {ministers of the Gospel} as some fail too dangerously herein, do not wisely discern, and heedfully distinguish between such voices of the Law, and the voice of the Gospel, especially in this essential difference; that the Law only teaches us what we ought to do; but the Gospel teaches what we ought to receive; therefore the Law and the Gospel are two contrary doctrines; for Moses with his Law is a severe exactor, requiring of us by fear, and hope of reward, what we should work, and that we should give. Briefly, it requireth by precepts, and exacteth by threatenings. On the contrary, the Gospel giveth freely, and requires of us nothing else, but to hold out our hands, and to receive that which is given. Now to exact and to give are clean contrary, and cannot stand together; because the voice of the Gospel stands only in freely receiving the good things of God to the praise of the glory of his grace. On the contrary, the Law and works consists in exacting with threats, in doing by works, and in giving to God; but faith and the voice of the Gospel requires no works of us, or that we should yield and give anything unto God, but that we believing the promise of God should receive of Him. Whereupon the voice of the Law exacteth and constraineth men to holy walking by fear of punishment, and hope of reward, and maketh hypocrites; but the voice of the Gospel constraineth to holy walking by love, and maketh true Christians. And if this difference be not marked in reading the Scripture, and distinctly applied to due persons in preaching, the Law and the Gospel are mixed and confounded together; and so neither true Law preached, nor true Gospel; but an hodgepodge of both, to the marring of both; just like the

mingling and mixing together of water and wine, which maketh corrupted matter of both, and is rejected of God. {Is.1:22} - Because commonly the greatest multitude lie under the Law; therefore doth Christ and the Apostles {as it is there said} much and often supply the part of Moses; and as Christ himself until his death was under the Law, {which Law he came not to break, but to fulfill,} so his sermons, in their preceptive parts, run all upon the perfect doctrine and works of the Law, showing and teaching what we ought to do by the right Law of justice, and what danger ensueth in not performing the same. All which places, though they be contained in the book of the New Testament, yet are they to be referred to the doctrine of the Law. As for example where Christ thus preacheth: "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God, &c." {Mt.5:8} Again; "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." {Mt.18:3} "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." {Mt.7:21} The parable of the unkind servant justly cast into prison, for not forgiving his fellow servant. {Mt.18:21-35} The casting of the rich glutton into hell fire. {Lk.16:19-31} These with many other suchlike places revealing sin, and threatening punishment do pertain to the doctrine of the Law. So then to know when the Law speaketh, and when the Gospel speaketh, and skillfully to discern the voice of the one from the voice of the other, that neither preachers nor hearers take the Law for the Gospel, nor the Gospel for the Law; this rule is to be observed, that when there is any moral work commanded to be done upon pain of punishment, or upon promise of any reward, either temporal or eternal; there is to be understood the voice of the Law. On the contrary, where the promise of life, favor, salvation or any blessings and benefits are granted unto us freely, without all our deservings, and simply without any condition annexed of any Law, either natural, ceremonial, or moral; all those places, whether they be read in the Old Testament or in the New Testament are to be referred to the voice and doctrine of the Gospel; hitherto this witness, which rule diligently observed, hath especially these two excellent uses. First, it serves to apply the Law and the Gospel rightly to their right due persons; as not to give the mourning gown to a marrying person, and the wedding garment to a funeral corpse; but to give the mourning gown to the funeral corpse to whom it belongs, and the wedding garment to the marrying person to whom it belongs. Secondly, it serves to give to each their due proper force, strength, and power; as to the Law, her due terrors and severity, being altogether

killing; and to the Gospel, her due sweetness and glory, being altogether quickening. But if preachers neglect this rule, and so taking the Law for the Gospel, and the Gospel for the Law, do confound them by mixing and mingling them together, either in their essence, or objects, or end; either directly and professedly, as the Papists do, or indirectly by preposterous urging men to a constrained righteousness by legal terrors, then {as Luther truly says,} they pervert the Gospel, and become the ministers of the devil; and yet such perverters of the Gospel can abide nothing less than to hear that they are perverters of the Gospel, and the apostles of the devil; nay rather, they glory above others in the name of Christ, and boast themselves to be the most sincere preachers of the Gospel; but because they mingle the Law with the Gospel, they must needs be perverters of the Gospel; because it doth not only blemish and darken the knowledge of grace, but also it doth take away Christ, with all his benefits, and utterly overthroweth the Gospel. John Eaton {Honeycombe of Free Justification by Christ Alone, 1642}

Law and Gospel Distinctions

Surely the apples, nuts and cakes {blessings;} and the rod of temporal punishments {cursings;} with which God did govern that first people, as little children, buried by Paul, Gal.3:25, ever since the coming of Christ, and now rotten, are fit foundations for their childish and rotten buildings; not only these do thus play the children again; but also we ministers of this glory of the gospel, too many amongst us, do not only limp in our practice, and lisp in our speech, but even halt downright; being so far from passing John the Baptist in opening the kingdom of heaven, that we come not near him; neither in his inward fullness of joy in hearing the voice of the Bridegroom, that then was come to enrich so royally the bride; nor in outward washing the people from all their sins; that is, in not preaching and opening the glory of free justification as he did; much less do we lay out the glory, that dos exceed in glory. But contra wise, we slide back to the legal teaching of the Old Testament, from which we not understanding the intent of God in such high commending, and sharp exacting of works and legal righteousness, do fetch our principal vein of preaching; and do make it our common and chiefest manner of teaching, only a little as the old prophets did, to glance at free justification, mercy and grace in general terms; but all our main labor is to command things that are right, and to forbid wicked things, to promise rewards to the followers of righteousness, and to threaten punishments to the transgressors; which seems in preachers and people a

good and plausible course to flesh and blood, because it is the teaching of reason, and the light of nature described, Rom.2:14,15, to be thus in the very Gentiles; namely, that "the Gentiles which have not the Law, do by nature the things contained in the Law;" much more then do they approve and allow of the hearing of it; "for they have the effect of the Law written in their hearts accusing them" with fear of punishment for their evil doings, and excusing them with hope of speeding well for their well doings. This kind of teaching the people do like and applaud as agreeing with that light of nature; but what comes hereof? Truly we sew up again the veil that was rent in two pieces, from the top to the bottom; we shut up the holy of holies; we hide and darken, if not put out the benefits of Christ; preaching as if the children of God were not made perfectly holy and righteous from all spot of sin in the sight of God freely. We confound the Old Testament with the New; we bring back the full grown heir to school again to be whipped of his school master, contrary to the express doctrine and direction of the Holy Ghost, saying, that after faith is come {that is Christ - the object of faith,} we are no longer under a school master, Gal.3:25. - O that our tongues were united, and our lips touched with the burning coal from the Altar Christ, that we might lay out the worth and glory of these things, then should we be right ministers of the gospel of Christ; then should we make our feet beautiful, by bringing these glad tidings of peace, and these glad tidings of good things, not confounding but truly distinguishing between the glory of the Old Testament, and the exceeding glory of the New. John Eaton {Honeycombe of Free Justification by Christ Alone, 1642}

Necessity of Divine Illumination by Christ

The spiritual knowledge, and right illumination, by the true spiritual learning, whereof the Prophet thus speaketh, saying, "and they shall be all taught of God;" is likewise {that we may not be babes in the knowledge thereof} as largely described by the Apostle, First Corinthians, chapter 2, from verse 9 to the very end of the Chapter, saying thus, "As it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." But, some will say, if they be such things as neither eye hath seen, nor ear hath heard, nor have entered into the heart of man, what is any man the better for such things? True saith the Apostle, not to the heart of the natural man, {vs.14,} but yet God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep

things of God; "for {saith he} what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him; even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. 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;" but the natural man, the man endued only with a mere earthly insight, perceiveth not, nor receiveth "the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned," and so forth to the end of the chapter; out of which two descriptions both of the literal knowledge, before expressed; and of the spiritual knowledge, as so largely described by the Apostle, let us {because to discern these two types of knowledge, the one from the other is a point of great moment, the one being but a condemning knowledge, making our damnation only the greater; and the other being a true saving knowledge;} let us, I say, for further perspicuity and clearness herein mark some main and principal differences whereby they may be discerned the one from the other, wherein for brevities sake I will only briefly touch these six following. First, the spiritual knowledge apprehends the things which neither eye hath seen, nor ear hath heard, nor the heart of natural man can conceive; that is, it conceives the mysteries of God above reason; yea, and contrary to natural reason, sense, and feeling; but the literal knowledge apprehends the mysteries of God after but a carnal manner, as they are new-fashioned; as it were, made agreeable to reason, sense, and feeling; and hence come so many objections from reason, sense, and feeling. Secondly, the literal knowledge so knows the mysteries of God's Word, as a man knows a thing by reading of it, {Rom.2:18,} or as a man knows a thing that is told him of a strange Country; but he hath no experimental certainty of it in himself, whereby it is true in such that is written, "by hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive." {Matt.13:14} The spiritual knowledge so knows the mysteries of Christ, as he knows a thing that sees it with his very eyes, and hath experimental feeling of it in his own self; so that he that is in the literal knowledge only is like a man that lying in the morning in his bed, and peradventure seeing a little by the holes and crevices of his windows, may talk of the daylight, and of the actions of the daylight to be done in the same; but because his windows and doors are closed shut, he still without doing anything, lies in darkness; but he that is in the spiritual way of true gospel knowledge, is like the one that is abroad in the open clear morning, working and walking by the light of the same. Thirdly, the literal knowledge

doth know; as it were, by hearsay many things, by which they think themselves rich, and increased in goods, and have need of nothing; but it doth not see the deep things of God; therefore they are raised up to no joy and zeal for the deepness and greatness of the same; but the spiritual knowledge doth see the deep things of God, {I Cor.2:10;} that is, as Beza well expressed it; the most excellent evangelical doctrine, the excellency of the benefits of the Gospel, working joy, and zeal of God's glory by discerning the greatness and benefits wrought upon us; and from a lack thereof flows that cold and formal working of great learned Clerks, making a show of doing something, and thinking within their hearts that to proceed any further is needless; but they that are in the spiritual knowledge do think both that there is need, and also that they can never do enough. Fourthly, the literal knowledge judgeth of the mysteries of the Gospel, by the spirit of the world; that is, after an human witted fashion, saying the same thing that the spiritual enlightened child of God doth, as far as natural reason, and human wit can reach; but pulls down God's thoughts in the mysteries and benefits of the Gospel, and makes them like unto man's thoughts; for whereas the Spirit of God useth by certain human phrases and similitudes, to descend down to our weak capacity {not to the intent that we should dwell in them, but that we should; as it were, by a ladder reached down to us, ascend up to the height and excellency of God's working and dealing upon us, correspondent to the glory of his great majesty;} they that are in this literal knowledge do stick fast in the human phraseology; as it were, in the foot and first step of the Ladder; but ascend not to the greatness and excellency of the work of God, correspondent to the greatness and excellency of his Majesty; whereby they hold fast to those phrases that are correspondent to human reason, and to good human wit; but cannot abide to have those human phrases reduced and understood according to spiritual phrases, expressing in the same case, the true nature and excellent working of God above reason, and passing those human similitudes; and so compare, and flatly measure, spiritual things with earthly things; because as a learned Dispenser of God's mysteries saith, "then said they unto him, Say now Shibboleth; and he said Sibboleth; for he could not frame to pronounce it right." {Judg.12:6} They can say regarding mysteries and benefits of Christ Sibboleth, but not Shibboleth; that is, they come very near the truth, and are as Christ said to the young man, "not far from the kingdom of heaven;" but they cannot frame to pronounce the aspirate that hath God in it; that is, they cannot yield to the truth and mystery correspondent to the nature, and

perfect working of God; for that is foolishness unto them. {I Cor.2:10} But on the other side, they that are in the spiritual knowledge have received not the spirit of the world to judge worldly, carnally, and after an human witted fashion of the mysteries and benefits of the Gospel; but have received the Spirit, which is of God, that they may see after a spiritual manner the things freely given of God; that is, correspondent to the high nature, perfect operation and glorious working of God; whereby, although they gladly use the similitudes and human representations in the Scriptures, as an help to their weak capacities; yet they stick not in them, but ascend by them, as it were by steps, to the high working of God above all human representations, and earthly excellencies; not comparing or measuring spiritual things with earthly things, but measuring spiritual things, as the Apostle saith, with spiritual; yea, even with God Himself, the spiritual Worker and Author thereof; making them in our apprehension corresponded and agreeable to the Almighty nature, and glorious working of so wonderful a workman. Fifthly, the literal knowledge although it be ever so great, doth not change him that is in it; but leaves him in his former old nature, and corrupt conversation; as if he were profane, it leaves him still profane. If he were merely honest in a civil way; if he were blindly zealous with a legal zeal, it leaves him still blindly zealous with a legal zeal, of advancing works, works and doing; as we may be by the example of Paul, who before his conversion, followed the righteousness of the Law, {Rom.9:31,} and was zealous towards God, {Acts 22:3,} serving God instantly day and night, {Acts 26:7,} and yet was but in this literal knowledge. As this literal knowledge finds a man in death and condemnation; so it leaves him in death and condemnation; except that it leaves him in greater condemnation, than if he never knew anything at all. But the spiritual knowledge wholly changeth him that is in it, and makes him to leave his old corrupt course of life, and to live a godly conversation; and not only makes him that was profane, or merely civil, to become zealous of God's glory; but also changeth the legal zeal of advancing works into the Evangelical zeal of advancing Christ's benefits, and to do all good duties zealously in mere thankfulness for the same; because he that by his spiritual knowledge with open face beholds {as in a looking glass} the glory of the Lord, is changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord. {II Cor.3:18} Sixthly and lastly, as the spiritual knowledge discerning the deep things of God, counts them and embraces them as precious and glorious; so the literal knowledge resting in the bare letter, cannot perceive, nor receive the deep things of God; that is,

the excellency of Christ's benefits, because it counts and rejects them as absurd and foolish; yea, very foolishness itself; {I Cor.2:14;} and because great learning counts it her wisdom to confute that which she takes for foolishness; hereupon arises unfailingly against the preaching of the excellency of Christ's benefits strong sophisticating, and bold contention; because the literal learning being mounted up upon the horse of pride {for this knowledge puffeth up, I Cor.8:1;} and being pricked forward with two spurs, the one of envy at her brother's gift of preaching the glory of Christ, and the other of vain glory lest this literal learning loose some of her praise, she rushes out like a war-horse into the battle of contention; and yet lays all the blame hereof upon the preaching of the excellency of Christ's benefits; yea so strongly doth this literal knowledge judge the excellency of Christ's benefits to be mere foolishness, and thereupon so impudent in contention against the same, that Luther upon these words, "then is the offence of the cross abolished," {Gal.5:11,} proves with many arguments, that Paul taketh it for a most certain sign, that the Gospel of Christ, and righteousness of faith are not rightly preached, and is not the Gospel, if it be preached without contention against it; for {saith Luther} when the cross is abolished, and the rage of the false apostles wrangling, sophisticating, and persecuting ceases on the one side; and offences and scandals on the other side, and all things are in peace; this is a sure token that the devil keeping the entire of the house, the pure doctrine of God's Word, is taken away. Because {saith he} it cannot be, but as long as the Gospel flourishes, the cross and offence thereof must needs follow it; or else truly the devil is not tightly leveled at, and hit, but slightly glanced at; but if he be rightly hit indeed, he rests not, but begins horribly to rage, and to raise up by these literal vain-glorious men all the troubles he can. And again, notably writes Luther upon these words, "as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now;" {Gal.4:29;} whose whole exposition is worthy to be often read of the children of faith; the sum and effect whereof is thus, that this persecution always remaineth in the Church, especially when the Word of God is powerfully brought to light, and the doctrine of the Gospel flourishes; namely, that the children of the flesh mock the children of the promise, and persecute them; and therefore Paul in this place arms the godly before-hand, that they should not be offended with these persecutions, sects and offences; as if he should say; if we be the children of the promise, and born after the Spirit, holding that righteousness is bestowed without works, exclusively by the promise, we must surely look

to be persecuted of our 'brethren,' which are born after the flesh; that is, after the Law and Works, and yet shines in the righteousness, and glorious works of the Law; that is to say, not only our open enemies, which are manifestly wicked, and shall persecute us; but also such as were at first our dear friends, with whom we were in religious familiarly conversant in one house, which received from us the true doctrine of the Gospel, shall become our deadly enemies, and persecute us extremely, for they are brethren after the flesh, and will persecute their brethren, which are born after the Spirit, and so raise panics and molestations. John Eaton {Honeycombe of Free Justification by Christ Alone, 1642}

Necessity of Divine Illumination by Christ

Although some one, or more, of seeming great learning, will in the height of their own conceit, and in the opinion of their great learning, oppose themselves against this common consent of the learned Orthodox writers, and so flatly hold the contrary; yet is their great knowledge and great learning no sufficient cause, to drive thee into wavering, and doubting the excellency of Christ's benefits; because the Holy Ghost hath so sufficiently armed us against this scandal, in teaching so plentifully in his Word, that there is a twofold knowledge or learning; the one a literal knowledge, or a literal learning, and the other a spiritual knowledge; the understanding and marking of which point, because it is of so great use, that thereupon depends, in a manner, the whole essence of salvation, both to discern in what state thou thine own self dost stand, that makest this objection, who peradventure may be learned, and of great knowledge; and also to keep thee from many scandals and delusions by others, that seem to be of great learning and knowledge. Therefore to leave us without all excuse is the Holy Ghost most diligent to describe these two types of knowledge unto us very largely. First, the literal knowledge is described in Romans, chapter two from verse 17 to the very end of the chapter, after this manner: "Behold thou art called a Jew," that is, thou art called to be a member of the Church of God, even of one called, and possessing God's revealed glorious truth; and "resteth in the Law," that is, thou takest the Word of God, and the doctrine from heaven to be thine only rule, and warrant, and wilt not {as thou sayest} go one hairs breadth from the Word; yea, and gloriest in God, namely, that he is thy Father, Saviour, Redeemer, and knowest his will; that is, thou art skillful in the Word of God, and canst try the things that differ, and are excellent, by reason thou art instructed and very learned in the

Word of God. Neither only hast thou thus, knowledge enough for thyself, and for thine own use alone, but also art a rich store-house for others; for thou art confident, and takest upon thee to be a guide to the blind, a light to them that are in darkness, an instructor of them that lack discretion, a teacher of the ignorant, and hast the whole form of knowledge, and of the truth in thy breast; is it possible that the exquisite knowledge that hardly can be more gloriously described; and yet all this is there showed, to the end of the chapter, to be no knowledge indeed; but only a mere shadow or show of great knowledge, and of the truth, which {as Calvin saith} men commonly call an appearance of knowledge; because {as the Apostle saith in diverse verses following} it consisteth but in the letter only; that is, merely literal, learned by good wit, and good memory; but is not by the working of the Spirit of God in spirit, and in truth; being agreeable with that which the Apostle saith in another place; namely, that they have a show of very godliness, but they deny the power of the same; for they had {which is the Apostles scope in this description} a confession of the forgiveness of their sins by God's mercy in the Messiah; but they had not a joyful spiritual heartfelt knowledge of the excellency of Free Justification, which is the soul of all this great knowledge; and when the soul is taken away, all the rest is nothing else but a dead carcass of knowledge; as the Apostle shows in all the whole Epistle following, chap 9:30,31 & 10:2,3. Whereby they that are in this literal knowledge, although they seem to be greatly enlightened in the whole Word of God, and to be excellent learned men, yea and very zealous with a legal zeal, Rom.9:31 & 10:2, yet because they are in this point destitute, as Calvin speaketh, of the true inward spiritual light, it is incredible to think how blind they are in understanding the excellency of Christ's benefits; so that none is so blind as such as are in this literal knowledge, as it is plainly testified by the Prophet Isaiah, saying, "Hear, ye deaf; and look, ye blind, that ye may see. Who is blind, but my servant; or deaf, as my messenger that I sent; who is blind as he that is perfect, {that is, that by this literal knowledge think themselves perfect} and blind as the LORD'S servant?" {Is.42:18,19} Yea such in this literal knowledge are not only more blind than the very plough-boy, but also more blind and ignorant than the ox, and the ass that the plough-boy drives before him; as the same Prophet witnesseth, saying, "the ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people {as by this literal knowledge they profess themselves} doth not consider." {Is.1:3} But how then {will some man say} may these blind men seeming so learned in this

literal knowledge, be discerned from such as are truly enlightened? I answer, this same Prophet Isaiah plainly expressed in the former place, saying thus; "Seeing many things, but thou observest not; opening the ears, but he heareth not." {Is.42:20} Seeing many things, but thou keepest them not; for such an one as is in this literal knowledge, doth not keep that which he professeth that he knows; and that also two manners of ways, that is neither in word, nor in deed. For first he fails in the foundation; that is, he keepeth it not in judgment; for how can he keep that which he hath not; that is, doth not understand? Indeed let a man run with them in the same round of the ordinary letter, or usual phrase, that they like blind mill-horses are customably without understanding used unto, thereby rocking themselves and others asleep in their cradle of custom. What in Christ's mysteries is carnally and customarily conceited, and ordinarily spoken, rather than caring to understand what is said; and whilst they are applauded for learned men, so long they are reasonably quiet, and will sing the same song of the dead letter, containing the outward shell of Christ's mysteries; and will some of them run as fast as you will, with you, in a legal zeal flowing from the light of nature, of works, works, works, and a preposterously holy walking; but if a man press the same truth, which they seem to hold, and to awake them out of their lethargy of Custom, do preach new tidings, but not New; nay if one express the same truth which they seem to hold, but even with an old phrase, used of the best Interpreters that understand rightly the mysteries of Christ, which they have not before heard of, or which they are not customarily acquainted withal; {especially if it be a phrase going to the quick of the truth, and expressing the excellency of the matter, which they daily, like Parrots, do blindfoldly prattle of;} then although it be but one and the same truth, and the old doctrine which is daily taught; yet upon presumption and high conceit of their great learning, they cry out, New doctrine, errors, false doctrine, heresy, blasphemy, and what not; adding ever something thereto out of their own Cimmerian darkness, to make the matter more odious; and thus they keep not, no not in word and judgment to that, which they seemed to hold; but when the excellency of Christ's benefits are pressed upon them, by the express Word of God, then they fall to sophisticating, equivocating, and plain denial; {if they cannot fashion it to agree with their natural reason, and earthly conceit, and human wit;} even of that truth which they seemed before to hold, at least in letter; so that by not understanding what they have spoken in one sentence, they are so far from keeping to that which they have said

{especially dealing in the mysteries of Christ, that are above human wit, and the light of reason} that they often times speak the flat contrary in another sentence; thus {as I said} not keeping, neither in judgment, nor in word and confession to that truth, which they themselves profess in other terms. An evident example hereof, is Nicodemus, who being a great learned Rabbi and Teacher in Israel, knew by the dead literal knowledge, those usual places often repeated in the Prophets, where God promised to give unto his people new hearts, and new spirits, that they might serve him in walking holily in all his Commandments; and yet because he felt not the power and truth of it in himself, being in this dead literal knowledge; although in his daily teaching he talked of these promises, and called for a new life in holy walking in all God's Commandments; yet when Christ giving an example to all preachers, how they should awake people rocked asleep in the cradle of custom, not by teaching new things, but by preaching Truth, {as revealed by the Spirit of Truth,} spoke of the same truth which he daily beat upon, but in a new phrase that he had not heard of, expressing but the excellency of the doctrine; namely, that a man must be new born; then was Nicodemus quite beside his books, and thought that Christ spoke very absurdly, if not erroneously; the old doctrine uttered with a new phrase, expressing but the truth and deepness of it, made it seem new and false doctrine to the old blind literal Doctor; and therefore it is well noted upon the same place by Musculus, {Wolfgang Musculus: Protestant Theologian, 1497-1563} saying, "there is in this man a certain example set before us, wherein we may see, that men, although wise and learned, yet not being new born again, are to the conceiving of the mysteries of Christ, and of the doctrine concerning his kingdom, merely blockish and sottish." Yes, and he added further, saying that, "they are so far from understanding the matter itself, that they conceive not the very declaration thereof set before them by the words of Christ himself." Whereupon {as the learned well note} Christ seeing that he lost both his time and labor, in teaching a man so high in his own conceit, and yet so greatly ignorant, is constrained to fall to chiding him, saying, "Art thou a principal teacher in Israel, and knowest not these things?" {Jn.3:10} As if he should say, oh miserable condition of those sheep, whereof the Pastor, that hath the care of them, is so grossly blind, and so unskillful in divine matters; hitherto thou hast been revered as a principal Teacher in Israel, and yet knowest not those things, of which it is a shame that thy very scholars should be ignorant; and lest any should think that this was a blindness, and just reproof peculiar and proper only to Nicodemus, and not

to all such as are dead in spiritual knowledge, it is upon the same place well noted of the learned, saying, this is a general reproof, wherewith Christ reprov'd all such Rabbi's and great Teachers as lie by the literal knowledge in the same blindness with Nicodemus. And thus we see the first way how they that are in this literal knowledge, do only but sophisticate about the mysteries of Christ, seeing many things, but they keep them not; namely, they do not keep to them in word and judgment, but possess them one way, and deny them, and speak contrary to themselves divers other ways. John Eaton {Honeycombe of Free Justification by Christ Alone, 1642}

Preaching the Unsearchable Riches of Christ

When preachers do neglect to ground in the people's heart great joy for the greatness of the free given treasures of Christ that work and cause filial fear, loving inclination, dutiful, and true sincere affections; and go about to square God's children, according to the corrupt pattern of natural children, corrupted with slavish fear, with blows and beatings; they do quench in them the true filial fear, and establish in them the servile fear that should be cast out; {I Jn.4:18;} and cause in the children of God this eye service, which if it be taught in sanctified servants to their earthly masters, {as the Apostle saith, Eph.6:6,} how abominable is that much more in the children of God to their heavenly Father, and makes but hypocrites. – When preachers of the Gospel, not seeing in their hearts the vigor and power of the free given treasures of Christ, do not trust to, nor rely upon the pressing of them as sufficient {where they are felt and enjoyed} operative causes of all holy walkings and godly conversation; then they do degenerate and decline thereby to the legal teaching of the Old Testament, more agreeable to the light of nature described of constraining men to holiness and righteousness with legal arguments of large blessings, if they do well; and with terrors of correction and punishment for their evil doings, which either does little good at all, or at the best makes but self-deceiving zealous hypocrites, and so go not with a right foot to the truth of the Gospel, {Gal.2:14,} and purity of apostolic preaching of constraining men to holiness and righteousness by joy and love, by preaching with joyful inflamed hearts and fiery tongues, {Acts 2:4,} the exceeding excellency and glory of the unsearchable riches of Christ; which as it was the true course of the first manner of preaching of the Gospel in the primitive Church, as is evident in the Scriptures; {Acts 8:8, 38-39, 13:38,39, 42-44, 52, I Pet.1:8;} and which Paul defines to be the very essence of a true preacher of the Gospel,

{Eph.3:8,} saying in the person of all true preachers of the Gospel, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;" {Eph.3:8;} so it is the only means sanctified with the blood of Christ, to cause people to abound in all godly and zealous conversation. And thus I have somewhat the more largely hunted and taken this little fox, {Cant.2:15,} because it is so nourished not only by the Papists that press it exceedingly out of the examples of the Old Testament against the perfection of justification maintained by Protestants; but also some of the Protestants by lipping the language of Ashdod do go about with the same to undermine the very root of the Lord's Vine; that is, free justification, by going about to prove by it, that we are not by the wedding garment of Christ's righteousness made perfectly holy and righteous from all spot of sin in the sight of God freely, full sufficient of itself {the more it is rightly known} to constrain us with all joy to holiness and righteousness, not by fear, but by love and evangelical zeal as strong as fire and death. {Cant.8:6,7, Tit.2;14} John Eaton {Honeycombe of Free Justification by Christ Alone, 1642}

Reign of Grace in the Gift of Righteousness

A true help to strengthen our faith that we are made thus perfectly and gloriously holy and righteous from all spot of sin in the sight of God freely is not to forget the comparison that Paul makes between the first Adam that made us; that is, both body and soul sinners, and loathsome; and the second Adam Christ, that as freely makes us both body and soul righteous and saved. And although there be some difference in the manner; namely, that Adam made us all sinners inherently and actively, to our sense and feeling; but Christ makes us righteous in the sight of God objectively, evangelically, passively, and invisibly above our sense and feeling, that there may be place for the faith of God's power of truly and really doing it Himself alone; yet notwithstanding we must take heed that we give not more power to Adam in making us sinners, being but a mere man; than to Christ in making us righteous, being both God and man. Let us know that as the first Adam made us, before we see ourselves having done any evil work, perfectly, completely, and only and merely sinners, and detestable in the sight of God; so strongly that we cannot choose, but show the same in all our lives by actual sins to the eyes of men; so much more doth Christ make us, before we have done any good – perfectly, completely, only and merely gloriously holy and righteous, and so perfectly saved in the sight of God; so

strongly, that he makes us to declare the same by a new life of sanctification to the eyes of men. – Which comparison between Adam and Christ, although it is proposed as equal, to show the truth, reality and verity between them, as verse 19, where the Apostle saith; that, “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} Yet, in other places is the work of Christ showed to be far more high, plentiful and abundant in making us perfectly righteous than the working of Adam in making us sinners; so that the Apostle, to express the plentiful work of Christ above Adam, doth not stick to the use of words, {abounding in the work of Christ above Adam,} less than four times in the latter part of that fifth chapter of Romans; saying, that although “through the offence of one many be dead,” yet, “much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.” Although the Law entered in upon sin, and made sin to abound, and to be out of measure sinful; yet grace in justification abounds much more; so that {saith Paul,} “they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life {in this life, by this justification of life} by one, Jesus Christ.” But that saying, even more abounds; that he which knew no sin was made sin for us, that we being translated into Christ, might be made the very righteousness of God. {II Cor.5:21} The abstract importing that we are made so perfectly, completely, gloriously holy and righteous from all spot of sin in the sight of God freely, that we are nothing else but mere righteousness in the sight of God; and doth hath Christ's work past that of Adam's in making us sinners, in swallowing up and utterly abolishing all our sin from before God. Shall we be troubled more with the feeling of Adam's work upon us, than be filled with joy, with the exceeding glory of Christ's work for us? Should we not by such regard of sins and feeling; that is, of old Adam, and weakness of faith, greatly dishonor the Godhead of Christ in the second Adam? John Eaton {Honeycombe of Free Justification by Christ Alone, 1642}

Repentance and Mortification of Sin

Seeing the least motions of sin, even in thought only, is such a horrible poison of hell; so poisoning us, and all our holy walkings in sanctification that {as Christ saith} they defile all unto damnation; for when we see that nothing can make us spiritually clean from them, except the Son of God be crushed for us; with his blood, so precious an antidote; this only able to make us perfectly holy and righteous from all sin in the sight of God; and so

first makes our inside of our cup, even of our minds and consciences passively pure and clean in the sight of God freely, {Tit.1:15,} or else these worms of our souls, even the very stirring motions only, will as truly and certainly kill us, as they killed Christ. Do we not then begin to see in the stream of Christ's blood washing us from them, the vileness of these evil thoughts and least motions, and begin to hate them, as the venomous vipers of our souls, either eating out our heart, or the heart of Christ Jesus; and thus hating the evil thoughts and first motions of sin, doth not this make us much more to hate and crucify the gross acts, and outward practices of the same? So for the second part of sanctification called vivification, being a quickening with joy, love, and zeal of God's glory, by cheerful walking in all his commandments. Did the tenth leper return with such joy, did he praise God with such a loud voice, and did he fall down and worship Christ so devotedly before he felt himself healed of his leprosy; which was a true type and figure of our free justification in Christ. Or did the children of Israel, stung in the wilderness by fiery serpents, go powerfully, cheerfully and courageously against their enemies, until by looking upon the brazen serpent they felt themselves perfectly healed of all their poisonous stings, which is the liveliest figure of the efficacy of our free justification. Thus we see how the lessening of the glory of our justification by Christ extinguishes the vigor of our mortification and vivification; both hindering our joy, lessening our love, and quenching our zeal, that otherwise, by the exceeding greatness of Christ's benefits would exceedingly abound. "To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified." {Is.61:3} "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." {Tit.2:14} John Eaton {Honeycombe of Free Justification by Christ Alone, 1642}

Spiritual Discernment

Therefore if we will not err in reading good Authors, we must follow that notable rule, that Luther gives in the same case, saying, This only I say of those holy men, that when they vary among themselves; those are rather to be followed, which have spoken the best things for free grace without works, leaving them which by the infirmity of the flesh, have spoken rather after the flesh and reason, than after the Spirit. So likewise, those writers that

vary from themselves, are in that part to be chosen, and held fast unto, where they speak after the Spirit, but to be relinquished, where they favor of the flesh and natural light of reason. This is the duty of a Christian Reader, and of the clean beast, that hath cloven hoofs, and cheweth the cud. But now setting aside judgment, we devour all confusedly whatsoever a good man saith; or that which is worse, by a perverse and preposterous judgment we refute the better things, and approve the worse; Yea, in one and the same Authors we attribute and apply that authority and title of holiness to their worser things, which they have deserved for their best things spoken after the Spirit, and not after the flesh, and natural light of reason. John Eaton {Honeycombe of Free Justification by Christ Alone, 1642}

Treasure which is Christ

“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also;” {Mt.6:21;} so that if the wedding garment of Christ's perfect righteousness be our treasure, there will be our hearts and tongues also; and then our hearts stand right to Christ, and our tongues do make others chaste virgins to Christ, {II Cor.11:2,3,} and true children of Abraham, and of that Jerusalem which is above, the mother of us all, and we shall never be cast out as bastard children. {Col.1:28,29, 2:10, Heb.10:14, Rom.5:21, Col.1:12,13} Because we bring forth a godly life, only for and by the joy and the excellency of free justification; not carnally, but rightly understood and embraced. {Tit.2:11-14} But if sanctification, repentance, humiliation, mortification, universal obedience, holy and righteous walking in all God's commandments, sincerity, a new life, and such like works be our treasure and diamond, then there will be our hearts and tongues also to extol, dignify and exhort the same, whereby producing by legal arguments but a false bastard sanctification, {Phil.3:6,} our hearts standing adulterously to Christ; and all such preaching and holiness produced thereby is but idolatry and unbelief, {II Cor.11:13-15,} and such preachers by misunderstanding and darkening free justification, do ipso facto stand accursed by Paul and excommunicated, though in all other gifts and graces they be like angels from heaven, {Gal.1:8,9,} and ever in danger of sudden death. {Gal.5:12} Therefore beware of the dead faith, which being varnished and gilt over with a preposterous zeal and opinion of holiness and righteousness before God, by walking in all God's commandments, doth give Christ and justification a Judas kiss. {Rom.10:3} And yet such preachers tremble not as they go up into the pulpits, although their preaching be both idolatrous and traitorous.

Here is life and death, who hath an ear to regard it! John Eaton {Abraham's Steps of Faith, 1745}

True & False Faith

The reason of my reprinting the following treatise is this. As there has been much talking about the danger of being in a dead faith, by those whom it is to be feared, are most dangerously drowned in it themselves; I thought it would be very seasonable, to publish this for the use of those who are willing to try the spirits, to prove all things, and to hold fast to that which is good. We have never {although it has been so reported of us} denied that there is such a thing as a dead general faith, that is unprofitable, which believes no more than what devils themselves may and do believe. No; we have too evident an experience of it all around us, {and within us,} and we thank our heavenly Father, that he has called us out of Egyptian darkness into his marvelous light. What we have said and do still affirm is this, that there is no such thing as a dead faith, which truly believes what we believe, and knows what we know; namely, that God hath given to us as lost sinners eternal life in Christ Jesus, that we receiving and trusting in him and in him alone, as made of God unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, and that our iniquities are washed away by his blood, his everlasting righteousness being our covering, and that we shall assuredly partake of eternal life with him forever. The insinuation of a possibility of being deceived in the thus trusting to Jesus Christ, can have no other tendency, than to bring souls into a diffidence of the truth of God's Word, and of the foundation that God hath laid, and to trust upon their own works, tempers, or dispositions of the mind, to the destruction of their souls; because there is no other name under heaven given amongst men whereby we must be saved, but the name of Jesus Christ, {Acts 4:12,} and he that believeth not shall be damned. {Mk.16:16} It is not any arbitrary will in God that hath thus fixed eternal life and salvation only in Jesus Christ; neither is it that God sets anymore value upon the act of believing than upon anything else done according to his will, but the reason is that he cannot deny or act unworthy of himself, and it is not consistent with his perfections to bring us back to himself in any other way, than by setting Christ forth as a propitiation through faith in his blood. {Rom.3:25} Infinite and unchangeable goodness, wisdom, power, holiness, justice and truth united cannot possibly save thee, O sinner, except thou {by the testimony of the Spirit and belief of the Truth} believest thus on the Lord Jesus Christ, and

standest in his righteousness alone. If thou appeal to any good thing thou thinkest to be done by thee, or to be in thee, thy sins {bad things} must also be taken notice of, and being thus weighed in the balance, thou wilt be found wanting. Be wise therefore and consider this, and wrangle no more against the truths of the Spirit of God, neither limit them to thy own notions, but submit thyself really to them as he hath spoken them. So shalt thou be the spiritual man, instructed and led by him into all truth. So shalt thou escape the most dangerous dead faith; so shall thy soul have true peace and everlasting life. William Cudworth – {Preface to John Eaton's, the Discovery of a most Dangerous Dead Faith, 1747 Edition}

Wedding Garment of Christ's Righteousness

If the wedding garment of Christ's righteousness wherewith we are clothed hath above our reason, sense and feeling abolished {as the prophet Isaiah saith} all our sins out of his own sight, and made us perfectly holy and righteous from all spot of sin in the sight of God freely; is God blind, because he sees his Son's wedding garment abolishing our sins, and making us that were darkness all light in his sight? Is not this contrary to spiritual sanctified reason? Except we will say, that the wedding garment of Christ's righteousness is not able to abolish the spiritual darkness of our sins above our reason, sense and feeling out of God's sight, as perfectly as the sun beams do abolish the bodily darkness out of a dark house; and that would be true blasphemy indeed! John Eaton {Honeycombe of Free Justification by Christ Alone, 1642}