

Richard Davis

1658-1714

Adoption

Adoption is an act of the free Grace of God, in and for his only Son Jesus Christ, whereby all those that are justified are received into the number of his children, have his name put upon them, the Spirit of his Son given unto them, are under his Fatherly care and correction, admitted to all the liberties and privileges of the sons of God, made heirs of all the promises, and fellow heirs with Christ in glory. Richard Davis {Confession of Faith}

Assurance & Faith

Scriptural Marks and Signs, which are the inseparable effects and concomitants of Faith are {one way or other,} Evidences of our Justification. They do also {as Dr. Goodwin phraseth it} seek out, encourage and strengthen our Faith in a certain way and measure. That Souls are more prone to look to them, than to Christ, and his Grace, the Object of Faith; and that is very dangerous. Spiritual Sense and Enjoyments, though given us, is something within us; but Faith, like the Merchant's Ship, fetcheth its goods from far, even from Christ, at the Right-Hand of the Father. We are far more apt to tabernacle within, than to go out of Self for a Supply continually; which is swimming against Wind and Tide, going contrary to Sense and Human Wisdom. It is that which Flesh and Blood knoweth not. Since Marks and Signs shine only in the Light of Faith; and Faith shineth not, but when it looketh directly to its Object, the Grace that is in Christ Jesus; then so to Examine our Faith, when we cease to Act Faith, is as if One should put out a Candle, to see whether it burneth or not; or to shut close the Doors and Windows, to see whether the Room be light. - Faith is a great Evidence; yea, and Self-Evidence too. {Heb.11:1} The great Evidence of Faith, is the once Crucified, but now Risen Jesus. It is Christ that died, and is risen again, and is set down at the Right-Hand of the Father, and ever liveth to intercede. They that look off of him, to look within, seek for a living Christ in a dead Frame. I never was against Self-Examination, performed in the Light of Faith, acting directly toward the Object. Richard Davis {Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Assurance & Faith

The Object of Faith is Christ once Crucified, now at the Father's Right-Hand; but this sort of Faith of Assurance sets up a Christ within, a Quaker's Christ, as the Object of Faith. - They that bid People to try their Faith, by looking within, and not bidding them at that time look to Christ, and that first; put them, in my Judgment, upon an impossible Test. As there can be no real Marks and Signs, without Faith exercised upon the Object; so, to put People upon examining the Sincerity of their supposed Marks and Signs, is yet to make the Matter ten times more difficult and perplexing to the Soul. Gospel-Sincerity, I find in Scripture to be this; namely, to mix nothing with Christ, and his Righteousness, in our Justification. They that would examine their Faith, whether it be sincere, by Marks and Signs, without Faith in the Exercise, must have a Second Mark to know the First, a Third to prove the Second, and a Fourth to prove the Third; and so, ad infinitum. Hence it is that poor Souls are quite bewildered to bring the Matter to a determinate issue; so that despairing of making their Calling and Election sure, they content themselves with lazy, faint and languid Hopes, which have no good bottom; or else, what is worst of all, they embrace a Cloud instead of this Assurance. Richard Davis {Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Assurance & Faith

I do not deny, but that when we sensibly feel inward Grace shining in the Light of Faith, we may from thence, together with the Evidence of Faith, infer the Certainty of our Believing; as when we sensibly perceive our Love to Christ flowing from our Faith in him, we may thence conclude we have the Faith of God's Elect; and so of other Graces. But perhaps this is but seldom the frame of a Believer's Spirit; and yet he ought, when he walks in the dark, to hold fast his Confidence. Therefore there must needs be that which is true Assurance, though not so high and so sensible as this. And I find in Scripture, it is a strong and constant reliance upon the Ability and Faithfulness

of Christ, as to the Grace promised. This you have instanced in Abraham's Faith. "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. {Rom.4:20,21} So also instanced in the Faith of Sarah. "Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised." {Heb.11:11} So therefore, in both these Instances, you may see that their Assurance was grounded upon the Ability and Faithfulness of the Promisor. It is the same with that called the Periphery of Faith. "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." {Heb.10:22} And that is founded upon the Means of Admittance to the Father, by the Blood of Jesus. "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus." {Heb.10:19} The Way of Admittance to the Father; that is, the new and living way, consecrated through the veil; that is to say, the flesh of Jesus; {vs.20;} who is our Head and Representative, through whom we are admitted to the Father; namely, such an High-Priest over the house of God. {vs.21} So that I conclude, the more strongly, purely, unmixtly, and frequently we behold and lean upon Christ; the more Light cometh in from the Object, to evidence our Faith itself. I find this Faith of Assurance, called freedom of speech, or access; so it is called. {Heb.3:6, 10:35, I Jn.3:21 & 5:14} Which is going to God in Christ with great freedom, as a Friend to a Friend; and asking the things we have need of, with great freedom of speech. And this also is grounded upon their Representative, who is entered to represent us above, even Jesus, the Son of God; who also is above, touched with the feeling of our Infirmities here below. "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need," {Heb.4:16,} compared with verses 14 & 15. "Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted {tested} like as we are, yet without sin." I find this sort of Assurance in the Scripture: the Sealing of the Spirit after Believing, {Eph.1:13,} called, "the Earnest of our Inheritance; termed also, "the times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord;" {Acts 3:19;} in which the Spirit of the Lord, in one Promise or other suited to the Believer's Case, doth give an undeniable and irresistible Assurance unto the Soul, that Christ is his, and that he is Pardoned and Justified, and consequently an Elect Vessel, though it lasts but for a little season. In these sorts of Assurance, I find none of them built upon our inherent Qualifications, but on Jesus Christ, the Corner-stone; and all of them cast anchor within the veil, upon the great Fore-runner that is entered for us, even Jesus, made an High-Priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec. Richard Davis {Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Christ in the Promise

They that take Comfort out of the Letter of the Promise, without meeting Christ in it by Faith, may be mistaken; for it is Christ in the Promise, maketh the Promise precious; and the Promise without Christ is but a dead and insignificant Promise. Richard Davis {Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Christ – the Power of Godliness

When men have said all that they can against the Doctrine of Free Grace, impiously branding it with the names of Antinomianism and Licentiousness; yet this is undeniable from the experience of the most godly, as well as from the Word of the Lord, that nothing constrains to all manner of holy obedience, like the love of Christ revealed to the conscience, and the love of the Father in his love. All that are most godly, can say what is said of the woman in the Gospel; they weep much, and do much, as she, {Lk.7:44-47,} because they love much; and they love Christ much, because much is forgiven them. This is certain, that the inherent holiness of the soul is the strength of the soul, and the strength and power of godliness in the soul, depends upon looking to, by faith, to that grace that is in Christ. "Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." {II Tim.2:1} It is not said, be strong in the grace that is in yourselves, for that is to seek the living among the dead, a living Christ in our dead frames, when he is never to be found there, for he is risen, and ever lives at the Father's right hand, to make intercession for his children, and a constant steady looking to him there, always interceding, and still full of grace and truth; this is that which will carry on the work of sanctification {separation unto Christ in abiding in Him, through the power of the Spirit in newness of resurrected & consecrated life} in the soul. The spiritual life of a believer is from faith, and maintained by faith; for it is written, the just {justified} shall live by faith. {Rom.1:17, Gal.3:11, Heb.10:38} Faith is said to purify the heart, {Acts 15:9,} to sanctify, {Acts 26:18,} and faith always respects Christ and his Grace. The blood of Christ; that is, pardoning grace in the blood of Christ, received into the conscience by believing, is affirmed to purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God. {Heb.9:14} The grace of God that bringeth salvation, and hath appeared to all men in the Gospel, but only as revealed unto the consciences of them that believe, teaches them to deny "ungodliness and worldly lusts," and that they "should

live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." {Tit.2:11,12} And the God of all grace in manifesting his grace to the soul, that he has called it to eternal glory by Jesus Christ does go on to perfect, establish, strengthen and settle the soul in Christ. Godliness within us is begun and carried on by faith in the Imputed Righteousness of Christ without us. These two are every way distinct, yet so as the former still flows from the latter. The all wise God has so ordered it in the Dispensation of his Grace, that his Free Grace shall be magnified, and the Righteousness of his Son highly valued and advanced. Were the only use of Christ's Righteousness {and indeed that is a great use of it} to secure eternal Glory for us, we should be tempted to have little recourse to it by Faith; for that being once done, and our state secured, corrupt nature would be apt to insinuate to us there would be no great need of such frequent viewing of the Righteousness of Christ without us, wherein we stand, it being that is so contrary to flesh and blood. But now our holiness {practical godliness – reigning through righteousness – in those who according to the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" – "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit"} in every step of it depending upon the Righteousness of Christ being apprehended by the soul in believing; it must, or it ought, to necessitate us to have constant recourse, by continued acts of believing to this glorious Righteousness all the day long. Since it is thus, that every dram of true Gospel holiness flows into the soul only this way; the Apostle affirms it three times, that now the just shall live by faith; which life, it is evident, he means to be a life spiritual, or a life of holiness here. And it is necessary that the work of holiness be carried on continually and constantly; and therefore that we believe in Christ and his Righteousness always. The reason of all this is that the Lord will have the righteousness which is of faith, the imputed righteousness of his Son always viewed, believed in, and admired by us. So that hence you may believe the doctrine of Free Grace does not tend to licentiousness, {as Satan by various instruments clamors against it,} but quite the contrary. Such undeserved super abounding Grace to pardon sinners, being the main motive unto holiness of heart, lip and life; the Apostle plainly affirms. "For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace." {Rom.6:14} Those souls being brought under grace, breaks sins dominion therein; namely, the soul being brought in believing under the powerful influence of that Grace that Reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. {Rom.5:21} Richard Davis {Funeral Sermon of John Bigg, 1691}

Christ - Sole Dispenser of the Grace of God

The reasons why the God of all Grace will yet give forth no Grace, but in and by his Son, are these: {1} He is resolved to give forth no Grace but in a Covenant way; this is the whole Tenure of the Old and New Testament; especially of the New. Hebrews 8:6-13. {2} Therefore what Life and Grace he bestows, he will do it by a Mediator, the Head and Surety of this Covenant. The people of Israel would receive nothing from God, but by the mediator Moses; and God himself testifies, that in so speaking they had spoken well. {"And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken." Deut.18:17} Much more now is it so under this better Covenant, of which the Son of God Himself is the Dispenser. He hath obtained the excellent ministry thereof, as He is the Mediator of it. Hebrews 8:6. {3} This is the highest reason it should be so, because He the Blessed Surety of this Covenant hath dearly bought and purchased every Blessing in it. Having completely performed all the conditions thereof; it was the Right of this Surety to take all the grants into his own hands, to be at his own disposal; and it was his pleasure to bestow these grants upon his Seed, as free Legacies, in a Testament way; and therefore to finish his vast Design of Grace, he dies; not only to accomplish the performance of Covenant conditions, but to make his Testament of force; Hebrews 9:15-17; and therefore he takes up his Life again, that he might be the Executor of his own Will. None else had a right, none else was able, and therefore none else was fit to be entrusted; therefore God the Father raised him up from the dead, and exalted Him with his own right hand to be Prince and Savior, to give repentance and remission of sin. Acts 5:31. And thus the promises were made good unto Him written in Isaiah 53:10-12. {"Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."} {4} And consequently of this, it was the Father's pleasure that his Son should be honored as Himself, and that the honoring of his Son should be the honoring of Him. "That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father; He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him." {Jn.5:23} Therefore he ordained him to be the Sole Dispenser of all his Grace, that men should honor him in trusting, loving, admiring and obeying him, and in being beholden to him for all. Richard Davis {Faith the Grand Evidence, 1694}

Church Covenant

We profess that by Faith we laid hold of the Eternal Compact, made with our Lord the Redeemer, as our Root, Surety and Representative and with us in Him and ours also, that were of the true Israel, {Is.59:21,} which words though they be spoken by God the Father, to our Lord Jesus, the Surety and Dispenser of the New Covenant, and Testament; to His Seed and Seeds Seed in Him; yet He therein is also the Messenger or Angel of the Eternal Compact. And the New Covenant itself, in its most glorious Administration is but a fuller Copy thereof, promulgated and published. We profess to lay hold of this Eternal Compact, as promulgated in a more comprehensive way in the Old and New Testament, as running with Noah, Abraham, the Patriarchs, David, the Righteous, the Godly, the Church, and their Seed. - We chiefly engage ourselves to that first and great command of the Gospel, {John 6:29,40, 3:16,18,36,} namely, believing on the Person and Righteousness of Christ for Eternal Life {Heb.12:2,} Acceptance with God, Peace of Conscience {Rom.5:1,} Spiritual Light, Life and Strength {John 6:53,56,57,} and everything else necessary. Therefore being greatly ashamed {Jer.3:13} of the constant and notorious breach of the command of living by Faith, and our turning aside from the Living God {Rom.1:17, Gal.3:11, Ezekiel 20, Heb.3:12,} the Fountain of Living Waters {Jer.2:13,} to our own cisterns, that will hold no water, being under deep sense of the Guilt of our Spiritual Adultery, and Idolatry with the World, and the things thereof {John 2:15,} our own legal Performances {Gal.3:1, Jer.2:37,} or that called Gospel Obedience, our Inherent Qualifications and Spiritual Enjoyments which we advanced in the room {I Cor.2:2} and throne of the Mediator, his Blood and Righteousness. We now constrained from a sense of His pardoning Grace, and in the strength and virtue of the Blood of the Everlasting Covenant {Zech.9:11, Heb.10:14,} sprinkled on our Consciences, do resolve to abide by Faith in exercise in the Person, {John 15:4 &c.,} Love {I John 4:16,} and Righteousness of Christ {Ex.28:35-43, Ps.89:15,16,} and as we have received Him our Root, Surety and Representative; so walking in Him by Faith {Rev.7:14,15,} that we may continually walk with Him in the Fellowship of the Spirit, {Phil.2:1,} constantly beholding ourselves by Faith {Jam.1:25,} in the Glass of the Perfect Law of Liberty, Members of His Glorious Body, complete in Him {Col.2:10,} and presented by Him in the Body of His Flesh through Death {Eph.5:27,} not having spot or wrinkle, or blemish, but always holy, {Col.1:22,} unblameable and unreprieveable in His, and His Father's sight; and hereby deriving all Influence and Virtue {John 1:16,} from His Fullness for all manner of holy Conversation, and Walk; that thus acting continually in His presence, constrained by His manifested Love, {II Cor.5:14,} encouraged by the blotting out of Guilt, and Imperfection from our persons, graces and duty, {Heb.4:14,15,} and they made perfect in Him and His grace; we may always seek those things that are above, where Christ is, having our Conversation in Heaven, {Phil.3:20,} whence we look for the appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and being all the day {Rom.8:5,13,} thus spiritually minded, watching over our vain wandering thoughts, we may continually make mention of His Name, {Ps.71:16,} Righteousness and loving Kindness, {Is.63:7,} having our speech always seasoned with Salt, {Mt.5:13,} administering Grace to the Hearers. And being as the Salt of the Earth, and of the Families we dwell in, we may be day by day dying to Sin, and living to Righteousness, denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, {Tit.2:12,} and living righteously, soberly, and godly in this present world; and with a conversation becoming the Gospel of Christ {Phil.1:27.} We also do believe this direct acting of Faith on the Person of Christ for all things, is the Faith of the Gospel, the Faith once delivered to the saints, {Jude 3,} which we ought earnestly to contend for, and to resist all oppositions thereto, even unto blood, {Heb.12:4,} whether in our souls, in the Churches, or other Sister Churches, from the World and Carnal Professors. Hence therefore, laying hold on the strength of Christ, {though we know Unbelief will cleave to the best of our Performances,} yet we will not plead for it, nor indulge it {Unbelief} as a little Sin, much less as a Virtue or Grace; but continually watch against it, mourn over and loath it, and slay it on the Head of the Sacrifice, as the greatest Immorality, because it gives the God of Truth the Lie, and treads the Blood of the Covenant underfoot {Heb.10:29;} and more especially the greatest Unbelief of questioning {Mt.14:31,} the Ability and Fullness of Christ to save us to the utmost. And though we think it our present Duty not to reject all Preaching, whose Doctrinal part treads in the steps of the first Reformers; though the Application be mixed with some felt Darkness and Legality, a putting difference between them and others, pulling them out of the fire by love and familiarity; yet detesting every Garment of Doctrine, so far as it is spotted with the Flesh {Jude 22,23,} of Man's Wisdom; yet notwithstanding all those, under what Name or Denomination whatsoever, whose Tenants corrupt the Doctrine of the Person of Christ, either denying or lessening His God-head, His Human Nature, or mystical Union of both Natures in one Person, or else separating the Natures, or confounding them. As likewise all those that add the least mixture to Christ's Righteousness, though it be their own acts of Faith in point of Acceptance, Acquittance, and the obtaining of Peace of Conscience; who also make Faith and Repentance foreseen as Conditions of the Eternal Election, and the Redemption of Christ Jesus; and Faith and Repentance, actual in the Soul, the preparative federal Conditions of possessing the Blessings of Election in Christ our Head; whether it be Christ's actual influential Union to us, Justification, Adoption, or any other Grace whatever; but especially the Perverters of the Gospel, those most

refined and subtle reserves of Antichrist, singled out to support its tottering Cause in this his last War with the Lamb, in these last days, who pervert the Gospel {Gal.1:7,} turning it upside down, asserting Faith, Repentance and Holiness to be given to the Soul before the Person of Christ, and His Righteousness, denying that blessed Order of the Gospel, which is first the Son of God {Rom.8:32,} freely, and then all things freely with Him; refusing Him and His Righteousness to have the preeminence {Col.1:18,} in all things; even in their actual bestowment {I John 5:12,} as they ought to have. And besides all this, wickedly intruding a new Law of their own Invention, requiring imperfect Faith and Repentance, and Gospel Obedience on Man's Part, as the imperfect and sinful Conditions of Gospel Justification; thereby vacating the good old righteous Law of God, {Rom.3:31,} setting up Terms of obtaining Spiritual Blessings, exceeding derogatory to the Holiness of God's Nature, Ways, and Laws; and contrary to the freeness of His Love and Grace, from the Eternal Purpose thereof in Election, even unto the Execution of Electing Grace here and in Glory. We do declare and protest against them and their Doctrine, and likewise all those that teach us to glory in anything but the Lord, {I Cor.1:31, II Tim.2:1,} or be strong in any other Grace, but that Grace that is in Christ Jesus. And do resolve in the strength of Christ's Grace to testify all manners of ways even unto our Blood, against all other Doctrines than those that are according to Godliness, {I Tim.6:3, Tit.2:1,} and if Men most noted for Knowledge and Holiness, or an Angel from Heaven {Gal.1:9,} preach any other Gospel, and maintain those Tenants before mentioned, we do in the presence and strength of Christ promise and engage to witness against them by public Preaching, and declaring against such Principles, by withdrawing from them, and not receiving them to our Houses, nor bidding them God's Speed, according to the command of the Lord, II John 10. - We do also resolve as a Royal Priesthood in our Profession, Ordinances, Walk and Conversation, with the loss of our Names, Lives and Liberties, our Reputations and Estates, and everything that is dear unto us; to bear our Testimony against all false Churches and Worship whatsoever. Namely; against the Mother of Harlots and all her Daughters; and we likewise protest against Idolatry, Superstition, Imposition and Persecution, wherever and whatsoever; and in love to Him, and Honor of His Crown, who first loved us, we resolve and engage by the assistance of the Grace that is in Him, to have nothing to do, nor go near their false Worship, unless it be to testify against them, that we will withdraw from them, and that we will not join with those that join with them, who are confederates against Christ. And this Testimony we engage in Christ's Presence to bear every way, and in every place whatever, even in Courts of Judicature, and at the Place of Execution if called thereto. Furthermore, we being convinced and humbled, that we and our Fathers have either selfishly neglected or cowardly betrayed the Interest of our Blessed Lord, as King of Nations; and do humbly, waiting for His Coming in His Strength, resolve that we shall from time to time, as He enlightens us, leads us, and calls us to be ready to part with our all, in asserting and maintaining all his Royal Prerogatives and Rights, as King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, against all Enemies and Opposition whatever to His Crown and Dignity, to whom the Kingdoms of the Earth belong, and that we shall faithfully testify against any that shall thus betray His Cause and Interest. Richard Davis {A Church Covenant or An Account of the Doctrine and Discipline of Mr. Richard Davis of Rothwell, and Those of His Separation, 1696.}

Conditions of Justification & Antecedent Qualifications

Arg. 1. The Word of the Lord says, that God walks by the same rule in Calling, as he did in Election, and the Eternal Compact, II Tim.1:9, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Whence it is convincingly evident, That as he hath chosen the Elect, and promised them all Grace in Christ, their Common-Head before the Foundation of the World, without any regard had to their fore-seen Qualifications, {not according to their Works,} so he also saveth them with an holy Calling, in time, without the least regard had to their then previous Works: "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." {Rom.9:16} "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." {Eph.2:8,9} Arg. 2. The Spirit is as free in Application, as the Father in Election, and the Son in the Work of Redemption; and therefore the Spirit in Conversion, regards not antecedent Qualifications. Arg. 3. 'Tis in Christ Jesus we are God's Workmanship, created to good works. {Eph.2:10} Therefore there is no power for Good Works, antecedent to our actual Union with Christ. Arg. 4. The first Work of God souls are moved upon is Believing. {John.6:28,29} And we are pressed in Scripture to other good Works, after Believing. {Tit.3:8} Therefore there can be no previous Qualifications preparatory of Faith. Arg. 5. Faith itself is receiving a free Gift, as freely given. {Rom.4:16, Eph.2:8} Therefore, by the nature thereof, faith excludes all manner of such antecedent Qualifications. Arg. 6. The Promise was by Faith, that it might be sure to all the Seed. {Rom.4:16} Even to the Gentile Seed, who had no manner of Qualifications to bring; for the Scripture saith expressly, they had not so much Qualifications, as to follow after righteousness, Rom. 9. 30 nor as much as to seek and ask after it, Rom. 10. 20. But Isaiah is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not: I was made manifest to them that asked not after, me: Whilst the Jews were rejected with all their Qualifications. {Rom.9:31,32} Therefore this Consideration destroys all

such antecedent Qualifications. Arg. 7. The holy Scriptures of Truth declare that Christ must first come to the Soul, before the Soul can move to Christ; for the Soul is dead in Sin, before the first moment of Spiritual Life; and the first moment of spiritual Life is when Christ actually united himself to the Soul; and how can they that are dead, prepare themselves for Life, before Life comes? Arg. 8. The Word of God says, that the Law cannot give Life; for if there had been a Law given, which could have given Life to the Apostate race of Adam, verily Righteousness should have been by the Law; and if the Works of the Law cannot give Life, they cannot prepare for Christ. Arg. 9. The Gospel calls Sinners, as Sinners; and not as qualified Sinners, to come to Christ. If the Heavy-laden be called, {Mat.11:28,} the lame, blind, halt, and maimed are brought in as well. {Lk.14:21} So also the Highway-Sinners are compelled to come in; as they are. "And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled." {Lk.14:23} Arg. 10. Lastly, this Doctrine of previous Qualification contradicts not only the Doctrine of the Bible, and of the first Reformers, but also the Twelfth and Thirteenth Article of the Church of England. - I judge there is no Holiness, or gracious Qualifications preceding Faith; and to set up these, as the Marks and Signs of our being Justified is the greatest Cheat put upon the Soul in the World; and the greatest Affront put upon the Spirit and Blood of Christ; for thereby they thrust these that are Nothing, into the Room and Throne of the Mediator and Comforter; and they that do so, are guilty of Spiritual and Mental Idolatry, as if they worshiped Stocks and Stones. As to that of Baal's Priests, I remember nothing of; but let the Coiners of this New Gospel, that preach such Doctrines, look to it, lest they justly deserve the Name. Richard Davis {Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Conversion

What is Conversion if this be not, that those who were so grossly ignorant, are so enlightened as to understand and speak so judiciously, clearly and experimentally of the Person and Undertakings of the Lord Jesus, and Justification by Him alone; of the beauty and excellency they saw by Faith in Him; his suitableness to their wants, and the absolute necessity they have of Him and His Righteousness, through a deep sight of their sin and misery, and a supernatural discovery of Him? Richard Davis {Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Conviction of Sin

This is plain from experience; that every soul that has no more than mere legal convictions, satisfies conscience under the greatest convictions and horrors with its own doings, and seeks for justification by the works of the Law. {Acts 16:29,30} Now where the soul thoroughly convinced of sin, how greatly sin affronts Infinite Justice, asperses Infinite Holiness, defies Infinite Truth, and despises Infinite Sovereignty; it would never presume to think to make the least reparation to affronted Justice and Infinite Holiness by any repentings, tears, or doings of its own. Could the soul make a true estimate of sin and self it would never offer its own obedience and sorrows at the bar of God for satisfaction. "But when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." {Rom.7:9} Compare with Philippians 3:8,9. This is a most certain rule; that whatever a soul satisfies conscience with; that's the answer, that the conscience gives to the demands of the righteous Law, and this is the satisfaction it offers to injured Justice. If a man's satisfies his conscience with the death and obedience of the Lord Jesus, by faith received and applied, then it is evident it offers the righteousness of Christ to the demands of Justice and of the Law. But if the man quits his raging conscience with his own sorrows and obedience, it is undeniably evident, that this man attempts to satisfy Justice, and the demands of the Law, with his own sorrows and his imperfect and impure obedience. And this is a common experience found in all, awakened in a natural state; and then their greatest legal convictions end in a conscience peace, merely acquired by the deeds of the Law; and it is commonly discerned, that a soul convinced by the Law of nature, or some general light of Scripture, presently sets about doing, reforms, humbles himself, weeps, mourns, hears, prays; and if he can but still conscience thereby; he sits down in great hopes and security, though not upon a good bottom. Ah; poor soul, didst thou but clearly know the spirituality of the Law, and the odious nature of sin, thou would not offer to bring thy rags to an holy God, nor stand before him in thy filth, and glory therein; and thy best doings are no other in a polluted state. God has a bar in the sinners conscience; and the justice of God there, by his righteous Law doth impeach. Thou hast sinned, O sinner, saith the Law in the conscience; whereupon the conscience is pained. Whatever now removes this pain of conscience is the answer given to this demand of the Law; and the answer of sinners is according to their degrees of nature's light. Some grossly ignorant plead this; that God is merciful; not knowing this, that there is not a drop of mercy to be had out of Christ. Others add to their plea, these things: they are Christians, Protestants, were baptized, are good Church folks, devout at their prayers, &c., whereas all things without Christ are but empty names. Richard Davis {True Spring of Gospel Sight & Sense of Sin: Jesus Christ, and Him Crucified, 1689}

Death & Dying

The believer in dying triumphs over the guilt of sin. Thus the believer in dying glories over it. Oh guilt of sin; who in my lifetime, since my conversion, notwithstanding I was washed with the blood of Jesus, and he had obtained on Eternal Redemption for me, didst often so sting my conscience, and thereby to fill me with dread and horror, and so didst weaken my faith and confidence in the Lord Jesus; didst strengthen the hands of my unbelief, in making me depart from the living God; didst make me often come in prayer to God as my angry Judge, and not as to my Father, reconciled to me in Christ; and thereby didst bind up my soul, fetter my spirits, so that I had no freedom of access to God through Christ; thou didst often deal with me as the man that went from Jerusalem to Jericho; didst wound me and strip me, and leave me half dead; didst often force me to entertain hard, murmuring and outrageous thoughts against my dear Lord and Master Christ, and my reconciled God and Father in Him; didst often make me add iniquity to my sin, and a carnal, loose, vain conversation to my inward deadness and enmity; and when death approached to bring me to a state of perfection in glory, didst represent him to me as a dreadful King of terrors. But now death is come, and has executed his office; I welcome him, and laugh thee to scorn. Free grace has disarmed him of the sting that thou wouldst have given him against me. I shall now no more be perplexed with thy gripes; I shall now plainly see my redemption eternal, and always the same, without as much as a cloud as big as a man's hand to interpose. I shall never look off the Lord, my Righteousness, my Sanctification and Covering, but shall always behold my Father's reconciled face in the face of my beloved Savior. Farewell eternally, oh guilt of sin! Thou canst not enter into heaven, where I am going. Thus I spurn thee now, mounting up into everlasting glory. Richard Davis {Funeral Sermon of John Bigg, 1691}

Death & Dying

The believer in dying triumphs over the world. Thou empty confused world, that didst so terrify me with thy threats; I defy thee and them now; that wast wont to allure me with thy flatteries; I am above their undermining now; I scorn thy rattles, and thy painted beads, and thy airy bubbles; I dread not now thy haggard face; nor shall I anymore be moved with thine enchantments. It will add to my pleasure in my mansions of glory to see thee burnt for thy witchcraft; I shall no more dread thy mighty hunters, nor be awed with thy grim tyrants, nor be enslaved in body, nor conscience, by thy bloody laws, nor be harassed with brutish executioners. There are no oppressing magistrates, no catch-poles, nor informers in the place I now enter to. Nay, now I tread under foot all in thee that is enticing; I set health, wealth, pleasures, honors, friends, relations and all in one scale, and my dear Forerunner in the other, and that scale ways down now to the ground. I now go to the heavenly Jerusalem, that better country, where I shall have better riches, and more durable substance, better honors, better pleasures, and far better relations. Richard Davis {Funeral Sermon of John Bigg, 1691}

Divine Illumination of the Spirit

Divine Illumination is of the Essence of Faith; for none can believe on what they know not. None can see a need of Christ, nor fly unto him, but they whose eyes have been opened by the Spirit, to see the Beauty, Excellency and Necessity of Christ Jesus. Therefore Faith is not a blind Consent to the Will. As the Spirit does work in this Faith, he is called the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation, in the knowledge of him that is Christ. "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him." {Eph.1:17} His Office is to open and enlighten the Eyes of the Understanding. "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints." {Eph.1:18} As also, to take the things of Christ, and show them unto the Soul. "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." {Jn.16:13,14} And, to make known unto Believers the Mystery of his Will. "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself." {Eph.1:9} Faith itself is called a Revelation of Christ in the Soul. "When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace" - "to reveal his Son in me." {Gal.1:15,16} Faith is also called, the Assurance of Understanding. "That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ. {Col.2:2} Richard Davis {Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Eternal Blessings in Christ

The right of the elect number to the Righteousness of Christ and other spiritual blessings is founded, and does arise from God's eternal good pleasure in Election, his engagement in the Eternal Compact, published to them in a free and sure promise, ratified and sealed by the Blood of Jesus, the Grand Purchaser. In this Eternal Grant in the Decree and Compact, God had the individual persons of the whole election in his eye. So had the Lord Jesus in his eye every individual person of them in his engagement and purchase; so that the right is in itself actual, proper, real and personal; the grant being actually and really made to the persons of the election, as considered in Christ their Head. Richard Davis {Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Eternal Suretyship of Christ

I do not mean, that the actual payment was made by Christ from eternity; nor do I mean, that the elect had any eternal being, except of Futurity and Representativeness; nor that God's act was applied to them as personally existing from eternity; in no other manner to them personally, than in that Representative being they had in their Head. Nor that this Eternal Act hindered their being rooted in the first Adam, placed for apparent felicity upon the bottom of a covenant of works; nor did it keep them from falling thence into a state of sin and misery, in reference to the first Adam and that Covenant; and this, in subserviency to the Covenant of Grace; nor that Divine Ordination in this Eternal Act was enough to rescue them from the curse of the Law, and manifest displeasure of Justice, without a Righteousness suitably wrought out and brought in for them. Nor was this Secret Eternal Sentence sufficient to satisfy their consciences, till as declared and pronounced by ways of Divine Appointment, as received to the conscience of the sinner actually existing, and actually arraigned at the bar of conscience by the faith of God's elect, wrought in them by the Irresistible Power of the Spirit of God. Richard Davis {Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Faith

Faith in the Scriptures is defined as "the evidence of things not seen;" namely, God's Justifying act passed to the soul in Christ and his Righteousness. The word signifies a convincing demonstration; namely, to the Conscience, of things not seen; namely, of the Righteousness and Strength that is in Christ; not by reason understood, nor sensibly felt to be in me, but evidenced by Faith; as this Righteousness is mine in Christ. It is not the only and highest evidence, for there are others; and the Spirit of God is Supreme. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." {Rom.8:16} It is not the revealing, but receiving Evidence. The Spirit reveals to faith, and faith receives. The Spirit witnesses with our spirit - our grace of faith or first fruit of the Spirit within us. The sun, day, and window may be said to lighten the room in diverse respects. The sun lightens by dispensing light, the window by receiving light; thus the Spirit justifies in the conscience by manifesting God's Act unto and upon man, faith by receiving this manifestation and applying it to the conscience. {Rom.3:22} Faith as justifying is set forth in Scriptures by a Witness, or Testimony, or Record; being in the original the same word; {Jn.3:33, I Cor.1:6, II Thes.1:10, Heb.11:4;} such a witness as is in the soul and conscience. {I Jn.5:10, I Cor.1:6, Gal.1:16} A judicial act to the sinner arraigned at the bar of conscience. It is a court record brought down by the Spirit from the Court of Justice in Heaven to the Court of Justice in the conscience, {like the white stone of old given to the arraigned person, as a token of his acquittal from the judges,} that there is Justification of life in Christ. {Rom.8:1, I Jn.5:10 & 11} And this record as received in the conscience honors God, by setting seal to the truth of this Declaration. "He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true." {Jn.3:33} So that faith absorbs this Record in the rolls of conscience. Faith is defined by the Holy Ghost as Manifestation, Revelation and Declaration. {Jn.14:21, Eph.1:17, Rom.3:25, Jn.16:16, Rom.1:16} But it is such a Manifestation, Revelation or Declaration as is inward and applied to the Conscience. {II Cor.4:2, Gal.1:16} Such a manifestation as unveils, declares and reveals the Blessed Object of Reconciliation and that Righteousness already prepared and appropriated in Christ, a Root and Surety to the poor sinner seeing that he is guilty and unrighteous in himself and in the first Adam, and cannot be otherwise therein. {Is.45:24, II Cor.5:19, Mt.22:4} Not a revealing, but a receiving manifestation. Therefore in a proper sense Faith is only instrumental to the practical and applicatory Knowledge of Justification in the conscience. Faith is termed acknowledging the Son. {I Jn.2:23, Eph.1:17, II Tim.2:25 compared with Jn.8:32} Faith is set forth in Scripture as a holy confidence in the conscience, or assurance which must amount to this, that there is such a fullness of Grace in Christ, and it is for me. {Is.32:17, I Thes.1:5, I Jn.3:19, Heb.3:6,14, 10:35, &c.} Faith in the Word of God is called Persuasion. {Rom.4:21, 8:38, I Jn.3:19 - where it is in the original, 'persuade our hearts before him.'} But it must be a conscience Persuasion of the reality of the Object; namely, his Christ, and his Grace; and that in reference to the sinner, which also

evidences faith to be an instrument to subserve to the practical conscience knowledge of Justification. The proper nature of an act of faith is expressed by the Spirit of God by the term – receiving. {Jn.1:12, Rom.5:17} Whence I consider, that this receiving is an act of the soul or conscience; it is not an outward receiving, as of the hand, but a conscience receiving. The act is equated to the Object; and the object is God's gracious act of counting and accepting sinners righteous in Another's Righteousness as declared, which is the Report of the Gospel, the glad tidings of great joy. Faith therefore as conversant about this Object must believe, and that for itself the glad tidings. To believe a report for myself is to know that for truth in reference to me, that I knew not before, and this must affect my conscience, as it removes guilt and makes it free. Richard Davis {Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Faith

My Judgment is that Faith is a Persuasion of the Pardon of Sin, and Acquittal by the Lord Jesus. - Faith looks to Christ for what he hath already done; for a Pardon already purchased, and an Acquittal already obtained, {Mt.22:4, Lk.14:17} - not a blind Consent of the Will, to I know not what. - Faith is a Revelation of Christ by the Spirit to the Soul, and a Persuasion by the same Spirit to leave Sin and Self, and trust in Christ so revealed. And by this Revelation and Persuasion of the Spirit, the Soul is satisfied, and not by any human Testimony without it. {Mt.11:25, Rom.8:16} Richard Davis {Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Faith

Faith is the evidence or demonstration of things not seen, {Heb.11:1,} but yet the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power. {I Cor.2:4} Christ as working this faith is said to manifest himself. {Jn.14:21,22} The Spirit, as the efficient thereof, is said to testify of Jesus, {Jn.15:26,} to take the things of Christ, and show them to the soul. {Jn.16:14} God the Father also, as the great Author of faith, is asserted to reveal his Son in the soul, {Gal.1:16,} and he that believeth, hath the witness {or manifestation} in himself, {I Jn.5:10,} with diverse other Scriptures. Whence it is evident, that Faith is a divine manifestation in the principle thereof; and the act flowing from it is the soul's acceptance of manifested grace. - They that exclude divine illumination or manifestation from the essence of faith, either set up an implicit popish blindfold faith; or, set up a faith to act without a principal, which is monstrous and absurd; or since in this divine principle of living light, Christ comes into the soul by his Spirit, and therein supernatural power is communicated to the soul, to act as a living soul in Christ; they consequently set up a power in man's soul to believe antecedent to Christ's coming to the soul, and antecedent to this divine supernatural power; which is nothing but Arminianism; and to allow it one minute before Christ's uniting himself to the soul, is all one as to allow it him from his cradle, or all three together. Richard Davis {Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Faith

Faith as strictly and properly taken is a Powerful Conscious Persuasion wrought by God concerning Christ and his Things, their excellency and suitableness to the soul, and more or less concerning the souls personal interest therein, according to the Word of God. Faith, in the original, comes from a root meaning to persuade, and really signifies a Persuading or Persuasion. It is phrased in the Old Testament language in Noah's prophecy concerning his children. "God shall enlarge {persuade} Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem." {Gen.9:27} And to the same purpose it is phrased in the New Testament, where it is said to be, a light shining into a dark heart; {II Cor.4:6;} which is a Persuasive Knowledge; called the Righteousness of God in the Gospel, revealed from Faith to Faith. {Rom.1:17} It is named a Manifestation without the Law of the Righteousness of God; {Rom.3:21;} and called a Declaration of his Righteousness for the Remission of Sins. {vs.25} The Evidence of things not seen, {Heb.11:1,} which are Christ and his Righteousness, which are entirely without us, not seen by our bodily eyes, or natural reason or understanding. The Spirit in working Faith is said to take of Christ and his Things, and show them to the soul. {Jn.16:14,15} God the Father as the worker thereof, and so is said to reveal his Son in the soul; {Gal.1:16;} which expressions evidently import a Persuasive Knowledge. This persuasion is an inward conscious persuasion, and not only head knowledge or a notional persuasion. "When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace to reveal his Son in me." {Gal.1:15,16} "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself;" {I Jn.5:10;} this witness being a Conscience-Testimony. This Conscience-Persuasion is very powerful, for it instantly works a great change on the whole man, heart, lip and life. It is a Creation Power, {II Cor.4:6,} and exceeding great Power, {Eph.1:19,} and it is the declaration of the King of Heaven to the conscience; and where the Word of the King is, there is Power. {Ecc.8:4} In this the soul is entirely

passive, like a dark room that has light let into it from outside. The object of this Faith is Christ, and the Things of Christ, as in the fore mentioned place. "He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you." {Jn.16:14,15} The Rule of Faith is the Written Word of God. {II Pet.1:19-21} And this I take to be faith strictly and properly taken. But there are inseparable and instantaneous effects and concomitants of this inward Revelation of Christ which are also called believing, which is the souls succumbing to this Manifested Christ and his Righteousness, venturing itself upon Him, and committing itself to Him; which spiritual acts are set forth in Scripture by various phrases; such as, looking unto Him, coming unto Him, casting ourselves and our burdens upon Him, staying upon Him, leaning upon Him, trusting in Him, {Is.45:22, Jn.6:37, Is.10:27, Is.50:10, Cant.8:5,} and many more. Richard Davis {Funeral Sermon of John Bigg, 1691}

Faith & Believing

What shall I do to be saved? I answer in the words of the apostles, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." {Acts 16:31} Objection: What, nothing else but believe on Christ? That I do already, and did it ever since I was born, and so shall do all that are not Turks or Pagans. Assertion: I answer; first, they that say that they believed ever since they were born, never yet believe at all. Faith grows not in nature's Garden, neither is a born with us, but it is the Gift of God, {Eph.2:8,} and it is written, "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, &c." {Phil.1:29} Whence observe, that to believe on the Lord Jesus must be given from above, and therefore it is not born with us; and they that think believing an easy thing, I dare engage never yet believed; for, nothing less than the Almighty Power of God in Christ can work this faith in us; even the same power that created the world, must be put forth to an act of faith. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness;" namely, in the creation of the world, {Gen.1:3,} "hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." {II Cor.4:6} Whence observe, that to believe is to have a view of the Glory of the Eternal Godhead, especially of the Glory of the Father's Grace and Goodness shining through Jesus of Nazareth; and this divine beam of eternal light is infused into the soul by the same powerful Command that sent down the Creating Light to inform the dark chaos. "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, &c." Nay, an even greater power must be put forth to an act of faith than to the world's creation; because in the world's creation there was no opposition, but in the sinful soul where faith is wrought such opposition exists. Richard Davis {Funeral Sermon of John Bigg, 1691}

Faith & Justification

Faith has no manner of causality in producing Justification; as it is God's Act, whether it be that gracious sentence, first as conceived in his mind from Eternity; or secondly, as promised to Christ the sinner's Surety at his resurrection; or thirdly, as this Act is terminated on the sinner's conscience. For the act of God, as qualified in the last sense is the Object that Faith lays hold upon and therefore must be in order of nature complete before the Act; and conversant act adds nothing to the completeness of the Object. Nor secondly, has it any causality in producing the matter of our Justification, as that is the Complete performance of Covenant Conditions, upon which complete performance of Covenant Conditions, the Justifying of God judicially passes; which complete performance, &c., as engaging such a Justifying Act at the Tribunal of Justice, was done by Christ our Surety perfectly many hundreds of years ago; and therefore the sinner's faith can add nothing to the benefit thereof. So that justification, the object of faith, cannot have the least instrumentality from faith, or produce its being. Whence we conclude that faith does not and cannot justify instrumentally, as an instrument subservient to the being of the thing. Richard Davis {Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Faith & Justification

Faith; though a grace, is yet but a work, and therefore can justify no otherwise, but declaratively. The proposition is plain from Scripture: "It is God that justifieth." Rom.8:33. This is a prerogative that the Supreme Judge has reserved unto Himself. "That he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Rom.3:26. The Jews counted it blasphemy in Christ to forgive sin by his own proper authority, esteeming Him a mere Man. Mark 2:7. And had He been but a mere man, they would have been in the right; for founded on that undeniable maxim, "who can forgive sins but God only?" And so also warranted from that portion of Scripture - Isa.43:25, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." The assumption is most sure! That faith in the believer, though an excellent grace, is yet a work; and it would sound harsh to say: Faith forgives sin; faith imputes righteousness, or faith justifies - no other than declaratively. - Faith justifying as

an instrument, justifies only evidentially. Heb.11:1. It is the instrument of the awakened conscience whereby it receives and records God's justifying act to the conscience, through Jesus Christ, and His righteousness. I grant indeed that faith is the instrument of justification; but such an instrument as Calvin herein asserts: "We shall now have a full definition of faith, if we say that it is a firm and certain knowledge of the mercy of God toward us, founded upon the Truth of the free promise in Christ, which is revealed in our minds, and sealed on our hearts, by the Holy Spirit." {Institutes: Book 3 Chapter 2} And such as Dr. Chauncy defines: "A spiritual organ in a quickened Sinner, whereby he sees, tastes, and feelingly lays hold on Christ and his Righteousness for Justification." {Neonomianism Unmasked, pg.232} The sinner is sensibly and practically made to know God's justifying Act to be passed to him in Christ his Surety, upon the account of that Righteousness his Surety performed. I might multiply in what sense the first Reformers took faith as an instrument; namely, An instrument wrought by the Spirit in an awakened, quickened conscience; whereby under the sense of vileness and condemnation in itself, it receives the glad tidings of great joy - that God counts and declares him guiltless and righteous in the Righteousness of Jesus. Richard Davis {A Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Faith & True Worship

All worship, if True and Evangelical must be in Spirit and in Truth. {John 4:23} As of old the worship was typically true, if in the place Divinely appointed; if offered in the appointed garments, and on the Consecrated Altar; so now the Worship is substantially true, if our gifts be offered in the Temple opened in Heaven; that is, the Person of Christ manifested there; and the worshipers by faith put on the Priestly Garments of Christ's Righteousness, and offer their Gifts on that Altar, the purity of his Nature advance to an infinite value by the Grace of Union; and without this the Worship cannot be true. All outward acts thereof; if they flow not from these inward holy acts, though externally according to Rule; yet it is but False Worship in God's account. Now thus to offer requires faith. Evangelical Worship must be in Spirit too; and where the Spirit assists to the performance, he does it is a Spirit of Adoption; witnessing with our spirits that we are the children of God, and teaching us to cry Abba Father. {Rom.8:15-16} If we are led by the Spirit of God in our worship, we act as sons of God. {"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Rom.8:14} We pray as children to a Father, we praise him as our Father; we hear him in the Ministry of the Gospel as a Father, and we do all to him as a Father; and all this cannot be done, without Faith in Exercise; for all acts of Worship are Testimonies of Love to Him, or they are not right; and we cannot testify love to Him, nor can we love Him, unless we believe upon Him. All duties of temperance and sobriety towards ourselves, of justice and mercy towards our neighbor, are but a wretched legality, and painted hypocrisy, unless done in Faith. This is a rule universally extensive which the Holy Ghost gives us; for "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." {Rom.14:23} All duties, if not performed in Love lack the life and soul of holiness; and it must be Love to God as our Father, and to Christ as our Husband. It has been proved that there can be no such Love in our hearts, but that which is wrought from a sense of our Father's love unto us, and this sense of his love is acquired only by Faith. Without such a faith there can be no Evangelical holiness for it must flow from Gospel principles, urged by Gospel motives, done by Gospel means and performed for Gospel ends. The primary Principles must be infused Light, II Cor.4:6, Life, Ez.16:6, and Love, II Cor.5:14. Now the two first of these, in their first flowing in from Faith, and their influx is continued by the Exercise of Faith; which is that bucket that draws water out of the Wells of Salvation. The third is always the effect of sensible Faith; and faith is that great channel or conduit pipe through which they are conveyed to the soul. The motives are from the Free Love and Grace of God manifested in the Person, and undertakings of Christ Jesus. All which are apprehended by faith; for faith alone apprehends the Record that God gives of his Son, and of that Eternal Life in and by Him Alone. {I Jn.5:10,14} The means by which these graces are exercised, and works of holiness done, is by virtue of Union to the Person of Christ; and this I grant and affirm, that this Union is not influential, or at least sensibly influential if not apprehended by Faith. In Christ we must spiritually Live, Move and Act. All our spiritual movements must be as Members of Him, and by virtue of Implantation into Him. {John 15:4,5} The end of all our works should not be to purchase, procure, or obtain any of his Favors; but for the Praise of the Glory of his Free Grace, and to the sole Honor of Him, "who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous Light." {Eph.1:6, I Pet.2:9} Now it is impossible for any soul to have these right Aims and Ends in good works without Faith in exercise. Either a soul must act to gain spiritual life, or from that Life already received; and there can be no third motivation. The former he cannot, because the hypothesis supposes him without Life, and therefore unable to stir or move; consequently it must be the latter; that is, from Life received; and wherever there is Life received, it supposes Faith. The service must be either servile or filial, either for wages, or because of an Inheritance given and made sure. The former is not a true service for it is against the Current of Scripture and Nature of Evangelical Holiness; therefore the latter is true. And it follows, that he that serves as a son has received the charter or grant of Adoption, which is received by faith, {Jn.1:12,} and the Spirit of Adoption which is consequential of Believing. {Eph.1:13} If the end of all duties be to the Praise of Free Grace and to the Honor of a Father and Husband; then this infallibly supposes Faith in the

subject that has already received grace; {Eph.2:6;} and that does practically know and acknowledge God to be his Father, and Christ to be his Husband. Richard Davis {Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Faith of Arminianism

Was I to receive Christ in an universal declaration, {according to the Arminian scheme,} that he died for all and every of mankind, and therefore for me; there would be no assurance for my faith, because I know then most that he died for are damned, and his death is in vain for the greatest number that he shed his precious blood for; and so I might fear, all my lifetime, it would be in vain for me. I could not relieve myself by the consideration, that I may distinguish myself from them by performing entitling conditions, because I know that I have no strength at all to perform any conditions, and all my conditions would not be worth one pence. I could never be satisfied, whether they come up to the value; and if once they did, whether they continue so to my life's end; for they might prove insincere at last, and I damned for all my professed interest in Christ for so many years. What torment and perplexity, instead of true rest of soul, which such a general faith and such a receiving of Christ bring me to unavoidably! Besides such a faith, Christ died for all, and therefore for me, would be as easy as it is fallacious, contrary to the nature of true faith, as expressed in the Scripture. This would be a conclusion of reason, not of faith; a natural inference, not a faith of the operation of the Spirit of God. Common notions with natural reason, and the power of nature would suffice to produce this faith, without the Almighty concurring influences of the Spirit of Grace; and the Scriptures would be false that say, there must be the same power to concur therein that raised up Christ from the dead. {Eph.1:19,20} The obedience of such a faith would be easier than the least moral act; and God, and his Son Christ, and the Spirit would not be honored thereby! Richard Davis {Faith the Grand Evidence, 1694}

Faith under Trial

Faith abiding in weak exercise in the soul, going out of all self, to Christ and his Fullness, in the furnace of temptations and raging corruptions, witnesses that the new creature is in that soul though much clouded and eclipsed at present. When the inward torrent of spiritual affections are sunk to the lowest ebb, yet faith then depending wholly on Christ is a proof that though it is a small brook, yet it is fed by the Well of Life. The Object of the weakest, as well as the strongest act of faith is the Person of Christ and his Righteousness; and all the being that faith has is from its Object; so all the sense of its own being that an act of faith has is also from its Object. Richard Davis {Faith the Grand Evidence, 1694}

Free Salvation in Christ

The high priest under the Law had his mitre and crown upon his head, and his Urim and Thummim on his breast to typify that the Lord Jesus executes his Kingly and Prophetic Office by his Priestly Office; and all whom he instructs and subdues, he does it by dispensing Faith and Hope, either more or less, of their pardoned state through his Blood into their Consciences. Again, do you seek Christ because of your Reformation, duties and tears? If so, you bring your own money in your hands to buy Christ; and that's quite contrary to the Proclamation that the Lord makes of Heaven's Market. "Ho, every one that thirsteth," that is, after the things of the world, or their own righteousness; for it is such thirsting as the second verse calls, spending money for that which is not bread, and labor for that which satisfies not. {Is.55:1,2} These are summoned here to come to the Fair of the Almighty, where glorious commodities are up for sale: waters, wine and milk; but what price must the buyers bring? No price at all; for they that would speed in Heaven's Market, must come "without money and without price." Not as Esau who sought to buy repentance with tears, but he found no place for it; {Heb.12:17;} for all buying in the meaning of Christ, is but receiving freely, and Christ gives the power to do that too. Richard Davis {Funeral Sermon of John Bigg, 1691}

God's Eternal Decree

The design of this Charge, if I am not mistaken, may be to Countenance the New-minted Principle that others might be saved besides the Elect. Again this Principle, I shall offer a few Reasons, and so conclude my Defense as to Matter, or Doctrine. This sort of Doctrine fixed two sorts of Eternal Decrees upon the holy God, both respective and irrespective, which is more absurd than the Arminian Tenent; for it constituted a two-fold Will in God, in respect of those that are to be Saved; to wit, that his Eternal Will was to save some absolutely, and others upon

Conditions; than which there cannot be a greater Injury offered to his holy, perfect and entire Will, which cannot be resisted. It renders the Death of Christ ineffectual to those to whom they allow Salvation, making the Purchase of Christ's Blood, to hang upon their weak, fickle, and uncertain Will, which is abominable. For it would make Christ die in vain for some. If any be Called and Saved by any other Grace, besides the Grace of Election, it must needs be by Free-will, universal Grace, and that the Scripture knoweth nothing of. More and greater Absurdities will follow upon this Opinion, than upon the Free will Point. I shall conclude what I have to allege at present, with that Passage in the Assembly and Savoy Confession: Neither are any other Redeemed by Christ, or effectually Called, Justified, Adopted, Sanctified and Saved, but the Elect only. Which I do believe is the Truth as it is in Jesus. Richard Davis {Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Intercession of Christ

Christ intercedes for all his elect before they are called, yet then only it takes effect, when they are effectually called. So again for his children under backslidings, yet then made effectual, when they are recovered. This is my judgment, that he presents his satisfaction to his Father in a way consistent with his glorified state. – Christ's meritorious righteousness in all its parts, though completed on Earth, is now in Heaven, where the Person of Christ is, who presents it to the Father on the behalf of believers, and he presents believers in it. Richard Davis {Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Jesus Christ & Him Crucified

Sinners, would you see the greatness of your misery? Behold the greatness of your redemption! Would you search out the horrid nature of sin? Oh search narrowly how much your sins cost the dearest Savior! Would you understand how an infinite God resenteth sin? Behold him wounding his innocent Son {that never offended him;} for imputed sin! If you would understand how much sin affronted his justice, government and authority. Oh see, the flaming sword of Justice sheathed in the bowels of his Shepherd, even the Man that was God's fellow. {Zech.13:7} Richard Davis {True Spring of Gospel Sight & Sense of Sin: Jesus Christ, and Him Crucified, 1689}

Jesus Christ & Him Crucified

We are apt to have slight thoughts of sin, except when we are persuaded in our conscience how much the least sinful thought of ours cost our dearest Savior. Oh could we but see how greatly the least of our sins wounded Him, and brought down the floods of divine wrath upon Him! Now nothing could deliver us from that hell which the least vain thought of ours deserves; but those heavy and unspeakable sufferings of the Son of God, to whom was wrung the dregs of the cup of vengeance; it would not only make us watch over every thought with holy jealousy; but abhor and dread every evil imagination of our hearts. We can let thousands of thoughts pass through our hearts without examination, and thousands of evil thoughts without the least regret of conscience. But did we but behold a bleeding Jesus, sweating out clods of blood, under the heavy burden of every sin of ours; did we bring this and that, and a third vain and idle thought to the bloody sacrifice; and see by faith what an expensive rate the Lord of glory blotted them out, even by his own blood and death, it would give us a true estimate of sin indeed. Thus you see, that in the glass of a crucified Savior, the soul, through faith may have a full sight of sin. – In this glass, a man has a soul purifying sight of sin. Sin reigns most when it reigns in the dark. Sin discovered to a soul, in a right way, is sin dethroned; and nothing makes such a discovery of sin to the soul like the blood of Jesus shed in the conscience. Sin also rightly mourned over, is sin in mortifying; and nothing makes the soul so deeply to mourn for sin, as the sight of him bleeding to death for sin, whom sin has pierced; as is evident from the words of the text. Again, sin loathed and detested by the soul is sin a dying in the soul; and it is our sin, as we see it on a crucified Jesus, {and that in an evangelical manner,} we only rightly hate and detest. This is the manner and nature of discovered grace, powerfully manifested in the conscience, as it is written, "And I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD; that thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth anymore because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord GOD." {Ezek.16:62,63} Richard Davis {True Spring of Gospel Sight & Sense of Sin: Jesus Christ, and Him Crucified, 1689}

Justification

Justification is an act of God's Sovereign pleasure constituting persons Righteous in the Righteousness of Another and eternally promising to the Lord Redeemer, a discharge to them upon his engagement to perform Covenant

conditions perfectly for them. This sovereign Will and Compact of God that unalterably fixes the end, fixes the means conducing thereunto; and this is one of the principal means, that they should of themselves lose their own personal righteousness in Adam their Head, so that they might be alone completely Righteous in the Righteousness of the Redeemer. So far as they are to be understood to have a Representative being in their Everlasting Head, so far as considered in Him they were never otherwise than righteous. Richard Davis {Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Justification

Dear Brother Beart, I was charged with holding eternal justification before ever I thought on the subject. Being thus charged, I weighed the matter, and searched authors until my judgment was settled in no other eternal justification than in the sense that Twisse, Ames, Rutherford, Pemble, Crandon, Goodwin, and many other sound divines, do hold it. And though I hold, with them, that God's immanent act may be called justification, in a sense; yet it is God's transient act in time that completes his justifying act to the sinner. But I perceive that good people run into two extremes; some, because the elect sinned in Adam their common Head, in his first transgression, and came really and actually under condemnation; and also execution in part, being by the sentence of God, in his righteous Law, made to forfeit their original uprightness, whence of course succeeded the depravity of their entire nature, do judge that therefore there was no Eternal Covenant Transaction, concerning them; nor can they see how the elect sinners being really under the Law, and its actual real curse and condemnation, can consist with his Eternal Acceptation in Christ. Others think that if they be thus eternally elected, and in a sense justified and accepted, they cannot possibly be under an actual curse and condemnation from the righteous Law they had broken. The ground of the mistake of both is, that they cannot take in the mystery, how the same persons, at the same time, should stand in relation to Two Common Heads. The latter also do mistake the nature of eternal justification, or acceptation; not considering that eternal acceptation is but a branch of eternal Election, and turns on the same hinges with it. Election to the End, is God's predestinating a certain number to eternal glory, for the praise of the glory of his grace; but the same eternal act of election predestinates them to the means also; which is the election of them in time, out of the world, by effectual calling to receive to themselves Christ and his Righteousness, to be justified and saved therein; and therefore undeniably supposes their Fall, Guilt and Condemnation, and the exhibition of Christ in our nature, and the bringing in an Everlasting Righteousness by him for them; and consequently, the effectual application of this Lord Jesus and his Righteousness to them. And yet this Eternal Act in appointing the end, and the means to the end, set them actually apart for his glory, and this glory for them, in Christ their Head. Thus eternal justification, as a branch of this Election is the Father's Eternal Purpose and Agreement with his Son, that the elect should be Everlastingly Righteous in his sight, in the Righteousness of His dear Son; in which Act he Constituted and Ordained them so to be. Notwithstanding, this was as firm an Ordination to the means, which is Christ's Righteousness wrought out, and applied by faith to each of them; which does infallibly suppose their fall in Adam, and coming under actual condemnation by the just sentence of the Righteous Law. However, this Eternal Act was complete in itself, as predestinating Christ's Righteousness only for them, and them only for Christ's Righteousness. But yet, as in the general act of Election whoever separates the means from the end, and denies such ought to be effectually called in time, overthrows the whole doctrine of Eternal Election; so, as to the special act of Eternal Justification, whoever puts asunder what God has joined together; namely, the Means and the End, and denies Christ's Righteousness to be imputed and effectually applied to sinners as sinners, ignorantly overthrows the doctrine of Eternal Election and Justification. And whoever denies the Imputation of Adam's first sin to the elect sinner, and the Law charge of sin upon him, for that sin, and for his personal pollution and transgressions; and consequently, his being put by the Law under an actual curse, condemnation and execution also, in part, for those sins, overthrows the doctrine of Actual Justification in time by Christ's Imputed Righteousness effectually applied to him, the individual sinner, and received by faith. And in overthrowing that, effectually overthrows the doctrine of Eternal Justification, which he would so strenuously maintain. For the sinner's fall in Adam, his actual condemnation in him, the pollution of his nature, his actual transgressions flowing from thence, his being actually condemned in his first Head and natural state for them all, Christ's Righteousness wrought out for him, Imputed and Applied to him, and received by faith, are but One Complete Mean to the Great End of his being Everlastingly Justified and Saved in Christ's Righteousness. Now to deny this is to overthrow and make void the Ordination and Constitution of God in his Purpose and Agreement before time, which I take to be the whole of Eternal Justification. Now the means and the end, and the particulars of the means among themselves are but one golden chain; take out but one link and the chain falls in pieces. Truths in their connection and mutual dependence on one another are thus nicely and delicately interwoven. This will evidently appear, by examining the particulars of this connection; for he that denies the elect sinner being in a state of nature under actual condemnation for Adam's sin, and his own inherent and committed iniquity, must consequently deny the imputation or charge of sin in any sense. He that denies the imputation of sin, denies the

imputation of Christ's Righteousness; he that denies the imputation of Christ's Righteousness, must deny any application of it to the elect sinner, or any receiving it by faith; and consequently, any right Manifestation of God's Justifying Sentence to the elect sinner's conscience; and so no justification or salvation for him in Christ's Righteousness. And, he that denies Justification and Salvation for him in Christ's Righteousness, denies God's Eternal Will, Compact and Constitution that it should be so in time, and overthrows God's Eternal Act, setting apart the elect alone to be Partakers of Christ's Righteousness, and setting apart Christ's Righteousness for the elect only; which is the Substance of Eternal Justification, in my sense of it. This argument will be yet more illustrated by examining this chain of particulars in the positive form. The soul that is made to believe, and in measure to feel, that by nature, and as under the Law, he is under the Imputation of Adam's sin, and under the power of inherent original Pollution, can only in a right manner apprehend the Doctrine of Imputed Righteousness, and therefore only is qualified to see his Need of Christ's Righteousness imputed freely to him; and it is only such an one can truly receive Christ's Righteousness as freely Imputed and Applied; and it is he that thus receives Christ's Righteousness, can only receive God's Sentence of Justification to his own soul and conscience {and thus, by the way, Justification in time is more than a bare Manifestation of it to the Conscience,} and it is he that thus rightly receives God's justifying Sentence to his Conscience, can only truly receive this Act as it was in God from Eternity; that is, his Eternal Purpose, Agreement and Constitution. Herein appears the admirable Wisdom and Prudence of God in making known the Eternal Mystery of his Will to an elect Sinner, through and unto faith in the blood of Christ, which is the great Price of his Redemption. It appears hence, that they who rightly believe the Imputation of Adam's first Sin to the elect sinner; and his actual condemnation, as under the Law, for that and other his transgressions, do only rightly establish the doctrine of Eternal Justification in the sense aforementioned; because they establish the eternal Act, in reference to the End and all the Means. It is for lack of due consideration of this, that good people err on this hand, and attribute too little to the miserable Ruin the fall of Adam has brought upon elect sinners; and consequently too little to the Redemption of Christ Jesus; and so our precious Lord loses the Glory of his redeeming Love. From hence flows another consideration, which they do not also duly weigh; and that is, as hinted, that the elect Sinner fallen stands at the same time in relation to two common Heads; and consequently, related to two Covenants at one and the same time. Though our gracious God blessed the elect number with all manner of spiritual blessings in heavenly Things in Christ Jesus, chose them in Him, predestinated them to the Adoption of Children, and made them accepted in the Beloved before the Foundation of the World; and consequently, they had an eternal Relation to Him, their eternal Head; yet as He willed in the Election to the Means, he accordingly executed his Will, and placed the same elect number in Adam their common Head, that they might bear his image, who was the earthly Man, as wrapped up in his loins, in his uprightness; and consequently, in his fallen, sinful, and ruinous estate. {I Cor.15:45-49} And then it follows, they fell in him, and sinned with him, in his first transgression. {Rom.5:12,19} Now to bear his image implies a firm Relation to him as a common Head and Surety. The elect were in his loins, as children in the loins of a parent. Partakers with Adam in his first sin, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned," {Rom.5:12,} the last clause which our Translators render 'for that all have sinned,' Dr. Goodwin translates more aptly thus, 'in whom all have sinned;' therefore sinners by Imputation, because Adam's first sin is Imputed to them. Likewise, partakers with him in his Condemnation; so "by one man sin entered into the world," that is, in its Guilt upon all Adam's race, so explained in verse 16, where we read, "for the Judgment was by one to Condemnation." This is confirmed by that in Hebrews 9:27, "it is appointed," it is a Statute-Law of Heaven, recorded, {says Dr. Goodwin regarding this passage,} for men once to die. This Statute-Law of Heaven to which this place alludes, we never read of in the Old Testament, but in that passed on Adam as our common Head, "for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." {Gen.2:17} Executed with Adam in his execution; to lose in him, and with him, all original uprightness, to have our whole nature depraved as an horrid fountain, sending forth all sinful thoughts, words and deeds. As the Apostle also argues, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men." Death spiritual and temporal, as the Execution in part of the Sentence of the righteous Law. This he repeats, "if through the offence of one many be dead;" and again, "for if by one man's offence death reigned by one." {vs.15,17} And explains, "for as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners." {vs.19} So that this death was a death spiritual in part, consisting in the loss of uprightness, and the depravity of nature; for it is opposed here all along to a Spiritual Life and Holiness. We see here the Execution is real and actual; fallen man is tainted with a real and actual inherent Pollution, then the Sentence of Condemnation must be real and actual; for a real Execution cannot proceed from a feigned Condemnation. It is further to be noted, that this sinful, ruinous, miserable image of the first Adam, the Elect themselves must first bear altogether till converted, and then they begin to bear the image of the heavenly Adam, by virtue of their Eternal Election in Him, and Relation to him. This is God's Ordination, as appears; "howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual;" {I Cor.15:46;} compared with verse 49, "as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." What the Apostle speaks here as true of the Body, is as true of the Soul. And he does assure us, that

the souls and bodies of the elect in their order, are at first altogether like the first Adam, before the Blessings of Eternal Election take place on them. The Sum of the whole to me appears to be this; that the Elect were really united to the first Adam, fell in him, and became really and actually like him in Sin, Condemnation, Execution, Ruin and Misery. Whence for a further confirmation does arise this argument; that though by virtue of the Eternal Election, and consequently the Relation and Union of the chosen ones to Christ, as their Everlasting Head and Surety, they were in Him and with Him one in the Eternal Covenant; yet this hindered not their being planted actually first in the first Adam, and being brought under the same Law, and upon the same covenant bottom with him; because the Eternal Covenant did, by eternal mutual Word and Oath, fix this as the grand Means to the grand End. Therefore the Scriptures of Truth assert it plainly, that the elect being united in a marriage union to the first Adam, they were under his Law as much as he, being their Marriage Law and Covenant, called the Law of the first Husband. "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth; for the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." {Romans 7:1-4} The Apostle says expressly that they are under this Law. It hath a dominion over them as long as they live all together in the first Adam, and bear his image; {vs.1;} they are really and actually bound by this Law; {vs.2,3;} and there is no actual nor real freedom from it but by Christ, and Marriage Union to Him. {vs.3,4} If Adam had stood, they would in him, and with him have been all blessed with blessings according to the tenor of this Law; {but this was not to be, because their Everlasting Father had provided better things for them;} and therefore Adam falling, by virtue of marriage union to him, and the Law of this Husband, they sinned in him. His first sin was really and actually imputed to them all, as has been proved from the real and actual dreadful Effects thereof, inherent original Pollution. And being really and actually under the same violated Law in Adam, and with him, they are really and actually charged equally with him for his first sin; and also for their inherent Pollution, and all their actual Transgressions. The Apostle undeniable proves this in Romans 3:9-20. {1} He shows there, that all are under Sin, and none righteous, and all gone out of the way, the elect as well as others. The Law equally charges all that are under it alike. "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law." {Rom.3:19} Now the elect before Conversion are under the same Law with others, and thereby the Apostle's argument under the same charge of the Law. {2} Being the elect are under the same Law, and under the same Charge, they are actually and really under the same guilt with others. "That every mouth," the mouth of the elect sinner himself, by virtue of any plea, short of Christ's Redemption, "may be stopped, and all the world," elect sinners in an unconverted state, as well as others, "may become guilty before God." {3} They being under the same actual real Guilt, must come under the same Condemnation, and consequently Execution in part, as has been proved. I add execution in part, because the elect sinner before effectual calling is secured from eternal wrath, and also from abiding under the Law, and its curse till death, &c., by Election and the Redemption of Christ Jesus. By the way, let me on this portion of Scripture note this, that the Apostle chiefly means the elect sinner to be under this heavy Charge of the Law, because he means such as are freely justified by Grace, through the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus. {vs.23,24} Hence it is, that though it be a great Mystery, yet it is a great Truth, that the elect may be at the same time truly related, and in the same sense United to Christ in their Election, yet by virtue of their union to their fallen head, {Adam,} may be said to lie in that wicked one really and actually, until united to Christ in a Marriage-Union by Faith; and that they may at the same time be so far discharged in the Eternal Covenant in God's Sight, as that He should look upon them his people and children, his Son's members and sheep; and yet then be actually cursed and condemned by the sentence of the righteous Law they are under. Hence it is, that though the Scriptures say the chosen of God were blessed and accepted in the Beloved from all Eternity in their eternal Predestination, and therefore as elect before conversion, named the children of God, members and sheep of Christ, vessels of mercy and honor; yet some at the same time are by the Scriptures of Truth called sinners, ungodly, enemies in their minds through wicked works, children of wrath, without Christ, and atheists in the world, and therefore actually condemned and pronounced accursed. The former is true of them, because God says so; and the latter is true of them at one and the same time, though not in the same respect, because God says so. It is a Truth that they are justified before Faith, because God makes it to be so; {based upon Christ's accomplished work on the cross;} and it is a Truth that they are justified when they believe, {as pertaining to their personal experience thereof,} because God makes it, and declares it to be so; and therefore great is the Mystery of the Gospel. It is a truth, that they are really Justified {it may be argued that in fact, the elect viewed in Christ, have no need of justification in any sense of the word, for they have always been looked upon in Christ – their Eternal Surety, Spiritual Head & Covenant Representative – and hence; accepted & perfected in Him from God's Eternal Perspective} in Eternity in God's sight and account, {'in God's sight and account' is a very pertinent statement,} who calleth those things that are not as though they were,

and to whose View all things he wills, whether past, present or to come, are always present with Him, and are as real in the Divine Mind as when they exist to us; and it is as great a Truth that they are not justified, but condemned before they have a being, and after they have a being, until they believe; but it is not in the same manner and respect, and therefore these two truths are not contradictory. Though they were Justified in God's sight in eternity, yet really condemned in Adam, till the righteousness of Christ was actually wrought out, {in time,} and this and that elect sinner under real condemnation, till it appears to be so otherwise, by the revelation of Christ's Righteousness through faith. His actual {personal} Justification does not exist, until God applies the Righteousness of his Son, and it is received by faith; forasmuch as according to the declared Will of God in his Word, things are then so to this and that sinner when they appear to be so. Though an elect sinner is loved from Eternity, yet God's love does not exist to him, until He makes demonstrations of it in Christ to him, more or less, in the sundry ways of his own Appointment. And therefore thus must those Scriptures be reconciled. An elect unregenerate sinner is really a child of God in respect of the eternal Decree and Covenant; for God has made him so to Himself; but at the same time he is really and truly a child of wrath in respect of himself, and all created beings; until rescued thence by the application of the blood of Christ. To deny the Imputation of Adam's first sin, and the actual condemnation of the elect sinner by the Law he is under, is to make void the Gospel of Grace. The Foundation of the Gospel of Grace is God's Eternal Election and Acceptation of a certain number in Christ their Eternal Head. But he fore-determined that these should be suffered to fall, and be miserable in the first Adam, that by the Intervention of Christ and his Undertakings they should be Justified, Sanctified and at last Glorified. Now, if there be no real Imputation of Sin, there is no need of a real Imputation of Righteousness. This therefore clouds the Glory of the Gospel as revealing Christ's Righteousness, lessens his Redemption, makes little of the Grace of Conversion, and clouds the Grace of God in many ways. It was God's eternal will and pleasure that his Grace should be glorified in the Gospel, in the Exaltation of Christ and his Redemption, in the way of regenerating, converting, justifying and sanctifying elect sinners, and that by the Gospel; therefore to lessen man's misery by the Fall, is to lessen the great things of the Gospel. As to what our brother seemed to assert, that faith was only a manifestation of our being justified from eternity, I judge, according to my thoughts of eternal justification, he mistakes in several things. Manifestation is God's act, but faith is our act, which receives God's declaration or manifestation, which is all one. Herein also he seems to separate the means and the end; for though the ultimate manifestation of God to, in, and by our faith is to make known unto the elect sinner the mystery of his will, according to his good Pleasure, which he hath purposed in Himself; and the very end of the Gospel is to declare the wisdom of God in a Mystery, even the hidden Wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory, to show that eternal Life which was with the Father; yet faith must come at the manifestation of this to the soul by appointed means, and by such steps as these. {1} Faith must take in the Discovery of Man's Sin, Guilt and Misery in a natural state, and the suitable Remedy that is alone in Christ and his Grace, for such a guilty, filthy, miserable soul; so that the poor awakened soul may come to see Christ absolutely needful for himself immediately. {2} Faith must take in the Manifestation of God's Will and Pleasure to the soul; which is to receive this Christ and his Righteousness as freely set forth in the Gospel indefinitely to Sinners as such; and this a soul may do, and be really pronounced justified, according to the great Charter of the Gospel, though it does not then take in the Manifestation of its present Justification, much less of its eternal Justification. {3} A soul by faith obeys the command of God in the Gospel; namely, to come alone in Christ and his Righteousness, renouncing his own righteousness to God for Justification. {4} By faith the soul receives God's present justifying sentence to itself, in pronouncing it then righteous, in the righteousness it brings and pleads, and then infer, that this sentence now pronounced in the Word was that which was pronounced on him in Christ his Surety, when Christ arose again from the dead; and conceived in the Mind of God towards him from Eternity; and past then into a federal Agreement between the Father and the Son. Which is, I suppose, what our brother means by a manifestation of his being eternally justified. Now, by this it appears that Faith itself is not the Manifestation, but an obediential receiving of God's Manifestation. And it does not only receive the Manifestation of God's eternal electing and accepting the person in a blessed Head, but it does receive the Revelation of Christ and ourselves, and the way to God by him and in him, and also the Manifestation of God's present Act of justifying us in Christ's Righteousness, before we can receive aright what was done in Eternity concerning us. I do hope our brother daily knows experimentally, that he comes as a perishing Sinner to Christ and his Righteousness, in every prayer to God for present Pardon and Justification; and when he is helped to receive this present Declaration, he then can reflect with comfort upon the Eternal Thoughts of God his Father towards him. And if he witnesses this experience to the Church, they may be certain he holds Faith to be something more besides the manifestation of his being eternally justified, however he may express himself. Thus I have delivered you my judgment with all the plainness and sincerity that I am capable of; and shall be glad if the Lord blesses it to reconcile your differences; and therefore I hope I shall not be wanting to second it with my prayers. I rest, Richard Davis. Richard Davis {A Letter from Richard Davis to Mr. John Beart, as it was published in the book by Maurice Matthias entitled Monuments of Mercy, 1729}

Justification

Objection - "Believers are actually justified from eternity." This I know, I have been chiefly on my guard in this matter; and when it was first charged upon me, I was in London, and heard of it only on my return home. Yet I do not deny, but did speak of eternal justification in the mind of God, as Dr. Twisse, Mr. Pemble, and many others have asserted; yet always restrained it to the foreknowledge of God, his Decree, and the Eternal Covenant. It is true finding the Decree of Election nowhere expressed by the name of Justification, I waved at last that term, and kept rather to that of eternal electing love and grace, because I would not keep on foot a vain strife about words to no profit, only to the subverting of the hearers. {II Tim.2:14} When I seriously weighed Isaiah 50:8,9, {"He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? let us stand together; who is mine adversary? let him come near to me. Behold, the Lord GOD will help me; who is he that shall condemn me? Lo, they all shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up,"} with Romans 8:33,34, {"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us,"} and divers other Scriptures, I cannot yet but maintain and assert, a virtual justification of the whole elect of God, though not yet called in Christ their common Head ever since his resurrection; especially when I was so confirmed therein by the excellent discourse of Dr. Goodwin on that subject in his Triumph of Faith. And they that take away the Representative Office of Christ, the Foundation of our Gospel, introduce a new scheme of religion, that I cannot find in the Bible. I do not see what need there is of all this noise about words, as long as I have constantly preached and affirmed that elect sinners are dead in trespasses and sins, and under the declared condemnation of Law and Gospel, {**pertaining to their conscience as condemned by Law**} till they believe; and that then, and only then, they are freed from that condemnation; which I take to be actual {**personal**} justification by faith. As to justification by faith, I need not put myself to the trouble to define it, as long as I am well satisfied with the definition given thereof by the Assembly, and Savoy Confession, by which I shall stand; and let this suffice for an answer to the these malicious charges. - I do grant, that all before the coming of Christ that were saved, were saved the same way that the Saints now are; namely, by the blood of Christ {**in time - at the cross of Christ, where redemption was accomplished,**} the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. - That charged tacked to this; namely, that God loved us from eternity, does very much confirm the suspicions I long entertained, that under the view of eternal justification, they fought against eternal electing love and grace. These jealousies were first fomented in my mind, by observing that not only well-meaning people, violently with great ignorance disputed the point, but men of corrupt minds were the fiercest in the contest. And I further observed, that the arguments they brought, were the very same alleged by the Arminian party to decry eternal election; and that made me the more willing often times so to frame my method of argumentation, as made many honest people think I held an elect person actually and declaratively free from the condemnation of the Law before faith, which was a mistake. My saying and unsaying the same thing, it is but a falsehood charged upon me of the same piece with the rest. When Mr. Chandler, {with whom I had discourse upon this point;} objected to my timing of justification, I only replied, I never told him yet when I timed it, and continued on my guard all the while. It is true, I asserted everlasting electing love, which he told me afterwards was one of my blasphemies; but I think he may as well charge it on the Book of God, particularly two places, Jer.31:3 & Eph.1:4, which affirm it in plain terms. Likewise, I was accused of this statement, 'there must be no works, because God rested in Christ, &c.' What I contended for {which these Arminians and Amyraldists cannot bear} was this, that no works must come into our justification; but Gospel holiness as flowing from faith, I have always preached and pressed, constantly affirming, "that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works," {Tit.3:8,} as hundreds can witness. But perhaps these Prevaricators judge nothing to be preached up of good works, unless they beat urgent as terms and conditions of our pardon and justification, and perseverance therein, as the terms of our eternal blessedness. Richard Davis {Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Justification

The elect are virtually justified at the resurrection of Christ; and here I maintain, {1} That God the Father's act towards Christ then, was his actual justifying of Him, as are common Head and Surety. {2} That Christ, as our Surety in our room and stead, was actually justified from all the sins of the chosen of God charged upon him. Hence he was unloosed from the bands and chains of death Judicially, and made to sit at the right hand of the Majesty on High. {3} That by this act passed upon Christ, all his spiritual seed was actually justified in him, in respect of God's act, and Christ's actual Justification in every sense, as their Surety. {4} But yet they are not actually justified {**personally & experimentally**} with Christ, until their believing; wherein they are made in some measure conformable unto the resurrection of Christ. Till then they are not brought out of the dungeon of a natural

state; nor are the fetters of spiritual death knocked off, till they receive, by faith, that justifying act passed upon Christ in their own consciences, whereby they are made to rise with him; and therefore, to be brief and plain, I thus word it: The chosen ones are actually justified in Christ ever since his resurrection; but virtually only with Christ until they believe. Richard Davis {Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Justification

As there is nothing of greater importance than those great truths of Eternal Justification {The actual & legal Justification of all the elect of God – as far as they are concerned; or in other words, in relationship to their actual sin & guilt being imputed to Christ their Surety, Representative & Substitute, and Christ's Righteousness imputed to them, whereby they were constituted perfectly righteous and savingly {completely} justified was in time – at the cross – on the sole basis of Christ's accomplished {finished} work alone; though in a true Supralapsarian consideration of God's pre-creation purpose of Grace to glorify Christ, and according to the harmony of Redemptive Revelation, there must of necessity, be a sense in which the elect of God, as such, in relation to their union in Christ – their Eternal Surety, Spiritual Head & Covenant Representative were always viewed {based upon Christ's Representative Work} in a state of perfection in Christ, and to imply otherwise would diminish the eternity of God, avert the Eternal Covenant of Redemption {wherein the complete salvation of God's elect on the basis of their Eternal Union with Christ was everlastingly provided for in Christ their Eternal Surety,} and to open a direct door to Arminianism.} and the Union of the Elect by and with the Lord Jesus Christ; as it hath its foundation and being in the Everlasting Sovereign good pleasure of the Holy God; and as it was managed in that Eternal Covenant, or Counsel of Peace between the Father and the Son; whose goings forth were of Old, and from Everlasting; wherein the Wondrous Grace of our God doth so marvelously appear to the Praise of his Glorious Name; and whereby the comfort of our souls is established, and through which we are powerfully influenced by the Efficacy of the Spirit of Christ unto purity and holiness; and engaged and enabled through the constraining Power of Divine Love, there inshining to yield according to the measure of the Light and Assistance, a universal and sincere Obedience. So it is that which that old implacable Enemy of our Salvation, endeavors by all his policy, craft, and subtlety, and by his inveterate malice, either to deny or pervert, either by fomenting of such false and erroneous principles as may draw souls off from believing its Sacred Truth; or by obscuring it by many mistaken notions as may darken the evidence thereof. Or lastly, by raising up prejudices against it, partly by some strange consequences as shall be unjustly drawn from it, or seemingly gross absurdities, that by a misrepresenting of it shall be cast upon, as if it were inconsistent with piety and purity. And lastly, by calumniating or reproaching those that by the grace of God are in a measure enabled to own it, and declare it; whereby, well-meaning persons who are inquiring after Truth may stumble at it, or be offended with it. Richard Davis {Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Justification

We make Justification, as it is an Act of God, to be one continued unchangeable Act from Eternity, {entirely bound up in the Person & Work of Christ,} which appears to be a consequence from our positions. It is this very thing that makes us contend for Justification from Eternity, because Justification really is fundamentally an act of God's Mind, {based upon the Redemptive work of Christ,} and all Acts of his Mind are Eternal and Unchangeable. The blasphemous inferences of acts arising new in God's mind, towards elect sinners, we endeavor to fence against, by asserting the Eternal nature of Justification. Justification from Eternity, and Justification at the Resurrection of Christ differ only as God's secret and revealed will does; and there is no other distinction between them. God's secret and revealed will are not two Acts in God; his revealed will being but the declaration of the Acts of his Mind; and that act is but One and the Same. Richard Davis {Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Justification

Those whom God effectually calls, he also freely justifies, not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous; not for anything wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone; not by imputing faith itself, nor any other evangelical obedience unto them as their Righteousness, but by imputing the Obedience and Satisfaction of Christ unto them; they receiving and resting on Him and his Righteousness by Faith, which Faith they have not of themselves, it is the Gift of God; and this Faith is not a dead faith, but worketh by Love, and is accompanied with all other evangelical graces. Richard Davis {Confession of Faith}

Law & Gospel Distinctions

Consider this, how grossly you abuse us, to say we are against the Law of God. No, we constantly affirm that the Law is good, if a man use it lawfully. Nor are we against the preaching of it as it ought to be preached. We always preach that the Law of God demands of Sinners complete and infinite satisfaction, and they that will satisfy the penalty of the Law in their own persons, must go to Hell to do it, ever to be satisfying, and never be able to satisfy; therefore there is a necessity laid upon Sinners to look and lean upon the satisfaction Christ has given. But you set up a certain imaginary repentance, or legal horrors, as terms of pardon and blessing. We preach that the Law of God demands of Sinners universal, constant, and perfect obedience, and will abate nothing if they will be justified, therefore they must believe on Him that has perfectly obeyed; but you preach lower degrees of obedience, by I know not what new Sanction, as conditions of Justification. We preach up the Law of God, but you a new Law of your own invention. The truth is, you preach neither Law nor Gospel, and that is very miserable. I do affirm, we are not against the Law, nor the preaching of it on a right foundation. We cannot offer salvation to Sinners, but we must tell them, that by the Law they are under, they are Sinners, and by the same Law accursed too. Richard Davis {Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Law & Gospel Distinctions

The Law abstractly considered gives to the sinner in a state of nature mere legal convictions and a short sight of sin. Because they never seek out under the greatest conviction of sin, for any righteousness better than their own to be justified by; whereas if the Law, abstractly considered, did give to a sinner in a state of nature a thorough sight of sin, he would never, so often as he doth, lean upon a justification by his own works, nor pacify the rage of his conscience with his own doings. This the Law of God, though perfect in itself, cannot do to a man in an unregenerate state, in that it is weak through the flesh, therefore God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh. {Rom.8:3} The Law abstractly considered it is but a killing sight of sin; and this is plain from Scripture; for to this the Apostle witnesseth, when he says expressly, "the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life," {II Cor.3:6,} which killing letter he calls, {vs.7,} "the ministration of death." - A Conviction of Sin in a state of Nature hath a tendency to irritate Sin the more, proved from Rom.7:5. "For when we were in the flesh, {in a natural state,} the motions of sins, {or the passions or ferment of sin,} which were by the Law, {convicting or restraining,} did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death." Whence it is evident, 1. That the Law in a state of Nature, by its Convictions, doth ferment and irritate Sin. 2. That Sin thus irritated, doth work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. To which agreeth what is experimentally recorded, ver.7 & 8, the Apostle saying there, "For I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." But did this Conviction diminish or extinguish his Concupiscence? No, but rather increased it; for it instantly follows, ver. 8, "but sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence." Yet it is true, the Law, by God's Ordination, oftentimes restrains the outward Acts of Sin, even then when Sin defiles the Conscience most with monstrous Unbelief, and a violent establishment of a Man's own Righteousness. Now considering all this, it is undeniably plain to me, that the Law, abstractedly considered, in mere legal Convictions, giveth to the Sinner a dim sight of Sin; whether we consider the impurity of that state that defileth all things, or the effects of such Convictions. - The Law or Covenant of Works abstractedly considered, or Convictions merely legal, drive the Soul either to sink into despair, or else to work for life, and so attain to a sinful security, both which lead far enough from Christ. Richard Davis {Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Mediatorial Offices of Christ

Our Lord Jesus Christ, both in his humbled and exalted state, executeth the Office of a Prophet, and of a Priest, and of a King to his Church. Christ executes the Office of a Prophet, in the times both of the Old and New Testament, in revealing, by his Word and Spirit, the whole mind and will of God for man's salvation. Christ executeth the Office of the Priest, in once offering of Himself a Sacrifice without spot to God, to be a Reconciliation for the sins of all them that shall be saved, and in making continual Intercession for them at the Right hand of the Majesty on High. Christ, as our Redeemer, executeth the Office of the King, in calling out of the world a people unto Himself, in ruling and defending them, and in restraining and conquering all his and their enemies. Richard Davis {Confession of Faith}

Offering Christ & Grace

Although I have some years ago {in a Discourse on Singing of Psalms, from I Cor.14:15, published in 1734} declared my sentiments, that the Psalms of David are most fit and proper to be sung in the churches of Christ; yet I never denied, nor do I deny, that Hymns and spiritual Songs composed by good men, though without the inspiration of God, may be made use of, and be useful, provided, that they are agreeable to the Sacred Writings, and the analogy of faith; and especially such as are written in an evangelic strain, as the following Hymns are. I have only one thing more to observe, that whereas the phrase of offering Christ and Grace, is sometimes used in these Hymns, which may be offensive to some persons; and which the worthy Author was led to the use of, partly through custom, it not having been at the writing of them objected to, and partly through his affectionate concern and zeal for gaining upon souls, and encouraging them to come to Christ; I can affirm upon good and sufficient testimony, that Mr. Davis before his death, changed his mind in this matter, and diffused the phrase, as being improper, and as being too bold and free for a minister of Christ to make use of; and though I have not thought fit to alter any words and phrases in the revision of these hymns, yet in the use of them in public service, those who think proper, may substitute another phrase in its room more eligible. I earnestly desire, that the Divine Spirit would make the reading and singing of these hymns, of use to the magnifying of the free-grace of God, to the exaltation of Christ, to the debasing of the creature, and to the comfort and refreshment of the Lord's people, as they often have been; and for these ends and purposes, I do heartily recommend them to every lover of Christ and his gospel, who profess myself to be of that number, and esteem it my greatest honor, to be reckoned one of them. John Gill {Preface to the Hymnbook of Richard Davis, 1748}

Perseverance of the Saints

The Perseverance of the Saints depends not upon their own free will, or inherent grace already received, but upon the Immutability of the Love of God in the Decree of Election, the Efficacy and Merit of the Intercession of Christ, the nature of the Covenant of Grace, and the abiding of the Spirit of God. Although true believers cannot fall finally and totally, yet they may fall into grievous sins, and may continue in them for a while, whereby they grieve the Spirit, lessen their comforts, wound their consciences, scandalize others, and do come under the rebuke of God's Fatherly corrections for their recovery and amendment. Richard Davis {Confession of Faith}

Representative Work of Christ

That Christ as our Representative fulfilled all Righteousness. That the Graces of the Spirit he perfectly exercised as man, cometh within the Compass of our Imputed Righteousness; that all the Righteousness he fulfilled on Earth, he carried with him to Heaven, when he entered once for all, not without Blood, where he eternally presented them to the Father as the matter of our Justification; and they are the Pleas he useth in his Intercession; the Faith and Love and other Graces he exercised when on Earth, are now in Heaven where he is. Believers may take Comfort by viewing through Faith, not only their Persons but Performances covered in his Righteousness, and see all their Guilt done away in his Blood; see their Imperfect Obedience covered with his perfect Obedience. Richard Davis {Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Representative Union in Christ

I do also hope that he will grant this, that all mankind were united to Adam when he was yet alone as their Root and Representative; and before ever any of them had a being to ask their consents; and that this union was so real, that they are really affected with what befell him, and that by virtue of this union they sinned in his sin, were condemned in his condemnation, and in a sense executed in his execution. {Rom.5:12-21} And who dare say that they were not really one with him? After the same manner, the elect number were united to Christ when he took their nature upon him as a Surety, Head, Root and Representative; and the union between Christ and them, was so real that they were really Arraigned, Condemned, Sentenced, and in a sense Executed in Him, when the threats of the Law was verified on them individually, as considered in their Surety. This union Mr. Rutherford calls a Natural, Legal and Federal Union; and it is this that we affirm to be before faith, and requires not the consent of the parties in union to make it up. Richard Davis {Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Representative Union in Christ

We judge the Holy Law charges Sin upon the person of the elect unbeliever, as he is considered in himself, in that relation his person had to the first Adam. But we do also say, that neither God's Justice, nor his Holy Law can charge sin upon the person of such a one, {an elect child of God not yet regenerated into newness of life by the direct power of the Holy Ghost in Divine Quickening,} as the eye of Justice views in Another, in that Relation he stands to his Surety and that Eternal Covenant whose Conditions are perfectly fulfilled for him by that Glorious Surety; for under such a consideration his transgression is finished, his sin made an end of, reconciliation made for him, and an Everlasting Righteousness brought in to cover him. {Dan.9:24} "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, &c." {Rom.8:34,35} We do also say, that the Law does charge sin upon the consciences of the elect; for in every execution there is a charge pre-supposed; and whether the conscience of an unconverted sinner be under security or despair, it is a Law execution there, the one being more sensible, the other more insensible; and in that sense the whole man is charged with Sin by the Law, as he stands at the Bar of Conscience. But as the same person stands at the Tribunal of Justice in the Court of Heaven, he cannot be there justly charged, for Justice has there received for him full Satisfaction, and given out to him a full Discharge by his Surety about 1700 years ago. Richard Davis {Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Representative Union in Christ

Christ upon the cross did truly and properly bear, or sustain and represent the persons of the elect. The argument to prove this is that he was their common Head, Root, Surety and Representative. The Foundation of which was, that God the Son according to the Divine Ordination, assumed our nature into an hypostatical Union, but not only as singly considered, but as being that common Head, Root, &c., of the elect number. Therefore when he assumed the nature of the election into a personal Union, he assumed in that nature, as a common Head, the persons of the election into an Union with Himself, as their Head, Root and Representative. - What is meant by the Dispensation of the Fullness of Time? In short, the time of our Lord's Incarnation. That is the meaning of that Scripture phraseology. "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." {Gal.4:4,5} That God, at an appointed time collected and summed up the chosen ones into one Sum or Body under one Head. The Center in which they all met, or the Head, unto which they were collected was Christ, that God "might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him," again reiterated. {Eph.1:10} That this special time of gathering of them into One was in the fullness of time; namely, when the Eternal Word was made Flesh. For that individual nature assumed was a Public, Common, Representative One, and by means of that Blessed One united thus hypostatically, he brought into near union to his own Person, the persons of the chosen ones. {Jn.17:21-23} Whence it is evident that our nearness of Union to God is founded {as to the means} in this middle chain, God assuming the Second Man into his own personality as a public Head, that had a numerous seed in itself, even in his loins, not in a natural way of generation, but in a mystical way of transcendent Union. Now all these put together establish the truth firmer than the pillars of Heaven and Earth; namely, when God the Son took the natures of the election into a personal Union, he took their persons also in that common Nature, into an Union to Himself, as the Root, Head and Representative. Again, all Scriptures that assert Christ to be a common Head, Root, &c., compared with those that declare the Foundation {as to the means} to be laid in the Assumption of the Nature of the election; and besides what was mentioned {in Jn.17:21-23, Heb.2:11} prove this Doctrine. So it is evident, that this glorious truth contained in the Holy Scriptures. Richard Davis {Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Righteousness of Christ

This Everlasting Righteousness is unchangeable, as is God's Act of Imputation, for with Him there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning, from whom this good and perfect Gift cometh. Jam.1:17. Jesus Christ that's made of God unto the Believer: Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption; 1 Cor.1:30, is the same yesterday, today and forever, Heb.13:8, who is an Advocate with the Father for us always, even when we sin; and pleading His Propitiatory Sacrifice unchangeably on our behalf. 1 John 1:7 compared with Heb.7:24. Though we vary and change in our frames and in the exercise of grace; yet it is well for us, for He never changeth; nor the Righteousness of his Son, for He is God, and changeth not. "For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Mal.3:6. Thus believers may take comfort by viewing through Faith, not only their Persons but Performances covered in His Righteousness, and see all their Guilt done away in His Blood; see

their Imperfect Obedience covered with His perfect Obedience. Richard Davis {Truth and Innocency Vindicated, 1692.}

Righteousness of Christ

One reason that we so practically slight the Righteousness of Christ is that we have very mean thoughts of God's act of imputation. We do not steadfastly believe that his righteousness is so made ours as the Word of God expresses it. We think it is the righteousness of another wholly without us; and through pride of heart, we must have something sensibly of our own to commend us. If our own grace be the hand that holds this shield, we glory more in the hand than in the shield that covers us. We are apt to think this righteousness is gone to heaven; and it is too great a self emptying to have recourse thither to it continually. And we are apt to think in our consciences, that we must substitute our own righteousness as Viceroy in its room on Earth, to procure all sense of favor, and peace of conscience. We deal with our own righteousness as Pharaoh dealt with Joseph, who set him over all the land, though under himself; and when the people cried to Pharaoh, he sent them to Joseph. So we are apt to send our consciences to our own righteousness for everything, as the Vicegerent of the righteousness of God. All this while we allow the righteousness of Christ to possess the throne, only there it shall sit neglected. Ah; but this is a complementing way to dethrone imputed righteousness. Richard Davis {True Spring of Gospel Sight & Sense of Sin: Jesus Christ, and Him Crucified, 1689}

Righteousness of Christ

That this Righteousness taketh not in the Active as well as the Passive Obedience of Christ is a Principle which hath been lately minted in Opposition to the Current of Orthodox Writers; to the various Confessions of Faith of the Protestants since the Reformation; and to the Word of God which hath been already proven. I shall only add these following Arguments: 1st. The Law of God must be either satisfied or defeated in its intents; and to defeat the intent of such a Holy, Righteous, and Just Law is Antinomianism with a Witness; which puteth a great affront upon the Law-Giver. 2ndly. The Primary intent of God's Law is perfect Obedience, and without perfect Obedience the Law of God cannot be satisfied. 3rdly. Unless the Law can be satisfied, there is no man living can be justified, according to the Tenor of it; and unless a sinner is justified, he cannot be saved. 4thly. There is no sinner that can plead satisfaction made unto it, in his own proper person; therefore he must plead the satisfaction given by his Surety and Representative in his stead, who fully satisfied as well the demands of it, as the Penalty; therefore through Faith we establish the Law, Rom.3:31, and give it the highest Honor, by offering to the Law-Giver the perfect and God-like Obedience of His Son thereunto. Richard Davis {Truth and Innocency Vindicated, 1692.}

Righteousness of Christ

As nothing can be spoken too high of the Righteousness of Christ, so the Holy Scriptures of Truth do speak very magnificently of those that are clothed with it; for they are said to be made "Kings and Priests to God and the Father," Rev.1:6, 1 Pet.2:6, a Holy Priesthood, a Chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, an Holy Nation, a Peculiar People. {1 Pet.2:9} As to Christ, they are called members of His Body, Eph.5:30, 1 Cor.12:12, His Friends, John 15:14,15, His Brethren, John 20:17, His Bride, Spouse, and Wife, Rev.21:2, ch.19:7, His Love & His Sister, Cant.4:7. And by Virtue of this Union, what properly is attributed to Christ is in the Scriptures attributed to His Members, with this Difference: It must be understood of Him properly, and inherently; but of them only imputatively; yet it is expressed of them in the Word of God, after such a manner, as renders the Act of Imputation very admirable. The Name that is peculiarly given to Him in Gospel Days; to wit, "The Lord our Righteousness," is also given to them. "In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely; and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, the LORD our righteousness." Jer.33:16. Just as a Wife, by virtue of the Marriage-Union, taketh her Husband's Name; so Christ's bride is given the name of her Bridegroom. So also of the Description given to his Vesture, one like the Son of Man, "clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle," Rev.1:13, which garment was of Fine Linen, Dan.10:5. The same is affirmed concerning the garment of Believers, Rev.19:8, "and to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." Of Christ it is said, Is.53:9, "neither was deceit found in His mouth," and the same is said of them, Rev.14:5, "and in their mouth was found no guile." Of Him it is written, Heb.7:26, that he "is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners;" the like concerning them is asserted, "thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." Cant.4:7. He presenteth them to Himself a Glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy and without blemish. Eph.5:27. He presenteth them to the Father no less Glorious; for in like manner they are said to be complete in him, as Head over all Principality

and Power. Col.2:10. And as they are wrapped about with this Righteousness, God is said to behold no perverseness, nor see any iniquity in them. "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel," Num.23:21; and concerning their transgressions it is written, that their Sins, upon the exact search of Justice, are not to be found, &c. "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; for I will pardon them whom I reserve." Jer.50:20. Richard Davis {Truth and Innocency Vindicated, 1692.}

Righteousness of Christ

Is it not safer for us, to keep close to Scriptural Expressions, and believe, and admire what we cannot comprehend. I wonder therefore, that saucy earth worms dare cast this imputed Righteousness into the Fire of their own Fancies, that thence it may come out a Golden Calf, for them to Dance about; or cast it into the Mold of their own carnal Reason, that from thence they may lift up a dead Image for themselves to fall down before; "for vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt." Job 11:12. Thus their Wisdom is their Folly, being Enmity against God, and the way of Salvation by Jesus Christ. Richard Davis {Truth and Innocency Vindicated, 1692.}

Righteousness of Christ

Isaiah Chapter 6. "Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, &c." What is the matter? What made him of a sudden have such a sight of his own vileness and misery? Read the following words, and you shall know the reason. "For {says he} mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts." Whence it follows, that a view of the Lord Jesus in his Glory, gives the soul to see its own pollution and misery. "Then said I, {when he beheld the King in his glory, he cried out,} woe is me!" But this place of Scripture will appear to be more pregnant to the purpose if we weigh well what it is to see the King in his glory; and that also we shall find out by the assistance of the Spirit in the understanding of these following things. This chapter prophetically treats of a crucified Christ. Compare verse one with John 12:41, {"These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him,"} and other places. From verse one it is plain, that his glory was not only, that he was upon a throne high and lifted up; but that also, his train filled the temple. That his train in the original, and margin of some of your Bibles signifies his skirts; that is, of his garments. His garments and the skirts of his garments in the Scripture phrase set forth his Righteousness. This did the garments of the high priest of old testify; and to this that parable alludes of the woman that had the bloody issue; for she says, "if I may but touch the hem of his garment, &c;" which no doubt, spiritually understood, signifies his Righteousness. So that this I infer from the words; to have a sight, through faith of the Lord Jesus in his God-like undertakings, is to have a sight of the King in his Glory; and such a sight by faith let's the poor soul see its own filthiness and pollution. Richard Davis {True Spring of Gospel Sight & Sense of Sin: Jesus Christ, and Him Crucified, 1689}

Righteousness of Christ

I judge then a Soul savingly convinced, when he is so convinced of Sin and Misery that he sees nothing but the Righteousness of Christ will do. When he is convinced of the Suitableness, and absolute Necessity of this Righteousness to him; and that nothing short of an Interest in it, will satisfy his Conscience. Also, when he is convinced of his great Evil, in leaning so long on his own Righteousness; and the proneness of his Heart to do so still. And lastly, when he is convinced of an evil Heart of Unbelief. Richard Davis {Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Righteousness of Christ

The Gospel which declares and reveals the righteousness of Christ, {which was the answering the demands of the Law in his active and passive obedience} to be so perfect, so full and complete; does thereby declare and reveal, how high, great, and perfect the demands of the Law are. The length and breadth of Christ's righteousness do sufficiently evidence the perfections of the Commandments; none but He by his complete obedience thereto, and suffering the penalty thereof, could magnify the Law, and make it honorable. {"The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honourable." Is.42:21} His suffering so great a death to satisfy its penalty, and his paying so complete an obedience to honor its exaction, did more glorify the purity and perfection of God's Law, than if Adam and all his race had stood and obeyed it always. And when the Spirit of grace

through the righteousness of Christ comes to make out this to the conscience in working faith, that conscience is made to see more clearly into the spirituality and extent of the Law that afore. And thus as the Apostle says, 'we through faith do not make void the Law, but establish it;' {Rom.3:31;} so that when grace comes to reign through the righteousness of Christ upon the conscience, there is an increase made of objective light in reference to the Law. Richard Davis {True Spring of Gospel Sight & Sense of Sin: Jesus Christ, and Him Crucified, 1689}

Separation from False Religious Associations Imperative

Having now dispatched the Slander, I think it also highly necessary, since I am thus engaged to defend the Truth, the Church and myself, to bestow some strong criticisms upon the Transactions at Kettering, because they have made such a noise in the World; and I judge, that order doth require, that first a brief and summary account be given of what passed between the united Brethren and myself. This cannot be well done, without looking back to the first Formation of this Union, and the Sentiments I had thereon. I confess, when others rejoiced thereat, and concluded it to be of God, and of great concernment to his Glory, I then being filled with sadness of heart, could not do so for these following Reasons: First, I thought it but an ill time for such an Union, and that upon a threefold Account: 1. It was a time of great degeneracy and deadness. 2. As consequential of this, a time that Professors were filled with corrupt and selfish designs and ends. 3. The Spirit was not yet poured down from on high, and therefore: First. Times of Deadness and Apostasy, I could not judge to be times for great actions. Secondly: When Professors ends are carnal and selfish, through the corruption of the Times, it is dangerous undertaking great matters then; though the glory of God may be pretendedly aimed at, yet the greatest sacrifice is to Self. Jehu could say, "Come with me, and see my zeal for the LORD," {II Kings 10:16,} when it was a Crown and a Scepter he had chiefly in his eye. Thirdly: Such a thing as so great an Union I could not expect to be firm and lasting, till we were all more of one judgment, or at least our lusts more subdued; nor indeed such an Union, till the Spirit was more poured down from on high, and these blessed effects follow thereupon: That the watchmen shall see more eye to eye, they shall lift their voice, and with their voice together shall they sing. {Isa.52:8} Till they shall no more err in vision, nor stumble in judgment. {Isa.28:7} Till the time that Ephraim shall not envy Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim. {Isa.11:13} There shall be no hurting nor destroying in all his holy mountain. {Isa.11:9} All attempts of this nature, without the special presence of the Spirit is like the Children of Israel's presuming, under their Unbelief, to go up to the top of the Hill to take the good Land, when Moses and the Ark of the Covenant was not with them; and it is no wonder if such attempters return back with shame, as well as the Israelites did. The Union prophesied by the joining of the two sticks, {Ezek.37:16 &c.,} is there declared to be after such an effusion of the Holy Ghost. The Promise runs thus, {vs.14,} "and shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land; then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD;" which also is the current of the preceding part of the Chapter, then follows the Union foretold by the Prophecy of the two Sticks. We read in the New Testament, that the members of the first primitive Church were of one heart, one mind, one accord; but it was chiefly after the pouring down of the Spirit. {Acts 2:41-47, 4:24, 5:12} To sum up all: For extraordinary actions, there must be an extraordinary Spirit; and a poor, ordinary, selfish spirit will not suffice for great designs and great services for Christ. Had not Joshua, Zerubbabel, Nehemiah, and Ezra been men extraordinarily spirited, they durst never have attempted their building work. {"Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the LORD; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work; for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts; according to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you; fear ye not." Haggai 2:4,5} That this made me then conclude that this Union was untimely; because I did not see the Spirit of God in a plentiful effusion thereof lead the way thereunto. My second reason was this; for I observed, that the greatest Numbers that were to make up this Union, were such as, 1. Had forsook the Cause and Banner of Christ in a day of Adversity, and since have wiped their mouths clean, and justified themselves, and yet will be accounted great Dissenters still. 2. Such as had been for a long season Strangers to the Order of the Gospel. 3. Such as had not only been Strangers to it, but had contested against it, and persecuted the Brethren for keeping close thereto; and observing these to be the most forward and zealous in promoting of it, implied to me no good design. Not but that I grant people may repent, and change their minds; but then that Repentance, if it be sincere, {they themselves being Judges} is attended with a hearty loathing, a free confession of, and a forsaking of their former ignorance and evil ways. That Rule of God's Word is a stated Rule to me in this Case, it being a Prophecy of what ought to be in Church matters in Gospel Days, Ezek.43:10. The Prophet is directed to show them the house in the deformity they brought it to, for their humiliation. The words run thus: "Thou son of man, show the house to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities;" {vs.11;} "and if they be ashamed of all that they have done, show them the form of the house, and the fashion thereof, &c.," and, {vs.10,} "let them measure the pattern thereof, &c." Whence observe, none such can build aright for God, unless they be ashamed of their former ignorance, disorder, and evil opposing spirit. Now I was diligently hearkening and enquiring, whether these Gentlemen now, so forward for the

Union, had: First. Ever publicly, or as much as privately, acknowledged their former ignorance, disorders and opposition, and confessed they saw now more light in the order of God's house than ever before? Secondly. Whether the Ancients of them had acknowledged their evil, in their former and latter opposition to; and persecuting and reproaching of the faithful followers of Jesus Christ that kept close to the order of the Gospel under the odious name of Sectarians? Their ignorance, opposition and persecution were too public to the dishonor of the Name of Christ, the stumbling of the world, and the grief of the godly; and I did expect if their Confession and Acknowledgment were true, it would be full as broad and wide as their Crime. Thirdly. I was observing, whether as a sign of true Repentance, they would pull down their old tottering human Fabrics, measure anew with the golden Reed of the Sanctuary, and leave out the Rubbish, and build anew, according to the pattern in the Mount? That would have testified they had indeed been in earnest; and sincere in their Repentance. But instead of this, I never heard of as much as a private acknowledgment; therefore I could not but justly suspect, that their judgments were the same as ever; and though they did in words give us almost all, yet then I judged their designs were deepest, and that they were to be treated with the extremist Caution. I confess we might have learned more wit, if not from the Bible, yet from a heathen Poet, who bringeth in one speaking of the Grecians thus:

"Suspect, that Grecian Gifts designs do own.

Strange! That Ulysses is no better known!"

For my own part, I was ready to say of them, when I saw their Concessions, as is further said there of the Greeks:

"I dread the Grecians, and their cunning Shifts,

Than most of all, when that they bring their Gifts."

It is certain Ahab intended no good to Jehoshaphat, when he entered into so strict a league with him; his whole design appeared to be no other than to engage him in that fatal War at Ramoth Gilead. It was observed of the French of old, what they lost by plain fighting with the English, they always gained with an overplus by their subtle Treaties. But I pass on to my 3rd Reason. Thirdly. I could not but upon good grounds entertain suspicions that all Confederacies with Men, that continue to lag behind in a work of Reformation was unwarrantable, and of a dangerous consequence. That Command to Jeremiah {especially the latter sentence} sounded still in mine ears, "Therefore thus saith the LORD, If thou return, then will I bring thee again, and thou shalt stand before me; and if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth; let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them." {Jer.15:19} I had observed, that all impure mixtures in the work of the Lord were forbidden; all linsey walsey garments under the Law were so. {"Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and linen together." Deut.22:11} So also {vs.10} was plowing with an Ox and an Ass together. {"Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together."} The Israelites experienced the bad effects of this, when they took many of the mixed multitude with them out of Egypt. As these retarded the work of the Lord, so they derived such guilt on the whole Congregation, that the carcasses of most of them fell in the Wilderness. The Builders in Zerubbabel's and Nehemiah's days were more wise and prudent, they refused the offers of those false Brethren to build with them, who said, "Let us build with you; for we seek your God, as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto." {Ezra 4:2} And it is well they put them off, for otherwise their building work had never gone on. I also observed that the Pillar of Fire and Cloud went always before the foremost rank. I confess I could not but fear such unions was like wheeling the front into the rear, and that is always losing ground; then they that were in the front, lost the benefit of the conducting Pillar. A word is enough to the wise. Fourthly: I had also observed, that most of the Gentlemen of the Union, through darkness of mind, were such as were no great friends to the purity of the Gospel; I therefore had my jealousies, lest this Union was formed on purpose, whilst they secretly undermined both Faith and Order; and tame us with the celebrated name of Union and Fellowship, with a gag in our mouths, into a quiet lethargy, whilst they went boldly on to pervert the Faith, as well as Gospel-order; and, as I feared, so it happened; but, blessed be the Lord, that hath awakened some of his Servants to contend earnestly for the Faith once delivered to the Saints. Fifthly: I was informed, that it was resolved upon by those Gentlemen, upon their entering into the Union, not to quit an hairs breadth of their Principles and Practices; but only they consented Articles of Faith that should be drawn in such a lax and loose phrase, that both parties might fix their particular sense upon it, and shroud their different sentiments under the universality of expressions. If this information be true, it was just such an abominable piece of Jesuitical Equivocation, as must needs highly provoke the displeasure of the Almighty, and render them odious to Men. If they thought thereby only to amuse a certain generation of men, that have out-done them for many years past in Politics, their prudence hath been strangely overseen. For they might easily perceive, those quick sighted Politicians could quickly see through their Fig-leaf-coverings, and that their Nakedness would

but the more appear to them. If the stratagems of Generals and the private intrigue of Statesmen do but once take wind it tends rather to their overthrow, than victory and establishment. Sixth; and lastly, I dreaded the design of this Union on the part of many, lest it should not be only a means framed for to jump into positions of ecclesiastical office, and consequently into power over their Brethren, when a favorable juncture of time should pave them the way; but also a device of Satan to stop all the dawns of new Light about Faith and Order. For it is well known we are not arrived to perfection therein; nor shall not till, the latter day glory is consummated. And it is also as undeniably evident, that, that glory must come in by degrees; and perhaps the first steps thereof must be advanced among a few despicable People. And it hath always been observed, the first dawns thereof have been opposed, by the majority of them that made a profession. The grain of Mustard seed in its first growth in Christ's and the Apostles days was attempted to be quashed by the learned Sanhedrim. The Learning, Power, and Policy of the Church of Rome, were engaged against the first Reformers. - From whence I observe: 1. That the dawning of every step of Reformation began first among a few. 2. That those few have been generally the most despicable; that the power and wisdom of God might therein appear the more. 3. That those few in their Testimony of Jesus were opposed by the majority of the same Profession; and were always forced to swim against wind and tide of united numbers and confederacies, armed with fleshly Power, Wisdom, Policy, Reputation, and a Popular Vogue. Read, and weigh well the 2nd Psalm to this purpose. It was the consideration of these things that awed me with the most dreadful fears and jealousies, especially being not a stranger to the complexion of times, of professors, and of the greatest number of the united brethren; lest this union should prove a great mountain in the way of our Zerubbabel, attempting to overwhelm the day of small things; and I had grounds enough for my fears. For I observed Professors lavishing their spirits forth into carnal joys and security, and proposing to themselves great and carnal advantages. I observed that the Leaders of the People were like the Sons of Zebedee, for the right and left hand in the kingdom, in a carnal sense. They could not conceal the pleasant prospect they had of rich benefices and mastery; as if the Kingdom of God, and Glory of Christ, consisted only in meats, drinks, and outward accommodations. - So that having considered these things, it is not much to be wondered at, if I was so shy to comply with the Union; for which piece of stubbornness, I was made a public example the other day at Kettering. I do not hereby in the least reflect upon my honored brethren that coalesced with them in this union. Probably their charity were more extensive than mine, in judging others were in earnest; and I confess it is at times safest erring on charity's hand. Or probably they might think, that by frequent friendly debates with them about subject matters relating to the order of God's house, that might arise occasions which would be given of affording them further light; which charitable intention of theirs I should have the rather approved of, had this been done without the formality of Articles, and a certain airy pomp, that attended those transactions. But to the matter in hand. Has not time proved it a fruitless affair? Have they reformed one hair's breadth in their discipline, admissions, watch, care, admonitions, and censures; or in their understanding and preaching the truth as it is in Jesus? Have not they rather gone ten degrees backward, and some others many steps back with them? But to add no more. These are my reasons why I dissented from the Union. I thought I saw disorders in the Foundation thereof, and feared the continued progress thereof would under the wings of a favorable juncture lick itself into the ensnaring form of a Lordly Classis. This made me cautious to advise with them in any matter, lest that should be improved to further such designs. Richard Davis {Vindication of the Doctrine of Justification and Union before Faith, 1698.}

Sin & the Righteousness of Christ

That which makes us slight the Righteousness of Christ in our consciences is the want of a due conviction of sin; and that arises from a not abiding in the constant views of this Righteousness. The more we look by faith to the blood of Christ, the more tender our conscience in point of sinning, and the more notice we take of the least sin, the sooner are we convinced and brought under guilt; and the more we are convinced of sin, the more cause we see to fly to, and value this Righteousness; when we come to see that our best thoughts are mixed with sin and imperfections, and are under the guilt and sense thereof; we then see a necessity of making constant use of it, and therefore constantly to admire and esteem this righteousness. We always practically disesteem the righteousness of Christ when we entertain favorable thoughts of sin. Richard Davis {True Spring of Gospel Sight & Sense of Sin: Jesus Christ, and Him Crucified, 1689}