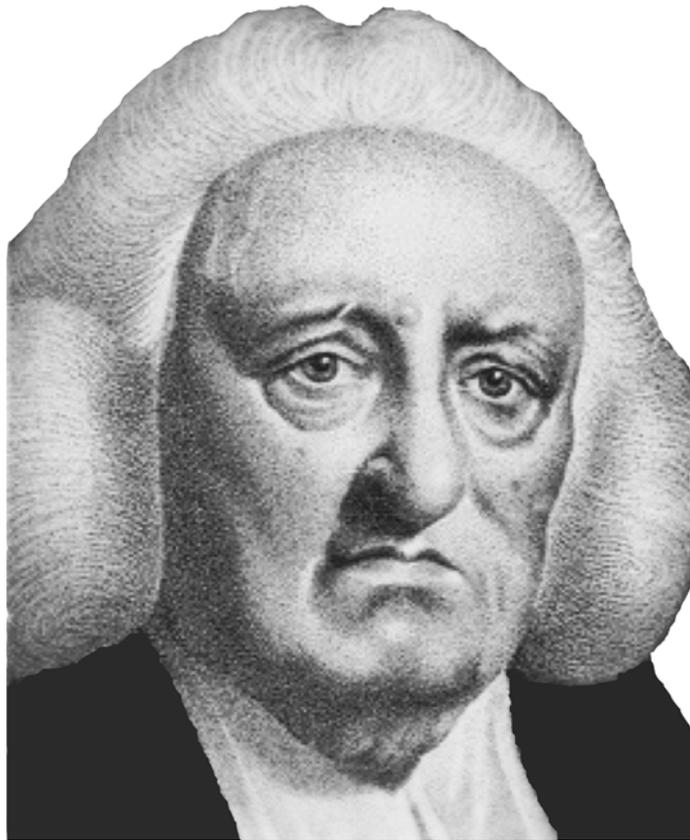


# SERMONS AND TRACTS



**BY DR. JOHN GILL**

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Bierton Particular Baptists have republished the whole of **Dr. Gills Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity, The Cause of God And Truth. Sermons and Tracts** in several volumes, See our publications list at the end of this volume. We call our reader to read **James Stuart Russell's book, "The Parousia"** to help in the study of eschatology to he with the errors in Historicism, as mentioned in our publication, **Difficulties Associated With Articles Of Religion Among Particular Baptists.**

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### 1 The Argument From Apostolic Tradition, In Favour Of Infant Baptism

With OTHERS, advanced in a late Pamphlet, called, The Baptism of Infants a reasonable Service, etc. considered;

It is with reluctance I enter again into the controversy about baptism; not from any consciousness either of the badness or weakness of the cause I am engaged in; but partly on account of other work upon my hands, which I chose not to be interrupted in; and partly because I think there has been enough written already, to bring this controversy to an issue; and it is not our fault that it has not been closed long ago; for there has been scarce any thing wrote by us these fifty years past, but in our own defense; our Paedobaptist brethren being continually the aggressors, and first movers of the controversy; they seem as if they were not satisfied with what has been done on their fide, and therefore are always attempting either to put the controversy upon a new foot, or to throw the old arguments into a new form; and even say the same things over and over again, to make their minds, and the minds of their people easy, if possible. If persons are content to search the scriptures, and form their judgment of this matter by them, there has been enough published on both sides of the question to determine themselves by; and we are willing things should rest here: but this is our care; if we reply to what is written against us, then we are litigious persons, and lovers of controversy; though we only rise up in our own vindication, for which surely we are not to be blamed; and if we make no reply, then what is written is unanswerable by us, and we are triumphed over.

No less than half a dozen pamphlets have been published upon this subject, within a very little time; without any provocation from us., that I know of. Some of them indeed are like mushrooms, that rise up and die almost as soon as they live; it has been the luck of the pamphlet before me, to live a little longer; and which is cried up as an unanswerable one, for no other reason, that I can see, but because it has not yet been answered in form; otherwise the arguments advanced in it, have been answered before it was in being; for there is nothing new throughout the whole of it. Is there any one argument in it, but what has been brought into the controversy before? not one. Is the date of infant-baptism, as it appears from the

writings of the ancients, from antiquity, for which this performance is mostly boasted of, carried one year, one month, one day, one hour, or moment higher, than it was before? not one. Is there any one passage of the ancients cited, which has not been produced and been under consideration before? not one. What then has this Gentleman been doing? just nothing at all. However an answer would have been made to him before this time, had not some things in providence prevented. My late worthy friend, the Reverend Mr. Samuel Wilson, intended to have drawn up one, as he signified to me; for which reason, I did not give myself the trouble to read this pamphlet: His view was first to publish his Manual, and then to take this under consideration; but he dying before the publication of the former, prevented his design; nor did he, as I could ever find, leave any materials behind him relating to this affair. Some time after Mr. Killingworth published an answer to Dr. Foster on the subject of communion, and added some remarks upon this pamphlet; when I ordered my Bookseller to get me that, and the strictures on it; upon reading of which, I found that Mr. Killingworth expected a formal answer to it was preparing, and would be published by a Gentleman he represents as the occasion of its being written; which for some time I have been waiting for: but hearing nothing of it, and the boasts of the party increasing, because of no answer, determined me to take it under examination in the manner I have done; but whether after all I am not too forward, I cannot tell; but if any thing is preparing or prepared by another hand, I hope what I have written will not hinder the publication of it.

Infant-baptism is sometimes put upon one footing, and sometimes on another; as on the covenant of grace; on circumcision; on the baptism of Jewish proselytes; on scripture consequences; and by our author it is rested on apostolic tradition. This he says is an argument of great weight;[1] and that it is principally for the sake of this, that his performance appears in the world;[2] for which reason, I shall chiefly attend unto it. Whatever weight this argument may be thought to have in the present controversy, it has none in others; not in the controversy with the Papists, nor with the church of England about rites and ceremonies, this Gentleman himself being judge; who I understand is the author of The dissenting Gentleman's answer

to Mr. White's Three Letters. In his controversy with him, Christ is the only lawgiver and head of the church, and no man upon earth, or body of men, have authority to make laws, or prescribe things in religion, or to set aside, alter or new-make any terms fixed by him; and apostolical authority, or what is directed to by the apostles, as fallible and unassisted men, is no authority at all, nor obligatory as a law on men, they having no dominion over their faith and practice; and the scriptures are the only, common, sufficient and perfect rule: but in the controversy about infant-baptism, apostolic tradition is of great weight; if the dispute is about sponsors and the cross in baptism, then fathers and councils stand for nothing; and the testimonies of the ancients for these things, though clear and indubitable, and about the sense of which there is no contest, and are of as early antiquity as any thing can be produced for infant-baptism, are not allowed sufficient; but if it is about infant-baptism itself, then fathers and councils are called in, and their testimonies produced, insisted upon, and retained, though they have not one syllable of baptism in them; and have senses affixed to them, strained and forced, contrived to serve an hypothesis, and what the good old fathers never dreamed of; is this fair dealing? can this be said to be sincerity, integrity and honesty? no surely.

This Gentleman should know that we, who are called Anabaptists, are Protestants, and the Bible is our religion; and that we reject all pretended apostolic tradition, and every thing that goes under that name, not found in the Bible, as the rule of our faith and practice.

The title of the pamphlet before me is, The baptism of Infants a reasonable service, founded upon Scripture, and undoubted Apostolic Tradition; but if it is founded upon scripture, then not upon tradition; and if upon tradition, then, not on scripture; if it is a scriptural business, then not a traditional one; and if a traditional one, then not a scriptural one: if it can be proved by scripture, that is enough, it has then no need of tradition; but if it cannot be proved by that, a cart-load of traditions will not support it.—This put me in mind of what I have heard, of a countryman offering to give the Judge a dozen reasons why his neighbor could not appear in court; in the first place, my Lord, says he, he is dead; that is enough, quote the Judge, I

shall spare you the trouble of giving me the rest: so prove but infant-baptism by scripture, and there will be no need of the weighty arguments from tradition. However, by putting the care as it is, we learn that this author by apostolic tradition, means unwritten apostolic tradition, since he distinguishes it from the scripture; and not apostolic tradition, delivered in the scriptures, which is the sense in which sometimes tradition is used, both in the word of God (1 Cor. 15:3; 2 Thess. 2:15), and in ancient writers.[3] So we are not at a loss about the sense of it; it is unwritten, uninspired apostolic tradition; tradition not in, but out of the scriptures; not delivered by the apostles in the sacred writings, but by word of mouth to their successors, or to the churches.

It is pretty much that infant-baptism should be called an undoubted apostolic tradition, since it has been doubted of by some learned Paedobaptists themselves; nay, some have affirmed that it is not observed by them as an apostolic tradition, particularly Curcellaeus,[4] and who gives a very good reason for it: his words are these; "Paedobaptism was unknown in the two first ages after Christ; in the third and fourth it was approved by a few; at length, in the fifth and following ages it began to obtain in divers places; and therefore this rite is indeed observed by us as an ancient custom, but not as an apostolic tradition."

Bishop Taylor[5] calls it a pretended apostolical tradition; and says, that the tradition cannot be proved to be apostolical, we have very good evidence from antiquity. Since then the Paedobaptists disagree about this point among themselves, as well as it is called in question and contested by others; one would think, this writer should not be so confident as to call it an undoubted apostolic tradition.

Besides, apostolic tradition, at most and best, is a very precarious and uncertain thing, and not to be depended on; we have a famous instance of this, in the controversy that arose in the second century, about the time of keeping Easter; whether it should be observed on the 14th day of the first moon, let it fall on what day of the week it would, or on the Sunday following; the former was observed by the churches of Asia, and the latter by the church of some; both pleaded the custom and usage of their predecessors, and even ancient apostolic tradition;[6] the Asiatic churches said, they had it by tradition from Philip and

John; the Roman church from Peter and Paul; but not being able to fettle this point, which was in the right, Victor, the then bishop of Rome, excommunicated the other churches that would not fall in with the practice of him and his church; this was in the year 196; and even before this, in the year 157, this same controversy was on foot; and Polycarp bishop of Smyrna, who had been a hearer and disciple of the apostle John, made a journey to some, and conversed with Anicetus bishop of that place, about this matter; they talked it over candidly, parted friendly, but without convincing each other, both retaining their former customs and tradition;[7] if now it was so difficult a thing to fix a tradition, or fettle what was an apostolic tradition, about the middle of the second century, fifty or sixty years after the death of the apostle John, and when some of the immediate successors of the apostles were living; what judgment can we form of apostolic traditions in the eighteenth century?

Moreover, it is doubtful whether there ever was any such thing as apostolic tradition; or that ever any thing was delivered by the apostles to their successors, or to the churches, to be observed by them, which was not delivered in the sacred writings; and I defy this Gentleman, and demand of him to give me one single instance of any apostolic tradition of this nature; and if no such instance can be given, it is in vain to talk of undoubted apostolic tradition; and upon what a miserable foundation must infant baptism stand, that relics upon this? unwritten apostolic tradition is a non- entity, as the learned Alting[8] calls it; it is a mere chimaera; a refuge of heretics formerly, and of papists now; a favourite argument of theirs, to prove by it what they please. But be it so, that there is such a thing as apostolic tradition; let it be proved that infant-baptism is such; let the apostles be pointed out that delivered it. Were they all the apostles or only some of them that delivered it? let them be named who they were, and to whom they delivered it, and when, and where. The apostles Peter and Paul, who were, the one the apostle of the circumcision, and the other the apostle of the uncircumcision, one would think, should be the most likely to hand down this tradition; the one to the Christian Jews, and the other to the Christian Gentiles; or however, to their successors or companions: but is there any proof or evidence that they did so? none at all; though there are writings of

persons extant that lived in their times. If Clemens Romanus was a successor of Peter, as the papists say, it might have been expected, that it would have been delivered to him, and he would have published it; but there is not a word of it in his epistles still in being. Barnabas was a companion of the apostle Paul; and had it been a tradition of his, it might be justly thought, it would be met with in an epistle of his now extant; but there is not the least hint of it in it, but on the contrary, several passages in favour of believers-baptism. Perhaps, as John was the last of the apostles, and outlived them all, it was left with him to transmit it to others; and had this been the care, it might have been hoped it would have been found in the writings of Polycarp, a hearer and disciple of the apostle John; but not a syllable of it is to be found in him. Nay Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, one that was a hearer of John the elder of Ephesus, and a companion of Polycarp, and who had conversed with those who were familiar with the apostles, and made it his business to pick up sayings and facts, said or done by the apostles, not recorded in scripture, has not a word of this; which childish business would have been a very pretty thing for that weak-headed man, as Eusebius[9] represents him, to have gone prattling about with; here is an apostolic tradition then, which no body knows by whom it was delivered, nor to whom, nor when and where: the companions and successors of the apostles say nothing of it. The[10] Jews talk of a Mosaic tradition and oral law, delivered from one to another for several thousand years running; they tell you by whom it was first given and received; and can name the persons to whom it was transmitted in succeeding ages; this is something to the purpose; this is doing business roundly; but here is a tradition no body can tell from whence it comes, nor who received it, and handed it down; for there is not the least mention of it, nor any pretended to in the first century or apostolic age. But let us attend to what evidence is given of it, in the next or second century.

Two passages are produced out of the writers of this age, to prove this undoubted apostolic tradition; the one out of Justin Martyr; the other out of Irenaeus. That from Justin is as follows:[11] “several persons among us, men and women, of sixty and seventy years of age, οἱ ἐκ παιδῶν ἐμαθητευθησαν τῷ Χριστῷ, who from their childhood were instructed in Christ, remain

incorrupt:” for so the phrase on which the whole depends should be rendered, and not disciplined or proselyted to Christ; which rendering of the words, as it is unjustifiable, so it would never have been thought of, had it not been to serve a turn; and is not agreeable to Justin’s use of the word, who frequently makes use of it in the sense of instruction and teaching; as when he speaks of persons being μαθητευθηνας, instructed into divine doctrines;[12] and of others being μαθητευομενους, instructed in the name (person or doctrine) of Christ, and leaving the way of error;[13] and of Christ’s sending his disciples to the Gentiles, who by them εμααθητευσαν, instructed them:[14] nor should εκ παιδων, be rendered in infancy, but from childhood; and is a phrase of the same signification with that in Timothy 3:15. where Timothy is said απο βρεφους, from a child to know the holy scriptures; and Justin’s sense is, that notwithstanding the strict and severe commands of Christ in Matthew 5:28, 29, 30, 44 as they might seem to be, and which he cites; yet there were several persons of the age he mentions, then living, who had been instructed in the person, offices, and doctrines of Christ, or had been trained up in the Christian religion from their childhood, who had persevered hitherto, and were incorrupt in their practices, and in their principles; and which is no other than a verification of what the wise man observes, Proverbs 22:6. Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it: and we are able in our day, to point out persons of an age that Justin mentions, who have been trained up in the Christian religion from their childhood; and who in riper years have made a public profession of it, and have held fast their profession without wavering, and lived unblemished lives and conversations; and yet never were baptized in their infancy.

Behold, here the first proof and evidence of infant-baptism being an undoubted apostolic tradition; when there is not a word of baptism in it, much less of infant-baptism; nor any hint of it, or reference unto it. Can the most sanguine Paedobaptist sit down, and in cool reflection conclude, upon reading and considering this passage, that it proves infant-baptism to be an undoubted apostolic tradition? surely he cannot. The other passage is out of Irenaeus, and stands thus;[15] “He (Christ) came to save all; all I say, qui per eum renascuntur in Deum, who by him are born again

unto God, infants, and little ones, and children, and young men, and old men.”

For so the words are to be rendered, and not baptized unto God; for the word renascor is never used by Irenaeus, or rather by his translator, in such a sense; nor had it as yet obtained among the ancients to use the words regenerated and regeneration, for baptized and baptism. Likewise, it is certain that Irenaeus speaks elsewhere of regeneration as distinct from baptism, as an inward spiritual work, agreeable to the scriptures; which never speak of it but as such, no not in John 3:5, Titus 3:5. And what reason can there be to depart from the literal and scriptural sense of the word, and even the sense which Irenaeus uses it in; and especially, since infants are capable of regeneration in such a sense of it? besides, to understand Irenaeus as speaking of baptism, is to make him at least to suggest a doctrine which is absolutely false; as if Christ came to save all and only such, who are baptized unto God; when it is certain, he came to save the Old-Testament-saints, who never were baptized, as well as New-Testament saints; and no doubt many now are fared by him, who never were baptized with water at all: and on the other hand, nothing is more true than that he came to save all and only those, who are regenerated by the Spirit and grace of God, of whatsoever age they be. And after all, when it is observed that the chapter out of which this passage is taken, is thought by some learned men to be none of Irenaeus’, but a spurious piece; and if it is his, it is only a translation, as almost all his works be, and a very foolish, uncouth and barbarous one, as learned men observe; so that it is not certain that there are his words, or are a true translation of them; what wise and considerate man will say, that this is a proof of infant-baptism being an undoubted apostolic tradition? seeing the passage is so much contested, and so much is to be said against it; seeing, at most and best, the sense of it is doubtful; and seeing it is certain that Irenaeus uses the word regeneration in a different sense from baptism;[16] who can be sure he uses it of baptism here? Upon the whole, what thoughtful man will affirm from hence, that infant-baptism is an undoubted apostolic tradition? And seeing these two testimonies are the only ones produced in favour of infant-baptism in the second century; and the latter Dr. Wall[17] confesses, “is the first express mention that we have met with

of infants baptized;” though there is no mention at all made of it in it, any more than in the former; he must have a strong faith to believe, and a good assurance upon such evidence to assert,[18] “that the baptism of infants was the undoubted practice of the Christian church in its purest and first: ages; the ages immediately succeeding the apostles.” Let us now proceed to the third century.

Tertullian is the first man that ever made mention of infant-baptism, that we know of; and as he was the first that spoke of it, he at the same time spoke against it, dissuaded from it, and advised to defer it; and though he was quire singular, as our author says, in this his advice; it should be observed, that he is also quite singular in his mention of the thing itself; there being no writings of any contemporary of his extant, from which we might learn their sense of this affair. We allow that infant-baptism was moved in the third century; that it then began to be talked of, and became matter of debate, and might be practiced in the African churches, where it was first moved. We do not deny the probability of the practice of it then, though the certainty of it does not appear; it is probable it might be practiced, but it is not certain it was; as yet it has not been proved. Now here we stick, by this we abide, that there is no mention made of it in any authentic writer before Tertullian’s time. And this writer himself elsewhere[19] observes, that “by his time, it is well known, a great variety of superstitious, and ridiculous, and foolish rites were brought into the church.” The date of infant-baptism cannot, we apprehend, be carried higher than his time; and we require of any of our learned Paedobaptist brethren, to produce a single passage out of any authentic writer before Tertullian, in which infant-baptism is expressly mentioned, or clearly hinted at, or plainly supposed, or manifestly referred unto. This being the care, as we own it began in this century, and might be practiced by some, it might be needless in a good measure to consider after-testimonies; however, I shall not think fit wholly to neglect them.

Origen is next quoted, and three passages out of him; shewing that the baptism of infants is a tradition of the apostles, and an usage of the church for the remission of sins; but it should be observed, that these quotations are not from the Greek of Origen; he wrote much in that language, and there is much still extant in

it; and yet nothing is produced from thence, that can fairly be construed in favour of infant-baptism; though many things may be observed from thence, in favour of adult-baptism. The three passages are quoted out of some Latin translations, greatly interpolated, and not to be depended on. His Homilies on Leviticus, and exposition of the epistle to the Romans, out of which two of them are taken, are translated by Ruffinus; who with the former, he himself owns, he used much freedom, and added much, and took such a liberty in both of adding, taking away, and changing, that, as Erasmus says,[20] whoever reads there pieces, it is uncertain whether he reads Origen or Ruffinus; and Vossius observes,[21] that the former of these was interpolated by Ruffinus, and thinks therefore, that the passage cited was of the greater authority against the Pelagians, because Ruffinus was inclined to them. The Homilies on Luke, out of which is the other passage, were translated by Jerom, of whom Du Pin says,[22] that “his versions are not more exact than Ruffinus’s.” Now both there lived at the latter end of the fourth century, and it looks very probable, that these very passages, are additions, or interpolations of these men, tinct (the color of) the language agrees with those times, and no other; for no contemporary of Origen’s, nor any writer before him or after him, until the times of Ruffinus, Jerom and Austin, speak of infant-baptism as an usage of the church, or an apostolical tradition; in short, as bishop Taylor observes,[23] “a tradition apostolical, if it be not consigned with a fuller testimony than of one person (Origen,) whom all after-ages have condemned of many errors, will obtain so little reputation amongst those, who know that things have upon greater authority pretended to derive from the apostles, and yet falsely; that it will be a great argument, that he is credulous, and weak, that shall be determined by so weak a probation, in a matter of so great concernment.”

Cyprian, with his council of sixty-six bishops, are brought as witnesses of infant-baptism, a little after the middle of the third century. We allow that as infant-baptism was moved for in Tertullian’s time, so it obtained in the African churches in Cyprian’s time; but then by Fidus the country bishop, applying to the council to have a doubt resolved, whether it was lawful to baptize infants until they were eight days old; it appears to be a novel practice; and that as yet it

was undetermined, by council or custom, when they were to be baptized, whether as soon as born, or on the eighth day, or whether it was to be left to every one's liberty: and it should also be observed, that in this age, infant communion was practiced as well as infant, baptism; and very likely both began together, as it is but reasonable, that if the one be admitted, the other should. But of this more hereafter.

The Clementine Constitutions, as they are called, are next produced, as enjoining infant-baptism; but why does this Gentleman call them the Clementine Constitutions, unless he is of opinion, and which he suggests by this title of them, that Clemens Romanus was the compiler of them from the mouths of the apostles? and if so, he might have placed the passage out of them with greater advantage, at the head of his testimonies; but he must know, that these writings are condemned as spurious, by almost all learned men, excepting Mr. Whiston; and were not heard of till the times of Epiphanius, in the latter end of the fourth century, if so soon: and it should be observed, that these same Constitutions, which direct to the baptizing of infants, injoin the use of godfathers in baptism; the form of renouncing the devil and all his works; the consecration of the water; trine immersion; the use of oil, and baptizing, fasting; crossing with the sign of the cross in the forehead; keeping the day of Christ's nativity, Epiphany, the Quadragesima or Lent; the feast of the passover, and the festivals of the apostles; falling on the fourth and sixth days of the week; praying for saints departed; singing for the dead, and honouring their relics; with many other things foreign enough from the simplicity of the apostolic doctrine and practice. A testimony from such a work, can be of very little credit to the cause of infant-baptism.

And now we are come to a very remarkable and decisive testimony, as it is called, from the writings of Austin and Pelagius; the sum of which is, that there being a controversy between these two persons about original sin, the latter, who denied it, was pressed by the former, with an argument taken from the baptism of infants for the remission of sins; with which Pelagius seemed exceedingly embarrassed, when it greatly concerned him to deny it if he could; and had it been an innovation, so acute, learned, and sagacious a man as he was, would have discovered it; but on the contrary, when he was charged with a denial of it as

the consequence of his opinion, he warmly disclaims it, and complains of a slander; and adds, that he never heard that even any impious heretic denied it, or refused it to infants; and the same says Austin, that it never was denied by any man, catholic or heretic, and was the constant usage of the church; for all which vouchers are produced. To which may be replied,

1. However embarrassed Pelagius might be with the argument, it did not lead to a controversy about the subject, but the end of baptism, and about the latter, and not the former was the dispute; nor was he under so great a temptation, and much less necessity, nor did it so greatly concern him to deny the baptism of infants, on account of his tenet; since he was able upon his principles to point out other ends of their baptism, than that of remission of sin; and particularly, their receiving and enjoying the kingdom of heaven; and as a late writer[24] observes, this proposition "baptism ought to be administered to children, as well as to the adult; was not inconsistent with, nor repugnant to his doctrine; for though he denied original sin, he allowed baptism to be administered even to children, but only for their sanctification."

2. It should be known and observed, that we have no writings of Pelagius extant, at least under his name, only some passages quoted by his adversaries, by which we can judge what were his sentiments about infant-baptism; and it is well known that a man's words often are misquoted, or misunderstood, or misrepresented by an adversary; I will not say that this is the case of Pelagius; I would hope better things of his adversaries, particularly Austin, and that he has been used fairly; I am willing to allow his authorities, though it would have been a greater satisfaction to have had these things from himself, and not at second hand. Nor,

3. Would I detract from the character of Pelagius, or call in question his acuteness, sagacity, and learning; yet two doctors of the age in which he lived, are divided about him in this respect, Austin and Jerom; the former speaks of him as a very considerable man, and of great penetration; but the latter, as if he had no genius, and but very little knowledge;[25] it must be owned, that Austin was the most candid man, and Jerom a sour one, who seldom spoke well of those he opposed, though he was a man of the greatest learning, and so the best judge of it: but however acute, learned, and sagacious Peliagius was, yet falling in with the

stream of the times, and not seeing himself concerned about the subject, but the end of baptism, might give himself no trouble to inquire into the rise of it; but take it for granted, as Austin did; who perhaps was as acute, learned and sagacious as he, that it had been the constant usage of the church, and an apostolic tradition; as he had many other things, in which he was mistaken, as will soon appear.

4. Though Pelagius complained that he was defamed, and slandered by some who charged him with denying infant-baptism; yet this, Austin observes, was only a shift of his, in order to invert the state of the question, that he might more easily answer to what was objected to him, and preserve his own opinion. And certain it is, according to Austin;[26] that the Pelagians did deny baptism to some infants, even to the infants of believers, and that for this reason, because they were holy; what others made a reason for it, they make a reason against it.

5. Pelagius says no such thing, that he never heard, no not even any impious heretic, who denied baptism to infants. His words indeed are[27] *nunquam se vel impium aliquem haeticum audisse, qui hoc, quod proposuit, de parvulis diceret*; that "he never heard, no not any impious heretic, that would say concerning infants, what he had proposed or mentioned:" the sense depends upon the meaning of the phrase, *quod proposuit*, "what he had proposed or mentioned," of whom, and what that is to be understood; whether of Austin, and the state of the case as proposed and set down by him; so our author seems to understand it, since by way of explanation, he adds, *viz.* "that unbaptized infants are not liable to the condemnation of the first man; and that they are not to be cleansed by the regeneration of baptism:" but this gentleman has not put it as Austin has stated it, which is thus; "it is objected to them (the Pelagians) that they will not own that unbaptized infants are liable to the condemnation of the first man; & *in eos tranfisse originale peccatum regeneratiane purgandum*, and that original sin has passed upon them to be cleansed by regeneration:" and according to this sense the meaning cannot be, that he never heard that any heretic denied baptism to infants; but either that he never heard that any one should say, that unbaptized infants are not liable to the condemnation of the first man, and that original sin had not passed upon them

to be cleansed by regeneration; but then this is to bring the wicked heretics as witnesses against himself, and to make himself worse than they: or the meaning is, that he never heard that any of them should say, that unbaptized infants are liable to the condemnation of the first man, and that original sin has passed upon them to be cleansed by regeneration, which is most likely: but then this makes rather against, than for the thing for which it is brought; since it makes the heretic as never saying that infants flood in need of being cleansed by baptism: or else, *quod proposuit*, "what he had proposed or mentioned," refers to Pelagius, and to the state of the question as he had put it; representing that he was charged with promising the kingdom of heaven to some, without the redemption of Christ; and of this he might say, he never heard the most impious heretic to say; and this seems to be the sense by what he subjoins; "for who is so ignorant of what is read in the gospel, not only as to attempt to affirm it, but even lightly mention it, or even imagine it?"

Moreover, who so impious that would exclude infants from the kingdom of heaven, *dum eos baptizari & in Christo renasci putat*? whilst he thinks, or is of opinion that they are baptized and regenerated in Christ?" for so it is in my edition[28] of Austin; *putet*, and not *vetat*, as Dr. Wall quotes it; and after him this Gentleman: and Pelagius further adds, "who so impious as to forbid to an infant, of whatsoever age, the common redemption of mankind?" but this, Austin says, like the rest is ambiguous; what redemption he means, whether from bad to good, or from good to better: now take the words which way you will, they cannot be made to say, that he had never heard that any heretic denied baptism to infants, but that they denied the kingdom of heaven to them; and indeed every one must: allow, whoever is of that opinion, that infants are by baptism really regenerated in Christ; which was the prevailing notion of those times, and the light in which it is put; that they must belong to the kingdom of heaven, and share in the common redemption by Christ.

6. Austin himself does not say, that he had never heard or read of any catholic, heretic, or schismatic, that denied infant-baptism; he could never say any such thing; he must know, that Tertullian had opposed it; and he himself was at the council of Carthage, and there presided, and was at the making of that canon

which runs thus; “also it is our pleasure, that whoever denies that new-born infants are to be baptized—let him be anathema:” but to what purpose was this canon made, if he and his brethren knew of none that denied infant-baptism? To say that this respects some people, who were still of the same opinion with Fidus, an African bishop, that lived 150 years before this time, that infants were not to be baptized until they were eight days old, is an idle notion of Dr. Wall:[29] can any man in his senses think, that a council, consisting of all the bishops in Africa, should agree to anathematize their own brethren, who were in the same opinion and practice of infant-baptism with themselves; only they thought it should not be administered to them as soon as born, but at eight days old? Credat Judaeus Apella, believe it who will; he is capable of believing any thing, that can believe this. Austin himself makes mention of some that argued against it, after this manner:[30] “men are used to ask this question, says he, of what profit is the sacrament of Christian baptism to infants, seeing when they have received it, for the most part they die before they know any thing of it?” and as before observed, he brings in the Pelagians[31] saying, that the infants of believers ought not to be baptized: and so Jerom,[32] who was a contemporary of his, speaks of some Christians, *qui dare noluerint baptisma*, “who refused to give baptism to their children;” so that though infant-baptism greatly obtained in those times, yet it was not so general as this author represents it. Austin therefore could not say what he is made to say: but what then does he say, that he never remembered to have read in any catholic, heretic, or schismatic writer? why, “that infants were not to be baptized, that they might receive the remission of sins, but that they might be sanctified in Christ:” it is of this the words are spoken, which our author has quoted, but are not to be found in the place he refers to; having through inadvertence mistaken Dr. Wall, from whom I perceive he has taken this, and other things. This, and not infant-baptism itself, was what was transiently talked of at Carthage, and cursorily heard by Austin some little time ago, when he was there: this was the novelty he was startled at, but did not think it seasonable to enter into a debate about it then, and so forgot it: for surely it will not be said, that it was the denial of infant-baptism that was defended with so much warmth against the church,

as he lays this was; and was committed to memory in writing; and the brethren were obliged to ask their advice about it; and they were obliged to dispute and write against; for this would prove the very reverse of what this gentleman produces it for. Now, though Austin could not say that he never remembered to have heard or read of any catholic, schismatic, or heretic, that denied infant-baptism; yet he might say he never remembered to have heard or read of any that owned and practiced infant-baptism, but who allowed it to be for the remission of sin; which is widely different from the former: it is one thing what Austin says, and another, what may be thought to be the consequence of his so saying; and in the same sense are we to understand him, when he says,[33] “and this the church has always had, has always held.” What? why, that infants are diseased through Adam; and stand in need of a physician; and are brought to the church to be healed. It was the doctrine of original sin, and the baptism of infants for the remission of it, he speaks of in these passages; it is true indeed, he took infant-baptism to be an ancient and constant usage of the church. and an apostolic tradition;[34] which perhaps he had taken up from the Latin translations of Origen by Jerom and Ruffinus before-mentioned; since no other ecclesiastical writer speaks of it as such, before those times: but in this he was deceived and mistaken, as he was in other things which he took for apostolic traditions; which ought to be equally received as this, by those who are influenced by his authority; and indeed every honest man that receives infant-baptism upon the foot of tradition, ought to receive every thing else upon the same foot, of which there is equally as full, and as early, evidence of apostolic tradition, as of this: let it then be observed,

1. That the same Austin that asserts infant-baptism to be an apostolic tradition, affirms infant-communion to be so likewise, as Bishop Taylour[35] observes; and thus Austin says,[36] “if they pay any regard to the apostolic authority, or rather to the Lord and Matter of the apostles, who says, that they have no life in themselves, unless they eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, which they cannot do unless baptized; will sometimes own that unbaptized infants have not life;” — and a little after, “no man that remembers that he is a Christian, and of the catholic faith, denies or doubts that infants, not having the

grace of regeneration in Christ, and without eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, have no life in them; but are hereby liable to everlasting punishment;" by which he means the two sacraments of baptism, and the Lord's supper; the necessity of both which to eternal life he founded upon a mistaken sense of John 3:5 and John 6:53 as appears from what he elsewhere says;[37] where having mentioned the first of those passages, he cites the latter, and adds; "let us hear the Lord, I say, not indeed speaking this of the sacrament of the holy laver, but of the sacrament of the holy table; whither none rightly come, unless baptized. Except ye eat my flesh, and drink my blood, ye shall have no life in you; what do we seek for further? what can be laid in answer to this, unless one would set himself obstinately against clear and invincible truth? will any one dare to say this, that this passage does not belong to infants; and that they can have life in themselves, without partaking of his body and blood?" And of the necessity of this, as well as of baptism to eternal life, he says[38] the African Christians took to be an ancient and apostolic tradition. Innocent the first, his contemporary, was also of the same mind; and the giving of the Eucharist to infants generally obtained; and it continued fix hundred years after, until transubstantiation took place; and is continued to this day in the Greek church: and if we look back to the times before Austin, we shall find that it was not only the opinion of Cyprian, but was practiced in his time; he tells[39] a story which he himself was a witness of; how that "a little child being left in a fright by its parents with a nurse, she carried the child to the magistrates, who had it to an idol's sacrifice; where because the child could not eat flesh, they gave it bread soaked in wine: some time after, the mother had her child again; which not being able to relate to her what had passed it was brought by its parent to the place where Cyprian and the church were celebrating the Lord's-supper; and where it shrieked, and was dreadfully distressed; and when the cup was offered it in its turn by the deacon, it shut its lips against it; who forced the wine down its throat; upon which it sobbed, and threw it up again." Now here is a plain instance of infant-communion in the third century; and we defy any one to give a more early instance, or an instance so early, of infant- baptism: it is highly probable that infant-baptism was now practiced; and

that this very child was baptized, or otherwise it would not have been admitted to the Lord's-supper; and it is reasonable to suppose, they both began together; yet no instance can be given of infant-baptism, so early as of infant-communion; wherefore whoever thinks himself obliged to receive the one upon such evidence and authority, ought to receive the other; the one has as good a claim to apostolic authority and tradition, as the other has.

2. The sign of the cross in baptism was used by the ancients, and pleaded for as an apostolic tradition. Basil, who lived in the fourth century observes,[40] that some things they had from scripture; and others from apostolic tradition, of which he gives instances; and, says he, "because this is the first and most common, I will mention it in the first place; as that we sign with the sign of the cross those who place their hope in Christ; and then asks who taught this in scripture?" Chrysostom, who lived in the same age, manifestly refers to it, when he says,[41] "how can you think it fitting for the minister to make the sign on its (the child's) forehead, where you have besmeared it with the dirt?" which Cyril[42] calls the royal seal upon the forehead. Cyprian in the middle of the third century relates the custom of his times;[43] "what is now also in use among us is, that those who are baptized, are offered to the governors of the church; and through our prayers and imposition of hands, they obtain the holy Spirit, and are made compleat signaculo Dominico, with the seal of the Lord." and in another place[44] he says, "they only can escape, who are regenerated and signed with the sign of Christ." And Tertullian, in the beginning of the same century, speaking of baptism says[45] "the flesh is washed, that the soul may be unspotted; the flesh is anointed, that the soul may be consecrated; caro signatur, "the flesh is signed," that the soul also may be fortified." Now this use of the cross in baptism, was as early as any instance of infant-baptism that can be produced; higher than Tertullian's time it cannot be carried: what partiality then is it, I know to whom I speak, to admit the one upon the foot of tradition, and reject the other? The same Tertullian[46] also speaks of sponsors, sponsors, or godfathers, in baptism; which this writer himself has mentioned, and thus renders; "what occasion is there—except in cases of necessity, that the sponsors or godfathers be brought

“into danger;” not to take notice of the Clementine Constitutions, as our author calls them, which enjoin the use of them; and which appear to be as early as infant-baptism itself; and indeed it is but reasonable that if infants are baptized, there should be sponsors or sureties for them.

3. The form of “renouncing the devil and all his works,” used in baptism, is also by Basil[47] represented as an apostolic tradition; for having mentioned several rites in baptism, received upon the same foot, he adds; “and the rest of what is done in baptism, as to renounce the devil and his angels, from what scripture have we it? is it not from this private and secret tradition?” Origen before the middle of the third century relates the usage of his times;[48] “let every one of the faithful remember when he first came to the waters of baptism; when he received the first seals of faith, and came to the fountain of salvation; what words there he then used; and what he denounced to the devil, non se, usurum pompis ejus, “that he would not use his pomps, nor his works, nor any of his service, nor obey his pleasures:” and Tertullian[49] before him; “when we enter into the water, we profess the faith of Christ, in the words of his law; we protest with our mouth that we renounce the devil, and his pomp, and his angels;” and in another place[50] in proof of unwritten tradition, and that it ought to be allowed of in some cases, he says; “to begin with baptism; when we come to the water, we do there, and sometimes in the congregation under the hand of the pallor, protest that we renounce the devil, and his pomp, and angels; and then we are thrice immersed; answering something more than the Lord has enjoined in the gospel.” now this is as early as any thing can be produced in favour of infant-baptism.

4. Exorcisms and exsusslations are represented by Austin[51] as rites in baptism, prisae traditionis, “of ancient tradition,” as used by the church every where, throughout the whole world. He frequently presses the Pelagians with the argument taken from thence, and luggers, that they were pinched with it, and knew not how to answer it; he observes, that things the most impious and absurd, were the consequences of their principles, and among the rest there:[52] “that they (infants) are baptized into a Saviour, but not saved; redeemed by a deliverer, but not delivered; washed in the laver of regeneration, but not washed from any

thing; exorcised and exsusslated, but not freed from the power of darkness:” and elsewhere he says,[53] that “notwithstanding their craftiness, they know not what answer to make to this, that infants are exorcised and exsusslated; for this, without doubt, is done in mere show, if the devil has no power over them; but if he has power over them, and therefore are not exorcised and exsusslated in mere show, by what has the prince of sinners power over them, but by sin?” And Gregory Nazianzen before him, as he exhorts to confession of sin in baptism, so to exorcism; “do not refuse, says he,[54] the medicine of exorcism—for that is the trial of sincerity, with respect to that grace (baptism).” And says Optatus of Milevis,[55] “every man that is born, though born of Christian parents, cannot be without the spirit of the world, which must be excluded and separated from him, before the salutary laver; this exorcism effects, by which the unclean spirit is driven away, and is caused to flee to desert places.” Cyprian, in the third century, speaking of the efficacy of baptism to destroy the power of Satan, relates what was done in his day;[56] “that by the exorcist the devil was buffeted, distressed, and tortured, with an human voice, and by a divine power.” And Cornelius bishop of Rome, a contemporary of his, makes mention[57] of the same officers in the church; and this is also as early as the practice of infant-baptism.

5. Trine immersion is affirmed to be an apostolic tradition, nothing is more frequently asserted by the ancients than this. Basil,[58] among his instances of apostolic tradition, mentions this; “now a man is thrice immersed, from whence is it derived?” his meaning is, is it from scripture or apostolic tradition? not the former, but the latter. And Jerom,[59] in a dialogue of his, makes one of the parties say after this manner, which clearly appears to be his own sense; “and many other things which by tradition are observed in the churches, have obtained the authority of a written law; as to dip the head thrice in the laver;” etc. And so Tertullian in the third century as above, in support of tradition, mentions[60] this as a common practice; “we are thrice immersed;” and elsewhere speaking[61] of the commission of Christ, he says, “he commanded them to dip into the Father, and the Son, and the holy Ghost; not into one, for not once, but thrice are we dipped, at each name, into each person;” and he is the first man that makes mention of infant-baptism,

who relates this as the then usage of the church: and Sozomen[62] the historian observes, that it was said, that: “Eunomius was the first that dared to assert, that the divine baptism should be performed by one immersion; and so corrupted the apostolic tradition, which till now had been every where observed.”

6. The consecration of the water of baptism is an ancient rite, and which[63] Basil derives from apostolic tradition; “we consecrate, says he, the water of baptism, and the anointing oil, as well as the person that receives baptism, from what scripture? is it not from private and secret tradition?” by which he means apostolic tradition, as he in the same place calls it; which was done, not only by the prayer of the administrator over the water, but by signing it with the sign of the cross; which rite was in use in the times of Austin,[64] who says, “baptism is signed with the sign of Christ, that is, the water where we are dipped;” and Ambrose, who lived in the same age, relates, that exorcism was also used in consecration: he describes the manner of it thus:[65] “why did Christ descend first, and afterwards the Spirit, seeing the form and use of baptism require, that first the font be consecrated, and then the person that is to be baptized, goes down? for where the priest first enters, he makes an exorcism, next an invocation on the creature of the water, and afterwards prays that the font may be sanctified, and the eternal Trinity be present.” Cyprian, in the middle of the third century, makes mention of this ceremony of consecrating the baptismal water; he says,[66] “the water must first be cleansed and sanctified by the priest, that it may, by his baptizing in it, wash away the sins of the man that is baptized.” And Tertullian[67] before him, though he makes no difference between the water of a pool, river or fountain, Tyber or Jordan, yet supposes there is a sanctification of it through prayer; “all waters,” he says, from their ancient original prerogative, (referring to Genesis 1:2) “obtain the sacrament of sanctification, Deo invocato, God being called upon;” for immediately the Spirit comes down from heaven, and rests upon the waters, sanctifying them of himself; and so being sanctified, they drink in together the sanctifying virtue.” This also is as high as the date of infant-baptism can be carried.

7. Anointing with oil at baptism, is a rite that claims apostolic tradition. Basil[68] mentions it as an instance of it, and asks; “the anointing oil, what

passage in scripture teaches this?” Ausin[69] speaks of it as the common custom of the church in his time; having quoted that passage in Acts 10:38, “how God anointed him (Jesus) with the holy Ghost; adds, not truly with visible oil, but with the gift of grace, which is signified by the visible ointment, quo baptizatos ungit ecclesia, “with which the church anoints those that are baptized:” several parts of the body were wont to be anointed. Ambrose[70] makes mention of the ointment on the head in baptism, and gives a reason for it. Cyril[71] says, the oil was exorcised, and the forehead, ear, nose and breast, were anointed with it, and observes the mystical signification of each of there; the necessity of this anointing is urged by Cyprian[72] in the third century; “he that is baptized must needs be anointed, that by receiving the chrism, that is, the anointing, he may be the anointed of God, and have the grace of Christ.” And Tertullian, in the beginning of the same century, says,[73] as before observed, “the flesh is anointed, that the soul may be consecrated;” and in another place,[74] “when we come out of the laver, we are anointed with the blessed ointment, according to the ancient discipline, in which they used to be anointed with oil out of the horn, for the priesthood;” this was the custom used in the times of the man that first spoke of infant-baptism.

8. The giving a mixture of milk and honey to a person just baptized, is a rite that was used in the churches anciently through tradition; Jerom[75] makes mention of it, as observed upon this footing, and as an instance, among other things which obtained authority in that way: “as to dip the head thrice in the laver, and when they came out from thence, to taste of a mixture of milk and honey, to signify the new birth;” and elsewhere he says,[76] it was a custom observed in the western churches to that day, to give wine and milk to them that were regenerated in Christ. This was in use in Tertullian’s time; for, speaking of the administration of baptism, he says,[77] we come to the water— then we are thrice dipped—then being taken out from thence we taste a mixture of milk and honey; and this, as well as anointing with oil, he observes, was used by heretics themselves, for so he says of Marcion:[78] “he does not reject the water of the creator, with which he washes his disciples; nor the oil with which he anoints his own; nor the mixture of milk and honey, by which he points them out as

newborn babes;” yea, even Barnabas, a companion of the apostle Paul, is thought to refer to this practice, in an epistle of his still extant;[79] not to take notice of the white garment, and the use of the ring and kiss in baptism, in Cyprian and Tertullian’s time.[80]

Now these several rites and usages in baptism, claim their rise from apostolic tradition, and have equal evidence of it as infant-baptism has; they are of as early date, have the same vouchers, and more; the testimonies of them are clear and full; they universally obtained, and were practiced by the churches, throughout the whole world; and even by heretics and schismatics; and this is to be said of them, that they never were opposed by any within the time referred to, which cannot be laid of infant-baptism; for the very first man that mentions it, dissuades from it: and are there facts which could not but be publicly and perfectly known, and for which the ancient writers and fathers may be appealed to, not as reasoners and interpreters, but as historians and witnesses to public standing facts; and all the reasoning this gentleman makes use of, concerning the apostles forming the churches on one uniform plan of baptism, the nearness of infant-baptism to their times, from the testimony of the ancients, the difficulty of an innovation, and the easiness of its detection, may be applied to all and each of these rites.

Wherefore whoever receives infant-baptism upon the foot of apostolic tradition, and upon such proof and evidence as is given of it, as above, if he is an honest man; I say again, if he is an honest man, he ought to give into the practice of all those rites and usages. We do not think ourselves indeed obliged to regard these things; we know that a variety of superstitious, ridiculous, and foolish rites, were brought into the church in these times; we are not of opinion, as is suggested, that even the authority of the apostles a hundred years after their death, was sufficient to keep an innovation from entering the church, nor even whilst they were living; we are well assured, there never was such a set of impure wretches under the Christian name, so unfound in principle, and so bad in practice, as were in the apostles days, and in the ages succeeding, called the purest ages of Christianity. We take the Bible to be the only authentic, perfect and sufficient rule of faith and practice: we allow of no other head and lawgiver but one, that is, Christ; we deny that any men, or let

of men, have any power to make laws in his house, or to decree rites and ceremonies to be observed by his people, no not apostles themselves, uninspired: and this gentleman, out of this controversy, is of the same mind with us, who asserts the above things we do; and affirms, without the least hesitation, that what is “ordained by the apostles, without any precept from the Lord, or any particular direction of the holy Spirit, is not at all obligatory as a law upon the consciences of Christians;—even the apostles had no dominion over the faith and practice of Christians, but what was given them by the special presence, and Spirit of Christ, the only Lawgiver, Lord, and Sovereign of the church: they were to teach only the things which he should command them; and whatever they enjoined under the influence of that Spirit, was to be considered and obeyed as the injunctions of Christ; but if they enjoined any thing in the church, without the peculiar influence and direction of this Spirit, that is, as merely fallible and unassisted men, in that case, their injunctions had no authority over conscience; and every man’s own reason had authority to examine and discuss their injunctions, as they approved themselves to his private judgment, to observe them or not: should we grant thee what you ask.—lays he to his antagonist—that the church in the present age, has the same authority and power, as the church in the apostolic age, considered, as not being under any immediate and extraordinary guidance of the holy Ghost what will you gain by it? This same authority and power is you see, Sir, really no power nor authority at all.”[81]

The controversy between us and our brethren on this head, is the same as between Papists and Protestants about tradition, and between the church of England and Dissenters, about the church’s power to decree rites and ceremonies namely, whether Christ is the sole head and lawgiver in his church; or whether any let of men have a power to set aside, alter, and change any laws of his, or prescribe new ones? if the latter, then we own it is all over with us, and we ought to submit, and not carry on the dispute any further: but since we both profess to make the Bible our religion, and that only the rule of our faith and practice; let us unite upon this common principle, and reject every tradition of men, and all rites and ceremonies which Christ hath not enjoined, us; let us join in pulling

down this prop of Popery, and remove this scandal of the Protestant churches, I mean infant-baptism; for lure I am, so long as it is attempted to support it upon the foot of apostolic tradition, no man can write with success against the Papists, or such, who hold that the church has a power to decree rites and ceremonies.

However; if infant baptism is a tradition of the apostles, then this point must be gained, that it is not a scriptural business; for if it is of tradition, then not of scripture; who ever appeals to tradition, when a doctrine or practice can be proved by scripture? appealing to tradition, and putting it upon that foot, is giving it up as a point of scripture: I might therefore be excused from considering what this writer has advanced from scripture in favour of infant-baptism, and the rather, since there is nothing produced but what has been brought into the controversy again and again, and has been answered over and over: but perhaps this gentleman and his friends will be displeased, if I take no notice of his arguments from thence; I shall therefore just make some few remarks on them. But before I proceed, I must congratulate my readers upon the blessed times we are fallen into! what an enlightened age! what an age of good sense do we live in! what prodigious improvement in knowledge is made! behold! tradition proved by Scripture! apostolic tradition proved by Abraham's covenant! undoubted apostolic tradition proved from writings in being hundreds of years before any of the apostles were born! all extraordinary and of the marvelous kind! but let us attend to the proof of these things.

The first argument is taken from its being an incontestable fact, that the infants of believers were received with their parents into covenant with God, in the former dispensations or ages of the church; which is a great privilege, a privilege still subsisting, and never revoked; wherefore the infants of believers, having still a right to the same privilege, in consequence have a right to baptism, which is now the only appointed token of God's covenant, and the only rite of admission into it.[82]

To which I reply, that it is not an incontestable loci; but a fact contested, that the infants of believers were with their parents taken into covenant with God, in the former dispensations and ages of the church; by which must be meant, the ages preceding the Abrahamic covenant; since that is made, to furnish

out a second and distinct argument from this; and so the scriptures produced are quite impertinent (Gen. 17:7, 10-12; Deut.29:10-12; Ezek. 16:20, 21), seeing they refer to the Abrahamic and Mosaic dispensations, of which hereafter. The first covenant made with man, was the covenant of works, with Adam before the fall, which indeed included all his posterity, but had no peculiar regard to the infants of believers; he standing as a federal head to all his feed, which no man since has ever done: and in him they all finned, were condemned, and died. This covenant, I presume this Gentleman can have no view unto: after the fall of Adam, the covenant of grace was revealed, and the way of life and salvation by the Messiah; but then this revelation was only made to Adam and Eve personally, as interested in these things, and not to their natural feed and posterity as such, as being interested in the same covenant of grace with them; for then all mankind must be taken into the covenant of grace; and if that gives a right to baptism, they have all an equal right to unto it; and so there is nothing peculiar to the infants of believers; and of whom, there is not the least syllable mentioned throughout the whole age or dispensation of the church, reaching from Adam to Noah; a length of time almost equal to what has run out from the birth of Christ, to the present age. The next covenant we read of, is the covenant made with Noah after the flood, which was not made with him, and his immediate offspring only; nor were they taken into covenant with him as the infants of a believer; nor had they any sacrament or rite given them as a token of Jehovah being their God, and they his children, and as standing in a peculiar relation to him; will any one dare to say this of Ham, one of the immediate sons of Noah? The covenant was made with Noah and all mankind, to the end of the world, and even with every living creature, and all the beasts of the earth, promising them security from an universal deluge, as long as the world stands; and had nothing in it peculiar to the infants of believers: and these are all the covenants the scripture makes mention of, till that made with Abraham, of which in the next argument.

This being the case, there is no room nor reason to talk of the greatness of this privilege, and of the continuance of it, and of asking when it was repealed, since it does not appear to have been a fact; nor during these ages and dispensations of the church, was there

ever any sacrament, rite, or ceremony, appointed for the admission of persons adult, or infants, into covenant with God; nor was there ever any such rite in any age of the world, nor is there now: the covenant with Adam, either of works or grace, had no ceremony of this kind; there was a token, and still is, of Noah's covenant, the rainbow, but not a token or rite of admission of persons into it, but a token of the continuance and perpetuity of it in all generations: nor was circumcision a rite of admission of Abraham's seed into his covenant, as will quickly appear; nor is baptism now an initiatory rite, by which persons are admitted into the covenant. Let this Gentleman, if he can, point out to us where it is so described; persons ought to appear to be in the covenant of grace, and partakers of the blessings of it, the Spirit of God, faith in Christ, and repentance towards God, before they are admitted to baptism. This Gentleman will find more work to support his first argument, than perhaps he was aware of; the premises being bad, the conclusion must be wrong. I proceed to, The second argument, taken from the Abrabamic covenant, which stands thus: The covenant God made with Abraham and his seed, Genesis 17: into which his infants were taken together with himself, by the rite of circumcision, is the very same we are now under, the same with that in Galatians 3:16, 17 still in force, and not to be disannulled, in which we believing Gentiles are included (Rom. 4:9-16, 17), and so being Abraham's seed, have a right to all the grants and privileges of it, and so to the admission of our infants to it, by the sign and token of it, which is changed from circumcision to baptism.[83] But,

1. though Abraham's seed were taken into covenant with him, which designs his adult posterity in all generations, on whom it was enjoined to circumcise their infants, it does not follow that his infants were; but so it is, that wherever the words seed, children, etc. are used, it immediately runs in the heads of some men, that infants must be meant, though they are not necessarily included; but be it so, that Abraham's infants were admitted with him, (though at the time of making this covenant, he had no infant with him, Ishmael was then thirteen years of age) yet not as the infants of a believer; there were believers and their infants then living, who were left out of the covenant; and those that were taken in successive

generations, were not the infants of believers only, but of unbelievers also; even all the natural feed of the Jews, whether believers or unbelievers.—

2. Those that were admitted into this covenant, were not admitted by the rite of circumcision; Abraham's female feed were taken into covenant with him, as well as his male feed, but not by any viable rite or ceremony; nor were his male feed admitted by any such rite, no not by circumcision; for they were not to be circumcised until the eighth day; to have circumcised them sooner would have been criminal; and that they were in covenant from their birth, this gentleman, I presume, will not deny.—

3. The covenant of circumcision, as it is called (Acts 7:8), cannot be the same covenant we are now under, since that is abolished (Gal. 5:1-3), and it is a new covenant, or a new administration of the covenant of grace, that we are now under; the old covenant under the Mosaic dispensation is waxen old, and vanished away (Heb. 8:8, 13), nor is the covenant with Abraham (Gen. 17), the same with that mentioned in Galatians 3:17 which is still in force, and not to be disannulled; the distance of time between them does not agree, but falls short of the apostle's date, four and twenty years; for from the making of this covenant to the birth of Isaac, was one year (Gen. 17:1; 21:5), from thence to the birth of Jacob, sixty years (Gen. 25:26), from thence to his going down to Egypt, one hundred and thirty years (Gen. 47:9), where the Israelites continued two hundred and fifteen;[84] and quickly after they came out of Egypt, was the law given, which was but four hundred and six years after this covenant. The reason this gentleman gives, why they must be the same, will not hold good, namely, "this is the only covenant in which "God ever made and confirmed promises to Abraham, and to his seed;" since God made a covenant with Abraham before this, and confirmed it to his seed, and that by various rites, and usages, and wonderful appearances (Gen. 15:8-18), which covenant, and the confirmation of it, the apostle manifestly refers to in Galatians 3:17 and with which his date exactly agrees, as the years are computed by Paraeus[85] thus; from the confirmation of the covenant, and taking Hagar to wife, to the birth of Isaac, fifteen years; from thence to the birth of Jacob, sixty (Gen. 25:26), from thence to his going down to Egypt, one hundred and thirty (Gen. 47:9), from thence to his death, seventeen

(Gen. 47:28), from thence to the death of Joseph, fifty three (Gen. 1:26), from thence to the birth of Moses, seventy-five; from thence to the going out of Israel from Egypt, and the giving of the law, eighty years; in all four hundred and thirty years.—

4. It is allowed, that the covenant made with Abraham (Gen. 17), is of a mixed kind, consisting partly of temporal, and partly of spiritual blessings; and that there is a twofold seed of Abraham, to which they severally belong; the temporal blessings, to his natural seed the Jews, and the spiritual blessings, to his spiritual seed, even all true believers that walk in the steps of his faith, Jews or Gentiles (Rom. 4:11, 12, 16), believing Gentiles are Abraham's spiritual seed, but then they have a right only to the spiritual blessings of the covenant, not to all the grants and privileges of it; for instance, not to the land of Canaan; and as for their natural feed, there have no right, as such, to any of the blessings of this covenant, temporal or spiritual: for either they are the natural, or the spiritual seed of Abraham; not his natural seed, no one will say that; not his spiritual seed, for only believers are such; they which are of faith (believers) the same are the children of Abraham; and if ye be Christ's, (that is, believers) then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise; and it is time enough to claim the promise, and the grants and privileges of it, be they what they will, when they appear to be believers; and as for the natural seed of believing Gentiles, there is not the least mention made of them in Abraham's covenant.

5. Since Abraham's seed were not admitted into covenant with him, by any visible rite or token, no not by circumcision, which was not a rite of admission into the covenant, but a token of the continuance of it to his natural seed, and of their distinction from other nations, until the Messiah came; and since therefore baptism cannot succeed it as such, nor are the one or the other seals of the covenant of grace, as I have elsewhere[86] proved, and shall not now repeat it; upon the whole, this second argument can be of no force in favour of infant-baptism: and here, if any where, is the proper time and place for this gentleman to ark for the repeal of this ancient privilege, as he calls it,[87] of infants being taken into covenant with their parents, or to shew when it was repealed; to which I answer, that the covenant made with Abraham, into which his natural feed were taken with him, so far as

it concerned them as such, or was a national covenant, it was abolished and disannulled when the people of the Jews were cut off as a nation, and as a church; when the Mosaic dispensation was put an end unto, by the coming, sufferings, and death of Christ; and by the destruction of that people on their rejection of him; when God wrote a Loammi upon them, and said, Ye are not my people, and I will not be your God (Hosea 1:9) when he took his staff, beauty, and cut it asunder, that he might break his covenant he had made with this people (Zech. 11:10), when the old covenant and old ordinances were removed, and the old church-state utterly destroyed, and a new church-state was set up, and new ordinances appointed; and for which new rules were given; and to which none are to be admitted, without the observance of them; which leads me to The third argument, taken from the commission of Christ for baptism (Matthew 28:19), and from the natural and necessary sense in which the apostles would understand it;[88] though this gentleman owns that it is delivered in such general terms, as not certainly to determine whether adult believers only, or the infants also of such are to be baptized; and if so, then surely no argument can be drawn from it for admitting infants to baptism. And,

1. The rendering of the words, disciple or proselyte all nations, baptizing them, will not help the cause of infant-baptism; for one cannot be a proselyte to any religion, unless he is taught it, and embraces and professes it; though had our Lord used a word which conveyed such an idea, the evangelist Matthew was not at a loss for a proper word or phrase to express it by; and doubtless would have made use of another clear and express, as he does in Matthew 23:15.—

2. The suppositions this writer makes, that if, instead of baptizing them, it had been said circumcising them, the apostles without any farther warrant would have naturally and justly thought, that upon proselytizing the Gentile parent, and circumcising him, his infants also were to be circumcised: or if the twelve patriarchs of old had had a divine command given them, to go into Egypt, Arabia, etc. and teach them the God of Abraham, circumcising them, they would have understood it as authorizing them to perform this ceremony, not upon the parent only, but also upon the infants of such as believed on the God of Abraham. As these suppositions are without foundation, so I greatly

question whether they would have been so understood, without some instructions and explanations; and besides the cases put are not parallel to this before us, since the circumcision of infants was enjoined and practiced before such a supposed commission and command; whereas the baptism of infants was neither commanded nor practiced before this commission of Christ; and therefore could not lead them to any such thought as this, whatever the other might do.—

3. The characters and circumstances of the apostles, to whom the commission was given, will not at all conclude that they apprehended infants to be actually included; some in which they are represented being entirely false, and others nothing to the purpose: Jews they were indeed, but men that knew that the covenant of circumcision was not still in force, but abolished: men, who could never have observed that the infants of believers with their parents had always been admitted into covenant, and passed under the same initiating rite: men, who could not know, that the Gentiles were to be taken into a joint participation of all the privileges of the Jewish church; but must know that both believing Jews and Gentiles were to constitute a new church, state, and to partake of new privileges and ordinances, which the Jewish church knew nothing of:—men, who were utter strangers to the baptism of Gentile proselytes, to the Jewish religion, and of their infants; and to any baptism, but the ceremonial ablutions, before the times of John the Baptist:—men, who were not tenacious of their ancient rites after the Spirit was poured down upon them at Pentecost, but knew they were now abolished, and at an end:—men, though they had seen little children brought to Christ to have his hands laid on them, yet had never seen an infant baptized in their days:—men, who though they knew that infants were sinners, and under a sentence of condemnation, and needed remission of sin and justification, and that baptism was a means of leading the faith of adult persons to Christ for them; yet knew that it was not by baptism, but by the blood of Christ, that these things are obtained:—men, that knew that Christ came to set up a new church-state; not national as before, but congregational; not consisting of carnal men, and of infants without understanding; but of spiritual and rational men, believers in Christ; and therefore could not be led to conclude that infants were comprehended in the commission: nor is

Christ's silence with respect to infants to be construed into a strong and most manifest presumption in their favour, which would be presumption indeed; or his not excepting them, a permission or order to admit them: persons capable of making such constructions, are capable of doing and saying any thing. I hasten to The fourth argument, drawn from the evident and clear consequences of other passages of scripture;[89] as,

1. From Romans 11:17 and if some of the branches be broken off, etc. here let it be noted, that the olive tree is not the Abrahamic covenant or church, into which the Gentiles were grafted; for they never were grafted into the Jewish church, that, with all its peculiar ordinances, being abolished by Christ; signified by the shaking of the heaven and the earth, and the removing of things shaken (Heb. 12:26, 27) but the gospel church-state, out of which the unbelieving Jews were left, and into which the believing Gentiles were engrafted, but not in the stead of the unbelieving Jews: and by the root and fatness of the olive-tree, are meant, not the religious privileges and grants belonging to the Jewish covenant or church, which the Gentiles had nothing to do with, and are abolished; but the privileges and ordinances of the gospel-church, which they with the believing Jews jointly partook of, being incorporated together in the same church-state; and which, as it is the meaning of Romans 11:17 so of Ephesians 3:6 in all which there is not the least syllable of baptism; and much less of infant, baptism; or of the faith of a parent grafting his children with himself, into the church or covenant-relation to God, which is a mere chimera, that has no foundation either in reason or scripture.

2. From Mark 10:14. Suffer little children to come unto me, etc. and John 3:5. Except any one is born of water, etc. from there two passages put together, it is said, the right of infants to baptism may be clearly inferred; for in one they are declared actually to have a place in God's kingdom or church, and yet into it, the other as expressly says, none can be admitted without being baptized. But supposing the former of these texts is to be understood of infants, not in a metaphorical sense, or of such as are compared to infants for humility, etc. which sense some versions lead unto, and in which way some Paedobaptists interpret the words, particularly Calvin, but literally; then by the kingdom of God, is not meant the visible church on

earth, or a gospel church-state, which is not national, but congregational; consisting of persons gathered out of the world by the grace of God, and that make a public profession of the name of Christ, which infants are incapable of, and so are not taken into it: betides, this sense would prove too much, and what this writer would not choose to give into, viz. that infants, having a place in this kingdom or church, must have a right to all the privileges of it; to the Lord's supper, as well as to baptism; and ought to be treated in all respects as other members of it. Wherefore it should be interpreted of the kingdom of glory, into which we doubt not that such as these in the text are admitted; and then the strength of our Lord's argument lies here; that since he came to save such infants as these, as well as adult persons, and bring them to heaven, they should not be hindered from being brought to him to be touched by him, and healed of their bodily diseases: and so the other text is to be understood of the kingdom of God, or heaven, in the same sense; but not of water-baptism as necessary to it, or that without which there is no entrance into it; which mistaken, shocking and stupid sense of them, led Austin, and the African churches, into a confirmed belief and practice of infant-baptism; and this sense being imbibed, will justify him in all his monstrous, absurd and impious tenets, as this writer calls them, about the ceremony of baptismal water, and the absolute necessity of it unto salvation: whereas the plain meaning of the words is, that except a man be born again of the grace of the Spirit of God, comparable to water, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God, or be a partaker of the heavenly glory; or without the regenerating grace of the Spirit of God, which in Titus 3:5 is called the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the holy Ghost, there can be no meetness for, no reception into, the kingdom of heaven; and therefore makes nothing for the baptizing of infants.

3. A distinction between the children of believers and of unbelievers, is attempted from 1 Corinthians 7:14 as if the one were in a visible covenant-relation to God, and the other not; whereas the text speaks not of two sorts of children, but of one and the same, under supposed different circumstances; and is to be understood not of any federal, but matrimonial holiness, as I have shewn elsewhere,[90] to which I

refer the reader. As for the Queries with which the argument is concluded, they are nothing to the purpose, unless it could be made out, that it is the will of God that infants should be baptized, and that the baptism of them would give them the remission of sins, and justify their persons; neither of which are true: and of the same kind is the harangue in the introduction to this treatise: and after all a poor, slender provision is made for the salvation of infants, according to this author's own scheme, which only concerns the infants of believers, and leaves all others to the uncovenanted mercies of God, as he calls them; seeing the former are but a very small part of the thousands of infants that every day languish under grievous distempers, are tortured, convulsed, and in piteous agonies give up the ghost. Nor have I any thing to do with what this writer lays, concerning the moral purposes and use of infant-baptism in religion; since the thing itself is without any foundation in the word of God: upon the whole, the baptism of infants is so far from being a reasonable service, that it is a most unreasonable one; since there is neither precept nor precedent for it in the sacred writings; and it is neither to be proved by scripture nor tradition.

## **2 An Answer To A Welsh Clergyman's Twenty Arguments In Favour Of Infant-Baptism**

With Some STRICTURES on what the said AUTHOR has advanced concerning the Mode of BAPTISM.

A BOOK some time ago being published in the Welch language, entitled, "A Guide to a saving Knowledge of the Principles and Duties of Religion, viz. Questions and Scriptural Answers, relating to the Doctrine contained in the Church Catechism," etc.

Some extracts out of it respecting the ordinance of baptism, its subject, and mode, being communicated to me, with a request from our friends in Wales to make some Reply unto, and also to draw up some Reasons for dissenting from the church of England, both which I have undertook, and shall attempt in the following manner.

I shall take but little notice of what this author says, part 5, page 40 concerning sponsors in baptism, but refer the reader to what is said of them in the Reasons for dissenting, hereunto annexed. This writer

himself owns, that the practice of having sureties is not particularly mentioned in scripture; only he would have it, that it has in general obtained in the churches from the primitive times, and was enacted by the powers which God has appointed, and whole ordinances are to be submitted to, when they are not contrary to those of God;[1] and must be allowed to be of great service, if the sureties fulfilled their engagements. The answer to all which is, that since it is not mentioned in scripture, it deserves no regard; at least, this can never recommend it to such, who make the Bible the rule of their faith and practice; and as to its obtaining in primitive times, it is indeed generally ascribed to Pope Hyginus, as an invention of his; but the genuineness of the epistles attributed to him and others, is called in question by learned men, and are condemned by them as spurious; but were they genuine, neither his office nor his age would have much weight and authority with us, who are not to be determined by the decrees of popes and councils; the powers spoken of in the scriptures referred to, were Heathen magistrates, who surely had no authority to enact any thing relating to gospel-worship and ordinances; nor can it be reasonably thought they should; and submission and obedience to them, are required in things of a civil nature, not ecclesiastical, as the scope of the passages, and their context manifestly shew; nor has God given power and authority to any let of men whatever, to enact laws and ordinances of religious worship; nor are we bound to submit to all ordinances of men in religious matters, that are not contrary to the appointments of God, that is, that are not expressly forbidden in his word; for by this means, all manner of superstition and will worship may be introduced. Oil and spittle in baptism are no where forbidden, nor is the baptizing of bells; yet there ordinances of men are not to be submitted to, and a multitude of others of the like kind: we are not only to take care to do what God has commanded, but to reject what he has not commanded; remembering the care of Nadab and Abihu, who offered strange fire to the Lord, which he commanded not. And whereas it is suggested, that this practice would be very serviceable were the engagements of sureties fulfilled, it is not practicable they should; it is impossible to do what they engage to do, even for themselves, and much

less for others, as is observed in the Reasons, before referred to.

But passing these things, I shall chiefly attend to the twenty arguments, which this writer has advanced in favour of infant-baptism, pages 41-45.

The first argument runs thus: "Baptism, which is a seal of the covenant of grace, should not be forbid to the children of believers, seeing they are under condemnation through the covenant of works; and if they are left without an interest in the covenant of grace, they then would be, to their parents great distress, under a dreadful sentence of eternal condemnation, without any sign or promise of the mercy of God, or of an interest in Christ; being by nature children of wrath as others, and consequently without any hope of salvation, if they die in their infancy."

In which there are some things true, and others false, and nothing that can be improved into an argument in favour of infant-baptism.

1. It is true that the infants of believers, as well as others, are by nature the children of wrath, and under condemnation through the covenant of works; so all mankind are as considered in Adam, and in consequence of his sin and fall (Rom. 5:12, 18). But,

2. It is not baptism that can save them from wrath and condemnation; a person may be baptized in water, and yet not saved from wrath to come, and still lie under the sentence of condemnation, being notwithstanding that, in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity, as the case of Simon Magus shews. Though this writer seems to be of opinion, that baptism is a saving ordinance, and that a person cannot be fared without it; and indeed he expressly says, p. 27. that "in general it is necessary to salvation;" as if salvation was by it, (which is a popish notion) and there was none without it; but the instance of the penitent thief, is a proof to the contrary: the text does not say, he that is baptized shall be saved, but he that BELIEVETH and is baptized; nor is it any where suggested, that a person dying without baptism shall be damned. It is CHRIST only, and not baptism, that fares from wrath and condemnation.

3. Being unbaptized, does not leave without an interest in the covenant of grace, or exclude from the hope of salvation, or the mercy of God, or an interest in Christ; persons may have an interest in all these,

and yet not be baptized. See the strange contradictions men run into when destitute of truth; one while the covenant of grace is said to be made with believers, and their seed, as in the next argument, and so their infants being in it, have a right to baptism; at another time it is baptism that puts them into the covenant; and if they are not baptized they are left without interest in it, and, to the great grief of their parents, under a dreadful sentence of eternal condemnation. But,

4. as the salvation of an infant dying in its infancy is one of the secret things which belong unto the Lord, a judicious Christian parent will leave it with him; and find more relief from his distress, by hoping in the grace and mercy of God through Christ, and in the virtue and efficacy of his blood and righteousness, which may be applied unto it without baptism, than he can in baptism; which he may observe, may be administered to a person, and yet be damned. For,

5. baptism is no seal of the covenant of grace, nor does it give any person an interest in it, or seal it to them; a person may be baptized, and yet have no interest in the covenant, as Simon Magus and others, and to whom it was never sealed; and on the other hand, a person may be in the covenant of grace, and it may be sealed to him, and he assured of his interest in it, and not yet be baptized: the blood of Christ is the seal of the covenant, and the Spirit of Christ is the sealer of the saint's interest in it. And, after all, if baptism has such virtue in it, as to give an interest in the covenant of grace, to be a sign and promise of mercy, and of our interest in Christ, and furnish out hope of salvation, and secure from wrath and condemnation, why should not compassion be shewn to the children of unbelievers, who are in the same state and condition by nature? for, I observe all along, that in this and the following arguments, baptism is wholly restrained to the children of believers; upon the whole, the argument from the state of infants to their baptism is impertinent and fruitless; since there is no such efficacy in baptism, to deliver them from it.[2]

The second argument is: "The children of believers should be admitted to baptism, since as the covenant of works, and the real of it belonged to Adam and his children, so the covenant of grace, and the real

thereof belongs, through Christ, to believers and their children:" to which it may be replied,

1. That it is indeed true, that the covenant of works belonged to Adam and his posterity, he being a federal head unto them; but then it does not appear, that that covenant had any seal belonging to it, since it needed none, nor was it proper it should have any, seeing it was not to continue. And if the tree of life is intended, As I suppose it is, whatever that might be a sign of, it was no real of any thing, nor did it belong to Adam's children, who were never suffered to partake of it.

2. There is a great disparity between Adam and believers, and the relation they stand in to their respective offspring: Adam stood as a common head and representative to all his posterity; not so believers to theirs: they are no common heads unto them, or representatives of them; wherefore though the covenant of works belonged to Adam and his posterity, it does not follow, that the covenant of grace belongs to believers and their children, they not standing in the same relation he did. There never were but two covenant-heads, Adam and CHRIST, and between them, and them only, the parallel will run, and in this form; that as the covenant of works belonged to Adam and his seed, so the covenant of grace belongs to Christ and his seed.

3. As it does not appear there was any real belonging to the covenant of works, so we have seen already, that baptism is not the real of the covenant of grace; wherefore this argument in favour of infant-baptism is weak and frivolous; the reason this author adds to strengthen the above argument, is very lamely and improperly expressed, and impertinently urged; "for we are not to imagine, that there is more efficacy in the covenant of works, to bring condemnation on the children of the unbelieving, through the fall of Adam; than there is virtue in the covenant of grace, through the mediation of the son of God, the second Adam, to bring salvation to the seed of those that believe" (Rom. 5:15, 18).

For the covenant of works being broken by the fall of Adam, brought condemnation, not on the children of the unbelieving only, but of believers also, even on all his posterity, to whom he stood a federal head; and so the covenant of grace, of which Christ the second Adam is the mediator, brings salvation, not to the seed

of those that believe, many of whom never believe, and to whom salvation is never brought, nor they to that; but to all Christ's spiritual seed and offspring, to whom he stands a federal head; which is the sense of the passages of scripture referred to, and serves no ways to strengthen the cause of infant baptism.

The third argument runs thus: "The seed of believers are to be baptized into the same covenant with themselves; seeing infants, while infants, as ha-aural parts of their parents, are included in the same threatenings, which are denounced against wicked parents, and in the same promises as are made to godly parents, being branches of one root" (Rom. 11:16; Deut. 4:37, 40; 28:1-4; 30:6, 19; Ps. 102:28; Prov. 11:21; 20:7; Jer. 32:38, 39; Ex. 20:5; 34:7; Deut. 28:15, 18, 45, 46; Ps. 21:10; 19:9, 10; Isa. 14:20, 21; Jer. 22:28; 36:31). Here let it be observed,

1. that it is pleaded that infants should be baptized into the same covenant with their parents, meaning no doubt the covenant of grace; that is, should by baptism be brought into the covenant as it is expressed in Argument 7th, or else I know not what is meant by being baptized into the same covenant; and yet in the preceding argument it is urged, that the covenant of grace belongs to the infants of believers, that is, they are in it, and therefore are to be baptized: an instance this of the glaring contradiction before observed.

2. Threatenings indeed are made to wicked parents and their children, partly to shew the heinousness of their sins, and to deter them from them; and partly to express God's hatred of sin, and his punitive justice; and also to point out original sin and the corruption of nature in infants, and what they must expect when grown up if they follow the examples of their parents, and commit the same or like sins; but what is all this to infant-baptism; Why,

3. In like manner promises are made to godly parents and their children, and several passages are referred to in proof of it; some of these are of a temporal nature, and are designed to stir up and encourage good men to the discharge of their duty, and have no manner of regard to any spiritual or religious privilege; and such as are of a spiritual nature, which respect conversion, sanctification, etc. when these take place on the seed of believers, then, and not till then, do they appear to have any right to Gospel-ordinances, such as baptism

and the Lord's supper; wherefore the argument from promises to such privileges, before the things promised are bestowed, is of no force.

The fourth argument is much of the same kind with the foregoing, namely, "There are many examples recorded in scripture wherein the infants of ungodly men are involved with their parents in heavy judgments; therefore as the judgment and curse which belong to the wicked, belong also to their seed, so the privileges of the fainted belong also to their offspring, unless they reject the God of their fathers. The justice and wrath of God, is not more extensive to destroy the offspring of the wicked, than his grace and mercy is to spare those of the faithful; therefore baptism, the sign of the promises of God's mercy, is not to be denied to such infants" (Num. 14:33; 2 Kings 5:27; Josh. 7:24, 25; Jer. 22:28). The answer given to the former may suffice for this: to which may be added,

1. That the inflicting judgments on the children of some wicked men, is an instance of the sovereign justice of God; and his bellowing privileges on the children of some good men, is an instance of his sovereign grace, who punishes whom he will, and has mercy on whom he will: for,

2. God does not always proceed in this method; he sometimes bellows the blessings of his grace on the children of the wicked, and inflicts deserved punishment on the children of good men; the seed of the wicked do not always inherit their curses, nor the seed of the godly their blessings; wherefore such dispensations of God can be no rule of conduct to us; and particularly with respect to baptism. And,

3. Whatsoever privileges belong to the seed of believers, we are very desirous they should enjoy; nor would we deprive them of any; let it be shewn that baptism belongs to them as ruth (compassion, ed.), and we will by no means deny it to them. But,

4. Whereas it is said that the privileges of fainted belong to their offspring, adding this exceptive clause, "unless they reject the God of their fathers;" it seems most proper, prudent and advisable, particularly in the care before us, to wait and see whether they will receive or reject, follow or depart from the God of their fathers.

The fifth argument is formed thus: "The children of believers are to be baptized now, as those of the

Jews were circumcised formerly; for circumcision was then the real of the covenant, as baptism is now, which Christ has appointed in lieu thereof. Abraham and his son Ishmael, and all that were born in his house, were circumcised the same day; and God commanded all Israel to bring their children into the covenant with them, to give them the real of it, and circumcise them" (Gen. 17; Deut. 29:10-12; Col. 2:11, 12). To all which I reply,

1. that circumcision was no real of the covenant of grace; if it was, the covenant of grace from Adam to Abraham was without a real. It is called a sign in Genesis 17: the passage referred to, but not a real: it is indeed in Romans 4:11 said to be a seal of the righteousness of the faith, not to infants, not to Abraham's natural seed, only to himself; assuring him, that he should be the father of many nations, in a spiritual sense, and that the righteousness of faith he had, should come upon the Gentiles: wherefore this mark or sign continued until the gospel, in which the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, was preached unto the Gentiles, and received by them; to which may be added, that there were many living who were interested in the covenant of grace, when circumcision was appointed, and yet it was not ordered to them; as it would have been, had it been a seal of that covenant; and on the other hand, it was enjoined such who had no interest in the covenant of grace, and to whom it could not be a real of it, as Ishmael, Esau, and others. And,

2. it has been shewn already, that baptism is no seal of the said covenant. Nor,

3. is it appointed by Christ in lieu of circumcision, nor does it succeed it; there is no agreement between them in their subjects, use, and manner of administration; and what most clearly shews that baptism did not come in the room of circumcision, is, that it was in force and use before circumcision was abolished; which was not till the death of Christ; whereas, years before that, multitudes were baptized, and our Lord himself; and there-tore it being in force before the other was out of date, cannot with any propriety be said to succeed it. This writer, p. 28. has advanced several things to prove that baptism came in the room of circumcision.

1st, He argues from the Lord's supper being instead

of the paschal lamb, that therefore baptism must be in the room of circumcision, which is ceased; or else there must be a deficiency. But it does not appear that the Lord's supper is in the room of the passover; it followed that indeed, in the institution and celebration of it by Christ, but it was not instituted by him to answer the like purposes as the passover; nor are the same persons admitted to the one as the other; and besides, was the Lord's supper in the room of the passover, it does not follow from thence that baptism must be in the room of circumcision: but then it is said there will be a deficiency; a deficiency of what? all those ceremonial rites, the passover and circumcision, with many others, pointed at thrift, and have had their fulfillment in him; he is come, and is the body and substance of them; and therefore there can be no deficiency, since he is in the room of them, and is the fulfilling end of them: nor can any other but he, with any propriety, be said to come in the room of them. And there can be no deficiency of grace, since he is full of it, nor of ordinances, for he has appointed as many as he thought fit.

2dly, This author urges, that it is proper there should be two sacraments under the gospel, as there were two under the law, one for adult persons, the other for their children, as were the paschal lamb and circumcision. But if every thing that was typical of Christ, as those two were, were sacraments, it might as well be said there were two and twenty sacraments under the law, as two; and, according to this way of reasoning, there should be as many under the gospel. Moreover, of these two, one was not for adult persons only, and the other for their children; for they were, each of them, both for adult persons and children too; they that partook of the one had a right to the other; all that were circumcised might eat of the passover, and none but they; and if this is a rule and direction to us now, if infants have a right to baptism, they ought to be admitted to the Lord's supper.

3dly, Baptism, he says, is appointed for a like end as circumcision; namely, for the admission of persons into the church, which is not true; circumcision was appointed for another end, and not for that: the Jewish church was national, and as loon as an infant was born, it was a member of it, even before circumcision; and therefore it could not be admitted by it; nor is baptism

for any such end, nor are persons admitted into a visible church of Christ by it; they may be baptized, and yet not members of a church: what church was the eunuch admitted into, or did he become a member of, by his baptism?

4thly, This writer affirms, that "the holy Spirit calls baptism circumcision, that is, the circumcision made without hands, having the same spiritual design; and is termed the Christian circumcision, or that of Christ; it answering to circumcision, and being ordained by Christ in the room of it." To say that baptism is ordained by Christ in the room of circumcision, is begging the question, nor is there any thing in it that answers to circumcision, nor is it called the circumcision of Christ, in Colossians 2:11, which I suppose is the place referred to; for not that, but internal circumcision, the circumcision of the heart is meant, which Christ by his Spirit is the author of, and therefore called his; and the same is the circumcision made without hands, in opposition to circumcision in the flesh; it being by the powerful and efficacious grace of God, without the assistance of men; nor can baptism with any shew of reason, or appearance of truth, be so called, since that is made with the hands of men; and therefore can never be the circumcision there meant.

5thly, He infers that baptism is appointed in the room of circumcision, from their signifying like things, as Original corruption, regeneration, or the circumcision of the heart (Deut. 30:6; Titus 3:5), being seals of the covenant of grace (Ezek. 16:21; Matthew 16:26), initiating ordinances, and alike laying men under an obligation to put off the body of sin, and walk in newness of life (Rom. 4:11) and also being marks of distinction between church-members and others (Rom. 6:4, 6). But baptism and circumcision do not signify the like things; baptism signifies the sufferings, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, which circumcision did not; nor does baptism signify original corruption, which it takes not away; nor regeneration, which it does not give, but pre-requires it; nor is baptism meant in the passage referred to, Titus 3:5, nor are either of them seals of the covenant of grace, as has been shewn already; nor initiating ordinances, or what enter persons into a church-state: Jewish infants were church-members, before they were circumcised;

and persons may be baptized, and yet not be members of churches; and whatever obligations the one and the other may lay men under to live in newness of life, this can be no proof of the one coming in the room of the other. Circumcision was indeed a mark of distinction between the natural seed of Abraham and others; and baptism is a distinguishing badge, to be wore by those that believe in Christ, and put him on, and are his spiritual seed; but neither of them distinguish church-members from others; the passages referred to are impertinent. But I proceed to consider—

The sixth argument in favour of infant-baptism, taken from "the sameness of the covenant of grace made with Jews and Gentiles, of which circumcision was the seal; from the seal and dispensation of which, the Jews and their children are cut off, and the Gentiles and their seed are engrafted in" (Gal. 3:14; Acts 15:11; Rom. 4:11; 11:15, 17). In answer to which, let it be observed,

1. That the covenant of grace is indeed the same in one age, and under one dispensation, as another; or as made with one sort of people as another, whether Jews or Gentiles; the same blessings of it that came upon Abraham, come upon all believers, Jews or Gentiles; and the one are saved by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the other; but then,

2. The covenant of grace was not made with Abraham and his natural seed, or with all the Jews as such; nor is it made with Gentiles and their natural seed as such; but with Christ and his spiritual seed, and with them only, be they of what nation., or live they in what age they will.

3. Circumcision was no seal of the covenant of grace, nor does Romans 4:11. prove it, as has been shewn already; and therefore nothing can be inferred from hence with respect to baptism.

4. The root or stock from whence the unbelieving Jews were cut off, and into which the believing Gentiles are engrafted, is not the covenant of grace, from which those who are interested in it can never be cut off; but the gospel church-state, from which the unbelieving Jews were rejected and left out, and the believing Gentiles took in, who partook of all the privileges of it (Rom. 11:17-25): though no mention is made throughout the whole of the passage of the children of either; only of some being broken off

through unbelief, and others standing by faith; and therefore can be of no service in the cause of infant-baptism.

The seventh argument is taken from "the extent of the covenant of grace being the same under the New Testament, as before the coming of Christ, who came not to curtail the covenant, and render worse the condition of infants; if they were in the covenant before, they are so now; no spiritual privilege given to children or others can be made void" (Rom. 11:29; Jer. 30:20). To which may be replied,

1. That the extent of the covenant, as to the constitution of it, and persons interested in it, is always the same, having neither more nor fewer; but with respect to the application of it, it extends to more persons at one time than at another; and is more extensive under the gospel-dispensation than before; it being applied to Gentiles as well as Jews: and with respect to the blessings and privileges of it, they are always the same, are never curtailed or made void, or taken away from those to whom they belong; which are all Christ's spiritual seed, and none else, be they Jews or Gentiles. But,

2. It should be proved that the infant-seed of believers, or their natural seed as such, were ever in the covenant of grace; or that any spiritual privileges were given to them as such; or it is impertinent to talk of curtailing the covenant, or taking away the privileges of the seed of believers.

3. If even their covenant-interest could be proved, which it cannot, that gives no right to any ordinance, or to a positive institution, without a divine direction; there were many who were interested in the covenant of grace, when circumcision was appointed, who yet had nothing to do with that ordinance.

4. baptism not being allowed to infants, does not make their condition worse than it was under the former dispensation; for as then circumcision could not save them, so neither would baptism, were it administered to them; nor was circumcision really a privilege, but the reverse; and therefore the abrogation of it, without substituting any thing in its room, does not make the condition of infants the worse; and certain it is, that the condition of the infants of believing Gentiles, even though baptism is denied them, is much better than that of the infants

of Gentiles before the coming of Christ; yea, even of the infants of Jews themselves; since they are born of Christian parents, and so have a Christian education, and the opportunity and advantage of hearing the gospel preached, as they grow up, with greater clearness, and in every place<sup>[3]</sup> where they are. The text in Romans 11:29 regards not external privileges, but internal grace; that in Jeremiah 30:20 respects not infants, but the posterity of the Jews; adult persons in the latter day.

The eighth argument is taken from the everlastingness of the covenant of grace, and runs thus; "The example of Abraham and the Israelites in circumcising their children according to the command of God, should oblige us to baptize our children; because circumcision was then a real of the everlasting covenant, a covenant that was to last for ever, and not cease as the legal ceremonies; which God hath confirmed with an oath; and therefore can have suffered no alteration for the worse in any thing with respect to infants" (Gen. 7:17; Heb. 6:13, 18; Micah 7:18, 20; Gal. 3:8.) The answer to which is,

1. That the covenant of grace is everlasting, will never cease, nor admit of any alteration, is certain; but the covenant of circumcision, which is called an everlasting covenant, Genesis 17:7, was only to continue during the Mosaic dispensation, or unto the times of the Messiah; and is so called for the same reason, and just in the same sense as the covenant of the priesthood with Phinehas is called, the covenant of an everlasting Priesthood (Num. 25:13). Though the covenant of grace is everlasting, and whatever is in that covenant, or ever was, will never be altered; yet it should be proved there is any thing in it with respect to infants, and particularly which lays any foundation for, or gives them any claim and right to baptism.

2. Though circumcision was a sign and token of the covenant made with Abraham, and his natural seed, it never was any real of the covenant of grace. And,

3. The example of Abraham and others, in circumcising their children according to the command of God, lays no obligation upon us to baptize ours, unless we had a command for their baptism, as they had for their circumcision.

The ninth argument is formed thus: "baptism is to be administered to the seed of believers, because it is

certainly very dangerous and blameworthy, to neglect and despise a valuable privilege appointed by God from the beginning, to the offspring of his people."

But it must be denied, and should be proved, that baptism is a privilege appointed by God from the beginning, to the offspring of his people; let it be shewn, if it can, when and where it was appointed by him. This argument is illustrated and enforced by various observations; as that "that soul was to be cut off that neglected circumcision; and no just excuse can be given for neglecting infant-baptism, which is ordained to be the seal of the covenant instead of circumcision:" but we have seen already, that baptism does not come in the room of circumcision, nor is it a real of the covenant of grace; and there is good reason to be given for the neglect of infant-baptism, because it never was ordained and appointed of God. Moreover it is said, "that the seed of believers were formerly, under the Old Testament, in the covenant together with their parents; and no one is able to shew that they have been cast out under the New, or that their condition is worse, and their spiritual privileges less, under the gospel, than under the law:" but that believers with their natural seed as such, were together in the covenant of grace under the Old Testament, mould not be barely affirmed, but proved, before we are put upon to shew that they are cast out under the New; though this writer himself, before in the sixth argument, talks of the Jews and their children being cut off from the real and dispensation of the covenant; which can never be true of the covenant of grace; nor do we think that the condition of infants is worse, or their privileges less now, than they were before, though baptism is denied them, as has been observed already. It is further urged, that "it is not to be imagined, without presumption, that Christ ever intended to "cut them off from an ordinance, which God had given them a right unto;" nor do we imagine any such thing; nor can it be proved that God ever gave the ordinance of baptism to them. As for what this writer further observes, that had Christ took away circumcision, without ordaining baptism in the room of it, for the children of believers; the Jews would have cried out against it as an excommunication of their children; and would have been a greater objection against him than any other; and would now be a

hindrance of their conversion; and who, if they were converted, would have baptism or circumcision to be a seal of the covenant with them and their children, it deserves no answer; since the clamors, outcries, and objections of the Jews, and their practice on their legal principles, would be no rule of direction to us, were they made and gave into, since they would be without reason and truth; for though Christ came not to destroy the moral law, but to fulfill it (Matthew 5:17); yet he came to put an end to the ceremonial law, of which circumcision is a part, and did put an end to it[4]: the text in Jeremiah 30:20 respects the restoration of the Jews in the latter day, but not their old ecclesiastical polity, which shall not be established again, but their civil liberties and privileges.

The tenth argument stands thus: "Children are to be baptized under the covenant of grace, because all the covenants which God ever made with men were made not only with them, but also with their children;" and instances are given in Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Levi, Phinehas, and David. The covenant of works was indeed made with Adam and his seed, in which covenant he was a federal head to his offspring; but the covenant of grace was not made with him and his seed, he was no federal head in that; nor is that made with all mankind, as it must, if it had been made with Adam and his seed: this is an instance against the argument, and shews that all the covenants that ever God made with men, were not made with them and their seed; for certainly the covenant of grace was made with Adam, and made known to him (Gen. 17:19-21), and yet not with his seed with him; nor can any instance be given of the covenant of grace being made with any man, and his natural seed. There was a covenant made with Noah and his posterity, securing them from a future deluge, but not a covenant of grace securing them from everlasting destruction; for then it must have been made with all mankind, since all are the posterity of Noah; and where then is the distinction of the seed of believers and of unbelievers? Besides Ham, one of Noah's immediate offspring, was not interested in the covenant of grace. As for the covenant made with Abraham, his son Ishmael was excluded from it"; and of Isaac's two sons one of them was rejected (Rom. 9:10- 13) and all were not Israel that were of Israel, or of Jacob, verse 6. The

covenant of the priesthood was indeed made with Levi and Phinehas, and their posterity; and though it is called an everlasting one, it is now made void; nor is there any other in its room with the ministers of the word and their posterity; and yet no outcry is made of the children of gospel-ministers being in a worse condition, and their privileges less than those of the priests and Levites: and as for David, the sad estate of his family, and the wicked behavior of most of his children, shew, that the covenant of grace was not made with him and his natural offspring; and whatever covenants those were that were made with these persons, they furnish out no argument proving the covenant of grace to be made with believers and their carnal seed, and still less any argument in favour of infant-baptism.[5]

The eleventh argument is: "The seed of believers ought to be baptized under the covenant of grace, otherwise they would be reckoned pagans, and the offspring of infidels and idolaters, to whom there is neither a promise nor any sign of hope; whereas the scripture makes a difference, calling them holy on account of their relation to the holy covenant, when either their father or mother believe (1 Cor. 7:14), disciples (Acts 15:10); reckoning them among them that believe, because of their relation to the household of faith (Matthew 18:6) styling them the seed of the blessed, and their offspring with them (Isa. 115:23); accounting them for a generation to the Lord (Ps. 22:30) as David says; who, verse 10 observes, that God was his God from his mother's belly; and also calling them the children of God (Ezek. 16:20, 21); therefore they ought to be dedicated to him by that ordinance which he has appointed for that purpose." To all which may be replied,

1. That the children of believers are by nature children of wrath even as others; and are no better than others; and were they baptized, they would not be at all the better Christians for it. Though,

2. It will be allowed that there is a difference between the offspring of believers, and those of infidels, pagans and idolaters; and the former have abundantly the advantage of the latter, as they have a Christian education; and consequently as they are brought up under the means of grace, there is hope of them; and it may be expected that the promise of God

to such who use the means will be accomplished. But,

3. the characters mentioned either do not belong to children, or not for the reason given; and those that do, do not furnish out an argument for their baptism. Children are said to be holy, born in lawful wedlock (1 Cor. 7:14); not on account of their relation to the holy covenant, but on account of the holiness of a believing parent, which surely cannot be a federal holiness, but a matrimonial one; the marriage of a believer with an unbeliever being valid, or otherwise their children must be unclean or illegitimate, and not holy or legitimate. The disciples in Acts 15:10 are not young children, but adult persons, the converted Gentiles, on whom the false teachers would have put the yoke of the ceremonial law, and particularly circumcision. The little ones reckoned among those that believe in Christ, Matthew 18:6 were not infants in age, but the apostles of our Lord, who were little in their own account, and in the account of others, whom to offend was criminal, highly provoking to Christ, and of dangerous consequence. The text, Isaiah 65:23, speaks of the spiritual seed of the church, and not the carnal seed of believers,[6] and therefore are the same who are accounted to the Lord for a generation; even a spiritual seed that shall serve him, Psalm 22:30 and the words in verse 10 are the words, not of David, but of Christ. And the sons and daughters born to God, and whom he calls his children, Ezekiel 16:20, 21 were so, not by grace or by covenant, but by creation. And from the whole there is not the least reason why the children of believers should be dedicated to God by baptism, which is an ordinance that never was appointed by him for any such purpose.

The twelfth argument is: "The seed of believers are to be baptized, because church-relation belongs to them, as citizenship belongs to the children of freemen; and it is by baptism that they are first admitted into the visible church, and there is neither covenant nor promise of salvation out of the church, for the church of Christ is his kingdom on earth, and Christ says this belongs to the children" (Mark 10:13, 14). In answer to which.

1. There is a manifest contradiction in the argument. Church-relation belongs to infants, that is, they are related to the church, and members of it, and therefore should be baptized; and yet they are first admitted into

the church by baptism; what a contradiction this! in it, and out of it, related, and not related to it, at one and the time.

2. Church-membership does not pass from father to son, nor is it by birth, as citizenship, or the freedom of cities; the one is a civil, the other an ecclesiastical affair; the one is of nature, the other of grace; natural birth gives a right to the one, but the spiritual birth or regeneration only entitles to the other.

3. Church-membership gives no right to baptism, but rather baptism to church-membership, or however is a qualification requisite to it; persons ought to be baptized before they are church-members; and if they are church members, and not regenerate persons and believers in Christ, for such may be in a church, they have no right to baptism.

4. To talk of there being no covenant or promise of salvation out of the church, smells rank of popery. The covenant and promise of salvation are not made with and to persons as members of churches, or as in a visible church-state, but with and to the elect of God in Christ, and with persons only considered in him; who have an interest in the covenant and promise of salvation, though they may not be in a visible church-state; and doubtless many are saved who never were members of a visible church.

5. The kingdom of God, in Mark 10:13, 14 be it the church of Christ on earth, or eternal glory in heaven, only belongs to such persons who are like to little children for their meekness and humility, and freedom from malice and rancor, as verse 15 shows.

6. Could infants in age, or the seed of believers as such be here meant, and the kingdom of God be understood of Christ's visible church, and they as belonging to it, it would prove more than this writer chooses; namely, that they have a right to all church-privileges, and particularly and especially to the Lord's supper.

The thirteenth argument is: "Children are the lambs of Christ's flock and sheep; and the lambs ought not to be kept out of Christ's fold, nor hindered from the washing that is in his blood; he particularly promises to be their shepherd; and his Spirit has declared, that little children should be brought to him under the gospel, in the arms, and on the shoulders of their parents" (Isa. 40:11; 49:22; Song of Sol. 6:6; John

21:15). On which may be observed,

1. That there is indeed mention made of the lambs of Christ in Isaiah 40:11 and John 21:15 which he gathers in his arms, and ordered Peter to feed; yet not infants in age are intended in either place, but adult persons, weak believers, who, in comparison of others, because of their small degree of knowledge and strength, are called lambs; and are to be gently and tenderly dealt with; and such as these are not kept out of Christ's fold, but are received into it, though weak in the faith, but not to doubtful disputations; and are fed with knowledge and understanding, which infants in age are not capable of.

2. The infant-seed of believers are no where called the sheep of Christ, nor has he promised to be the shepherd of them; let the passages be directed to, if it can be, where this is said.

3. Those who are truly the lambs and sheep of Christ, am not hindered from the washing of his blood; though that is not to be done, nor is it done by baptism; persons may be washed with water, as Simon Magus, and yet not warned in the blood of Christ: Song of Solomon 6:6 does not intend washing in either sense; but either the regenerating grace of the spirit, or the purity of conversation, and respects not infants at all.

4. Nor is it declared by the Spirit of God, that parents should bring their children to Christ in their arms, and on their shoulders; the passage in Isaiah 49:22 brought in support of it, speaks of the spiritual seed of the church, and not of the carnal seed of believers; and of their being brought, not in the arms and on the shoulders of their natural parents, but of the Gentiles; and not to Christ, but to the church, through the ministry of the word in the latter day, in which the Gentiles would be very assisting.

The fourteenth argument runs thus: "The seed of the faithful ought to be baptized, because they were partakers of all the former baptisms mentioned in scripture, as the children of Noah in the ark (1 Pet. 3:20); the Israelites at the Red Sea, and in the cloud (1 Cor. 10:1, 2; Ex. 12:37); Several children were baptized with the baptism of the Spirit, for several were filled with the holy Ghost from their mother's womb; all the children of Bethlehem under two years old, with the baptism of martyrdom (Matthew 2:1); and many

children with John's baptism, since he baptized the whole country." But,

1. It unhappily falls out, for the cause of infant-baptism, that Noah's children in the ark were all adult and married persons (Gen. 7:7).

2. That there were children among the Israelites when they were baptized in the cloud, and in the sea, is not denied; but then it should be observed, that they did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink; and therefore, if this does not give a sufficient claim to infants to partake of the Lord's supper, neither will the other prove their right to baptism: moreover, if any arguments can be formed from this and the former instance, for the administration of baptism under the New Testament, they will clearly shew, that it ought to be administered by immersion; for, as in the former, when the fountains of the great deep were broke up under them, and the windows of heaven were opened over them, they were as persons immersed in water; so when the waters of the Red Sea stood up on each side, and the cloud was over the Israelites, they were, as it were overwhelmed in water.

3. Though this writer says, that several children were filled with the holy Ghost from their mother's womb, yet we read but of one that was so, John the Baptist, a very extraordinary person, and extraordinarily qualified for extraordinary work, an instance not to be mentioned in ordinary cases; betides, it is a rule in logic, a *particulari ad univ-salem non valet consequentia*, "from a particular to an universal, the consequence is not conclusive." Moreover, in what sense John was filled with the holy Ghost so early, is not easy to say; and be it what it will, the same cannot be proved of the seed of believers in general; and could it, it would give no right to baptism, without a positive institution; it gave no right to John himself.

4. That the infants at Bethlehem were murdered, will be granted, but that they suffered martyrdom for Christ, will not easily be proved; since they knew nothing of the matter, and were not conscious on what account their lives were taken away.

5. That many or any children were baptized with John's baptism we deny, and call upon this writer to prove it, and even to give us one tingle instance of it; what he suggests is no evidence of it, as that the whole

country in general were baptized by him, who could not be all childless; but I hope he does not think, that every individual person in the country of Judea was baptized by John; it is certain, that there were many even adult persons that were refused by him, and such as were baptized by him, were such as confessed their sins, which infants could not do (Matthew 3:5-7) and as to the probability of the displeasure of Jewish parents, suggested if their children had not been baptized by John, since they were used, and under a command of God, to bring their children to the covenant and ordinances of God (Gen. 17; Deut. 29:10, 13; Joel 2:16), it deserves no regard, since whatever probability there was of their displeasure, though I see none, there could be no just ground for it; since in the instances given, they had the command of God for what they did, for this they had none.

The fifteenth argument is: "It is contrary to the apostle's practice, to leave any unbaptized in Christian families; for they baptized whole families when the heads of them believed; as the families of Lydia, the Jailor, and Stephanas; and it is evident, that the words, family and household, in scripture, mean chiefly children, sons, daughters, and little ones." [7]

To which I reply, that whatever there words signify in some places of scripture, though in the passages mentioned they do not chiefly intend new-born infants, but grown persons; it should be proved, that there were infants in families and households that were baptized, and that there were baptized together with the head of the family; for it is certain, there are many families and households that have no little children in them; and as for those that are instanced in, it is not probable that there were any in them; and it is manifest, that such as were baptized, were adult persons and believers in Christ. It is not evident in what station of life Lydia was, whether married or unmarried, and whether one had young children or not; and if one had, it is not likely they should be with her, when at a distance from her native place, and upon business; it is most probable, that those that were with her, called her household, were her servants, that assisted her in her business; and it is certain, that when the apostles entered her house, those that were there, and who doubtless are the same that were baptized, were called brethren, and

such as were capable of being comforted (Acts 16:15, 40) and the Jailor's household were such as had the word of God spoken to them, and received it with joy, took pleasure in the company and conversation of the apostles, and believed in God together with him, and so were adult persons, believers, and very proper subjects of baptism ( Acts 16:32-34). Stephanas is by some thought to be the same with the Jailor; but if he was another person, it is plain his household consisted of adult persons, men called by grace, and who were made use of in public work; they were the first-fruits of Achaia, and addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints.[8]

The sixteenth argument is: "None that truly fear God, can seriously and with certainty say, that there were not many infants among the three thousand baptized by the apostles at once; for the Jews were not content with any ordinances without having their children with them. The apostle directs those who were at age to repent, but he commands every one of them to be baptized, and objects nothing against their children; because, as he says, the promise was unto them and their children also; and this is a plain command for infant-baptism to all that will judge impartially." But,

1. A man that carefully reads the account of the baptism of the three thousand, having the fear of God before his eyes, may with the greatest seriousness and strongest assurance affirm, not only that there were not many infants, but that there were not one infant among the three thousand baptized by the apostles; for they were all of them such as were pricked to the heart, and cried out, Men and brethren what shall we do? they gladly received the word of the gospel, joined to the church, and continued stedfastly in the apostles doctrine, in fellowship, and in breaking of bread and prayer; all which cannot be said of infants.

2. What this author suggests, agreeable to what he elsewhere says, that the Jews were not pleased with any ordinance unless they had their children with them, is without foundation; what discontent did they ever shew at a part of their children being left out of the ordinance of circumcision, and no other appointed for them in lieu of it? And had they been discontented, what argument can be formed from it?

3. The distinction between those that were of age,

whom the apostle directed to repent, and the every one of them whom he commanded to be baptized, has no ground nor reason for it, yea is quite stupid and senseless; and even, according to this writer himself, is a distinction without any difference, since the every one to be baptized are supposed by him to have children, and so to be at age; since he adds, "and objects nothing against their children." And a clear case it is, that the self- same persons that were exhorted to be baptized, were exhorted to repent, and that as previous to their baptism; and therefore must be adult persons, for infants are not capable of repentance, and of giving evidence of it.

4. Those words, the promise is unto you and to your children, are so far from being a plain command for infant-baptism, that there is not a word of baptism in them, and much less of infant- baptism; nor do they regard intents, but the posterity of the Jews, who are often called children, though grown up, to whom the promise of the Messiah, and remission of sins by him, and the pouring out of the holy Ghost, was made; and are spoken for the encouragement of adult persons only, to repent and be baptized; and belong only to such as are called by grace, and to all truth, whether Jews or Gentiles.

The seventeenth argument is: "The seed of believers should be baptized, be-cause the privileges and blessings which are signified and sealed in baptism are necessary to their salvation, and there is no salvation without them; namely, an interest in the covenant of grace, the remission of original sin., union with Christ, sanctification of the holy Spirit, and regeneration, without which none can be saved" (John 3:5). The answer to which is,

1. That the things indeed mentioned are necessary to salvation, and there can be none without them; but then baptism is not necessary to the enjoyment of these things, nor to salvation; a person may have an interest in these blessings, and be saved, though not baptized; there are things necessary to baptism, but baptism is not necessary to them; and indeed a person ought to have an interest in these, and appear to have one, before he is baptized. Wherefore,

2. There things are not signified in baptism, and much less sealed by it; other things, such as the sufferings, death, and the resurrection of Christ, are signified in

it; there, as regeneration, etc. are prerequisites unto baptism, and are not communicated by it, or sealed up to persons in it, who may be baptized, and yet have no share and lot in this matter, witness the care of Simon Magus.

The eighteenth argument is: "The children of the faithful ought to be baptized, because this lays them under strong obligation to shun the works of Satan; and many have received much benefit from hence in their youth. Comfortable symptoms, or signs of a work of grace, have appeared very early in several, though perhaps bad company has afterwards corrupted them. Besides infant-baptism keeps up a general profession of faith and religion, and makes the word and means of grace of more virtue and efficacy, than if men had utterly renounced Christianity, and declared themselves infidels; and further, it says a powerful obligation on their parents and others, to teach them their duty, which is a main end of all the ordinances God has instituted" (Ps. 78:5, 6). But,

1. Is there nothing besides baptism, that can lay persons under strong obligation to shun the works of the Devil? certainly there are many things: if so, then it is not absolutely necessary on this account; besides, though the baptism of adult persons does lay them under obligation to walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:4), yet the baptism of infants can lay them under no such obligation as infants, and while they are such, because they are not conscious of it, nor can it take any such effect upon them.

2. What that much benefit or advantage is, that many have received from infant-baptism, I am at a loss to know, and even what is intended by this writer, unless it be what follows, that signs of a work of grace have appeared very early in several, which may be, and yet not to be ascribed to baptism; baptism has no such virtue and influence, as to produce a work of grace in the soul, or any signs of it; besides, a work of grace has appeared very early in several, and has been carried on in them, who have never been baptized at all.

3. Infant-baptism keeps up no public or general profession of faith or religion, since there is no profession of faith and religion made in it by the person baptized; nor is it of any avail to make the word and means of grace powerful and efficacious, which only become so by the Spirit and grace of God; and a

wide difference there is between the diffuse of infant-baptism, and renouncing Christianity, and professing infidelity; these things are not necessarily connected together, nor do they go together; persons may deny and disuse infant-baptism, as it is well known many do, and yet not renounce the Christian faith, and declare themselves infidels.

4. Parents and others, without infant-baptism, are under strong obligations to teach children their duty to God and men, and therefore it is not necessary on that account.

The nineteenth argument is: "The seed of believers are to be baptized, though they have not actual faith, since Christ speaks not of there but of adult persons, Mark 16:16. And certain it is they have as much fitness for baptism as for justification and eternal life, without which they must all perish; the Spirit of God knows how to work this tithers in them, as well as in grown persons: Jeremiah, John the Baptist, and several others, were sanctified from their mother's womb" (John 3:8, 9; Eccl. 11:5; Luke 1:15, 44; Jer. 1:5; Isa. 44:3; Ps. 8:2). To which may be returned for answer,

1. That if the text in Mark 16:16 speaks not of infants, but of adult persons only, as it certainly does, I hope it will be allowed to be an instruction and direction for the baptism of adult believers, and to be a sufficient warrant for our practice.

2. If the infants of believers have no more fitness for baptism than they have for justification and eternal life, they have none at all, since they are by nature children of wrath, even as others; and therefore can have none, but what is given them by the Spirit and grace of God.

3. We dispute not the power of the Spirit of God, or what he is able to do by the operations of his grace upon the souls of infants; we deny not but that he can and may work a work of grace upon their hearts, and clothe them with the righteousness of Christ, and so give them both a right and meetness for eternal life; but then this should appear previous to baptism; actual faith itself is not sufficient for baptism, without a profession of it; the man that has it ought to declare it to the satisfaction of the administrator, ere he admits him to the ordinance (Acts 8:36, 37).

4. Of the several children said to be sanctified from their mother's womb, no proof is given but of

one, John the Baptist, who was filled with the holy Ghost from thence, which has been considered in the answer to the fourteenth argument; as for Jeremiah, it is only said of him that he was sanctified, that is, set apart, designed and ordained, in the purpose and counsel of God to be a prophet, before he was born; and is no proof of internal sanctification so early, Isaiah 44:3 speaks of the Spirit of God being poured down, not upon the carnal seed of believers, but upon the spiritual seed of the church; and Psalm 8:2. is a prophecy, not of new-born infants, but of children grown up, crying Hosanna in the temple (Matthew 21:15,16) no argument from a particular instance or two, were there more than there are, is of avail for the sanctification of infants in general; it should be proved, that all the infant-seed of believers are sanctified by the Spirit of God; for if some only, and not all, how shall it be known who they are? let it first appear that they are sanctified, and then it will be time enough to baptize them.

The twentieth argument is: "The children of believers are to be baptized, because their right to the covenant and church of God is established from the first, much clearer than several other necessary ordinances; there is no express command nor example of women receiving the Lord's supper; no particular command in the New Testament for family-worship, and for the observation of the first day of the week as a sabbath; and yet none dare call them in question; and there is no objection against infant-baptism, but the like might formerly have been made against circumcision; and may now be objected against many other ordinances and commands, of God." To which I reply,

1. That with respect to women, receiving the Lord's supper, it is certain, that not only they were admitted to baptism (Acts 8:12), and became members of churches (Acts 1:14, 15; 4:37; 5:9, 14; 1 Cor. 11:5, 6, 13; Acts 14:34, 35). but there is an express command for their receiving the Lord's supper in 1 Corinthians 11:29 where a word is used of the common gender, and includes both men and women; who are both on in Christ, and in a gospel church-state, and have a right to the same ordinances (Gal. 3:28).

2. As to family-worship, that is not peculiar to the New Testament-dispensation, as baptism is; it was

common to the saints in all ages, and therefore needed no express command for it under the New; though what else but an express command for it is Ephesians 6:4? for can children be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, without family-worship?

3. As to the observation of the first day, though there is no express command for it, there are precedents of it; there are instances of keeping it (John 20:19, 26; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1, 2); now, let like instances and examples of infant-baptism be produced if they can: though no express command can be pointed at, yet if any precedent or example of any one infant being baptized by John, or Christ, or his apostles, can be given, we should think ourselves obliged to follow it.

4. That the same objections might be made against circumcision formerly, as now against infant-baptism, is most notoriously false; it is objected, and that upon a good foundation, that there is neither precept nor precedent for infant-baptism in all the word of God; the same could never be objected against circumcision, since there was such an express command of it to Abraham, Genesis 17, and so many instances of it are in the sacred writings; let the same be shewn for infant-baptism, and we have done.

5. What the other ordinances and commands of God are, to which the same objections may be made as to infant-baptism, is not said, and therefore no reply can be made. I have nothing more to do, than to take some little notice of what this writer says, concerning the mode of administering the ordinance of baptism, page 33. We are no more fond of contentions and strifes about words, than this author, and those of the same way of thinking with himself can be; but surely, modestly to inquire into, and attempt to fix the true manner of administering an ordinance of Christ, according to the scriptures, and the instances of it; according to the signification of the words used to express it, and agreeable to the end and design of it; can never be looked upon as a piece of impertinence, or be traduced as cavil and wrangling. And,

1st, Since this writer observes, that he does not find that either the sacred scripture or the church of England, have expressly determined, whether baptism is to be performed by plunging or sprinkling, but have left the one and the other indifferently to our choice; I hope he will not be displeased, that we choose the

former, as most agreeable to the sacred writings, and the examples of baptism in them; as those of our Lord and others in Jordan (Matthew 3:6, 16) and in AEnon, where John was baptizing, because there was much water (John 3:23) and of the Eunuch (Acts 8:36-38) and as best representing the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12), as well as best suits with the primary sense of the Greek word, βαπτίζω, which signifies to plunge or dip. And,

2dly, Since, according to this writer, one mode is not more essential to the ordinance than another, but a reverential receiving of the sign; it may be asked, what of this nature, namely, a reverential receiving of the sign, the application of the water to the body, signifying the spiritual application of Christ and his gifts to the soul, can be observed in an infant when sprinkled, which is not conscious of what is done to it?

3dly, Whereas, he says, "it is not improbable but the apostles baptized by sprinkling, since several were baptized in their houses, Acts 9:17, 18 and Acts 16:33 and others, in former times, sick in their beds:" it may be replied, that it is not probable that the apostle Paul was baptized by sprinkling (Acts 9:17, 18) since had he, he would have had no occasion to have arose in order to be baptized, as he is said to do, Acts 9:18. It is most probable, that when he arose off of his bed or chair, he went to a bath in Judas's house; or out of the house, to a certain place fit for the administration of the ordinance by immersion; and since there was a pool in the prison, as Grotius thinks, where the Jailor washed the apostles' stripes, it is most probable, that here he and his household were baptized; or since they were brought out of the prison, and after baptism brought into the Jailor's house, verses 33, 34, it is most likely they went out to the river near the city where prayer was wont to be made, and there had the ordinance administered to them, verse 13. As for the baptism of sick persons in their beds, this was not in the times of the apostles, but in after-times, when corruptions had got into the church; and so deserves no regard.

4thly, In favour of sprinkling, or pouring water in baptism, he urges that "it is a sign of the pouring or sprinkling of the holy Ghost, and of the blood of Christ" (Ezek. 36:25; Heb. 12:24), but it should be observed, that baptism is not a sign or significative

of the sprinkling of clean water, or the grace of the Spirit in regeneration, or of the blood of Christ on the conscience of a sinner, all which ought to precede baptism; but of the death, and burial, and resurrection of Christ; which cannot be represented in any other way than by covering a person in water, or an immersion of him.

5thly, "Water in baptism, he says, is but a sign and seal; a little of it is sufficient to signify the gifts which Christ has purchased, as a small quantity of bread and wine does in the other sacrament, and as a small seal is as much security as a larger one." But as baptism is no sign of the things before-mentioned, so it is no seal, as we have seen, of the covenant of grace; wherefore these similitudes are impertinent to illustrate this matter: and though a small quantity of bread and wine is sufficient in the other sacrament, to signify our partaking of the benefits of the death of Christ by faith; yet a small quantity of water is not sufficient to signify his sufferings and death, with his burial and resurrection, themselves. (The Sermon is incomplete beyond this point . . . ed.)

### **3 Antipaedobaptism; Or Infant-Baptism An Innovation**

Being a Reply

To A Late Pamphlet, Entitled, PAEDOBAPTISM;

Or, A Defence of Infant-baptism, in point of Antiquity, etc.

A pamphlet being published some time ago by a nameless author, entitled, The baptism of Infants a reasonable Service, etc. I wrote an answer to it, chiefly relating to the antiquity of infant-baptism, called, The argument from Apostolic tradition, in favour of Infant-baptism, etc. considered; and of late another anonymous writer has started up in defense of the antiquity of it, from the exceptions made by me to it; for it seems it is not the same author, but another who has engaged in this controversy; but be he who he will, it does not greatly concern me to know; though methinks, if they judge they are embarked in a good cause, they should not be ashamed of it, or of their names, and of letting the world know who they are, and what share they have in the defense of it: but just as they please, it gives me no uneasiness; they are welcome to take what method they judge

most agreeable, provided truth and righteousness are attended to.

In my answer, I observe that apostolic tradition at most and best is a very uncertain and precarious thing, not to be depended upon; of which I give an instance so early as the second century, which yet even then could not be settled; and that it is doubtful whether there is any such thing as apostolic tradition, not delivered in the sacred writings; and demand of the Gentleman, whole performance was before me, to give me one single instance of it; and if infant-baptism is of this kind, to name the apostle or apostles by whom it was delivered, and to whom, when, and where; to all which no answer is returned; only I observe a deep silence as to undoubted apostolic tradition, so much boasted of before.

The state of the controversy between us and the Paedobaptists, with respect to the antiquity of infant-baptism, lies here; and the question is, whether there is any evidence of its being practiced before the third century; or before the times of Tertullian. We allow it began in the third century, and was then practiced in the African churches, where we apprehend it was first moved; but deny there was any mention or practice of it before that age; and affirm that Tertullian is the first person known that spoke of it, and who speaks against it: I have therefore required of any of our learned Paedobaptists to produce a single passage out of any authentic writer before Tertullian, in which infant-baptism is expressly mentioned, or clearly hinted at, or plainly supposed, or manifestly referred to: if this is not done, the controversy must remain just in the same state where it was, and infant-baptism carried not a moment higher that it was before; and whatever else is done below this date, is all to no purpose. How far this Gentleman, who has engaged in this controversy, has succeeded, is our next business to inquire.

The only Christian writers of the first century, any of whose writings are extant, are Barnabas, Clemens Romanus, Hermas, Polycarp, and Ignatius; nothing out of Barnabas, Polycarp, and Ignatius, in favour of infant-baptism, is pretended to. "The most ancient writer that we have (says this Gentleman, in the words of Mr. Bingham) is Clemens Romanus, who lived in the time of the apostles; and he, though he doth not directly mention infant-baptism, yet says a thing that

by consequence proves it; for he makes infants liable to original sin, which is in effect to say that they have need of baptism to purge it away, etc." The passage or passages in Clemens, in which he lays this thing, are not produced; I suppose they are the same that are quoted by Dr Wall, in neither of which does he say any such thing; it is true, in the first of them he makes mention of a passage in Job 14:4. according to the Greek version, no man is free from pollution, no not though his life is but of one day; which might be brought indeed to prove original sin, but is not brought by Clemens for any such purpose, but as a self-accusation of Job; shewing, that though he had the character of a good man, yet he was not free from sin: and the other only speaks of men coming into the world as out of a grave and darkness, meaning out of their mother's womb; and seem, not to refer to any moral death and darkness men are under, or to the sinful state of men as they come into the world: but be it so, that in these passages Clemens does speak of original sin, what is this to infant-baptism, or the necessity of it? is there no other way to purge away original sin, but baptism? nay, is there any such virtue in baptism as to purge it away? there is not; it is the blood of Christ, and that only, that purges away sin, whether original or actual. Should it be said that this was the sense of the ancients in some after-ages, who did ascribe such a virtue to baptism, and did affirm it was necessary to be administered, and did administer it to infants for that purpose, what is this to Clemens? what, because some persons in some after-ages gave into this stupid notion, that baptism took away original sin, and was necessary to infants, and ought to be given them for that reason, does it follow that Clemens was of that mind? or is there the least hint of it in his letter? What though he held the doctrine of original sin, does it follow therefore that he was for infant-baptism? how many Antipaedobaptists are there who profess the same doctrine? will any man from hence conclude that they are for and in the practice of infant-baptism? It follows in the words of the same writer; "Hermes pastor (Hermas I suppose it should be) lived about the same time with Clemens; and hath several passages to shew the general necessity of water, that is, baptism, to save men:" the passages referred to are those Dr Wall has produced. Hermas had a vision of a tower built

on water; inquiring the reason of it, he is told, it was "because your life is, and will be saved by water:" and in another place, "before any one receives the name of the Son of God, he is liable to death; but when he receives that seal, he is delivered from death, and is assigned to life; and that seal is water."

Now by water Hermas is supposed to mean baptism; but surely he could not mean real material water, or the proper ordinance of water-baptism, since he speaks of the patriarchs coming up through this water, and being sealed with this seal after they were dead, and so entering into the kingdom of God: but how disembodied spirits could be baptized in real water, is not easy to conceive; it must surely design something mystical; and what it is, I must leave to those who better understand these visionary things: but be it so, that baptism in water is meant, salvation by it may be understood in the same sense as the apostle Peter ascribes salvation to it, when he says, that baptism saves by the resurrection of Christ from the dead; that is, by directing the baptized person to Christ for salvation, who was delivered for his offenses, and rose again for his justification; of which resurrection baptism by immersion is a lively emblem; and Hermas is only speaking of adult persons, and not of infants, or of their baptism, or of the necessity of it to their salvation: in another place indeed he speaks of some that were as infants without malice, and so more honourable than others; and, adds he, all infants, are honoured with the Lord, and accounted of first of all; that is, all such infants as before described: but be it that infants in age are meant, they may be valued and loved by the Lord; he may shew mercy to them, choose, redeem, regenerate, and save them, and yet not order them to be baptized; nor has he ordered it: however Hermas has not a word about the baptism of them, and therefore these passages are impertinently referred to.

Now these are all the passages of the writers of the first century brought into this controversy; in which there is so far from being any express mention of infant-baptism, that it is not in the least hinted at, nor referred unto; nor is any thing of this kind pretended to, till we come to the middle of the next age; and yet our author upon the above passages concludes after this manner: "thus—we have traced up the practice

of infant baptism to the time of the apostles;" when those writers give not the least hint of infant-baptism, or have any reference to it, or the practice of it. It is amazing what a face some men have!

Let us now proceed to the second century. The book of Recognitions, this writer seems to be at a loss where to place it, whether after or before Justin; however, Mr. Bingham tells him, "it is an ancient writing of the same age with Justin Martyr, mentioned by Origen in his Philocalia, and by some ascribed to Bardesanes Syrus, who lived about the middle of the second century." It is indeed mentioned by Origen, though not under that name, and is by him ascribed to Clemens, as it has been commonly done; and if so, might have been placed among the testimonies of the first century; but this Gentleman's author says it is ascribed by some to Bardesanes Syrus: it is true, there is inserted in it a fragment out of a dialogue of his concerning fate, against Abydas an astrologer; but then it should rather be concluded from hence, as Fabricius observes,[1] that the author of the Recognitions, is a later writer than Bardesanes: but be it so that it is him, who is this Bardesanes? an arch-heretic, one that first fell into the Valentinian heresy; and though he seemed afterwards to change his mind, he was not wholly free, as Eusebius says,[2] from his old heresy; and he became the author of a new sect, called after his name Bardesanists; who held that the devil was not a creature of God; that Christ did not assume human flesh; and that the body rises not.[3] The book of Recognitions, ascribed to him, is urged by the Papists, as Mr. James observes[4] to prove the power of exorcists, free-will, faith alone insufficient, the chrism in baptism, and Peter's succession; though the better sort of writers among them are ashamed of it. Sixtus Senensis says[5] that "most things in it are uncertain, many fabulous, and some contrary to doctrines generally received." And Baronius[6] has these words concerning it: "Away with such monstrous lies and mad dotages, which are brought out of the said filthy ditch of the Recognitions, which go under the name of Clemens:" but all this is no matter, if infant-baptism can be proved out it; but how? "This author speaks of the necessity of baptism in the same stile as Justin Martyr did—was undeniably an assertor of the general necessity of baptism to salvation:"

wherever this wretched tenet, this false notion of the absolute necessity of baptism to salvation is met with, the Paedobaptists presently smell out infant-baptism, one falsehood following upon another; and true it is, that one error leads on to another; and this false doctrine paved the way for infant-baptism; but then the mystery of iniquity worked by degrees; as soon as it was broached infant-baptism did not immediately commence: it does not follow, because that heretic asserted this notion, that therefore he was for or in the practice of infant-baptism; besides this book, be the author of it who will, is not made mention of before the third century, if so soon; for the work referred to by Origen has another title, and was in another form; he calls it the circuits of Peter, an apocryphal, fabulous and romantic writing; and though the passage he quotes is in the Recognitions, which makes some learned men conclude it to be the same with that; yet so it might be, and not be the same with it. But I pass on to a more authentic and approved writer of the second century: Justin Martyr, who lived about the year 150; and the first passage produced from him is this:[7] "We bring them (namely, the new converts) to some place where there is water, and they are regenerated by the same way of regeneration by which we were regenerated; for they are washed with water in the name of God the Father and Lord of all things, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the holy Spirit." In this passage, it is owned, "Justin is describing the manner of adult baptism only; having no occasion to descend to any farther particulars; nor is it alleged, it is said, as a proof of infant-baptism directly; but only to shew, that this ancient writer used the word regeneration so as to connote baptism—yet his words cannot be thought to exclude the baptism of infants in these days:" but if infant-baptism had been practiced in those days, it is not consistent with that sincerity and impartiality which Justin sets out with, when he proposed to give the Roman Emperor an account of Christian baptism, not to make any mention of that; for he introduces it thus: "We will declare after what manner, when we were renewed by Christ, we devoted ourselves unto God, lest omitting this we should seem to act a bad part (prevaricate or deal unfairly) in this declaration;" whereas it was not dealing fairly with the Emperor, and not giving him a full and fair account of

the administration of the ordinance of baptism to all its proper subjects, if infants had used to be baptized; which he could easily have introduced the mention of, and one would think could not have omitted it: betides, as Dr. Gale[8] observes, he had an occasion to speak of it, and to descend to this particular, had it been used; since the Christians were charged with using their infants barbarously; which he might have removed, had this been the case, by observing the great regard they had to them in devoting them to God in baptism, and thereby initiating them into their religion, and providing for the salvation of their souls: but Justin is so far from saying any thing of this kind, that he leaves the Emperor and every body else to conclude that infants were not the subjects of baptism in this early age; for as the above writer observes, immediately follow such words as directly oppose infant-baptism; they are these: "And we have been taught by the apostles this reason for this thing; because we being ignorant of our first birth, were generated by necessity, etc. that we should not continue children of that necessity and ignorance, but of will (or choice) and knowledge; and should obtain forgiveness of the sins in which we have lived, by water:" so that in order to obtain these things by water or baptism, which Justin speaks of, there must be free choice and knowledge, which infants are not capable of: but it seems the main thing this passage is brought to prove, is, that the words regenerated and regeneration are used for baptized and baptism; and this agreeing with the words of Christ in John 3:5 shews that this construction of them then obtained, that baptism is necessary to salvation. Now, it should be observed, that the persons Justin speaks of are not represented by him as regenerated by baptism, because they are spoken of before as converted persons and believers; and it is as clear and plain that their baptism is distinguished from their regeneration, and is not the same thing; for Justin uses the former as an argument of the latter; which if the same, his sense must be, they were baptized because they were baptized; whereas his sense, consistent with himself, and the practice of the primitive churches, is; that there persons, when brought to the water, having made a profession of their regeneration, were owned and declared regenerated persons; as was manifest from their being admitted

to the ordinance of water-baptism; and from hence it appears, that, then no such construction of John 3:5 obtained, that baptism is necessary to salvation: and this now seems to be the passage referred to, in which Justin is said to speak of the necessity of baptism, in a stile the author of the Recognitions agreed with him in; but without any reason.

The next passage out of Justin is in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew; where he says that “concerning the influence and effect of Adam’s sin upon mankind, which the ancient writers represent as the ground and reason of infant-baptism—” The words, as cited by Dr Wall, to whom our author refers us, are there: Justin, speaking of the birth, baptism, and crucifixion of Christ, says[9] “he did this for mankind, which by Adam was fallen under death, and under the guile of the serpent; beside the particular cause which each man had of sinning.”

Now, allowing that this is spoken of original sin, as it seems to be, what is this to infant-baptism? I have already exposed the folly of arguing from persons holding the one, to the practice of the other. It is added by our author, “in the same book, he (Justin) speaks of baptism being to Christians in the room of circumcision, and so points out the analogy between those two initiatory rites.” The passage referred to is this:[10] “We also who by him have had access to God, have not received this carnal circumcision, but the spiritual circumcision, which Enoch, and those like him, have observed; and we have received it by baptism by the mercy of God, because we were sinners; and it is enjoined to all persons to receive it the same way.” Now let be observed, that this spiritual circumcision, whatever Justin means by it, can never design baptism; since the patriarch Enoch, and others like him, observed it: and since Christians are said to receive it by baptism, and therefore must be different from baptism itself: nor does Justin say any thing of the analogy between baptism and circumcision, or of the one being in the room of the other; but opposes the spiritual circumcision to carnal circumcision; and speaks not one word of infants, only of the duty of adult persons, as he supposes it to be. The last passage, and on which this Gentleman intends to dwell awhile, is this:[11] “Several persons (says Justin) among us of both sexes, of sixty and seventy years of age, οἱ

εκ παιδων εμαθητευθησαν τω Χριστω, “who were discipled to Christ in their childhood, etc.” which I have observed should be rendered, “who from their childhood were instructed in Christ;” and which I have confirmed by several passages in Justin, in which he uses the word in the sense of instruction; and from whom can we better learn his meaning than from himself? all which this author takes no notice of; but puts me off with a passage out of Plutarch, where Antiphon the son of Sophilus, according to his version, is said to be discipled or proselyted to his father: I leave him to enjoy his own sense; for I do not understand it; and should have thought that μαθητευσαπ δε τω πατρι, might have been rendered more intelligibly, as well as more truly, “instructed by his father;” since, as it follows, his father was an orator. He thinks he has caught me off of my guard, and that I suppose the word disciple includes baptism; because in my commentary on Acts 19:3 I say, “the apostle takes it for granted that they were baptized, since they were not only believers, but disciples;” but had he read on, or transcribed what follows, my sense would clearly appear; “such as not only believed with the heart, but had made a profession of their faith, and were followers of Christ:” nor is the sense of the word disciple, as including the idea of baptism, confirmed by Acts 14:21 where it is said, when they had preached the gospel to that city, κἰ μαθητευσαντες, “and taught many, or made them disciples;” which may be interpreted without tautology, and yet not include the idea of baptism; since the first word, preached, expresses the bare external ministry of the word; and the latter, taught, or made disciples, the influence and effect of it upon the minds of men; the former may be where the latter is not; and both, where baptism is not as yet administered. The reason why εκπαιδων must be rendered in, and not from their childhood, because the baptism of any persons being not a continued, but one single transient act, to speak of their being baptized from their childhood would be improper, is merry indeed; when Justin is not speaking of the baptism of any person at all; but of their being trained up in the knowledge of Christ, and the Christian religion from their childhood, in which they had persevered to the years mentioned. Upon the whole, in all these passages of Justin quoted, there is

no express mention of infant-baptism, nor any hint given of it, nor any reference unto it. Proceed we now to the next writer in this century, brought into this controversy:

Irenaeus; who lived towards the close of it, and wrote about the year 180; the only passage in him, and which has been the subject of debate a hundred years past, is this; speaking of Christ, he says,[12] "he came to save all, all I say, qui per eum renascuntur in Deum, "who by him are born again unto God;" infants, and little ones, and children, and young men, and old men." Now not to insist upon the works of Irenaeus we have being mostly a translation, and a very poor one, complained of by learned men; nor upon this chapter wherein this passage is, being reckoned spurious by others; which weaken the force of this testimony, and will have their weight with considering persons; I shall only take notice of the sense of the phrase, born again unto God; and the injury done to the character of Irenaeus, to make it signify baptism, or any thing else but the grace of regeneration. Our author begins his defense of this passage in favour of infant-baptism, with a remark of the learned Feuarentius, as he calls him; "that by the name of regeneration, according to the phrase of Christ: and his apostles, he (Irenaeus) understands baptism, clearly confirming the apostolical tradition concerning the baptism of infants." As for the learning of this monk, I cannot discern it, unless his lies and impudence against the reformers, which run through his notes, are to be so called. Whether our author is a junior or senior man, I know not; by his writing he seems to be the former, but the advice of Rivet, who was without doubt a man of learning, is good; only, says he,[13] "I would have the younger, that shall light on the works of Irenaeus advised, to beware of those editions, which that most impudent monk Feuarentius, a man of large assurance, and uncommon boldness, and of no faith nor faithfulness, has in many things foully corrupted and defiled with impious and lying annotations:" and a false gloss this of his is, which is quoted; for Christ and his apostles no where call baptism by the name of the new birth. I have observed, that as yet, that is, in Irenaeus' time, it had not obtained among the ancients, to use the words regenerated or regeneration for baptized or baptism; nor is this author able to prove

it. The passage in Justin before-mentioned falls short of it, as has been shewn; and the passages in Tertullian and Clemens of Alexandria, concerning being born in water, and begotten of the womb of water, are too late; and beside, the one is to be interpreted of the grace of God compared to water; this is clearly Tertullian's sense; for he adds[14] "nor are we otherwise safe or saved, than by remaining in water;" which surely can never be understood literally of the water of baptism and as for Clemens,[15] he is speaking not of regeneration, but of the natural generation of man, as he comes out of his mother's womb, naked, and free from sin, as he supposes; and as such, converted persons ought to be.

To have recourse to heathens to ascertain the name of Christian baptism, is monstrous; though this, it is said, there is no need of, "since several Christian writers, who lived with or before Irenaeus, speak the same language, as will be seen hereafter:" and yet none are produced but Barnabas and Justin; the latter of which has been considered already, and found not to the purpose; and his reasoning upon the former is beyond my comprehension; for whatever may be said for the giving of milk and honey to persons just baptized, being a symbol of their being born again, it can be no proof of the words regeneration and regenerated being used for baptism and baptized; when there words neither the one nor the other are mentioned by Barnabas; so that I have no reason to retract what I have said on that point. And now we are returned to Irenaeus himself; and two passages from him are produced in proof of the sense of the word contended for; and one is where he thus speaks[16] "and again giving the power of regeneration unto God to his disciples, he said unto them, Go and teach all nations, baptizing them, etc." By which power or commission is meant, not the commission of baptizing, but more plainly the commission of teaching the doctrine of regeneration by the Spirit of God, and the necessity of that to salvation, and in order to baptism; and which was the first and principal part of the apostles commission, as the order of the words shew; and it is molt reasonable to think, that he should so call the commission, not from its more remote and less principal part, but from the first and more principal one. The other passage is where Irenaeus

mentions[17] by name “the baptism of regeneration to God:” but this rather proves the contrary, that baptism and regeneration are two different things, and not the same; just as the scriptural phrase, the baptism of repentance, and which seems to have led the ancients to such a way of speaking, means something different from repentance, and not the same: baptism is so called, because repentance is a prerequisite to it, in the subjects of it; and for the same reason it is called the baptism of regeneration, because regeneration is absolutely necessary in order to it: to all which I only add, that Irenaeus not only uses the word regeneration in a different sense from baptism elsewhere,[18] but most clearly uses it in another sense in this very passage; since he says, Christ came to save all who by him are born again unto God; who are regenerated by Christ, and not by baptism; and which is explained both before and after by his sanctifying all sorts of persons, infants, little ones, young men, and old men; which cannot be understood of his baptizing them, for he baptized none; and therefore they cannot be said to be regenerated by him in that sense: and I say again, to understand Irenaeus as speaking of baptism, is to make him speak what is absolutely false; that Christ came to save all and only such who are baptized unto God. It seems LeClerc is of the same sentiment with me, an author I am a stranger to; whom this writer lets pass without any reasoning against him, only with this chastisement; “he should have understood (being an ecclesiastical historian) the sentiments and language of the primitive fathers better;” but what their language and sentiments were, we have seen already; and let them be what they will, Irenaeus must express a downright falsehood, if he is to be understood in the sense contended for: on the one hand, it cannot be true that Christ came to save all that are baptized; no doubt but Judas was baptized, as well as the other apostles, and yet it will not be said Christ came to save him; Simon Magus was certainly baptized, and yet was in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity, and by all the accounts of him continued so till death; there were many members of the church at Corinth, who doubtless were baptized, and yet were unworthy receivers of the Lord’s supper, and eat and drank damnation to themselves, for which reason there were many weak, sickly, and asleep;[19] and it is to be

feared, without any breach of charity, that this has been the case of thousands besides: and on the other hand, it cannot be with truth suggested, that Christ came to save only such as are baptized; he came to die for the transgressions that were under the First Testament, or to save persons under that dispensation, who never received Christian baptism; he said to one and to another, unbaptized persons, thy sins are forgiven thee; (Matthew 9:5; Luke 7:48) and no doubt there are many saved, and whom Christ came to save, who never were baptized in water; and the Paedobaptists themselves will stand a bad chance for salvation, if this was true; for they will find it a hard task to prove that any one of them, only sprinkled in infancy, was ever truly baptized; and yet as uncharitable as we are said to be, we have so much charity to believe that every good man among them, though unbaptized, shall be saved. And now since the words of Irenaeus taken in this sense contain a manifest falsehood, and they are capable of another sense, agreeable to truth, without straining them; as that thrift: came to save all that are regenerated by himself, by his spirit and grace, we ought in a judgment of charity to believe that this latter sense is his, and not the former; and the rather, since his words in their proper and literal sense have this meaning; and since they are expressed with so much caution; lest it should be thought it was his meaning that Christ came to save all men, good and bad, he describes the patrons he came to save, not by their baptism, which is a precarious and uncertain evidence of salvation, but by their regeneration, which is a sure proof of it; and since this sense of his words is agreeable to his use of the phrase elsewhere, and to the context likewise, and is suited to all sorts of persons of every age here mentioned; and indeed to depart from this clear literal sense of his words, which establishes a well-known truth, and fix a figurative, improper one upon them, which makes him to say a notorious untruth, to serve an hypothesis, is cruel usage of the good old father, and is contrary to all the rules of honour, justice, truth, and charity. To put our Lord’s words in Mark 16:16 upon a level with the false sense of Irenaeus, is mean and stupid; they need no qualifying sense; the meaning is plain and easy; that every baptized believer shall be saved, and leave no room to suggest that unbaptized believers shall not;

but that every unbeliever, be he who he will, baptized or unbaptized, shall be damned. And now what a wretched cause must the cause of infant-baptism be, that requires such managing as this to maintain it? what a wretched cause is it, that at its first setting out, according to the account of the advocates of it; for Dr Wall says,[20] “this is the first express mention that we have met with of infants “baptized?” I say again, what a wretched cause must this be, that is connected with lies and falsehood at its first appearance, as pleaded for; is established upon downright injustice to a good man's character, and supported by real injury to it? and yet notwithstanding all this, our author has the front to say, “so much then for the testimony, the plain, unexceptionable testimony, of Irenaeus, for the practice of infant-baptism.”

And now we are come to the close of the second century; but before we pass to the next, we must stop a little, and consider a passage our author, after Dr. Wall, has produced out of Clemens of Alexandria, who lived at the latter end of this century, about the year 190; and it is this: speaking of rings worn on the fingers, and the seals upon them, advises against every thing idolatrous and lascivious, and to what is innocent and useful; “let our seals,” says he,[21] “be a dove, or a fish, or a ship running with the wind, or a musical harp—or a mariner's anchor,—and if any one is a fisherman, Αποσολου μεμνησεται κι των εξ υδατοπ ανασπωμενων παιδιων, let him remember the apostle, and the children drawn out of the water.”

This passage was sent by two Gentlemen from different places to Dr Wall, after he had published two editions of his history; and he seems to have been ashamed of himself for not having observed it, and fancies that this refers to the baptizing of a child, and the taking, drawing, and lifting it out of the water. Now, though I do not pretend to support my conjecture by any manuscript or printed copy, nor do I think it worth while to search and inquire after it, whether there is any various reading or no, but shall leave it to others who have more leisure and opportunity; yet I persuade myself my conjecture will not be condemned as a groundless one by any man of sense and learning, especially out of this controversy: my conjecture then is, that it should be read not παιδιων, “children,” but ιχθυων, “fishes;” for who ever

heard of a draught of children; when a draught of fishes is common? and why should a fisherman, more than any other, remember an apostle and a draught of children? surely a draught of fishes is more proper to him: the words I think therefore should be read, “let him remember the apostle, and the fishes drawn out of the water;” and the sense is, let him remember the apostle Peter, and the draught of fishes taken by him, recorded either in Luke 5:6, 9 or in John 21:6, 8, 11; for the words manifestly refer to some particular and remarkable fact, which should be called to mind, and not to a thing that was done every day; which must be the case, if infant-baptism now obtained: besides, the word used cannot with any decency and propriety be applied to the baptizing of a child; a wide difference there is in the expression, between taking and lifting a child out of the font, and a drawing or dragging it out of the water; the word is expressive of strength and force necessary to an action (Luke 14:15; Acts 11:10), and well agrees with the drawing or dragging of a net full of fishes. However, if this instance is continued to be urged, I hope it will be allowed that baptism in those early times was performed by immersion; since these children are said to be drawn out of the water, and therefore must have been in it: moreover, let it be what it will that Clemens refers unto, it must be something that was not common to every man, but peculiar to a fisherman; as he afterwards says, a sword or a bow are not proper for those that pursue peace; nor cups for temperate persons; and I insist upon it, that it be said what that is which is peculiar to such a one, except it be that which I have suggested: and after all, he must have a warm brain, a heated imagination, and a mind prepossessed, that can believe that infant-baptism is here referred to. Upon the whole, it does not appear from any authentic writer of the second century, that there is any express mention of infant-baptism in it, nor any clear hint of it, or manifest reference to it; and therefore it must be an innovation in the church, whenever it afterwards took place. I proceed now to,

The third century, at the beginning of which Tertullian lived; who is the first person that ever gave any hint of infant-baptism, or referred unto it, or made express mention of it, that is known; and he argued against it, and that very strongly, from the more usual delay of the administration of it, according to every

one's age, condition, and disposition; from the danger sureties might be brought into by engaging for infants; from the necessity of first knowing and understanding what they were about; from their innocent age, as it comparatively is, not being yet conscious of sin, standing in no need of the application of pardoning grace, which the ordinance of baptism leads adult believers to; from the propriety of their first asking for it; and from a different method being taken in worldly affairs: his words are these, and as they are translated by Dr. Wall himself; "therefore according to every one's condition and disposition, and also their age, the delaying of baptism is more profitable, especially in the case of little children; for what need is there that the godfathers should be brought into danger? because they may either fail of their promises by death, or they may be mistaken by a child's proving of a wicked disposition. Our Lord says indeed, Do not forbid them to come to me: therefore let them come when they are grown up: let them come when they understand: when they are instructed whither it is that they come: let them be made Christians when they can know Christ; what need their guiltless age make such haste to the forgiveness of sins? Men will proceed more warily in worldly things; and he that should not have earthly goods committed to him, yet shall have heavenly. Let them know how to desire this salvation, that you may appear to have given to one that asketh." [22]

It is observed by our author, after Dr Wall, that in the clause about sponsors, in the older editions, there words come in, *si non tam necesse*, which are rendered, except in case of necessity. But these older editions are but one Gagnaeus, whose reading is rejected by Rigaltius as a foolish repetition; censured by Grotius, as affording no tolerable sense; [23] received by Pamelius for no other reason that he gives, but because it softens the opinion of the author about the delaying of baptism to infants; [24] and it is for this reason it is caught at by the Paedobaptists; and yet they do not seem to be quite easy with it, because of the nonsense and impertinence of it; "what need is there, except there is a need?" wherefore our author attempts an emendation, and proposes to read *tamen* for *tam*, which does not make it a whit the better, but rather increases the nonsense; "what need is there,

except notwithstanding there is need?" but what is of more importance is, it is said, "these words of Tertullian seem fairly to imply that infant baptism was not only moved for, but actually practiced in his time:" to which I answer, that they neither do imply, nor seem to imply any such thing, at least not necessarily; for supposing the baptism of infants moved for, and sureties promised to be engaged for them, which seems likely to be the case as soon as mentioned, the better to get it received; Tertullian might say all that he does, though as yet not one infant had ever been baptized, or any sureties made use of: and indeed it would have been very strange, if nothing of this kind had been said previous to the observance of them; the bare motion of these things was sufficient to bring our the arguments against them: and what though Tertullian might have some odd notions and singular opinions, about which he talked wrong and weakly, does it follow that therefore he so did about these points? Nor is there any reason to interpret his words of the infants of infidels, since he makes no distinction in the passage, nor gives the least hint of any; and what he elsewhere says of the children of believers being holy, he explains of their being designed for holiness; [25] and says men are not born, but made Christians; [26] nor does he any where allow of the baptism of infants, in case of necessity, which is only established upon that impertinent reading before-mentioned: and with respect to his notion of the necessity of baptism to salvation, it is sufficient to observe what he says; "if any understand the importance of baptism, they will rather fear the having it, than the delaying it: true faith is secure of salvation." [27] And the reason why he does not produce infant- baptism among his unwritten customs, is very easy to observe, because as yet no such custom had obtained, and as yet the apostolical tradition of it had never been heard of: the first that speaks of that, if he does at all, is the following person;

Origen, who flourished about the year 230, and comes next under consideration: and three passages are usually cited out of him in favour of infant-baptism; shewing not only that infants should be baptized; but that this was an ancient usage of the church, and a tradition of the apostles. Now there things are only to be met with in the Latin translations of this ancient writer; and though there is much of his still extant

in Greek, yet in these his genuine works there is not the least hint of infant-baptism, nor any reference to it; and much less any express mention of it; and still less any thing did of it, being a custom of the church, and an apostolical tradition: This has justly raised a suspicion, that he has not been fairly used

in the translations of him by Ruffinus and Jerome: and upon inquiry, this is found to be the truth of the matter; and it is not only Erasmus, whom Dr. Wall is pleased to represent as angrily saying, that a reader is uncertain whether he reads Origen or Ruffinus; for Scutetus[28] says the same thing; and it is the observation of many others, that it was the common custom of Ruffinus to interpolate whatever he translated. The learned Huctius, who has given us a good edition of all Origen's commentaries of the scripture in Greek, and who was as conversant with his writings, and understood them as well as any man whatever, was very sensible of the foul play he has met with, and often complains of the perfidy and impudence of Ruffinus; he says of him, that whatever he undertook to translate, he interpolated; that he so distressed and corrupted the writings of Origen by additions and detractions, that one is at a loss to find Origen in Origen: that whereas he undertook to translate his commentary on the Romans, at the instance of Heraclius, yet he asks, with what faithfulness did he do it? namely, with his own, that is, which is the worst; and when Huetius produces any thing out of these translations, it is always with diffidence, as not to be depended upon and sometimes he adds when he has done, "but let us remember again the perfidy of Ruffinus;" and speaking particularly of his commentaries on the Romans, he says; "Let the learned reader remember that Origen is not so much to be thought the author of them, as Ruffinus, by whom they are not so much interpreted, as new coined and interpolated." [29]

But what need I produce these testimonies? Ruffinus himself owns, not only that he used great freedom in translating the homilies on Leviticus, and added much of his own to them, as I have observed; but also in his translation of the commentary on the Romans, he grants the charge against him, "that he added some things, supplied what was wanting, and shortened what were too long;" [30] and it is from

there two pieces that the two principal passages which assert infant-baptism to be the custom of the church, and an apostolical tradition, are taken: and now of what use is this Gentleman's quotation from Marshall? it is good for nothing. The other passage, which stands in Jerome's translation of Origen's homilies on Luke, speaks indeed of the baptism of infants, and the necessity of it; but not a word of its being a custom of the church, and an apostolical tradition, as in the other; and betide, his translations being no more exact than Ruffinus', and which appears by his other versions; in which he takes the same liberty as Ruffinus did, are no more to be depended upon than his. And now, where is his highest probability and moral certainty, that there are no additions and interpolations in Origen? I appeal to the whole world, whether such sort of writings as there, so manifestly corrupted, so confessedly interpolated, would be admitted an evidence in any civil affair in any court of judicature whatever; and if not, then surely these ought not to be admitted as an evidence in religious affairs, respecting an ordinance of our Lord Jesus Christ. But it is said, "supposing all this, what does it signify in the present case, unless it could be proved that the particular passages under consideration were additions or interpolations?"

To which I answer; since the whole is so interpolated, and so deformed, that it can scarcely be known, as has been observed, what dependence can there be on any part of it? I have observed, that the passage in the homilies on Leviticus, is by Vossius thought to be of the greater authority against the Pelagians, because of the interpolations of Ruffinus. This Gentleman says, I have unluckily observed this; I do not see any unluckiness in it; it is lucky on my side, that Vossius, a Paedobaptist, should suggest that this passage is interpolated, however unlucky Ruffinus was in doing it; and it is no. unusual thing for a writer to infect that in his works, which makes or may be improved against himself: beside, what makes these very passages suspected of interpolation, is, not only that no contemporary of Origen's, nor any writer before him, nor any after him, till the times of Ruffinus and Jerome, ever speak of infant-baptism as a custom of the church, or an apostolic tradition; but neither Cyprian who came after him, and pleaded for infant-

baptism, ever refers to Origen as saying these things, or uses such language as he is said to do; nor does Austin, who made such a bluster about infant-baptism being an apostolical tradition, ever appeal to Origen's testimony of it; which one would think he would have done, had there been any such testimony: our author, because I have said that many things may be observed from the Greek of Origen in favour of adult-baptism, hectors most manfully; "the assertion, he says, is either false, or very impertinent;" but surely he must be a little too premature to pass such a censure before the things are produced. I greatly question whether he has ever read the writings of Origen, either the Latin translations of him, or his works in Greek; and indeed there are scarce any of his quotations of the fathers throughout his whole work, but what seem to be taken at second hand from Dr Wall, or others: I say more than I should have chose to have said, through his insulting language. I am quite content he should have all the credit his performance will admit of; only such a writer, who knows his own weakness, ought not to be so pert and insolent: however, to stop the mouth of this swaggering blade, whoever he is, I will give him an instance or two out of the Greek of Origen, in favour of adult-baptism, to the exclusion of infant-baptism, and as manifestly against it. Now, not to take notice of Origen's[31] interpretation of Matthew 19:14 as not of infants literally, but metaphorically; which, according to his sense, destroys the argument of the Paedobaptists from thence, in favour of infant-baptism: "It is to be observed, says Origen, that the four evangelists saying that John confessed he came to baptize in water, only Matthew adds unto repentance; teaching, that he has the profit of baptism who "is baptized of his own will and choice:"

Now if the profit of baptism is tied to "a person baptized of his own will and choice,' according to Origen, then baptism mutt: be unprofitable and insignificant to infants, because they are not baptized of their own will and choice: and a little after he says; "The laver by the water is a symbol of the purification of the soul washed from all the filth of wickedness; nevertheless also of itself it is the beginning and fountain of divine gifts, because of the power of the invocation of the adorable Trinity, "to him that gives up himself to God;"[32] which last clause excludes infants, since

they do not and cannot give up themselves to God in that ordinance. Let this Gentleman, if he can, produce any thing out of those writings of Origen, in favour of infant-baptism; the passage Dr. Wall[33] refers to has not a syllable of it, nor any reference to it; and though he supposes Jerome must some where or other have read it in his writings, what Jerome says[34] supposes no such thing; since the passage only speaks of Origen's opinion of sins in a pre-existent state, being forgiven in baptism, but not a word of the baptism of infants, or of their sins being forgiven them in their baptism: and now where is the clear testimony of the great Origen, not only for the practice of infant-baptism in his own days, but for the continual use of it all along from the time of the apostles? and where is our author's vaunt of the superior antiquity of infant-baptism to infant-communion? which, as we shall see presently, began together.

Cyprian is the next, and the only remaining writer of this century, quoted in favour of infant-baptism; who lived about the middle of it, and is the first pleader for it that we know of. We allow it was practiced in his time in the African churches, where it was first moved; and at the same time infant-communion was practiced also, of which we have undoubted and incontestable evidence; and it is but reasonable that if infants have a right to one ordinance, they should be admitted to the other; and if antiquity is of any weight in the matter, it is as early for the one as for the other: but though infant-baptism now began to be practiced, it appears to be a novel business; not only the time of its administration, being undetermined; which made Fidus, a country bishop, who had a doubt about administering it before the eighth day, apply to the council under Cyprian for the resolution of it; but the exceeding weakness of the arguments then made use of for baptizing new-born infants, of which the present Paedobaptists must be ashamed, shew that Paedobaptism was then in its infant-state: the arguments used by Cyprian, and his brethren for it, were taken from the grace of God being given to all men; and from the equality of the gift to all; and this proved from the spiritual equality of the bodies of infants and adult persons; and both from the prophet Elisha's stretching himself on the Shunamite's child; they argue the admission of all to baptism from the

words of Peter, who says he was shewn, that nothing is to be called common or unclean; and reason, that infants ought to be more easily admitted than grown persons, because they have less guilt; and their weeping and crying are to be interpreted praying; yea, they suggest that baptism gives grace, and that a person is lost without it: but that it may appear I do not wrong them, I will transcribe their own words; and that as they are translated by Dr. Wall, so far as they relate to this matter: "All of us judged that the grace and mercy of God is to be denied to no person that is born; for whereas our Lord in his gospel says, the Son of Man came not to destroy men's souls, (or lives) but to save them; as far as lies in us, no soul, if possible, is to be lost. The scripture gives us to understand the equality of the divine gift on all, whether infants or grown persons: Elisha, in his prayer to God, stretched himself on the infant-son of the Shunamite woman, that lay dead, in such manner, that his head, and face, and limbs, and feet, were applied to the head, face, limbs, and feet of the child; which, if it he understood according to the quality of our body and nature, the infant would not hold measure with that grown man, nor his limbs fit to reach to his great ones; but in that place a spiritual equality, and such as is in the esteem of God, is intimated to us by which persons that are once made by God are alike and equal; and our growth of body by age, makes a difference in the sense of the world, but not of God; unless you will think that the grace itself which is given to baptized persons, is greater or less according to the age of those that receive it; whereas the holy Spirit is given, not by different measures, but with a fatherly affection and kindness, equal to all; for God, as he accepts no one person, so not his age; but with a just equality shews himself a Father to all, for their obtaining the heavenly grace—so that we judge that no person is to be hindered from the obtaining the grace by the law that is now appointed; and that the spiritual circumcision ought not to be restrained by the circumcision that was according to the flesh; but that all are to be admitted to the grace of Christ; since Peter, speaking in the Acts of the Apostles, says, the Lord has shewn me, that no person is to be called common or unclean. If any thing could be an obstacle to persons against their obtaining the grace, the adult, and grown, and

elder men, would be rather hindered by their more grievous sins. If then the graceless offender, and those that have grievously sinned against God before, have, when they afterwards come to believe, forgiveness of their sins; and no person is kept off from baptism and the grace; how much less reason is there to refuse an infant, who, being newly born, has no sin, save the being descended from Adam according to the flesh: he has from his very birth contracted the contagion of the death anciently threatened; who comes, for this reason, more easily to receive forgiveness of sins, because they are not his own, but others sins that are forgiven him. This therefore, dear brother, was our opinion in the assembly, that it is not for us to hinder any man from baptism and the grace of God, who is merciful and kind and affectionate to all; which rule, as it holds for all, so we think it more especially to be observed in reference to infants, and persons newly born; to whom our help, and the divine mercy, is rather to be granted; because by their weeping and wailing, at their first entrance into the world, they do intimate nothing so much as that they implore compassion." [35]

Every one that compares what Cyprian and his colleagues say for infant-baptism, and what Tertullian says against it, as before related, will easily see a difference between them, between Tertullian the Antipaedobaptist, and Cyprian the Paedobaptist; how manly and nervous the one! how mean and weak the other! no doubt, as is known, being railed about infant-baptism at this time, or any objection made to it, does not prove it then to be an ancient custom; since the same observation, which may be made, would prove infant-communion to be equally the same. Now as we allow that henceforward infant-baptism was practiced in the African churches, and prevailed in,

The fourth century, here the controversy might stop: and indeed all that we contend for in this century, is only that there were some persons that did call it in question and oppose it; and if this will not be allowed, we are not very anxious about it, and shall not think it worth while to contest it. This writer would have it observed, that I have given up the greatest lights of the church in this century as vouchers for infant-baptism, and particularly St Jerom, Ruffinus, and Augustin; they are welcome to them; they have

need of them to enlighten them in this dark affair: we do not envy their having them, especially that persidious interpolater Ruffinus; nor that arch-heretic Pelagius, whom this Gentleman takes much pains to retain, as ignorant as he either was, or would be, or is thought to be; as that he never heard that any one whatever denied baptism to infants, and promised the kingdom of heaven without the redemption of Christ, or refused that unto them. This ignorance of his was either affected or pretended, in order to clear himself from the charge of those things against him; as men generally do run into high strains and extravagant expressions, when they are at such work; or it was real ignorance, and who can help that? It does not follow that therefore none had, because he had never heard of it; one would think his meaning rather was, that he had never heard of any that denied the kingdom of heaven and the common redemption to infants, who think they ought to be baptized, *dum putat*, while he is of opinion, that in baptism they are regenerated in Christ; but about this I shall not contend; truth does not depend upon his hearing and knowledge, judgment and observation. I think it is not insisted upon that Austin should say, he never heard or read of any catholic, heretic, or schismatic, that denied infant-baptism; however, it seems he could say it if he did not, and that notwithstanding the reasons I alledged; as,

1. Austin must know that Tertullian had opposed it. Here our author quibbles about the terms opposing and denying, and distinguishes between them; and observes, that whatever Tertullian said against it, he did not properly deny it. He may say the same of me, or any other writer against infant-baptism, that though we speak against it, contradict and oppose it, and use arguments against it, yet we do not deny it. Dr Wall indeed thinks neither Austin nor Pelagius had seen Tertullian's book of baptism, or they could not have said what he thinks they did.

2. Austin presided at the council of Carthage, when a canon was made that anathematized those who denied baptism to new-born infants; and therefore mull know there were some that denied it. This Gentleman says, it is demonstrably certain, that this canon was not made against persons that denied infant-baptism, because it was made against Pelagius and Celesius. It is true, the latter part of the canon was made against

them; but the former part respected a notion or tenet of some other persons, who denied baptism to new-born infants. Dr Wall saw this, and says, this canon mentions the baptism of infants, condemning two errors about it; the one respecting the baptism of new-born infants; the other the doctrine of original sin, and the baptism of infants for forgiveness of sins, denied by the Pelagians; but the former he supposes was the opinion of Fidus, embraced by some persons now, which he had vented a hundred and fifty years before, that infants should not be baptized till they were eight days old; whereas Fidus is represented as having been alone in his opinion; and if he retained it, which is doubtful, it does not appear he had any followers; nor is there any evidence of there being any of his sentiment in this age;[36] and were there, it is unreasonable to imagine, that a council of all the bishops in Africa should agree to anathematize them, because they thought proper to defer the baptizing of infants a few days longer than they did; and besides, infants only eight days old may be properly called newly-born infants; and therefore such could not be said to deny baptism to them; and it would have been a marvelous thing, had they been anathematized for it: though this writer says, wonder who will; a council, consisting of all the bishops of Africa, did in fact agree to anathematize their own brethren, who were in the same opinion and practice of infant-baptism with themselves." It is true, they did anathematize the Pelagians, who were in the same opinion and practice of infant-baptism with themselves in general; though I question whether they reckoned them their own brethren; but then not on account of any difference about the time of baptism, a few days odds between them, the thing to be wondered at; but their denial of original sin, and the baptism of infants to be on account of that: and now since the Pelagians are distinct from those in the canon that denied baptism to new-born infants; and it is unreasonable to suppose any who were of the sentiments of Fidus are intended; it remains, that there must be some persons different both from the one and the other, who denied baptism to babes, and are by this canon anathematized for it, which Austin must know.

3. It is observed by me, that Austin himself makes mention of some that argued against it, from

the unprofitableness of it to infants; since for the most part they die before they have any knowledge of it. These men our author does not know what to make of; sometimes it is questionable whether they were Christians, and suggests that they were men of atheistical principles; and then again they are supposed to be Christians, and even might be Paedobaptists, notwithstanding this their manner of arguing. I am content he should reckon them what he pleases; but one would think they could not be any good friends to infant-baptism, that questioned the profitableness of baptism to infants, and brought so strong an objection to it.

4. It is further observed by me, that according to Austin the Pelagians denied baptism to the infants of believers, because they were holy. This is represented by this Gentleman as a mistake of mine, understanding what was spoken hypothetically, to be absolutely spoken. I have looked over the passage again, and am not convinced upon a second reading of it, nor by what this writer has advanced, of a mistake: the words are absolutely expressed and reasoned upon; "but, says the apostle, your children would be unclean, but now they are holy; therefore, say they (the Pelagians) the children of believers ought not now to be baptized." The observation our author makes, though he does not insist upon it, is very impertinent; that not infants but children are mentioned, and so may include the adult children of believers, and consequently make as much against adult-baptism as infant-baptism; since children in the text, on which the argument is grounded, are always by themselves understood of infants. Austin wonders that the Pelagians should talk after this manner, that holiness is derived from parents, and reasons upon it, when they deny that sin is originally derived from Adam: it is true, indeed, he presses them with an argument this Gentleman calls *ad hominem*, taken from their shutting up the kingdom of God to unbaptized infants; for though they believed that unbaptized infants would not perish, but have everlasting life, yet not enter the kingdom of God; absurdly distinguishing between the kingdom of God, and eternal life. What they were able to answer, or did answer to this, it is not easy to say; "it is a disadvantage, as our author says, that we have none of their writings entire, only scraps and

quotations from them:" Perhaps as they had a singular notion, that the infants of believers ought not to be baptized, though the infants of others should; they would, in answer to the above argument, say, that the infants of believers unbaptized enter the kingdom, though the unbaptized infants of others do not. I only guess this might be their answer, consistent with their principles: however, if I am mistaken in this matter, as I think I am not, it is in company with men of learning I am not ashamed to be among. The learned Daneus says[37] "the Pelagians deny that baptism is to be administered to the children of believers," having plainly in view this passage of Austin's; and the very learned Forbesius[38] brings in this as an objection to his sense of 1 Corinthians 7:14, "the Pelagians abused this saying of the apostle, that they might say, that the infants of believers ought not to be baptized, as we read in Augustin." [39]

5. The words quoted by me out of Jerome, I own, are spoken by way of supposition; but then they suppose a case that had been, was, and might be again; and it should be observed, that the supposition Jerome makes, is not a neglect of the baptism of infants, as this Gentleman suggests, but a denial of it to them, a refusing to give it to them; which is expressive of a rejection of it, and of an opposition to it. So that from all these instances put together, we cannot but conclude that there were some persons that did oppose and reject infant-baptism in those times, and think it may be allowed, which is all we contend for; however, as I have said before, we are not very anxious about it. Mr. Marshall[40] a favourite writer of our author's, says, some in those times questioned it (infant-baptism) as Augustin grants in his sermons *de verbis Apostol*, but does not refer us to the particular place; it seems to be his fourteenth sermon on that subject, entitled, Concerning the baptism of infants, against the Pelagians; where Austin tells us how he was led to the subject; and though he had no doubt about it, "yet some men raised disputes, which were now become frequent, and endeavored to subvert the minds of many;" [41] by whom he seems to mean persons distinct from the Pelagians, since he represents them as having no doubt about it: and this is further confirmed by a passage out of the same discourse; "that infants are to be baptized, let no one

doubt (which is an address to others, and implies, that either they did doubt of infant-baptism, or were in danger of it) since they doubt not, who in some respect contradict it;" which our author has placed as a motto in his title-page.

Austin, we allow, in this age, frequently speaks of infant-baptism as an ancient usage of the church, and as an apostolical tradition; but what proof does he give of it? what testimonies does he produce? does he produce any higher testimony than Cyprian? not one; who, it is owned, speaks of infant-baptism, but not as an apostolical tradition; Cyprian uses no such language: those phrases, which were understood and believed from the beginning, and what the church always thought, or anciently, held, are Austin's words, and not Cyprian's; and only express what Austin inferred and concluded from him: and betides, his testimony is appealed to, not so much for infant-baptism, the thing itself, as for the reason of it, original sin, which gave rise unto it in Cyprian's time: and it is for the proof of this, and not infant-baptism, that Austin himself refers to the manifest faith of an apostle; namely, to shew that not the flesh only, but the soul would be lost, and be brought into condemnation through the offense of Adam, if not quickened by the grace of Christ, for which he refers to Romans 5:18 and yet our author insinuates, that by this he did not consider the baptism of infants for original sin as a novel thing in Cyprian's time, but refers it to the authority of an apostle: and by the way, since Cyprian, the only witness produced by Austin, speaks not of infant-baptism as an ancient usage of the church, or an apostolic tradition, there is no agreement between his language and that of Origen, he is made to speak in his Latin translations, as this author elsewhere suggests; and it confirms the proof of his having been dealt unfairly with, since Cyprian, coming after him, uses no such language, nor does Austin himself ever refer unto him.

I have observed that there are many other things, which by Austin; and other ancient writers, are called apostolic traditions; such as infant-communion, the sign of the cross in baptism, the form of renouncing the devil and all his works, exorcism, trine immersion, the consecration of the water, anointing with oil in baptism, and giving a mixture of milk and honey to the baptized persons: and therefore if infant-baptism is

received on this foot, these ought likewise; since there is as early and clear proof of them from antiquity, as of that: and my further view in mentioning these, was to observe, not only how early, but how easily these corruptions got into the church, as infant-baptism did.

This writer has thought fit to take notice only of one of these particulars, namely, infant-communion; and the evidence of this, he says, is not so full and so early as that of infant-baptism.

Now, let it be observed, that there is no proof of infant-baptism being practiced before Cyprian's time; nor does Austin refer to any higher testimony than his for the practice of it for original sin; and in his time infant-communion was in use beyond all contradiction: there is an instance of it given by himself, which I have referred to; and that is more than is or can be given of infant-baptism, which can only be deduced by consequences from that instance, and from Cyprian and his colleagues reasoning about the necessity of the administration of it to new-born children, he suggests that Austin expresses himself differently, when he is speaking of the one and of the other as an apostolic tradition; but if he does, it is in higher strains of infant-communion; for thus begin the passages, "if they pay any regard to the apostolic authority, or rather to the Lord and Master of the apostles, etc. and no man that remembers that he is a Christian, and of the catholic faith, denies or doubts that infants, without eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, have no life in them, etc."

The Punic Christians, which Austin speaks of, are not to be restrained, as they are by our author, to the Christians of Carthage, but take in other African Christians, particularly at Hippo, where Austin was bishop, and where they spoke the Punic language, and in many other places: and surely if Austin is a good witness for an apostolical tradition, who lived at the latter end of the fourth century; he must know what was the sense of the African Christians in his time, among whom he lived, and upon what they grounded their practice of infant-communion; which he says was upon an ancient and apostolic tradition.

The other rites and usages, he says, I make mention of, are spoken of by Basil as unwritten traditions; and infant-baptism is not mentioned among them, and so was considered as standing upon a better evidence

and testimony: now, not to observe that I produce earlier authorities than Basil, for there apostolical traditions so called, even as early as Tertullian, the first man that spoke of infant-baptism; neither are infant-communion, sponsors at baptism, exorcism in it, and giving milk and honey at that time, mentioned by Basil among them; does it therefore follow that they stand upon a better foot than the rest? besides, since Apostolic tradition is distinguished from Scripture, by the author of *The baptism of infants a reasonable Service, with whom I had to do*; it can be considered in the controversy between us, no other than as an unwritten tradition. This writer further observes, that it does not appear that there unwritten traditions were ever put to the test, and stood the trial, particularly in the Pelagian controversy, as infant-baptism: it is manifest that the exorcisms and exsufflations used in baptism, and the argument from them, as much pinched, puzzled, and confounded the Pelagians, as ever infant-baptism did: and it is notorious, that signing with the sign of the cross has stood the test in all ages, from the beginning of it, and is continued to this day; and prevails not only among the Papists, but among Protestant churches. Upon the whole then, it is clear there is no express mention of infant-baptism in the two first centuries, no nor any plain hint of it, nor any manifest reference to it; and that there is no evidence of its being practiced till the third century; and that it is owned, it prevailed in the fourth: and so rests the state of the controversy.

#### **4 A Reply To A Defense Of The Divine Right Of Infant Baptism**

By Peter Clark, A.M. Minister at Salem

In A Letter To A Friend At Boston In New-England. To Which Are Added, Some Strictures On A Late Treatise, Called, *A Fair And Rational Vindication Of The Right Of Infants To The Ordinance Of Baptism.*

Written by David Bostwick, A.M.

Late Minister of the Presbyterian Church in the City of New-York

The Preface

It is necessary that the reader should be acquainted with the reason of the republication of the following treatise. In the year 1746, a pamphlet was printed at Boston in New England, called, "*A brief Illustration and*

*Confirmation of the Divine Right of Infant-baptism,*" written by Mr. Dickinson; which being industriously spread about in great numbers, to hinder the growth of the Baptist-Interest in those parts, it was sent over to me by some of our friends there, requesting an answer to it; which I undertook, and published in the year 1749, entitled, "*The Divine Right of Infant-baptism examined and disproved.*" Upon which Peter Clark, A.M. Minister at Salem in New England, was employed to write against it, and which he did; and what he wrote was printed and published at Boston in 1752, called, "*A Defense of the Divine Right of Infant-baptism.*" This being sent over to me, I wrote a Reply, in a letter to a friend at Boston, in the year 1753, as the date of my letter shews, giving leave to make use of it, as might be thought fit; and which was printed and published at Boston in 1734, together with a Sermon of mine on Baptism preached at Barbican, 1750. The controversy lying beyond the seas, I chose it should continue there, and therefore never reprinted and republished my Reply here, though it has been solicited; but of late Mr. Clark's Defense has been sent over here, and published, and advertised to be sold; which is the only reason of my reprinting and republishing the following Reply; to which I have added some scriptures on a treatise of Mr. Bostwick's on the same subject, imported from America, with the above Defense, and here reprinted. The Paedobaptists are ever restless and uneasy, endeavoring to maintain and support, if possible, their unscriptural practice of Infant-baptism; though it is no other than a pillar of Popery; that by which antichrist has spread his baneful influence over many nations; is the basis of national churches, and worldly establishments; that which unites the church and the world, and keeps them together; nor can there be a full separation of the one from the other, nor a thorough

reformation in religion, until it is wholly removed: and though it has so long and largely obtained, and still does obtain; I believe with a firm and unshaken faith, that the time is hastening on, when Infant-baptism will be no more practiced in the world; when churches will be formed on the same plan they were in the times of the apostles; when gospel-doctrine and discipline will be restored to their primitive luster and purity; when the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper will

be administered as they were first delivered, clear of all present corruption and superstition; all which will be accomplished, when the Lord shall be king over all the earth, and there shall be one Lord, and his name one.

A REPLY, ETC.

IN A LETTER TO A FRIEND.

SIR,

I Acknowledge the receipt of your Letter on the 22d of last March, and with it Mr. Clark's Defense of the Divine Right of Infant-baptism, etc. which I have since cursorily read over; for I thought it a too great waste of time to give it a second reading. Nor will my engagement in a work of greater importance permit me to write a set and labored answer to it; nor am I willing to bestow so much time and pains as are necessary to cleanse that Augean stable, and remove all the dirt and rubbish this writer has collected together. The remarks I made in reading, I here send you. At first setting out, I soon found I must expect to be dealt rudely and roughly with, and accordingly prepared myself for it; and I assure you, Sir, I was not disappointed.

The first chapter of my book, which the above Gentleman has undertook to answer, is short, and only an introduction, observing the author's title, method, and occasion of writing the pamphlet before me. In Mr. Clark's Reply to which I observe;

1. That he is displeas'd at calling the ordinance of baptism as truly and properly administered, Believer's-baptism, and the pretended administration of it, to infants, Infant-sprinkling; whereas this is calling things by their proper names: it is with great propriety, we call baptism as administered to believers, the proper subjects of it, Believer's-baptism; and with the same propriety we call that which is administered to infants, Infant-sprinkling; from the nature of the action performed, and the persons on whom it is performed. Does this Gentleman think, we shall be so complaisant to suit our language and way of speaking to his mistaken notion and practice? though indeed we too often do, through the common use of phrases which obtain.

2. He is unwilling to allow of any increase of the Baptist interest in New England, either at Boston or in the country; whereas I am credibly informed, and you, Sir, I believe, can attest the truth of it, that there have

been considerable additions to the Baptist interest at Boston; and that many hundreds in the country have been baptized within a few years

3. He says, it is an egregious mistake, that the ministers of New England applied to Mr. Dickinson (the author of the pamphlet I wrote against) to write in favour of Infant-sprinkling; and he is certain that not one of the ministers in Boston made application to him, (which was never affirmed,) and is persuaded it was not at the motion of any ministers in New England, that he wrote his Dialogue, but of his own mere motion; and yet he is obliged to correct himself by a marginal note, and acknowledge that it was wrote through ministerial influence.

4. This writer very early gives a specimen of his talent at reasoning; from the rejection of Infant-baptism, as an human invention, he argues to the rejection of baptism itself, as such; that if Infant-baptism is entirely an human invention, and a rite not to be observed, then baptism itself is an human invention, and not to be observed: this is an argument drawn up secundum artem, like a master of arts; and to pretend to answer so strong an argument, and set aside such a masterly way of reasoning, would be weakness indeed!

5. It being observed of the Dialogue-writer, "that he took care, not to put such arguments and objections into the mouth of his antagonist as he was not able to answer;" this Gentleman rises up, and blusters at a great rate, and defies the most zealous, learned, and subtle of the Antipaedobaptists to produce any other arguments and objections against Infant-baptism, for matter or substance, different from, or of greater weight, than those produced in the Dialogue; but afterwards lowers his topsail, and says, that the design of the author of that pamphlet was to represent in a few plain words, the most material objections against Infant-baptism, with the proper answers to them; and at last owns, that a great deal more has been said by the Antipaedobaptists.

The second chapter, you know, Sir, treats of "the consequences of embracing Believer's-baptism; such as, renouncing Infant-baptism, vacating the covenant, and renouncing all other ordinances of the gospel;" that Christ must have forsaken his church for many ages, and not made good the promise of his presence, and that there now can be no baptism in the world. In

Mr. Clark's Reply to what I have said on those heads, I observe the following things.

The first consequence is the renunciation of Infant-baptism; which consequence, to put him out of all doubt and pain, about my owning or not owning it, I readily allow, follows upon a person's being sprinkled in infancy, embracing adult-baptism by immersion; in which he is to be justified, the one being an invention of man's, the other according to the word of God; nor is there any thing this Gentleman has said, that proves such a renunciation to be an evil.

1. He is very wrong in supposing it must be my intention, that the age of a person, or the time of receiving baptism, are essential to the ordinance. The Antipaedobaptists do not confine this ordinance to any age, but admit old or young to it, if proper subjects; let a man be as old as Methuselah, if he has not faith in Christ, or cannot give a satisfactory account of it, he will not be admitted to this ordinance by reason of his age; on the other hand, if a little child is called by grace, and converted, and gives a reason of the hope that is in it, of which there have been instances; such will not be refused this ordinance of baptism. The essentials to the right administration of baptism, amongst other things, are, that it be performed by immersion, without which it cannot be baptism; and that it be administered upon a profession of faith; neither of which are to be found in Infant sprinkling.

2. It is in vain and to no purport in this writer to urge, that infants are capable of baptism; so are bells, and have been baptized by the Papists. But it is said, infants are capable of being cleansed by the blood of Christ; of being regenerated; of being entered into covenant, and of having the seal of it administered to them. And what of all this? are they capable of understanding the nature, design, and use of the ordinance, when administered to them? are they capable of professing faith in Christ, which is a pre-requisite to this ordinance? are they capable of answering a good conscience towards God in it? are they capable of submitting to it in obedience to the will of Christ, from a love to him, and with a view to his glory? they are not. But,

3. It seems, in baptism, infants are dedicated unto God; wherefore to renounce Infant baptism, is for a man to renounce his solemn dedication to God; and much is said to prove that parents have a Right

to dedicate their children to him. It will be allowed, that parents have a right to devote or dedicate their children to the Lord; that is, to give them up to him in prayer; or to pray for them, as Abraham did for Ishmael, that they may live in his light; and it is their duty to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; but they have no direction to baptize them, nor warrant to dedicate them by baptism; nor is baptism an ordinance of dedication, either of a man's self, or of others; a dedication ought to be previous to baptism; and Believers first give up themselves to the Lord, and then are baptized in his name.

4. After all, a renunciation of baptism in infancy must be a matter of great impiety, because witches are solicited by the Devil to renounce it, in order to their entering into confederacy with them. I thought, Sir, your country of New-England had been cured of these fooleries about witchcraft, and diabolical confederacies long ago, but I find the distemper continues. This argument, I own, is unanswerable by me; I must confess myself quite a stranger to this dark business.

5. What the story of Mr. Whiston is told for, is not easy to say; since it seems, he did not renounce his Infant-baptism: it looks, by the reference, as if it was intended to suggest, that an Antitrinitarian could not so well shelter himself among a people of any denomination, as the Baptists; whereas the ordinance as administered by them, as strongly militates against such a principle, as it does by being administered by Paedobaptists: but it may be, it is to recommend a spirit of moderation among us, to receive unbaptized persons into our communion by this example; but then unhappy for this writer, so it is, that the congregation Dr. Foster was pastor of, and Mr. Whiston joined himself to, is, and always was of the Paedobaptist denomination, and have for their present minister one of the Presbyterian persuasion. The second consequence of receiving the principle of adult-baptism, and acting up to it, is, vacating the covenant between God and the person baptized in infancy, into which he was brought by his baptism. Now you will observe, Sir,

1. That Mr. Clark has offered nothing in proof of infants being brought into covenant with God, by baptism; and indeed I cannot see how he can consistently with himself undertake it; since he

makes covenant relation to God, the main ground of infants right to baptism; and therefore they must be in it before their baptism, and consequently are not brought into it by it; wherefore since they are not brought into covenant by it, that cannot be vacated by their renouncing of it.

2. It being observed, that no man can be brought into the covenant of grace by baptism, since it is from everlasting, and all interested in it were so early in covenant, and consequently previous to their baptism; this writer lets himself with all his might and main to oppose this sentiment, that the covenant of grace was from everlasting; this, he says, is unscriptural, irrational, and contrary to scripture. But if Christ was set up from everlasting as mediator; for only as such could he be set up (Prov. 8:12); if there was a promise of eternal life made before the world began, and this promise was in Christ, who then existed as the federal head and representative of his people, in whom they were chosen so early, to receive all promises and grace for them (Titus 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:1); and if grace was given to them in him before the world was, and they were blessed with all spiritual blessings in him so early (2 Tim. 1:9; Eph. 1:3, 4); then, surely, there must be a covenant transaction between the Father and the Son on their account so early; for could there be all this and no covenant subsisting? The distinction between a covenant of redemption and a covenant of grace, is without any foundation in the word of God. Nor is this notion irrational; two parties were so early existing, when the covenant was made; Jehovah the Father was one, and the Son of God the other, in the name of his people; who, though they had not then a personal, yet had a representative being in Christ their head; and this was sufficient for them to have grace given them in him before the world was.

His metaphysical arguments from eternal acts being imminent, will equally militate against eternal election, as against an eternal covenant; and perhaps this writer has as little regard to the one, as he has to the other: nor is this notion contrary to scripture; for though the covenant is called a new and second covenant, yet only with respect to the former administration of it, under the legal dispensation; and both administrations of it, under the law and under the gospel, are only so many exhibitions and manifestations of the covenant under different forms, which was made in eternity. The

scriptures which promise the making of a covenant, only intend a clearer manifestation and application of the covenant of grace to persons to whom it belongs; things are said in scripture to be made, when they are made manifest or declared (Acts 2:36): it is a previous interest in the covenant of grace that gives persons a right to the blessings of it; and the application of these blessings, such as pardon of sin, etc. flows from this previous interest: nor does this notion render the ministry of the word and the operation of the Spirit for that end useless, and superfluous; but on the contrary so early an interest in the covenant of grace is the ground and reason of the Spirit being sent down in time to make the word effectual to salvation. Nor is the state of unregeneracy, the elect of God are in by nature, inconsistent with this eternal covenant; since that covenant supposes it, and provides for, promises, and secures the regeneration and sanctification of all interested in it; assuring them that the heart of stone shall be taken away, and an heart of flesh given them; a new heart and a new Spirit, yea the Spirit of God shall be put into them, and the laws of God written in their minds.

The text in Ephesians 2:12. describes the Gentiles only, who were strangers from the covenants of promise; the covenant of circumcision, and the covenant at Sinai; covenants peculiar to the Jews; as well as strangers to the scriptures, which contain the promise of the Messiah; all which might be, and was, and yet be interested in the covenant of grace. If this is to be an Antinomian, I am quite content to be called one; such bug-bear names do not frighten me. It is not worth while to take notice of this man's Neonomian rant; of the terms and conditions of the covenant; of its being a rule of moral government over man in a flare of unregeneracy, brought hereby into a state of probation; which turns the covenant into a law, and is what the Neonomians call a remedial law, (as this writer calls the covenant a remedial one) a law of milder terms; nor of his Arminian strokes in making the endeavors and acts of men to be the turning point of their salvation, and conversion, as being foreign to the controversy, in hand.

3. This writer makes a distinction between a man's being in covenant in respect of the spiritual dispensation of the grace of it, and in respect of the external administration of it: by the spiritual dispensation of

it, I apprehend, he means the application of spiritual blessings in the covenant to persons regenerated and converted, by which they must appear to be in it; and in this sense, all the persons, I have instanced in, must be manifestly in the covenant of grace, previous to baptism: and consequently not brought into it by it. By the external administration of it, I suppose, he means the administration of the ordinances of the gospel, particularly baptism; and then it is only saying a man is not baptized before he is baptized; which no body will contest with him.

4. No man, I observe, is entered into the covenant of grace by himself, or others; this is an act of the sovereign grace of God, who says, I will be their God, and they shall be my people; which this writer owns, though not exclusive of human endeavors; as if God could not take any into his covenant without their own endeavors; such wretched divinity deserves the utmost contempt. Since the above phrase, I will be their God, etc. is a proof of the sovereign grace of God in bringing men into covenant; he hopes it will be allowed that a like phrase, I will be the God of thy seed, will be admitted as strongly to conclude the reception of the Infant-children of believers into covenant. I answer, whenever it appears that there is such an article in the covenant of grace, that so runs, that God will be the God of the natural Seed of believers as such, it will be admitted; and whereas I have observed, that the phrase of bringing into the bond of the covenant, which the Paedobaptists often make use of, is but once mentioned in scripture, and then ascribed to God; this, as it no ways contradicts a being in covenant from everlasting, so it fails not of being a proof of the sovereign grace of God in that act. By the bond of the covenant, is not meant faith and repentance on man's part; which some stupidly call the terms and conditions of the covenant, when they are parts and blessings of it; but the everlasting love of God, which is the force and security of it, and which says men under obligation to serve their covenant-God; and to be brought into it, is to be brought into a comfortable view of interest in it, and to an open participation of the blessings of it; which is all according to, and consistent with the eternal constitution of it.

5. The covenant of grace can never be vacated, since it is everlasting, ordered in all things and sure:

this is owned by our author in respect of its divine constitution, and of the immutability of the divine promise, to all under the spiritual dispensation of it; but there are others who are only in it by a visible and baptismal dedication; and these may make void the covenant between God and them; and this it seems is the case of the greatest part of infants in covenant. Now let me retort this Gentleman's argument upon himself, which he makes use of against the covenant being from everlasting. "Those, whom God admits into the covenant of grace, have an interest in the benefits of that covenant, pardon of sin, the gift of the Spirit, reconciliation, adoption, etc. for it is a sort of contradiction to say, that any man is admitted into the covenant, and yet debarred from an interest in all the privileges of it." Now, either infants are admitted into the covenant of grace, or they are not; if they are, then they have an interest in the benefits of it, pardon of sin, and the other blessings, and so shall all certainly be saved with an everlasting salvation, and not apostatize, as it seems the greatest part of them do; for to say they are in the external, but not in the spiritual part of the covenant, is to make a poor business of their covenant-interest indeed. The instance of Simon Magus, which he thinks I have forgot, will not make for him, nor against me; it is a clear proof, that a man is not brought into covenant by baptism; since though baptism was administered to this person in the pure, primitive way, by an apostolic man, yet he was in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity.

3dly, The other three consequences following upon the renouncing of Infant-baptism, as renouncing all other ordinances, the promise of Christ's presence not made good, and no baptism now in the world, are in some fort given up, and are allowed not to be clear, at least not alike clear; and are only adverted to in a general way, and some expressions of mine caught at, and remarked upon, and these mistaken or perverted.

1. I observe, this author repeats his former mistake, that we make age essential to baptism, which is but circumstantial; and then uses an argument from the lesser to the greater, as he thinks, that if a defect in such a circumstance nullifies the ordinance, then much more the want of proper administrators: but it is not age that we object to, but a want of understanding, and faith, and an incapacity to make a profession of it, as well as the mode of administration; things of

greater importance in this ordinance; at least they are so with us. However, it is kind in this Gentleman to direct us how we may avoid this inconvenience his argument has thrown us into, by exercising a little more moderation and charity for Infant-baptism; and upon this foot he seems to be willing to compound the matter with us.

2. As to the presence of Christ with his church and ministers, it is sufficient to make that good, that he grants it where his Church is, and wheresoever he has a people, be they more, or fewer, and wheresoever his ordinances are administered according to his direction; but he has no where promised, that he will have a continued succession of visible congregated churches. Certain indeed it is, that he will have a number of chosen ones in all ages; that his invisible church, built on Christ the rock, shall not fail; and he will have a seed to serve him, or some particular persons, whom he will reserve to himself from a general corruption; but that there shall be gathered always into a visible gospel church-state, is no where promised; and for many hundreds of years it will be hard to find any one such church, unless the people in the valleys of Piedmont are allowed to be such.

3. This writer is not willing to admit such a supposition, that any of the laws and institutions of Christ have failed, ceased, or been annulled in any one age, and much more for several ages together; but, besides the ordinance of baptism, which through the change of mode and subjects, together with the impure mixtures of salt, oil, and spittle, and other superstitious rites, which became quite another thing than what was instituted by Christ, and practiced by his apostles; the ordinance of the Lord's-supper was so sadly perverted and corrupted, as to be a mere mass indeed of blasphemy and idolatry; in the communion of which the gracious presence of Christ cannot be thought to be enjoyed: and yet this continued some hundreds of years; only now and then some single persons rose up, and bore a testimony against it, who for a while had their followers.

4. He seems to triumph from Dr. Wall's account of things, that there never was, nor is, to this day, any national church in the world but Paedobaptists, either among the Greeks, or Roman Catholics, or the Reformed; and that Antipaedobaptism never obtained to be the established religion of any country

in the world. We do not envy his boast; we know that national churches are good for nothing, as not being agreeable to the rule of the divine word; one small church or congregation, gathered out of the world by the grace of God, according to gospel-order, and whole principles and practices are agreeable to the word of God, is to be preferred before all the national churches in the world.

5. According to this Gentleman's own account of the English Antipaedobaptists, there could be none to administer the ordinance to them in their way; since those that came from Holland, it seems, gained no proselytes, but were soon extinct, being cruelly persecuted and destroyed; so that it was necessary they should send abroad for an administrator, or make use of an unbaptized one: but which way soever they took, they are able to justify their baptism on as good a foundation as the Reformers are able to justify theirs received from the Papists, with all the fooleries, corruptions, and superstitious rites attending it.

My third chapter, you will remember, Sir, is concerning The Antiquity of Infant-baptism, and the practice of the Waldenses.

I. The enquiry is, whether Infant-baptism constantly and universally obtained in the truly primitive church, which truly pure and primitive church must be the church in the times of Christ and his apostles; since towards the close of those times, and in the two following Ages, there arose such a see of impure men, both for principle and practice, under the Christian name, as never were known in the world: now by an induction of particular instances of churches in this period of time, it does not appear, that Infant-baptism at all obtained. In Mr. Clark's reply to which, I observe,

1. That he says, the evidence of Infant-baptism is not pretended to lie in the history of fact, or in any express mention of it in the New Testament. That the penman of the Acts of the Apostles did not descend to so minute a particular, as the baptizing of infants,—and that the baptism of the adult was of the greatest account to be recorded.

2. Yet he thinks there are pretty plain intimations of it in most of the characters instanced in, and particularly in the church at Jerusalem; which he endeavors to make good by a criticism on Acts 2:41. And it is pleasant to observe, how he toils and labors to find out an antecedent to a relative not expressed in

the text; for the words, to them, are not in the original; it is only and the same day there were added about three thousand souls; or, the same day there was an addition of about three thousand souls; and all this pains is taken to support a whimsical notion, that this addition was made, not to the church, but to the new converts; and by a wild fancy he imagines, that infants are included among the three thousand souls that were added: his argument from verse 39. and the other instances mentioned, as well as some other passages alleged, such as Luke 18:16; Acts 15:10 and 1 Corinthians 7:14 as they come over in the debate again, are referred to their proper places. But,

3. It must not be forgotten, what is said, that this may be a reason why Infant-baptism is so sparingly mentioned, (not mentioned at all) because the custom of the Jews to baptize the children of proselytes to their religion with their parents, was well known; and there can be little doubt, that the apostles proceeded by the same rule in admitting the infants of Christian proselytes into the Christian covenant by baptism. This is building Infant-baptism on a bog indeed; since this Jewish custom is not pretended to be of divine institution; and so a poor argument in the Defense of the Divine Right of Infant-baptism; and at most and best, is only a tradition of the elders, which body of traditions was inveighed against by Christ and his apostles; and besides, this particular tradition does not appear to have obtained so early among the Jews themselves, as the times of the apostles, and therefore could be no rule for them to proceed by; and about which the first reporters of it disagree, the one affirming there was such a custom, and the other denying it; and had it then obtained, it is incredible the apostles should make this the rule of their procedure in administering an ordinance of Christ and after all, was this the case, this would be a reason for, and not against the express mention of Infant-baptism by the divine historian; since it is necessary that in agreement with this Jewish custom, some instance or instances of Christian proselytes being baptized with their children should be recorded, as an example for Christians in succeeding ages to go by. But,

4. A supposition is made of some Paedobaptists sent into an heathen country to preach, and giving an account of their success, declaring that some families were baptized, such a man and all his, such another

and his household; upon which a question is asked, who could raise a doubt whether any infants were baptized in those several families? To which I answer, there is no doubt to be made of it, that Paedobaptists would baptize infants; and if the apostles were Paedobaptists, which is the thing to be proved, they no doubt baptized infants too; but if no other account was given of the baptizing of households, than what the apostles give of them, Infant-baptism would still remain a doubt. For who can believe, that the brethren in Lydia's house whom the apostles comforted, and of whom her household consisted, or that the Jailor's household, that believed and rejoiced with him, or the household of Stephanas, who addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints, were infants? however it seems, as there is no evidence of fact for Infant-baptism in the New Testament, it is referred to the testimony of the ancient fathers; and to them then we must go.

II. The testimony of the fathers of the three first centuries is chiefly to be attended to; and whereas none in the first century are produced in favour of Infant-baptism, we must proceed to the second. In it, I observe, there is but one writer, that it is pretended speaks of Infant-baptism, and that is Irenaeus, and but one passage in him; and this is at best of doubtful meaning, and by some learned men judged spurious; as when he says, Christ "came to save all, all, I say, who are regenerated (or born again) unto God; Infants, and little ones, and children, and young men, and old men." Now, admitting the chapter in which this passage stands, is genuine and not spurious, which yet is not a clear case; it is objectionable to, as being a translation, as the most of this author's works are, and a very foolish, uncouth and barbarous one it is, as learned men observe; wherefore there is reason to believe that justice is not done him; and it lies not upon us, but upon our antagonists that urge this passage against us, to produce the original in support of it: but allowing it to be a just translation, yet what is there of Infant-baptism in it? Not a word. Yes, to be regenerated, or born again, is to be baptized; this is the sense of the ancients, and particularly of Irenaeus, it is said; but how does this appear? Dr. Wall has given an instance of it out of Lib. 3 chap. 19 where this ancient writer says, "when he gave the disciples the commission of regenerating (or rather

of regeneration) unto God, he said unto them, Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," where the commission of regenerating, adds Dr. Wall, plainly means the commission of baptizing; whereas, it more plainly means the commission of teaching the doctrine of regeneration by the spirit, and the necessity of that unto salvation, and in order to baptism; and which was the first and principal part of the apostles' commission, as the very order of the words shews; and certain it is, that Irenaeus uses the word Regeneration in a different sense from baptism,[1] as an inward work, agreeable to the scriptures; and besides, such a sense of his words contended for, is to make him at least to suggest a doctrine which is absolutely false, as if Christ came to save all, and only such, who are baptized unto God; whereas he came to save baptized and unbaptized ones, Old and New Testament saints; and many no doubt are saved by him who never were baptized at all, and some baptized not saved; but on the other hand nothing is more true than that he came to save all, and only those, who are regenerated by the spirit and grace of God, of whatsoever age; and which is clearly this ancient writer's sense, and so no proof of Infant-baptism. To support this notion of regeneration signifying baptism so early, our author urges a passage cited by me from Justin; who, speaking of converted persons, says, "they are brought by us where water is, and they are regenerated in the same way of regeneration as we have been regenerated; for they are then washed in water in the name of the Father, etc."

Now, it is evident, that those persons are not represented as regenerated by baptism; because they are spoken of before as believers and converted ones; and it is as clear, that their baptism is distinguished from their regeneration, and not the same thing; for Justin uses the former, as an argument of the latter; which, if the same, his sense must be, they were baptized, because they were baptized; which is making him guilty of what Logicians call proving Idem per Idem: whereas, Justin's sense, consistent with himself, and the practice of the primitive churches, is, that those persons when brought to the water, having made a profession of their regeneration, were owned and declared regenerated persons, as is manifest from their being admitted to the ordinance of water-baptism: and that Justin speaks of the baptism of the

adult, is owned by this writer; though he thinks it is unquestionable, that he speaks only of such who were converted from Heathenism; and is sure of it, that there were none among them born of Christian parents; this he will find a hard talk, with all his confidence, to prove. And he has ventured to produce a passage out of Justin, as giving suffrage to Infant-baptism in the second century; and it is this from Dr. Wall; "We also, who by him have had access to God, have not received this carnal circumcision, but the spiritual circumcision, which Enoch and those like him observed; and we have received it by baptism, by the mercy of God, because we were sinners, and it is enjoined to all persons to receive it the same way."

Now let it be observed, that this spiritual circumcision, whatever Justin means by it, can never design baptism; since the patriarch Enoch, and others like him, observed it; and since with Christians it is received by baptism, he says; and therefore must be different from it: and, after all, not a word of infants in the passage; nor is baptism called a spiritual circumcision; nor, as our author elsewhere stiles it, Christian circumcision, in Colossians 2:11 since the circumcision there spoken of, is called a circumcision made without hands, which surely cannot be said of baptism. In short, I must once more triumph, if it may be so called, and say, this is all the evidence, the undoubted evidence of Infant-baptism from the fathers of the two first centuries. Proceed we to

The third century; and the fathers of this, brought into the controversy about baptism are Tertullian, Origen, and Cyprian. The first of these, is the first writer we know of that ever made mention of Infant-baptism; and he dissuades from it, and advises to defer baptism to riper years; and is therefore claimed on our side of the question: nor can he be made to unsay what he has said; and therefore is traduced as a man of heterodox notions, and of odd and strange opinions; and, it seems, afterwards turned Montanist; and all this is said, to weaken the credit of his testimony, when not a word is said of Origen's gross errors and monstrous absurdities: the reason is, because it seems he was a Paedobaptist, and Tertullian an Antipaedobaptist; though it is some comfort to this writer, that he was not quite so bad as the present Antipaedobaptists are. As to Origen, there are three passages quoted out of him; to which we object, not only, that they are

translations, the fidelity of which cannot be depended upon, when there is much of this writer still extant in the language in which he wrote, and yet nothing from thence produced; but that there are interpolated, and confessedly so. His homilies on Leviticus and exposition of the epistle to the Romans, from whence two of the passages are taken, were translated by Ruffinus, who owns he took liberty to add of his own to them; so that, as Erasmus[2] observes, it is uncertain whether one reads Origen or Ruffinus; and Scultetus[3] says the same thing; and Huetius, who has given us a good edition of the Greek commentaries of this father, and well understood him, says,[4] that “his writings are so corrupted by him, that you are at a loss to find Origen in Origen, and so deformed and unlike the original, they can scarce be known;” and one of these particular passages Vossius[5] takes to be an interpolation, and so of the greater force against the Pelagians, because Ruffinus the translator and interpolator was inclined to them: the homilies on Luke, out of which is the other passage, are said to be translated by Jerom, of whom Du Pin says,[6] that his versions are not more exact than the other’s; so no credit is to be given to them, nor are they to be depended on. Cyprian is the next that is produced, and it will be allowed that Infant-baptism began to be practiced in his time in some churches, though it seems to be an upstart notion; since it was not till then determined at what time it should be administered; and also at the same time, and in the same churches, Infant-communion was practiced; of which Cyprian gives an instance; and that is more than is, or can be given of the practice of Infant-baptism so early; and if his testimony is of any weight for the one, it ought to be of the same for the other; and if infants are admitted to baptism, it is but reasonable they should partake of the Lord’s-supper, and especially as there is as early antiquity for the one as for the other.

The quotations out of Gregory Nazianzen, Optatus, Ambrose, Chrysostom, and Austin, fathers of the fourth century, which Mr. Clark has collected from Dr. Wall, might have been spared; seeing this does not come into his own account of the truly primitive church; and since it is not denied, Infant-baptism obtained in it; and yet it is certain, there were persons in this age against it, as will be observed hereafter; nor was Pelagius, in this age, so pressed and puzzled with

the argument taken from it in favour of original sin; since it was not contrary to his doctrine, who allowed baptism to be administered to them “on account of the kingdom of God, but not for forgiveness of sin;” and the controversy did not lead to dispute about the subject, but the end of baptism.

The next thing, you will remember, Sir, brought into the controversy, is, whether the practice of Infant-baptism was called in question before the mad-men of Munster let themselves against it. As to the troubles in Germany, and in Munster itself, it is certain beyond all contradiction, that they were begun by Paedobaptists, and whilst they were such; and as for the German Anabaptists, as they are called, who joined with them, they were Sprinklers, and not Baptists, and so belong rather to this writer’s party, than to us; but be this as it will, nothing in the controversy, depends upon that; the state of the case is, whether Infant-baptism was called in question, or made matter of doubt of before there men opposed it; and here I observe,

1. That it is allowed there were debates about Infant-baptism before the affair of Munster, and between that and the reformation; by which it appears that it was quickly opposed after the reformation begun.

2. The letter to Erasmus out of Bohemia shews, that there were a people there near one hundred years before the reformation, who baptized anew, in mere water, such as came over to their sect: this those people did, as our author would have it, not because they judged baptism in infancy invalid, but what was received in the corrupt way of the church of Rome. This he says after Dr. Wall, (though with the Doctor it is uncertain which was the case) inclining to the latter. But it should be observed, that there is no proof from any ancient history, that these people, or any Protestants and reformers that retained Infant-baptism, did, upon leaving the church of Rome, reject the baptism of that church, and receive a new one; and besides, Thomas Waldensis,[7] who lived and wrote at this very time, affirms, that there were a people in Bohemia then, that maintained that “believers children were not to be baptized, and that baptism was to no purpose administered to them;” to which I would add the testimony of Luther,[8] who says, “the Waldenses in Bohemia, ground the sacrament of baptism upon the person’s faith; and for that reason, they annihilate the baptizing of children; for they say,

children must be taught before they be baptized."

2. This Gentleman is not well pleased with Dr. Wall in making this concession, that the Petrobrusians were Antipaedobaptists; though it is some comfort to him, that he tells him, that their opinion seems to have been in a short time extinguished and forgotten. But this opinion of theirs not only continued among Henry and his followers, who succeeded the Petrobrusians, but among the people afterwards called Waldenses; who to this day own Peter Bruis for one of their Barbs or Parrots, as will be seen hereafter. However, that we may have no credit from these people, they are branded as denying the other ordinance of the Lord's Supper; and as saying, it is not to be administered since Christ's time. But what Dr. Wall[9] afterwards cites from the abbot of Clugny, will serve to explain this, and shew, that their meaning is only, that the real presence of Christ in the supper, was only at the time when it was administered by him to the disciples; who makes them to say, "the body of Christ was only once made by himself the supper, before his passion, and was only, namely at this time, given to his disciples; since that time it was never made by any one, nor given to any one;" or as it is expressed from the same popish writer by Dr. Allix,[10]

"The fourth (article ascribed by the abbot to the Petrobrusians) consisted not only in denying the truth of the body and blood of our Lord, which is offered up every day, and continually by the sacrament of the church; but also in maintaining, that it was nothing, and ought not to be offered." Upon which the Doctor makes this remark: "The fourth heresy is expressed in very odious terms, and after the popish manner, who own nothing to be real in the sacrament, if the flesh of Jesus Christ and his blood be not there in substance; and who do not believe he is present at the sacrament upon any other account, but as he is offered up to God before he is eaten." It was the real presence in the supper, and not that itself, these people denied; so that they were brave champions for the purity of both ordinances, equally rejecting Infant-baptism and the doctrine of transubstantiation.

3. As for the other instances of persons denying Infant-baptism after Peter Bruis, produced by me; this writer, from Dr. Wall, would fain fasten the charge of Manicheism upon them, and so as denying all water-baptism; I say, from Dr. Wall, for what he here says,

and indeed there is scarce any thing in this whole chapter about the antiquity of Infant-baptism, but what is borrowed from him, this Gentleman having no stock of his own; that, in fact, instead of answering Mr. Clark, I am answering Dr. Wall. As for those Evervinus writes of to Bernard, about the year 1140, there he observes, from Dr. Wall, held a tenet which shews them to be Manichees; though Evervinus[11] distinguishes them from the Manichees, namely, "all marriage they call fornication, except that which was between two virgins;" but this was not one of the principles of the Manichees, who condemned all marriage; whereas these allowed of the marriage of persons who had never been married before; they only condemned second marriage; a notion which had prevailed with some of the Christian fathers before the Manichees were in being; and this was the notion of some of the apostolics, and very probably of them all, the same Bernard makes mention of; and who, very likely, as I have observed, were the followers of Henry; and against these, this author has nothing of Manicheism: Here Dr. Wall fails him; and here it may be remarked what Mezeray says, "in the year 1163, there were two sorts of heretics; the one ignorant and loose, who were a sort of Manichees; the other more learned, and remote from such filthiness, who held much the same opinions as the Calvinists, and were called Henricians;" so that the followers of Henry were a distinct people from the Manichees; but as for those the Bishop of Arles takes notice of, our author's remark upon them is, "it may be said, these heretics might be some of "the Manichean sect;" fine proof indeed! what he farther adds is more probable, "as perhaps they were some remains of the Petrobrusians;" so that it appears, that their opinion, which seems to have been in a short time extinguished and forgotten, continued however to the year 1215. As for the Gascoiners, that came over into England in the year 1158, and asserted, that infants ought not to be baptized till they come to the age of understanding; this, our author says, is no more than what a Manichee might say then, and a Quaker now; though they both disown all water-baptism. What! to say, that infants ought not to be baptized till they come to the age of understanding? is this talking like a Manichee or a Quaker? Does not this suppose that they may be baptized, when they come to the age of understanding, and know what

they do? But this writer adds, it appears that these rejected both the sacraments of the New Testament, detecting holy baptism, and the Eucharist: so they did, they detested Infant-baptism as an human invention, and transubstantiation as an idol of the Pope of Rome.

4. To what I have said concerning Bruno and Berengarius, and their opposition to Infant-baptism 100 years before the Petrobrusians, I would only add; that Peter Bruis was not the author of a new sect, though his followers were so called by the Papists, to suggest that they were so; whereas, they were the same with the Berengarians, and held the same principles as the Berengarians did, both with respect to baptism and the Lord's-Supper; and what were their sentiments concerning these are well known.

5. Gundulphus and his followers, another instance of persons denying Infant-baptism as early as the year 1025, are represented as Manichees and Quakers, in the point of baptism; and both Mr. Stennett and myself are charged with great unfairness, partiality and disingenuity, in leaving out what Dr. Allix has said concerning these men, namely, "that in the same examination, being further interrogated, these men confessed, that they thought water-baptism of no use or necessity to any one, infants or adult." [12] This is cited from Dr. Wall, an author not always to be depended upon, and particularly here; for Dr. Allix gives no account of any further interrogation of these men, by Gerard bishop of Cambrai, as is suggested; nor are these words to be found in him; for though the men at their first, and only interrogation, speak of the non-necessity and unavailableness of baptism to salvation; and, as Dr. Allix observes, said some things slightly of baptism, in opposition to the prevailing notions of those times, about the absolute necessity and efficacy of baptism to salvation; yet he is quite clear, that they were for the thing itself: "It is easy to judge, says he, [13] that they looked upon baptism only as a mystical ceremony, the end of which was to express the engagement of him who is baptized, and the vow he makes to live holy." Gundulphus, adds he, "seeing them, (the popish priests) assert, that whosoever was baptized could never be damned, falls to an indifference for baptism; thinking it sufficient to keep to the essentials of that sacrament." From whence it is plain, he did not deny it, nor disuse it; and upon the whole it is evident, Dr. Wall has abused Mr.

Stennett, and this Gentleman both him and myself.

6. It is observed, that a large stride is taken by me from the Eleventh to the Fourth century, not being able in the space of more than 600 years to find one instance of an opposer of Infant-baptism: this will not seem so strange to those who know what a time of ignorance this was; partly through the prevalence of popery, and partly through the inundation of the barbarous nations, which brought a flood of darkness upon the empire; and very few witnesses arose against the superstitions of the church of some; yet there were some in the valleys of Piedmont, even from the times of the apostles, and during this interval, as learned men have observed, that bore their testimony against corruptions in doctrine and practice; among which, this of Infant-baptism must be reckoned one; and whole successors, as we have seen already in the Berengarians, and the Petrobrusians, and will be seen again in the Waldenses, bore witness against this innovation.

7. Though I did not insist upon the Pelagians and others being against Infant-baptism, which some have allowed; this writer is pleased to reproach me with a good-will to admit such heretics, as our predecessors; and this is not the only instance of this sort of reflection; whereas truth is truth, let it be espoused by whom it will; and it might be retorted, that Infant-baptism has been practiced by the worst of heretics, and retained by the man of sin and his followers in all the Antichristian states; and this writer thinks it worth his pains to rescue the above heretics and schismatics out of our hands; and yet, after all, some of the followers of Pelagius at least argued, that the infants of believers ought not to be baptized; and that for this reason, because they were holy, as [14] Austin affirms; and who also observes, [15] that some other patrons argued against it, and the unprofitableness of it to infants, who for the most part died before they knew any thing of it; and Jerom, [16] his contemporary, supposes it, and reasons upon it, that some Christians refused to give baptism to their children. So that even in the fourth century, though Infant-baptism greatly prevailed, yet it was not so general, as that not one man contemporary with Austin can be produced, as setting himself against it, as our author avers; nay Stephen Marshall, a great stickler for Infant-baptism, in his famous sermon on this subject, [17] owns, that

some in the times of Austin questioned it, and refers to a discourse of his in proof of it; and the canon of the council at Carthage, produced by me, notwithstanding all that this writer says, is a full proof of the same. For surely, no man in his senses can ever think, that a council consisting of all the bishops in Africa, should agree to anathematize their own brethren, who were in the same opinion with them about Infant-baptism; only thought it should not be administered to them as soon as born, but be deferred till they were eight days old; they that can believe this, can believe any thing; and besides, is not a child of eight days old a child newly born? Lastly, after all, Tertullian, in the beginning of the third century, as he was the first we know of that made mention of Infant-baptism, did oppose it, and dissuade from it; so that it must be once more said, it was called in question, debated and opposed twelve or thirteen hundred years before the madmen of Munster, as well as in some of the intervening centuries. It remains now, Sir, to defend what I have said concerning the Waldenses; and it should be observed,

1. That these people had not their name from Waldus, as the first founder of their sect: this Dr. Allix has undertook to make out beyond all possible contradiction, and he has done it. These people were before his time called Vaudois, Vallenses or Wallenses, from their inhabiting the valleys; which name was afterwards changed to Waldenses, when the design was said to make men believe that

Valda or Waldus was their first founder, that they might be taken for a new and upstart people; whereas they were in being long before Waldus, who received his light and doctrine from them, and whose followers joined them; and this observation sets aside the exceptions of our author to the testimonies of Peter Bruis, their confession of faith in 1120, and their noble lesson 1100, as being before the times of the Waldenses; that is, before the times of Waldo, more properly speaking; and by how much the more ancient these testimonies are, by so much the greater is their evidence in point of antiquity, as to these peoples denial of Infant-baptism; and more strongly prove that the ancient Vallenses, afterwards corruptly called Waldenses, were against it, and for adult baptism. These people were not divided into various sects, but were a body of people of one and the same faith and

practice, which they retained from father to son, as their usual phrase is, time out of mind.

2. It is true, they were called by different names, by their adversaries; some given them by way of reproach, others from their leaders and teachers, as Petrobrusians, Henricians, Arnoldists, Waldensians, Etc. from Peter Bruis, Henry, Arnold, Waldus; but still they were the same people; just as the Papists, at the Reformation, made as many heads of distinct parties, as these were men of note in that work. Thus for instance, the Petrobrusians were not a distinct sect of this people, but the very people called Vallenses, afterwards Waldenses; and the same may be said of the rest: nor were there any sect among them of the Manichean principle, or any of them tinctured with that heresy, as Dr. Allix has abundantly proved. The care, as he makes it appear, was this; that there were Manichees in the places where the Valdenses and Albigenes lived, but not that joined them; their enemies took the advantage of this, and called them by the same name, and ascribed the same opinions to them, especially if they could find any thing in them familiar to them: thus for instance, because they denied Infant-baptism, therefore they were against all Water-baptism, and so Manichees; for as Dr. Allix[18] observes, “in those barbarous and cruel ages, a small conformity of opinions with the Manichees, was a sufficient ground to accuse them of Manicheism, who opposed any doctrine received by the church of some: Thus would they have taken the Anabaptists for downright Manichees, says he, because they condemned the baptism of infants:” and Mr. Clark cannot object to this observation, since he himself argues from the denial of Infant-baptism, to the denial of baptism itself; and has represented me as a Manichee, or a Quaker, for no other reason, but for the denial of Infant-baptism; and if his book lives to the next age, and is of any authority, and can find people foolish enough to believe it, I must be set down for a Manichee or a Quaker. Indeed I must confess, I once thought, giving too much credit to Dr. Wall, that there were different sects among the Waldenses, and some of them Manichees, and of other erroneous principles, which I now retract.

3. It is not true what this writer from Dr. Wall affirms; “This is certain, that no one author, that calls the people he writes of Waldenses, does impute

to them the denial of Infant-baptism;” for Claudius Couffard, writing against them, under this name, gives an extract of their errors out of Raynerius, and this is one of them; “They say, then first a man is baptized, when he is received into their sect; some of them hold that baptism is of no advantage to infants, because they cannot yet actually believe;” and concludes this extract thus, “from whence you may see, courteous reader, that this sect of the Waldenses, and the chief, yea almost all heretics now in vogue, are not of late invention, etc.” and were this true, yet it is a mere evasion, and a foolish one; since the names of Henricians, Arnoldists, Cathari, Apostolici, etc. under which they are represented, as opposers of Infant-baptism, are the names of the Waldenses, as Perrin[19] observes, a writer whom our author says he has read.

4. It is a most clear case, that the ancient barbs or pastors of the Waldensian churches, so called, were opposers of Infant-baptism. Sir Samuel Moreland, as I have observed, reckons Peter Bruis and Henry among their ancient pallors; to does Perrin likewise, though he is mistaken in making them to follow Waldo; and these are allowed to be Antipaedobaptists by several Paedobaptists themselves. Arnoldus, another of their parrots, according to the above writer, from whence they were called Arnoldists, was out of all doubt a denier of Infant-baptism, for which he was condemned by a council, as Dr. Wall owns. Lollardo was another of their pastors, according to the same authors, and from whole name, Perrin says, the Waldenses were called Lollards; and so Kilianus says,[20] a Lollard is also called a Waldensian heretic. These were not the followers of Wickliff, as our author wrongly asserts; for they were, as Dr. Allix[21] observes, more ancient than the Wicklifites; and though this name was afterwards given to the latter, Lollardo was here in England, and had his followers before Wickliff’s time; and so he had in Flanders and Germany; and of the Lollards there, Trithemius[22] says, they derided the sacrament of baptism; which cannot be understood of their deriding baptism in general, but of their deriding Infant-baptism; which was common among the Papists to say; and the same is the sense of the Lollards in England, who are charged with making light of the sacrament of baptism. Now since these were the sentiments of the ancient pastors of

the Waldenses, it is reasonable to believe the people themselves were of the same mind with them; nor are there any confessions of their faith, which make any mention of Infant-baptism; nor any proofs of its being practiced by them until the sixteenth century, produced by our author, or any other.

5. The Albigenses, as Perrin[23] says, differ nothing at all from the Waldenses, in their belief; but are only so called of the country of Albi; where they dwelt, and had their first beginning; and who received the belief of the Waldenses by means of Peter Bruis, Henry and Arnold; who, as it clearly appears, were all Antipaedobaptists; and Dr. Allix[24] observes, that the Albigenses have been called Petrobrusians; owned to be a sect of the Waldenses, that denied Infant-baptism: and that the Albigenses denied it, at least some of them, yea the greatest part of them, is acknowledged by some Paedobaptists themselves. Chassanion in his history of these people says;[25] “some writers have affirmed, that the Albigeois approved not of the baptism of infants. —I cannot deny that the Albigeois for the greatest part were of that opinion. —The truth is, they did not reject this sacrament, or say it was useless, (as some, he before observes, asserted they did) but only counted it unnecessary to infants, because they are not of age to believe, or capable of giving evidence of their faith.” Which is another proof of the ancient Waldenses being against Infant-baptism, these being the same with them. Upon the whole, if I have been too modest, in saying that the ancient Waldenses practiced Infant-baptism, wants proof, I shall now use a little more boldness and confidence, and alarm, that the ancient Vallenses, or as corruptly called Waldenses, were opposers of Infant-baptism; and that no proof can be given of the practice of it among them till the sixteenth century; and that the author of the dialogue had no reason to say, that their being in the practice of adult baptism, and denying Infant-baptism, was a mere chimaera and a groundless figment.

My fourth chapter, you know, Sir, respects the argument for Infant-baptism, taken from the covenant made with Abraham, and from circumcision. Here our author runs out into a large discussion of the covenant of grace, in his way; in which he spends about fourscore pages, which I take to be the heads of some old sermons, he is fond of, and has taken this opportunity of publishing them to the world,

without any propriety or pertinence. For, 1. not to dispute the point with him, whether there are two distinct covenants of redemption and grace, or whether they are one and the same, which is foreign to the argument; be it that they are two distinct ones, the spiritual seed promised to Christ, or the people given him in the one, are the same that are taken into the other; they are of equal extent; there are no more in the one, than there are concerned in the other; and this writer himself allows, “that the salvation of the spiritual seed of Christ is promised in both covenants.” Now let it be proved, if it can, that there are any in the covenant of grace but the spiritual seed of Christ; and that the natural seed of believers, and their infants as such, are the spiritual seed: and if they are, then they were given to Christ, who undertook to save them, and whose salvation was promised to him, and to whom in time the communications of grace according to the covenant are made; then they must be all of them regenerated, renewed, and sanctified, justified, pardoned, adopted, persevere in grace, and be eternally saved; all which will not, cannot be said of all the infants of believers; and consequently cannot be thought to be in the covenant of grace.

2. As to what he says concerning the conditionality of the covenant, it is all answered in one word; let him name what he will, as the condition of this covenant, which God has not absolutely promised, or thrift: has not engaged to perform, or to see performed in his people, or by them. Are the conditions, faith and repentance? These are both included in the new heart, and spirit, and heart of flesh, God has absolutely promised in the covenant, Ezekiel 36:26. Is new, spiritual, and evangelical obedience, the condition? This is absolutely promised as the former, verse 27. Or is it actual consent? Thy people shall be willing (Ps. 110:3). And after all, if it is a conditional covenant, how do infants get into it? Or is it a conditional covenant to the adult, and unconditional to them? If faith and repentance are the conditions of it, and these must be, as this author says, “the sinner’s own voluntary chosen acts, before he can have any actual saving interest in the privileges of the covenant;” it follows, that they cannot be in it, or have interest in the privileges of it, till they repent and believe, and do these as their own voluntary chosen acts; and if “man’s consent and agreement bring him into covenant with God,” as this

writer says; it should be considered, whether infants are capable of this consent, or no; and if they are not, according to this man, they stand a poor chance for being in the covenant.

3. Whereas the covenant of grace, as to the essence of it, has been always the same, as is allowed, under the various forms and administrations of it, both under the Old and New Testament; so the subjects of it have been, and are the same, the spiritual seed of Christ, and none else; and not the carnal seed of men as such: and if the conditions of it are the same, faith and obedience, as our author observes, then infants must stand excluded from it, since they can neither believe nor obey.

4. That the covenant of grace was made with Abraham, or a revelation and application of it to him; that the gospel was revealed to him, and he was justified in the same way believers are now; and that he had spiritual promises made to him, and spiritual blessings bestowed upon him; and that gospel-believers, be they Jews or Gentiles, who are the spiritual seed of Abraham, are heirs of the same covenant-blessings and promises, are never denied;—this man is fighting with his own shadow. What is denied and should be proved, is, that the covenant of grace is made with Abraham’s carnal seed, the Jews, and with the carnal seed of gospel-believers among the Gentiles; and that spiritual promises are made to them; and that they are heirs of spiritual blessings, as such: and let it be further observed, that the covenant in Genesis 17 is not the covenant referred to in Galatians 3:17 said to be confirmed of God in Christ, and which could not be disannulled by the law 430 years after; since the date does not agree, it falls short twenty-four years; and therefore must refer, not to the covenant of circumcision, but to some other covenant, and time of making it.

5. It is false, that children have been always taken with their parents into the covenant of grace, under every dispensation. The children of Adam were not taken into the covenant of grace with him, which was made known to him immediately after the fall; for then all the world must be in the covenant of grace. The covenant made with Noah and his sons, was not the covenant of grace; since it was made with the beasts of the field as well as with them; unless it will be said, that they also are in the covenant of grace. Nor were

all Abraham's natural seed taken into the covenant of grace with him. Ishmael was by name excluded, and the covenant established with Isaac; and yet Ishmael was in the covenant of circumcision; which by the way proves, that, that and the covenant of grace are two different things: nor were all Abraham's natural seed in the line of Isaac taken into the covenant of grace, not Esau; nor all in the line of Jacob and Israel; for as the apostle says, they are not all Israel which are of Israel; neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but in Isaac shall thy seed be called; that is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed (Rom. 9:6-8). The covenant at Horeb was indeed a national covenant, and took in all, children and grown persons; and which was no other than a civil contract, and not a covenant of grace, between God and the people of Israel; he asking, and they as subjects; he promising to be their protector and defender, and they to be his faithful subjects, and obey his laws; which covenant has been long ago abolished, when God wrote a Loammi upon them: nor is there any proof of infants under the New Testament being taken into covenant with their parents. Not Matthew 19:14, 1 Corinthians 7:14 which make no mention of any covenant at all, as will be considered hereafter; nor Hebrews 8:8 since the house of Israel, that new covenant is said to be made with, are the spiritual Israel, whether Jews or Gentiles, even the whole household of faith, and none but them nor are their infants spoken of, nor can they be included; for have they all of them the laws of God written on their hearts? Do they all know the Lord? or have they all their sins forgiven them? which is the care with all those with whom this covenant is made, or to whom it is applied. Nor are there any predictions of this kind in the Old Testament. Deuteronomy 30:6, Psalm 22:30, Isaiah 9:21 speak only of a succession of converted persons, either in the gospel-church among the Gentiles, or in the same among the Jews, when that people shall be converted in the latter day.

6. The distinction of an inward and outward covenant, is an Utopian business, mere jargon and nonsense; it has no foundation in scripture, reason, nor common sense. And here I cannot but observe what Mr. Baxter, a zealous Paedobaptist, says on this subject.[26] "Mr. Blake's common phrase is, that

they are in the outward covenant, and what that is, I cannot tell; in what sense is that (God's covenant-act) called outward? It cannot be, as if God did as the dissembling creature, Oretenus, with the mouth only, covenant with them, and not with the heart, as they deal with him. I know therefore no possible sense but this, that it is called outward from the blessings promised, which are outward; here therefore, I should have thought it reasonable for Mr. Blake to have told us what these outward blessings are, that this covenant promiseth; and that he would have proved out of the scriptures that God hath such a covenant distinct from the covenant of grace. I desire therefore that those words of scripture may be produced, where any such covenant is contained. And let Mr. Clark tell us what he means by the outward covenant, or the outward part of it, in which infants are; if any thing can be collected from him, as his meaning, it is, that it designs the outward administration of the covenant by the word and ordinances: but if it means the outward ministry of the word, newborn infants are not capable of that to any profit; if it designs the administration of baptism and the Lord's supper, then they should be admitted to one as well as the other; and if baptism only is intended by this outward covenant, or the outward part, here is the greatest confusion imaginable; then the sense is, they are under the outward administration of the covenant, that is baptism; and this gives them a right to be baptized, that is to be baptized again, or in other words to be made Anabaptists of; and after all it is a poor covenant, or a poor part of it assigned for infants, in the bond of which, as this author says, are many real hypocrites.

7. That covenant-interest, and an evidence of it, give right to the real of the covenant, which was circumcision formerly, and baptism now, is false; and this writer has not proved it, nor infants covenant-interest, as we have seen already. He should have first proved that circumcision was a seal of the covenant of grace formerly, and baptism the real of it now, before he talked of covenant-interest giving a right to either. Admitting that circumcision was a real of the covenant of grace formerly, (though it was not) yet interest in that covenant and evidence of interest in it, did not give right to all in it to the seal of it, as it is called; since there were many who had evidently an interest in the covenant of grace, when circumcision

was first appointed, and yet had no right to it; as Shem, Arphaxad, Lot, and others; and even many who were in the covenant made with Abraham, as this writer himself will allow, who had no right to this seal, even all his female offspring: to say, they were virtually circumcised in the males, is false and foolish; to have a thing virtually by another, is to have it by proxy, who represents another; but were the males the proxies and representatives of the females? had they been so, then indeed when they were circumcised, the females were virtually circumcised with them; and so it was all one as if they had been circumcised in their own persons; which to have been, would have been unlawful and sinful, not being by the appointment of God: as for its being unlawful for uncircumcised persons to eat of the passover, this must be understood of such who ought to be circumcised, and does not affect the females, who ought not, and so might eat, though they were really uncircumcised; nor had the males themselves any right to it till the eighth day; and so it was not covenant-interest, but a command from God, that gave them a right; and such an order is necessary to any person's right to baptism.

Again, admitting for argument-sake, that baptism is a seal of the covenant, does not this Gentleman also believe, that the Lord's-supper is a seal of it likewise? and if covenant-interest gives a right to the seals, why not to one seal as well as the other? and why are not infants admitted to the Lord's table, as well as to baptism? Moreover, it is evidence of interest, this writer says, that gives a right to the seal; and what is that evidence? Surely if faith and repentance are the conditions of the covenant, as before asserted, they must be the evidence? and therefore, according to his own argument, it should first appear, that infants have faith and repentance as the evidence of their covenant interest, before they are admitted to the seal of it; and such only according to the injunction of Christ, and the practice of his apostles, were admitted to baptism; as the passages below shew (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38, 39; 10:47), which our author refers us to. And now, Sir, after a long ramble, we are come to Abraham's covenant itself, and to the questions concerning it; as, of what kind it is; with whom made; and whether circumcision was the real of the covenant of grace; and whether baptism is come in its room, and is the seal of it. Now as to the

I. First of these, of what kind was the covenant with Abraham, Genesis 17? I have asserted, that it was not the pure covenant of grace, but of a mixed kind; consisting partly of promises of temporal things, and partly of spiritual ones; and you will easily observe, Sir, that the exceptions of this writer to the arguments I make use of in proof of it, are for the most part founded on his mistaken notions of the conditionality of the covenant of grace, and on that stupid and senseless distinction of the inward and outward covenant, before exploded; wherefore since these are groundless conceits and sandy foundations, what is built upon them must necessarily fall.

II. The same may be observed with respect to that part of the question, which relates to the covenant being made with all Abraham's seed according to the flesh, as a covenant of grace; by the help of which unscriptural and irrational distinction, he can find a place in the covenant of grace for a persecuting Ishmael, a profane Esau, and all the wicked Jews in all ages, in all times of defection and apostasy; but if he can find no better covenant to put the infants of believers into, nor better company to place them with, who notwithstanding their covenant-interest, may be lost and damned, it will be a very insignificant thing with considerate persons, whether they are in this Utopian covenant or no.

III. As to that part of the question which relates to the natural seed of believing Gentiles being in Abraham's covenant, or to that being made with them as a covenant of grace, it is by me denied. This writer says, I add a stroke, as he calls it, that at once cuts off all Abraham's natural seed, and all the natural seed of believing Gentiles, from having any share in the covenant; since I say, "That to none can spiritual blessings belong, but to a spiritual seed, not a natural one." But he might have observed, that this is explained in the same page thus, "not to the natural seed of either of them as such." He says, it is not requisite to a person's visible title and claim to the external privileges of the covenant, that he should be truly regenerate, or a sincere believer;" and yet he elsewhere says, "that to repent and believe must be the sinner's own voluntary chosen acts, before he can have any actual saving interest in the privileges of the covenant;" let him reconcile these together. He has not proved, nor is he able to prove, that the natural

seed of believing Gentiles, as such, are the spiritual seed of Abraham; since only they that are Christ's, or believers in him, or who walk in the steps of the faith of Abraham, are his spiritual seed; which cannot be said of all the natural seed of believing Gentiles, or of any of them as such. That clause in Abraham's covenant, A father of many nations have I made thee (Gen. 17:4, 5) is to be understood only of the faithful, or of believers in all nations; and not of all nations that bear the Christian name, as comprehending all in them, grown persons and infants, good and bad men; and only to such who are of the faith of Abraham does the apostle apply it (Rom. 4:16); the stranger, and his male seed, that submitted to circumcision, may indeed be said to be in the covenant of circumcision; but it does not follow, that these were in the covenant of grace; there were many of Abraham's own natural seed that were in the covenant of circumcision, who were not in the covenant of grace; and it would be very much, that the natural seed of strangers, and even of believing Gentiles, should have a superior privilege to the natural seed of Abraham. Those, and those only, in a judgment of charity, are to be reckoned the spiritual seed, who openly believe in Christ, as I have expressed it; about which phrase this man makes a great pother, when the sense is plain and easy; and that it designs such who make a visible profession of their faith, and are judged to be partakers of the grace of the covenant; which certainly is the best evidence of their interest in it; and therefore it must be best to wait till this appears, before any claim of privilege can be made; and is no other than what this writer himself says in the words before referred to. Though, after all, I stand by my former assertion, that covenant-interest, even when made out clear and plain, gives not right to any ordinance without a positive order or direction from God; and he may call it a conceit of mine if he pleases; he is right in it, that according to it, no person living is capable of (that is, has a right unto) the ordinances and visible privileges of the church upon any grounds of covenant-interest, without a positive direction from God for it; as there was for circumcision, so there should be for baptism; as, with respect to the former, many who were in the covenant of grace had no concern with it, having no direction from the Lord about it; so though persons may be in the covenant of grace, yet if they are not pointed out

by the Lord, as those whom he wills to be the subjects of it, they have no right unto it. To say, that Lot and others were under a former administration of the covenant, on whom circumcision was not enjoined, is saying nothing; unless he can tell us what that former administration of it was, and wherein it differed from the administration of it to Abraham and his seed; to instance in circumcision, would be begging the question, since that is the thing instanced in; by which it appears that covenant-interest gives no right to an ordinance, without a special direction; and the same holds good of baptism. His sense of Mark 16:16 is, that infants are included in the profession of their believing parents, and why not in their baptism too? and so there is no necessity of their baptism; the text countenances one as much as it does the other, and both are equally stupid and senseless.

IV. The next inquiry is, whether circumcision was the seal of the covenant of grace to Abraham's natural seed. It is called a token or sign, but not a seal; this writer says, though a token, simply considered, does not necessarily imply a seal, yet the token of a covenant, or promise, can be nothing else: if it can be nothing else, it does necessarily imply it; unless there is any real difference between a token simply considered, and the token of a covenant, which he would do well to shew circumcision was nothing else but a sign or mark in the flesh, appointed by the covenant; and therefore that is called the covenant in their flesh; and not because circumcision was any confirming token or seal of the covenant to any of Abraham's natural seed: it was a sign and seal of the righteousness of faith to Abraham; that that righteousness which he had by faith before his circumcision, should come upon the uncircumcised Gentiles; but was no seal of that, nor any thing else, to any others: and according to our author's notion of it, it was neither a seal of Abraham's faith, nor of his righteousness; then surely not of any others; and yet in contradiction to this, he says, it is "a seal of the covenant of grace, wherein this privilege of justification by faith is confirmed and conveyed to believers;" and if to believers, then surely not to all Abraham's natural seed, unless he can think they were all believers; though his real notion, if I understand him right, is, that it is no confirming sign, or seal of any spiritual blessings to any; since the subjects of it, as he owns, may have neither faith nor righteousness;

but of the truth of the covenant itself; that God has made one; but this needs no such sign or seal; the word of God is sufficient, which declares it and assures of it.

V. The next thing that comes under consideration, is, whether baptism succeeds circumcision; and is the seal of the covenant of grace to believers, and their natural seed.

1. This author endeavors to prove that baptism succeeds circumcision from Colossians 2:11, but in vain; for the apostle is speaking not of corporal, but of spiritual circumcision, of which the former was a typical resemblance; and so shewing, that believing Gentiles have that through Christ which was signified by it; and which the apostle describes, by the manner of its being effected, without hands, without the power of man, by the efficacy of divine grace; and by the substance and matter of it, which lay in the putting off the body of the sins of the flesh; and without a tautology, as this writer suggests, by the author of it, Christ, who by his Spirit effects it, and therefore is called the circumcision of Christ; and is distinguished from baptism, described in the next verse: and as weak and insignificant is his proof from the analogy between baptism and circumcision; some things said of baptism and circumcision are not true; as that they are sacraments of admission into the church: Not so was circumcision; not of the Gentiles, who had it not, nor were admitted by it, and yet were in the church; nor even of the males, for they were not circumcised till eight days old, yet were of the Jewish church, which was national, as soon as born; and persons may be baptized, and yet not be entered into any visible church: Nor are they badges of relation to the God of Israel; since on the one hand, persons might have one or the other, yet have no spiritual relation to God; and on the other hand, be without either, and yet be related to him: nor are either of them seals and signs of the covenant of grace, as before shewn: nor is baptism absolutely requisite to a person's approach to God with confidence and acceptance in any religious duty, private or public. Baptism serves not to the same use and purpose in many things that circumcision did; it is not the middle wall of partition; nor does it bind men to keep the whole law, as circumcision; and though there may be some seeming agreement, arguments from analogy are weak and dangerous: so from the priest's offering a propitiatory sacrifice, wearing the

linen ephod, and one high priest being above all other priests, the Papists argue for a minister's offering a real propitiatory sacrifice, for wearing the surplice, and for a Pope, or universal Bishop; and others from the same topic argue for tithes being due to ministers, and for the inequality of bishops and presbyters, there being an high priest and inferior ones: and to this tends our author's third argument, that either baptism succeeds circumcision, or there is nothing at all instituted in its room; nor is there any necessity that there should, any more than that there should be a Pope in the room of an high priest, or any thing to answer to Easter, Pentecost, etc. all which, as circumcision, had their end in Christ nor does the Lord's-supper come in the room of the passover; what answers to that is, Christ the passover sacrificed for us; and did it, by this argument from analogy, infants ought to be admitted to the Lord's-supper, as they were to the passover: by this way of arguing, and at this door, may be brought in all the Jewish rites and ceremonies, under other names: and after all, what little agreement may be imagined is between them, the difference is notorious in many things; some of which this author is obliged to own; as in the subjects of them, the one being only males, the other males and females; the one being by blood, the other by water; and besides they differ as to the persons by whom, and the places where, and the uses for which, they are performed; wherefore from analogy and resemblance is no proof of succession, but the contrary. My argument from baptism being in force before circumcision, to prove that the one did not succeed the other, is so far from being allowed by our author a proof of it, that he will not allow it to be a bare probability, unless I could prove they had been all along contemporary: but if I cannot do it, he and his brethren can, who give credit to the Jewish custom of baptizing their proselytes and children; and which they make to be a practice, for which the Jews fetch proof as early as the times of Jacob; and I hope, if he will abide by this, he will allow that baptism could not come in the room of circumcision.

2. He next attempts to prove that baptism is a real of the covenant of grace to believers and their seed, by a wretched perversion of several passages of scripture (John 3:33; Mark 16:16; Matthew 28:19; 1 Pet. 3:21; 1 Cor. 12:13), in which no mention is made of the covenant of grace, and much less of baptism as a real

of it; and which only speak of believers, and not a syllable of their infants; and all of them clear proofs, that believers, and they only, are the proper subjects of baptism; as may easily be observed by the bare reading of them.

3. My sentiment of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper not being seals of the covenant of grace, he thinks, is borrowed from the Socinians. These have no better notion or' the covenant of grace than himself, nor of the efficacy of the blood of Christ for the ratification of it, nor of the sealing work of the spirit of God upon the hearts of his people. My sentiment is borrowed from the scriptures, and is established by them; the blood of Christ confirms and ratifies the covenant, the blessings and promises of it, and is therefore called the blood of the everlasting covenant; the blessed spirit is the sealer of believers interest in it, or assures them of it (Heb. 13:20; Eph. 1:13) So that there are not two seals of the covenant of grace, as he wrongly observes. The blood of Christ makes the covenant itself sure, and is in this sense the seal of that; the spirit of God is the seal of interest in it to particular persons; and in neither sense do or can ordinances seal.

4. Upon the whole, what has this author been doing throughout this chapter? has he proved that the natural seed of believers, as such, are in the covenant of grace? he has not. The covenant he attempts to prove they are in, according to his own account of it, is no covenant of grace. Does it secure any one spiritual blessing to the carnal seed of believers? it does not. Does it secure regenerating, renewing, sanctifying grace, or pardoning grace, or justifying grace, or adopting grace, or eternal life? it does not. And if so, I leave it to be judged of by such that have any knowledge of the covenant, if such a covenant can be called the covenant of grace; or what spiritual Caving advantage is to be had from an interest in such a covenant, could it be proved. He would have his readers believe, that the covenant, he pleads infants have an interest in, is the same under all dispensations, and in all ages: the covenant of grace is indeed the same, but the covenant he puts the infant-seed of believers into, is only an external administration; and this, he himself being judge, cannot have been always the same. This external administration, according to himself, was first by sacrifices, and then by circumcision, and now

by baptism; for what else he means by an external administration, than an administration of ordinances, cannot be conceived; and then by infants being in the covenant, is no other than having ordinances administered to them; and so their being in the covenant now, is no other than their being baptized; and yet he says, "the main foundation of the right of infants to baptism, is their interest in the covenant;" that is, the external administration they are under, or the administration of baptism to them, is the main foundation of their right to baptism. They are baptized, therefore they are and ought to be baptized; such an account of covenant-interest, and of right to baptism from it, is a mere begging the question, and proving idem per idem, yea is downright nonsense and contradiction: and so, when baptism is said to be the seal of the covenant, that is, of the external administration, which administration is that of baptism, the sense is, baptism is the seal of baptism. This senseless jargon is the amount of all the reasonings throughout this chapter: Such mysterious stuff, such glaring contradictions, and stupid nonsense, I leave him and his admirers to please themselves with.

5. From hence it appears, that the clamorous out-cry of cutting off infants from their covenant-right, and so abridging and lessening their privileges, is all a noise about nothing; since it is in vain to talk about cutting off from the covenant of grace, when they were never in it; as the natural seed of believers, as such, never were, under any dispensation whatever; and even what is pleaded for, is only an external administration, which neither conveys grace, nor secures any spiritual blessings; wherefore what privileges are infants deprived of by not being baptized? Let it be shewn if it can, what spiritual blessings infants said to be baptized have, which our infants unbaptized have not; to instance in baptism itself, would be begging the question; it would still be asked, what spiritual privilege or profit comes to an infant by its baptism? If our infants have as many, or the same privileges under the gospel-dispensation, without baptism, as others have with it; then their privileges are not abridged or lessened, and the clamor must be a groundless one. To say, that baptism admits into the Christian church, as circumcision into the Jewish church, are both false, as has been proved already; our author, it seems, did not know, that a national church was a carnal one; whereas

a national church can be no other, since all born in a nation are members of it, and become so by their birth, which is carnal; for, whatsoever is born of the flesh is flesh. Whereas a gospel-church, gathered out of the world, does, or should consist, only of such who are born again, and have an understanding of spiritual things. This writer seems to suggest, that if infants are not admitted to this external administration, and real of the covenant he pleads for, their condition is deplorable, and there is no ground of hope of their eternal salvation; and does their being admitted into this external administration make their condition better with respect to everlasting salvation? not at all; since, according to our author, persons may be in this, and yet not in the covenant of grace, as hypocrites may be; and he distinguishes this visible and external administration from the spiritual dispensation and efficacy of the covenant of grace; so that persons may be in the one, and yet be everlastingly lost; and therefore what ground of hope of eternal salvation does this give? or what ground of hope does non-admission into it deprive them of? Is salvation inseparably connected with baptism? or does it ensure it to any? How unreasonable then, and without foundation, is this clamorous outcry? And now, Sir, we are come to

The fifth chapter of my treatise, which considers the several texts of scripture produced in favour of Infant-baptism; and the first is Acts 2:38, 39. Now, not to take notice of this author's foolish impertinencies, and with which his book abounds, and would be endless to observe; for which reason I mention them not, that I might not swell this letter too large, and impose upon your patience in reading it; you will easily observe, Sir, the puzzle and confusion he is thrown into to make the exhortation to repent, urged in order to the enjoyment of the promise, to agree with infants; and which is mentioned as previous to baptism, and in order to it. That this passage can furnish out no argument in favour of Infant-baptism, will appear by the plain, clear, and easy sense of it; Peter had charged the Jews with the sin of crucifying Christ; their consciences were awakened, and loaded with the guilt of it; in their distress, being pricked to the heart, they inquire what they should do, as almost despairing of mercy to be shewn to such great sinners; they are told, that notwithstanding their sin was so heinous, yet if they truly repented of it, and submitted

to Christ and his ordinances, particularly to baptism, the promise of life and salvation belonged to them, nor need they doubt of an interest in it: and whereas they had imprecated his blood, not only upon themselves, but upon their posterity, more immediate and more remote, for which they were under great concern; they are told this promise of salvation by Christ reached to them also, provided they repented and were baptized; and which is the reason that mention is made of their children; yea, even to them that were afar off, their brethren the Jews in distant countries, that should hear the gospel, repent and believe, and be baptized; or should live in ages to come in the latter day, and should look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn; and so has nothing to do with the covenant with Abraham and his natural seed, and much less with the Gentiles and theirs: and be it so, that the Gentiles are meant by those afar off, which may be admitted, since it is sometimes a descriptive character of them; yet no mention is made of their children; and had they been mentioned, the limiting clause, even as many as the Lord our God shall call, plainly points at, and describes the persons intended; not among the Gentiles only, but the Jews also, as agreeable to common sense and the rules of grammar; and is to be understood only of the Jews that are called by grace, and of their children, that are effectually, called, and of the Gentiles called with an holy calling, as the persons to whom the promise belongs; and which appears evident by their repentance and baptism, which this is an encouraging motive to; and therefore can be understood only of adult persons, and not of infants; and of whole baptism not a syllable is mentioned, nor can it be inferred from this passage, or established by it.

II. The next passage of scripture produced in favour of Infant-baptism, and to as little purpose, is Matthew 19:14 it is owned by our author, that these children were not brought to Christ to be baptized by him; and that they were not baptized by him; these things, he says, they do not affirm. For what then is the passage produced? why, to shew, that infants become proselytes to Christ by baptism; and is not this to be baptized? what a contradiction is this? And afterwards another self-contradiction follows: he imagines these infants had been baptized already, and yet were commanded to become proselytes by

baptism, and so Anabaptists; but how does it appear that it was the will of Christ they should become proselytes to him this way? from the etymology of the Greek word, which signifies to come to; so, wherever the word is used of persons as coming to Christ, it is to be understood of their becoming proselytes to him by baptism: it is used in Matthew 16:1 the Pharisees also with the Sadducees—*προσελθόντες*, “came tempting him.” Did they become proselytes to him by baptism? what stupid stuff is this? nay the Devil himself is said to come to him, and when the Tempter—*προσελθών*, came to him, he said, etc. Matthew 4:3. our author surely does not think he became a proselyte to him. That it was the custom of the Jews, before the times of Christ, to baptize the children of proselytes, is not a fact so well attested, as is said; the writings from whence the proof is taken, were written some hundreds of years after Christ’s time; and the very first persons that mention it, dispute it; one alarming there was such a custom, and the other denying it; and were it far, since it was only a tradition of the elders at best, and not a command of God, it is not credible that our Lord should follow it, or enforce such a practice on his followers: the coming of these children was merely corporal, whatever it was for, and temporary; there is no other way of coming to Christ, or becoming proselytes to him, but by believing in him, embracing his doctrines, and obeying his commands; and when children are capable of these things, and do them, we are ready to acknowledge them the proselytes of Christ, and admit them to baptism: nor does the reason given in the text, for of such is the kingdom of heaven, prove their right to baptism; for not to insist on the metaphorical sense of these words, which yet Calvin gives into; but supposing infants literally are meant, the kingdom of heaven cannot be understood of the gospel-church-state; which is not national but congregational, consisting of men gathered out of the world by the grace of God, and who make a public profession of Christ, which infants are not capable of, and so not taken into it; and were they, they must have an equal right to the Lord’s supper as to baptism, and of which they are equally capable; for does the Lord’s supper require in the receivers of it a competent measure of Christian knowledge, the exercise of reason and understanding, and their active powers, as this writer says, so does baptism. But by the kingdom

of heaven, is meant the heavenly glory; and we deny not, that there are infants that belong to it, though who they are, we know not; nor is this any argument for their admission to baptism; it is one thing what Christ does himself, he may admit them into heaven; it is another thing what we are to do, the rule of which is his revealed will: we cannot admit them into a church-state, or to any ordinance, unless he has given us an order so to do; and besides, it is time enough to talk of their admission to baptism, when it appears they have a right unto, and a meetness for the kingdom of heaven.

III. Another passage brought into this controversy is Matthew 18:16; this is owned to be less convictive, because interpreters are divided about the sense of it; some understanding it of children in knowledge and grace, others of children in age, to which our author inclines, for the sake of his hypothesis; though he knows not how to reject the former: my objections to the latter sense, he says, have no great weight in them; it seems they have some. I will add a little more to them, shewing that not little ones in a literal, but figurative sense, are meant, even the disciples of Christ, that actually believed in him: the word here used is different from that which is used of little children, verse 3. and is manifestly used of the disciples of Christ (Matthew 10:42), and the parallel text in Mark 9:41, 42 most clearly shews, that the little ones that believed in Christ, which were not to be offended, were his apostles, that belonged to him; quite contrary to what this writer produces it for; who has most miserably mangled and tortured this passage: Moreover there was but one little child, Christ took and set in the midst of his disciples, whereas he has regard to several little ones then present, and whom, as it were, he points unto; one of which to offend, would be resented; and plainly designs the apostles then present, who not only had the principle of faith, but exercised it, as the word used signifies; and who were capable of being scandalized, and of having stumbling-blocks thrown in their way, and taking offense at them; which infants in age are not capable of: that senseless rant of cutting off infants from their right in the covenant of salvation, and from the privileges of the gospel, (I suppose he means by denying baptism to them) being an offense and injury to them, and the whining cant upon this, are mean and despicable: his reasons, why the apostles of

Christ cannot be meant, because contending for pre-eminence, they discovered a temper of mind opposite to little children, has no force in it; for Christ calls them little ones, partly because they ought to be as little children, verse 3, and in some sense were so; and partly to mortify their pride and vanity, as well as to express his tender affection and regard for them, see verse 10, and since infants are not meant, it is in vain to dispute about their faith, either as to principle or act, and what right that gives to baptism; and especially since profession of faith, and consent to be baptized, are necessary to the administration of that ordinance, and to the subjects of it.

IV. Next we have his remarks on the exceptions to the sense of 1 Corinthians 7:14 contended for: the sense of internal holiness derived from parents to children is rejected by him; but there is another, which he seems to have a good will unto: he says there are some reasons to support it, and he does not object to it; yet chooses not to adhere to it, though if established, would put an end to the controversy; and that is, that the word sanctified signifies baptized, and the word holy, Christians baptized; and then the sense is, “the unbelieving husband is baptized by the believing wife, and the unbelieving wife is baptized by the believing husband; else were your children unbaptized, but now they are baptized Christians;” the bare mention of which is confutation sufficient. The sense our author prefers is a visible federal holiness: but what that holiness is, for any thing he has said to clear it, remains in the dark: covenant-holiness, or what the covenant of grace promises, and secures to all interested in it, is clear and plain, internal holiness of heart, and outward holiness of life and conversation flowing from that (Ezek. 36:25-27); But are the infants of believers, as such, partakers of this holiness? or is such holiness as this communicated unto, or does it appear upon all the natural seed of believers? This will not be said; experience and facts are against it; they are born in sin, and are by nature children of wrath, as others; and many of them are never partakers of real holiness, and are as profligate as others; and on the other hand, some of the children of unbelievers are partakers of true holiness: if it be said, and which seems to be our author’s meaning, that it is such a holiness the people of the Jews had in distinction from the Heathens, and therefore are called an holy seed; this cannot be, since the holiness of the Jewish

seed lay in the lawful issue of a Jewish man and a Jewish woman: if a Jewish man married an Heathen woman, their issue was not holy, as appears from Ezra and Nehemiah; whereas, according to the apostle, if a Christian man married an Heathen woman, or a Christian woman an Heathen man, their issue were holy: should it be said, as it is suggested by our author, that so indeed it was in Ezra’s times, according to the Jewish law; but now, since the coming of Christ, the national difference is abolished; which he makes to be the sense of the apostle, and therein betrays his ignorance of the apostle’s argument and method of reasoning; for the particle now, as Beza observes, is not in this place an adverb of time, but a conjunction, which is commonly used in assumptions of argument, which destroys our author’s argument, and lets aside his method of reasoning, which he seems fond of, and afterwards repeats: it remains therefore, that only a matrimonial holiness is here intended; and surely marriage may be said to be holy, as it is by the apostle honourable, and for that reason (Heb. 13:4), without savoring strong of popery, or savoring the notion of marriage being a sacrament, as this writer insinuates; who has got a strange nose, and a stranger judgment: whether he is a single or a married man, I know not; he appears to have a bad opinion of marriage. That infants born in lawful wedlock cannot be called holy, being legitimate, without favouring of popery. As he is not able to set aside the sense of the word sanctified given by me, as signifying espoused; he requires of me to prove that the word holy means legitimate; for which I refer him to Ezra 9:2 where those born of parents, both Jewish, are called an holy seed; that is, a lawful one; in opposition to, and in distinction from a spurious and illegitimate issue, born of parents, the one Jewish and the other Heathen: and this is the same with the godly seed, in Malachi 2:15. which Calvin interprets legitimate, in distinction from those that are born in polygamy: nor will any other sense suit with the care proposed to the apostle; nor with his answer and manner of reasoning about it; who says not one word era covenant whereby an unbelieving yoke-fellow is sanctified to a believing one, or of the federal holiness of the children of both; but argues, that if their marriage, being unequal, was not valid, which was their scruple, their children must be unclean, as bastards were accounted (Deut. 23:2);

whereas it being good, their children were legitimate, and so might be easy, and continue together as they ought.

The passage out of the Talmud, which he has at second-hand from Dr. Lightfoot, designs by Holiness, Judaism, and not Christianity, and is quite impertinent to the purpose; nor can it be thought to be alluded to, since the holiness the Jews speak of, respects the parents, as both proselytes to Judaism; whereas the apostle's case supposes one an Heathen, and the other a Christian: and he might have observed by a tradition quoted by the Doctor, in the same place, that such a marriage the apostle was considering, is condemned by the Jews as no marriage, and the issue of it as illegitimate; which asserts, that a son begotten of a Heathen woman is not a son, his lawful son; just the reverse of what the apostle suggested: and after all, our author himself seems to make this holiness no other than a civil holiness, and which secures a civil relation, by which "the unbelieving yoke-fellow is sanctified, so far as concerns the believing party; that is, for lawful cohabitation, conjugal society, and the propagation of a holy covenant-seed;" for all which purposes, lawful marriages may be allowed to sanctify, if only instead of a holy covenant-seed, a legitimate feed is put. So that upon the whole, this passage does not furnish out the least shew of argument for Infant-baptism. Come we to

V. The next passage produced in favour of Infant-baptism, which are the words of the commission in Matthew 28:19, 20, one would think there should be no difficulty in understanding these words; and that the plain and easy sense of them is, that such as are taught by the ministry of the word,

should be baptized, and they only; and if there was any doubt about this, yet it might be removed by comparing the same commission with this, as differently expressed in Mark 16:15, 16 from whence it clearly appears, that to teach all nations, is to preach the gospel to every creature; and that the persons among all nations, that may be said to be taught, or made disciples by teaching, are believers, and being so, are to be baptized; he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved. It is observed by this writer, that the acts of discipling and baptizing are of equal extent: it is agreed to, provided it be allowed, as it ought, that

the word, teach, or make disciples, describes and limits the persons to be baptized; for such only of all nations are to be baptized, who are made disciples by teaching; not all the individuals of all nations; no, not even where the gospel comes, and is preached; for many hear it, and more might, who are not taught by it; and even when the seventh trumpet shall sound, and all nations shall serve the Lord, this will not be true of every individual of all nations, only of such, who are qualified for, and capable of serving the Lord; and so of adult persons only, and not of infants at all: and was this the care, that all nations in the commission are under no limitation and restriction, then not only the children of Pagans, Turks, and Jews, but even all adult persons, the most vile and profligate, should be baptized; wherefore the phrase, all nations to be baptized, must be restrained and limited to those who are made disciples out of all nations; who are the antecedent to the relative, them that are to be baptized, and not all nations; and though there is a frequent change of gender in the Greek language, which is owned; yet as Piscator, a learned Paedobaptist, on the text observes, "the syntax (of them) is referred to "the sense, and not to the word, since nations went before;" and the same observation he makes on the passage our author has produced as parallel (Rom. 2:14), but in order to bring infants to this restrictive and qualifying character for baptism, it is said, they are made disciples with their parents, when they become so, as parts of themselves: and why may they not be said to be baptized with them, when they are baptized, as parts of themselves, and so have no need of baptism? No doubt, if Christ had continued the use of circumcision under the New-Testament, and had bid his apostles to go and disciple the nations, circumcising them, they would have needed no direction as to infants, as is suggested; and that for this plain reason, because there had been a previous express command for the circumcision of them; but there is no such command to baptize infants previous to the commission, and therefore could not be understood in like manner. But it seems the known custom of the Jews to baptize the children of proselytes with them, was a plain and sufficient direction as to the subjects of baptism, and is the reason why no express mention is made of them in the commission: But it does not appear there was any such custom among the Jews, when the commission

was given; had it been so early, as is pretended, even in the times of Jacob, it is strange there should be no hint of it in the Old Testament: nor in the apocryphal writings; nor in the writings of the New Testament; nor in Josephus; nor in Philo the Jew; nor in the Jewish Misnah; only in the Talmud; which was not composed till five hundred years after Christ; and this custom is at first reported by a single Rabbi, and at the same time denied by another of equal credit and authority: and admitting that this was a custom that then obtained, since it was not of divine institution, but of human invention, had our Lord thought fit (which is not reasonable to suppose) to take it into his New Testament ordinance of baptism; yet it would have been necessary to have made express mention of it, as his will that it should be observed, in order to remove the scruple that might arise from its being a mere Jewish custom and tradition. But to proceed: though this writer may be able to find in the schools within his knowledge, such ignorant disciples and learners, that have learned nothing at all; CHRIST has none such in his school: Christ says, none can be a disciple of his, but who has learned to deny himself, take up his cross, and follow him (Luke 14:26, 27, 33), and forsake all for him; and this man says, they may be called disciples, that have learned nothing, and be enrolled among the disciples of Christ, who are incapable of outward teaching: but who are we to believe, Christ, or this man? He suggests, that it would be impracticable to put the commission in execution, if none but true disciples and believers are to be baptized, since the heart cannot be inspected, and man may be deceived; and observes, that the apostles baptized immediately upon profession, and waited not for the fruits of it, and some of which are not true disciples, but hypocrites: this is what he often harps upon; and to which I answer, the apostles had no doubt a greater spirit of discerning, and so could observe the signs of true faith and discipleship in men, without long waiting; but they never baptized any whom they did not judge to be true disciples and believers, and who professed themselves to be such: and though they were in some few instances mistaken; this might be suffered, that ministers and churches might not be discouraged, when such instances should appear in following times; and this is satisfaction enough in this point, when men keep as close as they

can to the divine rule, and make the best judgment of persons they are able; and when, in a judgment of charity, they are thought to be true disciples of Christ, baptize them; in which they do their duty, though it may fall out otherwise; and in which they are to be justified by the word of God; which they could not, were they to administer the ordinance to such who have no appearance of the grace of God, and the truth of it in them. The text in Acts 15:10 is far from proving infants disciples; they are not designed in that place, nor included in the character; for though no doubt the Judaizing preachers were for having the Gentiles, and their infants too, circumcised; yet it was not circumcision, the thing itself, that is meant by the intolerable yoke, attempted to be put upon the necks of the disciples; for that was what the Jewish fathers and their children were able to bear, and had borne in ages past; but it was the doctrine of the necessity of that, and other rites of Moses to salvation; and which could not be imposed upon infants, but upon adult persons only. Next we proceed to

VI. The passages concerning the baptism of whole households, as an explanation of the commission, and of the apostles understanding it: Now since Infant-baptism, as we have seen, cannot be established by Abraham's covenant, nor by circumcision, nor by any command of Christ, nor by his commission, nor by any instances of infants baptized in the times of John the Baptist, or of Christ; if any instances of infants baptized by the apostles are proposed, they should be clear and plain: Since there is no express precept, which might justly be demanded; if any precedent is produced, it ought to be quite unexceptionable; if it is expected, such a practice should be given into by thinking people. Three families or households we read of, that were baptized, and these are the precedents proposed; yet no proof is made of any one infant in these families, or of the baptism of any in them; which should be done, if the former could be proved: but instead of this, the advocates for this practice are drove to this poor and miserable shift, to put us on proving the negative, that there were no infants in them. Our author thinks it utterly incredible, that in three such families there should be no infants, when, in so large a country as Egypt, there was not a family without a child (Ex. 12:30); and is so weak as to believe, or however hopes to find readers weak enough to believe,

that all the first-born of the Egyptians that were slain were infants; whereas there might be many of them twenty, thirty, or forty years of age; so that there might be hundreds and thousands of families in Egypt that had not an infant in them, and yet not an house in which there was not a dead person.

But let us attend to these particular families: as for Lydia and her household, so far as a negative in such a care as this is capable of being proved; this is certain, that no mention is made of any infants in her family; it is certain, that there were brethren in her house, who were capable of being comforted by the apostles, and were; for it is expressly said, that they entered into the house of Lydia, and comforted the brethren; which is a proof of what, he says, cannot be proved, that they law the brethren at her house; and nothing appears to the contrary, but that they were of her household; and if there were any other besides them, that were baptized by the apostles, it lies upon those that will affirm it, to prove it; without which, this instance cannot be in favour of Infant- baptism. As for the Jailor's family, it is owned by our author, that there were some adult persons in it, who believed, and were baptized at the same time with the Jailor; but he asks, how does this argue that there were no others baptized in it, who were in the infantile state? It lies upon him to prove it, if there were: The word of God was spoken to all that were in his house, and all his house believed in God, and rejoiced in the conversation of the apostles, who must be all of them adult persons; and if he can find persons in his house, besides those all that were in it, I will see him down for a cunning man. Who those expositors are, that reader the words, believing in God, he rejoiced all his house aver, I know not, any more than I understand the nonsense of it. Erasmus and Vatablus join the phrase with all his house, with believing, as we do, and Pricaeus makes it parallel with Acts 18:8 but however, this writer has found a text to prove, that the children of believers are in their infancy accounted believers, and numbered with them, it is in Acts 2:44 if he can find any wise-acres that will give credit to him. As to the household of Stephanas, he says, that it seems probable that it was large and numerous, which renders it more likely that there were some infants in it: how large and numerous it was, does not appear; but be those of it more or fewer, it is a clear case they were adult persons, that we have

any account of; since they addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints: and now upon what a tottering foundation does Infant-baptism stand, having no precept from God for it, nor any one single precedent for it in the word of God? Come we now,

VII. To the last text in the controversy, Romans 11:17, 24 and which is the decisive one, and yet purely allegorical; when it is an axiom with divines, that symbolical or allegorical divinity is not argumentative: there is nothing, says Dr. Owen,[27] "so sottish, or foolish, or contradictious in and to itself, as may not be countenanced from teaching parables to be instructive, and proving in every parcel, or expression, that attends them;" of this we have an instance in our author, about engrafting buds with the cyon, and of breaking off and grafting in branches with their buds, which he applies to parents and their children; though the apostle has not a word about it: and indeed he is speaking of an engrafture, not according, but contrary to nature; not only of an engrafture of an olive-tree, which is never done, but of engrafting a wild cyon into a good stock; whereas the usual way is to engraft a good cyon into a wild stock. The general scope and design of the allegory is to be attended to which is to shew the rejection of the unbelieving Jews from, and the reception of the believing Gentiles into the gospel-church; for though God did not call away the people among the Jews whom he foreknew; or the remnant according to the election of grace, of which the apostle was one; yet there was a calling-away of that people as a body politic and ecclesiastic, which now continues, and will till the fullness of the Gentiles are brought in; and then there will be a general conversion of the Jews, of which the conversion of some of them in the times of Christ and his apostles were the root, first-fruits, pledge, and earnest; and which led on the apostle to this allegorical discourse about the olive-tree; which I understand of the gospel church-state, in distinction from the Jewish church-state, now dissolved. This writer will not allow, that the Jewish church, as to its essential constitution, is abolished, only as to its outward form of administration: but God has wrote a Loammi upon that people, both as a body politic and ecclesiastic (Hosea 1:9); he has unchurched them; he has broke his covenant with them, and their union with each other in their church state, signified by his breaking his two staffs, beauty and bands (Zech.

11:10, 14); and if this is not the care, the people of the Jews are now the true church of God, notwithstanding their rejection of the Messiah; and if the Gentiles are incorporated into that church, the gospel-church is, and must be national, as that was, and the same with it; whereas it differs from it, both as to matter and them, consisting of persons gathered out of the world, and enjoying different ordinances, the former being utterly abolished. Our author objects to my interpretation of the good olive-tree being the gospel church state, from the unbelieving Jews being said to be broken-off, and the olive-tree called their own olive-tree, and they the natural branches: to which I answer, that the breaking of them off, verse 17 is the same with the carting away of them, verse 15 and the allegory is not to be stretched beyond its scope. The Jewish church being dissolved, the unbelieving Jews lay like broken, withered, scattered branches, and so continued, and were not admitted into the gospel church state, which is all the apostle means: if I have used too soft a term, to say they were left out of the gospel-church, since severity is expressed, I may be allowed to use one more harsh, and severe; as that they were cast away and rejected, they were cut off from all right, and excluded from admission into the gospel church, and not suffered to partake of the ordinances of it: and as to the gospel church being called their own olive-tree, that is, the converted Jews in the latter day, of whom the apostle speaks; with great propriety may it be called their own, not only because of their right of admission to it, being converted, but because the first gospel-church was set up in Jerusalem, was gathered out from among the Jews, and consisted of some of their nation, which were the first-fruits of those converted ones; and so in other places, the first gospel churches consisted of Jews, into which, and not into the national church of the Jews, were the Gentiles engrafted, and became fellow-heirs with them, and of the same body, partaking of gospel-ordinances and privileges: and the natural branches are not the natural branches of the olive-tree, but the natural branches or natural seed of Abraham, or of the Jewish people, who in the latter day will be converted, and brought into the gospel-church, as some of them were in the beginning of it. This sense being established, it is a clear and plain case, that nothing from hence can be

concluded in favour of Infant-baptism; of which there is not the least hint, nor any manner of reference to it.

This chapter, you will remember, Sir, is concluded with proofs of women's right to the ordinance of the Lord's supper: and which are such, as cannot be produced, and supported, to prove the right of infants to baptism. It is granted by our author, that my arguments are in the main conclusive, and he "must be a wrangler that will dispute them;" and yet he disputes them himself, and so proves himself a wrangler, as indeed he is nothing else throughout the whole of his performance. However, he is confident, there are as good proofs of the baptism of infants; as, from their being accounted believers and disciples (Matthew 8:6; Acts 2:44; 15:10); from their being church-members (Luke 18:16; 1 Cor. 7:14; Eph. 5:15, 26); from the probability of some infants baptized in the whole households mentioned; all which we have seen are weak, foolish, impertinent, and inconclusive. This author does wonderful feats in his own conceit, in his knight errantry way; he proves this, and confutes that, and baffles the other; and though he brings the same arguments, that have been used already; as he owns, and I may add, baffled too already, to use his own language; yet he has added fume new illustration and enforcement to them, and such as have not occurred to him in any author he has seen; so that he would have his reader believe, he is some extraordinary man, and has performed wonderful well; and in this vainglorious shew, I leave him to the ridicule and contempt of men of modesty and good sense, as he justly deserves, and proceed to The sixth and last chapter of my treatise, which is concerning the mode of administering the ordinance of baptism, whether by immersion, or sprinkling; and here, Sir, I observe,

1. That our author represents the controversy about this as one of the most trifling controversies that ever was managed: but if it is so trifling a matter, whether baptism is administered by immersion or sprinkling, why do he and his party write with so much heat and vehemence, as well as with so much scorn and contempt against the former, and so heavily load with calumnies those that defend it, and charge them with the breach of the sixth and seventh commands, as it has been often done? But if it is so indifferent and trifling a matter with this writer, it is not so with us, who think it to be an affair of great importance, in

what manner an ordinance is to be administered; and who judge it essential to baptism, that it be performed by immersion, without which it cannot be baptism; nor the end of the ordinance answered, which is to represent the burial of Christ; and which cannot be done unless the person baptized is covered in water.

2. It is allowed that the word βαπτίζω, with the lexicons and critics, signifies to dip; but it is also observed, that they render it to wash: which is not denied, since dipping necessarily includes washing; whatever is dipped, is washed, and therefore in a consequential sense it signifies washing, when its primary sense is dipping. Our author does not attempt to prove, that the lexicons and critics ever say it signifies to pour or sprinkle; which ought to be done, if any thing is done to purpose: indeed he says, with classical writers, it has the signification of persuasion, or sprinkling; but does not produce one instance of it. He charges me with partiality in concealing part of what Mr. Leigh says in his *Critica Sacra*; which I am not conscious of, since my edition, which indeed is one of the former, has not a syllable of what is quoted from him; and even that is more for us than against us. Hence with great impertinence are those passages of scripture produced (Mark 7:3, 4; Luke 11:30; Heb. 9:10), which are supposed to have the signification of washing; since these do not at all militate against the sense of dipping, seeing dipping is washing; and to as vain a purpose are those scriptures referred to (Eph. 5:26; Titus 3:5; 1 Cor. 6:11; 2 Pet. 1:9; Acts 22:16), which call baptism a washing of water, and the washing of regeneration, etc. even supposing they are to be understood of baptism; which, at least in several of them, is doubtful; since nobody denies, that a person baptized, may be said to be washed, he being dipped in water.

3. It is affirmed that we do not read of one instance of any person who repaired to a river, or conflux of water, purely on the design of being baptized therein. But certain it is, that John repaired to such places for the convenient administration of that ordinance; and many repaired to him at those places, purely on a design of being baptized by him in them; and particularly it is said of Christ, then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him (Matthew 3:13); and I hope it will be allowed, that he repaired to Jordan, on a pure design of being

baptized in it; and though it was in a wilderness where John was, yet such an one in which were many villages, full of inhabitants, as our author might have learned from Dr. Lightfoot;[28] where John might have had the convenience of vessels for bringing water, had the ordinance been performed by him in any other way, than by immersion.

4. The use of the words, baptize and baptism, in scripture, comes next under consideration; and,

(1.) the word is used in Acts 1:5 of the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit to the apostles on the day of Pentecost, which is called a being baptized with the holy Ghost; and the house in which the apostles were, being filled with it, had in it a resemblance to baptism by immersion; and hence the use of the phrase. The main objection our author makes to this, is, that the disciples were in the house before it was filled with the holy Ghost; whereas it should have been first filled, and then they enter into it, to carry any resemblance in it to immersion: but it matters not, whether the house was filled before or after they entered, inasmuch as it was filled when they were in, whereby they were encompassed and covered with it; which is sufficient to support the allusion to baptism, performed by immersion; or covering the person in water: it is represented as dissonant from common sense, to say, Ye shall be poured with the holy Ghost? and is it not as dissonant from common sense to say, Ye shall be poured with the Holy Ghost?

(2.) The sufferings of Christ are called a baptism (Mark 10:38; Luke 12:50); and a very apt word is used to express the abundance of them, as that signifies an immersion into water; and though the lesser sufferings of men, and God's judgments on them, may be expressed by the pouring out of his wrath, and the vials of it on them; yet since the holy Ghost has thought fit not to make use of such a phrase, but a very peculiar word to express the greater sufferings of Christ, this the more confirms the sense of the word contended for. The phrase in Psalm 22:14. I am poured out like water, doth not express the sufferings of Christ, but the effect of them, the faintness of his spirits under them. The passages in Psalm 69:1, 2 which represent him as overwhelmed with his sufferings, as in water, do most clearly illustrate the use of the word baptism in reference to them, and strongly support the allusion to it, as performed by immersion, which this writer

has not been able to let aside.

(3.) Mention is made in Mark 7:4 of the Jews washing, or baptizing themselves, when they come from market, before they eat; and of the washing, or baptizing of their cups, pots, brazen vessels, tables or beds; all which was done by immersion. This writer says, I am contradicted by the best masters of the Jewish learning, when I say, that the Jews upon touching common people, or their clothes, at market, or in any court of judicature, were obliged by the tradition of the elders to immerse themselves in water, and did. To which I reply, that Vatablus and Drusius, who were great masters of Jewish learning, affirm, that according to the tradition of the elders, the Jews washed or immersed the whole body before they ate, when they came from market; to whom may be added the learned Grotius, who interprets the words the same way; and which seems most reasonable, since washing before eating, verse 4 is distinguished from the washing of hands, verse 3. But not to rest it here; Maimonides,[29] that great matter of Jewish learning, assures us, that “if the Pharisees touched but the garments of the common people, they were defiled, all one as if they had touched a profluvius person, and needed immersion,” and were obliged to it: and though Dr. Lightfoot, who was a great man in this kind of learning, yet not always to be depended upon, is of opinion, that the plunging of the whole body is not here understood; yet he thinks, that plunging or immersion of the hands in water, is meant, done by the Jews being ignorant and uncertain what uncleanness they came near unto in the market; and observes, the Jews used the washing of the hands, and the plunging of the hands; and that the word wash in the Evangelist, seems to answer to the former, and baptize to the latter; and Pococke[30] himself, whom this writer refers to, confesses the same, and says, that the Hebrew word *to* which βαπτίζεθαι answers in Greek, signifies a further degree of purification, than or χερνιπτειν (the words used for washing of hands) though not so as necessarily to imply an immersion of the whole body; since the greatest and most notorious uncleanness of the hands reached but to the wrist, and was cleansed by immersing or dipping up to it; and though he thinks the Greek word used in the text does not only and necessarily signify immersion, which yet he grants, specially agrees to it, as he thinks appears

from Luke 11:38. To this may be opposed what the great Scaliger[31] says; “the more superstitious part of the Jews, not only dipped the feet but the whole body, hence they were called Hemerobaptists, who every day before they sat down to food, dipped the body; wherefore the Pharisee, who had invited Jesus to dine with him, wondered he sat down to meat before he had washed his whole body, Luke 11,” and after all, be it which it will, whether the immersion of the whole body, or only of the hands and feet, that is meant in these passages; since the washing of either was by immersion, as owned, it is sufficient to support the primary sense of the word contended for: and so all other things, after mentioned, according to the tradition of the elders, of which only the text speaks, and not of the law of God, were washed by immersion; particularly brazen vessels; concerning which the tradition is,[32] “such as they use for hot things, as cauldrons and kettles, they heat them with hot water, and scour them, and dip them, and they are fit to be used.” This writer says, I am strangely besides my Text, when I add, that “even beds, pillows, and bolsters, when they were unclean in a ceremonial sense, were to be washed by immersion, or dipping them into water;” but I am able to produce chapter and verse for what I affirm, from the traditions of the Jews, which are the only things spoken of in the text, and upon which the proof depends: for beds, their canons run thus; “a bed that is wholly defiled, if a man dips it part by part, it is pure.”[33] Again, if he dips the bed in it, (a pool of water) though its feet are plunged into the thick clay, (at the bottom of the pool) it is clean.”[34] As for pillows and bolsters, thus they say; “a pillow or a bolster of skin, when a man lifts up the mouth of them out of the water, the water which is in them will be drawn; what shall we do? he must dip them, and lift them up by their fringes.”[35] Thus, according to the traditions of the elders, our Lord is speaking of, these several things mentioned were washed by immersion; which abundantly confirms the primary sense of the word used.

(4.) The passage of the Israelites through the Red-sea, and under a cloud, is represented as a baptism, 1 Corinthians 10:1, 2 and very aptly, as performed by immersion; since the waters stood up on both sides of them, and a cloud covered them; which very fitly represented persons immersed and covered with

water in baptism: but what our author thinks will spoil this fine fancy, and some others, as he calls them, is, that one observation of Moses often repeated; that the children of Israel went on dry ground through the midst of the sea. To which I reply, that we are not under any necessity of owning that the cloud under which the Israelites were, let down any rain: it is indeed the sentiment of a Paedobaptist, I have referred to, and therefore am not affected with this observation; besides, it should be considered, that this equally, at least, spoils the fine fancy of the rain from the cloud bearing a much greater resemblance to sprinkling or affusion, as is asserted by the writer of the dialogue; and our author says, there was a true and proper ablution with water from the cloud, in which the Israelites were baptized, and concludes that they received baptism by sprinkling or affusion; how then could they walk on dry ground?

(5.) The last text mentioned is Hebrews 9:10 which speaks of diverse washings or baptisms of the Jews, or different dippings, as it may be rendered without any impropriety, as our author asserts; though not to be understood of different sorts of dipping, as he foolishly objects to us; nor of different sorts of washing, some by sprinkling, some by affusion, others by bathing or dipping, as he would have it; but the Jewish washings or baptisms are so called, because of the different persons, or things washed or dipped, as Grotius on the place says; there was one washing of the Priests, another of the Levites, and another of the Israelites, when they had contracted any impurity; and which was done by immersion; nor do any of the instances this writer has produced disprove it. Not Exodus 29:4 thou shalt wash them with water; but whether by immersion or affusion he knows not. The Jews interpret it of immersion; the Targum of Jonathan is, “thou shalt dip them in forty measures of living water:” nor Exodus 30:19 which mentions the washing of the priest’s hands and feet at the brazen laver of the tabernacle; the manner of which our author describes from Dr. Lightfoot, out of the Rabbins; but had he transcribed the whole, it would have appeared, that not only washing the hands and feet, but bathing of their whole body, were necessary to the performance of their service; for it follows, “and none might enter into the court to do the service there, till he hath bathed; yea, though he were

clean, he must bathe his body in cold water before he enter.” And to this agrees a canon of theirs;[36] “no man enters into the court for service, though clean, till he has dipped himself; the high-priest dips himself five times on the day of atonement.” And the Priests and Levites, before they performed any part of the daily service, dipped themselves: nor 2 Chronicles 4:6 which says, the molten sea in Solomon’s temple was for the priests to wash in; where they washed not only their hands and their feet, but their whole bodies, as Dr. Lightfoot says;[37] “and for the bathing of which; they went down into the vessel itself; and to which agrees the Jerusalem Talmud,[38] which says, “the molten sea was a dipping-place for the priests:” Nor Numbers 8:6, 7 which, had the passage been wholly transcribed, it would appear, that not only the water of purifying was sprinkled on the Levites, but their bodies were bathed; for it allows: “and let them shave all their flesh, and wash their clothes, and so “make themselves clean;” that is, by bathing their whole bodies, which, as the Targum on the place says, was done in forty measures of water. Sprinkling the water of purification was a ceremony preparatory to the bathing, but was itself no part of it; and the same is to be observed of the purification by the ashes of an heifer, on the third and seventh days, Numbers 19:19 which was only preparatory to the great purification by bathing the body, and washing the clothes on the seventh day, which was the closing and finishing part of the service; for that it was the unclean person, and not the priest, that was to wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, verse 19 is clear; since it is a distinct law, or statute, from that in verse 21 which enjoins the priest to wash his clothes, but not to bathe himself in water; and indeed, the contrary sense is not only absurd, and interrupts and confounds the sense of the words; but, as Dr. Gale also observes, it cannot be reasonably imagined that the priest, by barely purifying the unclean, should need so much greater a washing and purification than the unclean himself; this sprinkling of the ashes of the heifer, therefore, was not part of the Jewish washings, or baptisms, or any exemplification of them; so that from the whole, I see no reason to depart from my conclusion, that “the words baptize and baptism, in all the places mentioned, do from their signification make dipping or plunging the necessary mode of administering the

ordinance of baptism." I proceed now,

6. To vindicate those passages of scripture, which necessarily prove the mode of baptism by immersion. And, The first passage, is in Matthew 3:6 and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. We argue from hence, not merely from these persons being baptized, to their being dipped; though this is an argument that cannot be answered, seeing those that are baptized, are necessarily dipped; for the word baptize signifies always to dip, or to wash by dipping, and never to pour or sprinkle; but the argument is frill more forcible from these persons being baptized in the river Jordan: for either the persons said to be baptized were in the river, or they were not; if they were not in the river, they could not be baptized in it; if they were in it, they went in it in order to be baptized by immersion; since no other end could be proposed, agreeable to the common sense of mankind: to say they went into it to have a little water sprinkled or poured on them, which could have been done without it, is ridiculous, and an imposition on common sense; wherefore this necessarily proves the mode of baptizing by immersion; since no other mode is compatible with this circumstance. The instances of the blind man's washing in Siloam, and the layers of the temple being to wash in, as disproving the necessity of immersion, I say, are impertinent; since the word baptize is used in neither of them; and besides, there is nothing appears to the contrary, that the

blind man dipped himself in Siloam, as Naaman the Syrian did in Jordan; and the things that were washed in the layers, were dipped there, since they held a quantity of water sufficient for that purpose. The author of the dialogue asks, "Do not we commonly wash our face and hands in a basin of water without dipping in it?" But common practice proves the contrary; men commonly dip their hands into a basin, when they wash either hands or face; the instance of Elisha pouring water on the hands of Elijah, doth not prove it was common to wash hands by pouring water on them; since this is not said to be done to wash his hands with; and some interpreters have thought that washing of hands is not intended, but some miracle which followed the action of pouring water, which gave Elisha a character, and by which he is described.

The second passage, is John 3:23. John was baptizing in Enon near Salim, because there was

much water there. Here is not the least hint of John's choosing of this place, and being here, for any other reason, but for baptizing; not for drink for men and cattle, as suggested; besides, why did he not fix upon a place where the people could be provided with food for themselves, and provender for their cattle? Why for drink only? This is a wild fancy, a vain conjecture. The reason of the choice is plain, it was for the convenience of baptizing, and that because there was much water, suitable to the manner of baptizing used by John; and if this reason given agrees with no other mode of baptizing, but by immersion, as it does not, since sprinkling or pouring requires not much water; it follows, that this necessarily proves the mode of baptism by immersion.

The third text is Matthew 3:16. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water. The author of the dialogue suggested, that the Greek preposition *απο*, always signifies from, never out of: our author is obliged to own, that it may sometimes admit to be rendered out of: a great condescension to the learned translators of our Bible! Well, if Jesus came up out of the water, he must have been in it, where it is certain he was baptized; and the evangelist Mark says, he was baptized into Jordan; not into the banks of Jordan; but into the waters of Jordan; now seeing such an expression as this will not suit with any other mode of baptism but immersion, and it cannot be said with any propriety, that Christ was sprinkled into Jordan, or poured into Jordan, but with great propriety may be said to be dipped or plunged into Jordan; it follows, that this necessarily proves the mode of baptism as administered to our Lord, to be by immersion.

The fourth passage, is concerning Philip's baptizing the Eunuch in Acts 8:38, 39. they went down both into the water, and he baptized him; and when they were come up out of the water, etc. The dialogue writer would have it, that this proves no more than that they went down to the water, and came from it: but that this was not the case, I have observed, that previous to this, they are said to came to a certain water, to the water-side; and therefore after this, it cannot be understood of any thing else, but of their going into it; and so, consequently, the other phrase, of their coming out of it. Here our author has got a new fancy in his head; that turning to a certain water is not coming to the water-side, or to the water itself, but to the sight

of it; which sense he does not pretend to confirm by any parallel place, either in sacred or profane writings, and is very absurd, improper and impertinent; since a person may come to the sight of a water, when he is at a great distance from it, and cannot be said with any propriety to be come so it: what he thinks will add strength to this fancy, and destroy the observation I made, is, that after this, the chariot is still going on, and several questions and answers passed before it was bid to stand still: all which is easily accounted for, supposing them to be come to the water itself; since the road they were now in, might be by the water-side, and so they traveled along by it, while the questions and answers passed, till they came to a proper and convenient place for baptism, at which they alighted; besides, why should the sight of a certain water, or confluence of water, put the Eunuch in mind of baptism, if it was not performed by immersion, of the mode of which he was doubtless acquainted? It is highly probable, that this treasurer was provided both with wine and water for his journey, which, mixed, was the usual drink of those countries; and a bottle of his own water would have done for sprinkling, or pouring, had either of them been the mode of baptism used; nor would there have been any occasion for going out of the chariot and to the water, and much less into it, which the text is express for; and seeing these circumstances of going down into the water, and coming up out of it, at the administration of baptism, agree with no other mode than that of immersion, not with sprinkling, nor pouring water, it necessarily proves immersion to be the mode of baptism.

The last text is Romans 6:4 we are buried with him by baptism into death; where baptism is called a burial, a burial with Christ, and a resemblance of his; which only can be made by immersion: but our author says, if it is designed to represent it, there is no necessity it should be a resemblance of it; but how it can represent it without a resemblance of it, is not easy to say: he suggests, that though the Lord's supper represents the death of Christ, it is no resemblance of it. Strange! that the breaking of the bread should not be a resemblance of the body of Christ broken, and the pouring out of the wine not a resemblance of his blood shed. Baptism by immersion, according to our author, is no resemblance of the burial of Christ; since his body was laid in a sepulcher cut out of a rock

on high, and not put under ground, or covered with earth: this arises from a mistaken notion of the Jewish way of burial, even in their sepulchres, hewed out of rocks; for in every sepulcher of this kind, according to the nature of the rock, there were eight graves dug, some say thirteen, and which were dug seven cubits deep:[39] in one of these graves, within the sepulcher, lay the body of our Lord. So that it had a double burial, as it were, one in the sepulcher, and another in one of the graves in it: besides, how otherwise could our Lord be said to be three days and nights in the heart of the earth? (Matthew 12:40). Again, our author says, "there is no more resemblance of a common burial in baptism by immersion, than by sprinkling, or pouring on water; since a corpse above ground may be properly said to be buried by having a sufficient quantity of earth cast upon it."

True; but then a corpse can never be said to be buried, that has a little dust or earth sprinkled or poured on its face; from whence it is evident, that sprinkling or pouring cannot bear any resemblance of a common burial. In short, seeing no other mode but immersion, not sprinkling, nor pouring, has any resemblance of a burial, this passage necessarily proves the mode of baptism by immersion: and yet, after all, this writer inclines to that opinion, that both modes were used in scripture-times; though it appears by all accounts that the manner was uniform, one and the same word being always used in the relation of it; and yet he wrangles at every instance of immersion, and will not allow of one; what must be said of such a man! that he must be let down for a mere wrangler; a wrangler against light and conscience; a wrangler against his own opinion and sentiment; and what a worthless writer must this be! I go on,

7. To consider the instances, which, it is said, shew it improbable that the ordinance of baptism was performed by dipping. The first is the baptism of the three thousand, Acts 2:41 which, to be done by immersion, is represented as improbable; from the shortness of the time, and the want of convenience on a sudden, for the baptizing of such a multitude. As to the time, I shall not dispute it with our author, whether Peter's sermon was at the beginning of the third hour, or nine o'clock, or at the close of it, and about noon: I am willing to allow it might be noon before the baptism of these persons came on; nay, I

will grant him an hour longer if he pleases, and yet there was time enough between that and night for the twelve apostles, and seventy disciples, in all fourscore and two, to baptize by immersion three times three thousand persons. I pass over his foolish remarks on a person's being ready for baptism, as I have done many others of the same stupid kind, as deserving no notice, nor answer: As to the want of convenience for the baptizing such a number, I have observed the great number of baths in private houses in Jerusalem, the several pools in it, and the many conveniences in the temple: this writer thinks, the mention of the last is a piece of weakness in me, to imagine that the Jewish priests, in whose hands they were, the mortal enemies of Christ, should be on a sudden so good-natured as to grant the use of their baths for such a purpose: but how came they to allow the Christians the use of their temple, where they met daily? And besides, it is expressly said, they had favour with all the people (Acts 2:46, 47).

The second instance, is the baptism of Paul (Acts 9:18); here only the narrative is directed to, as representing his baptism to be in the house of Judas: but there is nothing in the account that necessarily concludes it was done in the house, but rather the contrary; since he arose from the place where he was, in order to be baptized: and supposing it was done in the house, it is not at all improbable that there was a bath in this house, where it might be performed; since it was the house of a Jew, with whom it was usual to have baths to wash their whole bodies in, on certain occasions: So that there is no improbability of Paul's baptism being by immersion; besides, he was not only bid to arise and be baptized, which would found very oddly, be sprinkled or poured (Acts 22:16); but says himself, that he was buried by baptism (Rom. 6:4).

The third instance, is the baptism of Cornelius and his household (Acts 10:47). The sense of the words given, "can any man forbid the use of his river, or bath, or what convenience he might have, for baptizing;" is objected to, as not being the apostle's words, but a strained sense of them: the same objection may be made to this writer's sense, that the phrase imports the forbidding water to be brought; since no such thing is expressed, or hinted at: the principal thing, no doubt, designed by the apostle, is, that no one could, or at least ought, to object to the baptism of those who had

so manifestly received the holy Ghost: but what is there in all this account, that renders their baptism by immersion improbable, for which it is produced?

The fourth instance is the baptism of the Jailor and his household; (Acts 16:33) in the relation of which, there is nothing that makes it probable, much less certain, that it was performed by sprinkling or pouring water on them; nor any thing that makes it improbable that it was done by immersion: according to the account given, it seems to be a clear case, that the Jailor, upon his conversion, took the apostles out of prison into his own house, where they preached to him and his family, verse 32, and that after this, they went out of his house, and were baptized; very probably in the river without the city, where the oratory was, verse 13, for it is certain, that after the baptism of him and his household, he brought the apostles into his house, and set meat before them (Acts 16:33, 34), nor is it any unreasonable and incredible thing, that he with his whole family should leave the prison and prisoners, who no doubt had servants that he could trust, or otherwise he must have been always little better than a prisoner himself: and whether the earthquake reached any farther than the prison, to alarm others, is not certain, nor any great matter of moment in this controversy to be determined; and the circumstances of the whole relation shew it more likely, that the Jailor and his family were baptized without the prison, than in it, and rather in the river without the city, than with the water out of the vessel, with which the Jailor had washed the apostle's stripes: upon the whole, these instances produced fail of shewing the improbability of the mode of baptism by immersion; which must appear clear and manifest to every attentive reader, notwithstanding all that has been opposed unto it.

There remains nothing but what has been already attended to, or worthy of regard; but the untruth he charges me with, in saying that "the dialogue writer only attempts to mention allusive expressions in favour of sprinkling;" our author will be ashamed of himself, and his abusive language, when he looks into the dialogue again; since the writer of that never mentions the words of the institution, for any such purpose, and much less argues from them; nor does he ever shew that the word baptize is in the sacred pages applied to sprinkling, or that it so signifies; nor does he any where argue from the good appearance

there is of evidence, that in the apostles times, the mode of sprinkling was used; he never attempts to prove that the word βαπτίζω, signifies to sprinkle, or is so used; nor mentions any one instance of sprinkling in baptism; what he contends for is, that the signification of the word, and the scripture instances of baptism, do not make dipping the necessary mode of administering that ordinance; and what he mentions in favour of sprinkling, are only resemblances, and allusive expressions.

There, Sir, are the remarks I made in reading Mr. Clark's book; which I have caused to be transcribed, and here send you for the use of yourself and friends, either in a private or in a public way, as you may judge necessary and proper.

I am with all due respects, Yours, etc. JOHN GILL  
LONDON, July 26, 1753.

### **5 Some Strictures On Mr. Bostwick's Fair And Rational Vindication Of The Right Of Infants To The Ordinance Of Baptism**

Along with Mr. Clark's Defense of the divine Right of Infant-baptism, to which what is written above is a Reply, there has been imported from America a treatise called, A fair and rational Vindication of the Right of Infants to the Ordinance of Baptism; being the substance of several discourses from Acts 2:39, by David Bostwick, A.M. late minister of the Presbyterian church in the city of New York, which has been reprinted and published here; and as it comes in company with the former, it is but a piece of civility to take some notice of it, and make some few strictures (severe criticisms, ed.) upon it, though there is nothing in it but what is answered in the above Reply; to which I shall greatly refer the reader. There is scarce a single thought through the whole of it, that I can discern, is new; nothing but crumbe repetita, old stale reasonings and arguments, which have been answered over and over; and yet this, I understand, has been cried up as an unanswerable performance; which I do not wonder at, that any thing that has but an appearance of reasoning, candor, and ingenuity, as this will be allowed to have, should be so reckoned by those of that party; when the most miserable pamphlet that comes out on that side of the question, has the same epithet bellowed upon it. And,

First, This Gentleman has mistook the sense of his text, on which he grounds his discourse concerning the Right of infants to baptism (Acts 2:39), for the promise is unto you, and to your children; and to all that are afar off; even as many as the Lord our God shall call; by which promise, he says, p. 14, 15, must be understood," the covenant-promise made to Abraham, which gave his "infant-children a right to the ordinance of circumcision;" when there is not the least mention made of Abraham, nor of any covenant-promise made to him in it; nor was ever any covenant-promise made to him, giving his infant-children a right to the ordinance of circumcision, but the covenant of circumcision; and that can never be meant here by the promise; since this is said to be to all that are afar off; by whom, according to this Gentleman, Gentiles are meant; to whom the covenant of circumcision belonged not; nor did it give to them any right to the ordinance of circumcision, except they became proselytes to the Jewish religion: besides, be the promise here what it may, it is observed, not as giving any right or claim to any ordinance whatever; but as an encouraging motive to persons in distress under a sense of sin, to repent of their sin, and declare their repentance, and yield a voluntary subjection to the ordinance of baptism; when they might hope that remission of sin would be applied to them, and they should receive a larger measure of the grace of the Spirit; and therefore can only be understood of adult persons; and the promise is no other than the promise of life and salvation by Christ, and of remission of sins by his blood, and of an increase of grace from his Spirit: and whereas the persons addressed had imprecated the blood of Christ, they had shed, upon their posterity, as well as on themselves, which greatly distressed them; they are told, for their relief, that the same promise would be made good to their posterity also, provided they did as they were directed to do; and to all their brethren the Jews, in distant parts; and even to the Gentiles, sometimes described as afar off, of the same character with themselves, repenting and submitting to baptism; yea, to all, in all ages and places, whom God should now, or hereafter call by his grace; see my Reply to Mr. Clark, p. 50, 51.[1] This text is so far from being an unanswerable argument for the right of infants to baptism, as it is said to be,

that there is not the least mention of Infant-baptism in it; nor any hint of it; nor any thing from whence it can be concluded. The baptism encouraged to by it is only of adult persons convinced of sin, and who repented of it. The passage in Acts 3:25, brought for the support of the author's sense of his text, is foreign to his purpose; since it refers not to the covenant of circumcision made with Abraham (Gen. 17), but to the promise of the Messiah of Abraham's seed, and of the blessing of all nations in him (Gen. 22:18), and which was fulfilled in the mission and incarnation of Christ, and in the ministration of his gospel to Jews and Gentiles; which same promise of Christ, of life and salvation by him, is meant in Acts 13:26, 32, 33, and which is also a proof, that the children to whom it belongs, are to be understood, not of infant-children, but of the adult posterity of the Jews; since the apostle says, God hath fulfilled the same to us their children; for surely the apostle Paul must not be reckoned an infant-child.

Secondly, The ground on which the right of infants to baptism is founded by this author is a false one; which is the covenant made with Abraham, that which gave his infant-children a right to circumcision, and is said to be the covenant of grace, the same under which believers now are. This he looks upon to be the grand turning point, on which the issue of the controversy very much depends; that it is the main ground on which the right of infants to baptism is asserted; and he freely confesses, that if this covenant is not the covenant of grace, the main ground of infants right to baptism is taken away, and consequently, that the principal arguments in support of the doctrine are overturned (pp. 18, 19). Now that this ground and foundation is a false and sandy one, and will not bear the weight of this superstructure laid upon it, will appear by observing,

1. That the covenant of grace gives no right to any positive institution; either circumcision or baptism: not to circumcision; the covenant of grace was in being, was made, manifested, and applied to many, from Adam to Abraham, both before and after the flood, who had no right to circumcision, nor knowledge of it; the covenant of grace did not give to Abraham himself a right to circumcision; he was openly interested in it, it was made, manifested, and applied unto him, many

years before circumcision was enjoined him; and when it was, it was not the covenant of grace, but the express command of God, that gave him and his male seed a right to circumcision; I say his male seed, for his female seed, though no doubt many of them were interested in the covenant of grace, yet their covenant-interest gave them no right unto it: as there were also many, at the same time that circumcision was enjoined Abraham and his natural seed, who were interested in the covenant of grace, and yet had no right to circumcision; as Shem, Arphaxad, Lot, and others: and on the other hand, it may easily be observed, that there were many who had a right to circumcision, and on whom it was practiced, who, without any breach of charity, it may be concluded, had no interest in the covenant of grace; not to mention particular persons, as Ishmael, Esau, etc. many of the idolaters and rebels among the Israelites in the wilderness, of those that bowed the knee to Baal in the times of Ahab, and of the worshippers of Jeroboam's calves; those that are called the rulers of Sodom and Gomorrah in the times of Isaiah, and that worshipped the queen and host of heaven in the times of Jeremiah; and those whose characters are given in the prophecy of Malachi, as then living; with the Scribes and Pharisees, who committed the unpardonable sin in the times of Christ; these cannot be thought to be in the covenant of grace.

In short, all were not Israel that were of Israel, and circumcised: it is therefore clear to a demonstration, that interest in the covenant of grace did not give right to circumcision, but the special, particular, and express command of God: nor does it give right to baptism; it gave the Old Testament-saints no right unto it, who were four thousand years without it, and yet in the covenant of grace; and since baptism is enjoined as an ordinance of the New Testament, a person may be in the covenant of grace, and yet not known to be so by himself or others; and while he is in such a state, and in such circumstances, he cannot be thought to have any right to baptism. It is a command of God, that those that repent and believe, be baptized; the covenant of grace provides faith and repentance for those interested in it, and bestows them on them; whereby they are qualified for baptism according to the divine command. But it is not the covenant

of grace, nor these qualifications, that give the right to baptism; but the command of God to persons so qualified, to profess the same, and be baptized: for men may have faith and repentance, yet if they do not make a profession of them, they have no right to baptism, nor a minister any authority to administer it to them. No doubt but the apostle Peter was satisfied that the three thousand pricked in their hearts were truly penitents; yet insisted on the profession of their repentance, as antecedent to baptism; and Philip, I make no question, was satisfied of the Eunuch's being a believer in Christ by the conversation he had with him; yet required a confession of his faith in him, in order to his baptism; for with the mouth confession is to be made unto salvation. Nor even according to our author's sentiment does the covenant of grace give a right to baptism; since, according to him, persons are not in covenant before they are baptized; for he expressly says, pp. 12, 30. that by baptism they enter into the covenant, and are taken into the covenant by baptism; and therefore baptism rather gives them a right to the covenant, than the covenant a right to baptism, according to this Gentleman: so far is it from being true what he elsewhere says (p. 32), that the covenant of grace gave Abraham and his children a right to circumcision under the law; and that this it is that gives parents and children a right to baptism under the gospel.

2. The covenant of circumcision, or the covenant which gave Abraham's infant-children a right to circumcision, is not the covenant of grace; for the covenant of circumcision must be most certainly, in the nature of it, a covenant of works, and not of grace. It will be freely allowed, that the covenant of grace was at certain times made, and made manifest, and applied to Abraham, and he interested in it; and that God was the God of him, and of his spiritual seed; and that the spiritual seed of Abraham, both among Jews and Gentiles, are interested in the same covenant; but not his carnal seed, nor theirs as such: and that Abraham was justified by faith, as believers now are; and that the same gospel was preached to him as now; and that at the same time the covenant of circumcision was given unto him, there was an exhibition of the covenant of grace unto him: the account of both is mixed together; but then the covenant of circumcision, which was a

covenant of peculiarity, and belonged only to him and his natural male seed, was quite a distinct thing from the covenant of grace, since it included some that were not in the covenant of grace, and excluded others that were in it: nor is that the covenant that was confirmed of God in Christ 430 years before the law was; since the covenant of circumcision falls 24 years short of that date, and therefore it refers not to that, but to an exhibition of the covenant of grace to Abraham, about the time of his call out of Chaldea; besides the covenant of circumcision is abolished, but the covenant of grace continues, and ever will; see my reply (pp. 35, 36). Now as this covenant, which gave Abraham's infant- children a right to circumcision, is not the covenant of grace, the main ground on which the right of infants to baptism is asserted, is taken away, and so no foundation left for it; and consequently the principal arguments in support of the doctrine are overturned, as this Gentleman freely confesses; and as everyone should, who is in the same way of thinking and reasoning. If the covenant of circumcision is not the covenant of grace, here of right the controversy should be closed, since this is the turning point on which the issue of it very much depends; for if this be false, all that follows as argued from it, must be so too; for,

Thirdly, If the covenant of circumcision is not the covenant of grace, then circumcision is not the seal of the covenant of grace it is said to be (p. 22). If it was, the covenant of grace must be without such a seal near two thousand years, before the covenant of circumcision was given; and why not then always without one? besides, it must be with a seal and without a seal at one and same time, which is absurd; for there were some interested in the covenant of grace as before observed, on whom circumcision was not enjoined, and so without this seal, when it was enjoined on Abraham and his natural seed, and there were such afterwards; and circumcision also must have been the seal of itself, which is another absurdity. Circumcision was a token and sign, or mark in the flesh, which Abraham's natural posterity were to bear until the coming of the Messiah; but is never called a seal throughout the whole Old Testament; and much less is it any where said to be a seal of the covenant of grace: and indeed what blessing of grace could it

seal, assure of, and confirm, to any of Abraham's natural seed as such, or any other man's natural seed? It is indeed in the New Testament called a seal of the righteousness of the faith which Abraham had, being yet uncircumcised (Rom. 4:11.) but then it was no seal of that, nor of any thing else to others, but to Abraham only; namely, that that righteousness which he had by faith before he was circumcised, would come upon, or be imputed to the uncircumcised Gentiles; and accordingly this mark continued in the flesh of his posterity, until the gospel, publishing justification by the righteousness of faith, was ordered to be preached to the Gentiles.[2] Wherefore,

Fourthly, Seeing circumcision was no seal of the covenant of grace, baptism, which it is pretended was instituted in the room of it, can be no seal of it neither, and so not to be administered as such to the children of professed believers, as is said (p. 25). The text in Colossians 2:11, falls short of proving that baptism is instituted in the room of circumcision; since the apostle is speaking, not of circumcision in the flesh, but in the Spirit; and by which he means not the outward ordinance of baptism, that is distinguished from it,[3] but an inward work of grace upon the heart; spiritual circumcision, called the circumcision of Christ; which to understand as the same, is not to make an unreasonable tautology; it makes none at all, and much less nonsense, as this writer suggests; but beautifully completes the description the apostle gives of spiritual circumcision; first, by the manner of its performance, without hands; then by the matter and substance of it, the putting off the body of the sins of the flesh; and lastly, by the author of it, Christ, who by his spirit produces it. The argument from analogy is weak and insufficient; though some little agreement between circumcision and baptism may be imagined, and seem to be in the signification of them, yet the difference between them is notorious; they differ in their subjects, uses, manner of administration, and the administrators of them; nor is it true, what is suggested, that they are both sacraments of admission into the church; nor are they badges of relation to God or Christ, nor signs and seals of the covenant of grace. Nor need we be under any concern about any ordinance coming in the room of circumcision, and answering to that Jewish rite. Nor is there any

necessity of any, no more than of a pope in the room of an high priest, or of any festivals to answer to those of the Passover, Pentecost, and Feast of Tabernacles; nor does the Lord's supper answer to the passover, and come in the room of it; it is Christ that answers to it, and is the passover sacrificed for us: but what makes it quite clear and plain, that baptism does not succeed circumcision, or come in the room of it, is, that it was in force and use before circumcision was abolished, which was not until the death of Christ, whereas John administered baptism, and Christ himself was baptized, and many others, some years before that time; and therefore baptism cannot be said, with any propriety, to succeed circumcision, when it was in force before the other was out of date: besides, if it did, it is no seal of the covenant of grace, nor to be administered to infants for such an use; for what spiritual blessing, what blessing of grace in the covenant, does baptism seal, or can seal, assure of, and secure unto the carnal seed of believers? Let it be named if it can.[4]

Fifthly, It is not indisputably evident, as this Gentleman says (p. 29), but indisputably false, that the apostles acknowledged and allowed the covenant-relation and interest of children, under the gospel, as well as under the law; by which I take it for granted he means, their relation and interest in the covenant of grace: that relation and interest, the natural seed of Abraham, as such, had not under the law; nor have the natural seed of believers, as such, the same under the gospel. This is not to be proved from his text, as has been shown already: nor from Romans 11:16, 17, where by the root and branches, are not meant Abraham and his posterity, or natural seed; nor by the olive-tree the Jewish church; but the gospel church-state in its first foundation, out of which were left the Jews that believed not in Christ, meant by the branches broken off; and which church was constituted of those that believed in him; and these were the root and first-fruits, which being holy, are the pledge and earnest of the future conversion and holiness of that people the apostle is speaking of in the context; and into which church state the Gentiles that believed were received, and are the branches grafted in, which partook of the root and fatness of the olive-tree; that is, of the goodness and fatness of the house of God, the ordinances and

privileges of it: and in this passage not a word is said of the covenant-relation, and interest of children under the gospel; not a syllable about baptism, much less of Infant-baptism; nor can anything in favour of it be inferred from it;[5] nor can anything of this kind be proved from 1 Corinthians 7:14, real internal holiness is rejected by our author, as the sense of this and the preceding passage; but he pleads for a federal holiness; but what that is, as distinct from real holiness, let it be said if it can: the only holiness which the covenant of grace promises and provides for, and which only is proper federal holiness, is real holiness of heart and life:[6] no other than matrimonial holiness, or lawful marriage, can be meant in the Corinthian text; it is such a holiness with which the unbelieving parent is sanctified, husband or wife; and if it is a federal holiness, the unbeliever ought to be allowed to be in covenant; and if this gives a right to baptism, ought to be baptized, as well as their carnal issue; and have as good a right to it, surely, as they who have their holiness from them, and which even depends upon the sanctification of the unbelieving parent. I am able to prove, from innumerable instances in Jewish writings, that the words sanctify and sanctified, are used for espouse and espoused, and the apostle, being a Jew, adopts the same language; and let men wriggle and wrangle as long as they can, no other sense can be put upon the words, than of a legitimate marriage and offspring; nothing else will suit with the case proposed to the apostle, and with his answer and reasoning about it; and which sense has been allowed by many learned Paedobaptists; and I cannot forbear transcribing, what I have elsewhere done, the honest confession of Musculus: "Formerly, says he, I have abused this place against the Anabaptists, thinking the meaning was, that the children were holy for the parents faith, which, though true, the present place makes nothing for the purpose." [7]

Sixthly, From what has been observed, it is not proved, as our author asserts (p. 32), that the apostles looked on the children of believing parents as having an interest in the covenant of grace; and false is it, to the last degree of falsehood, what he infers from thence, that "then we have undeniable evidence that "they did in fact baptize the children of all professing believers; and that they "understood their commission

as authorizing them so to do" (Matthew 28:19). Let one single fact be produced, one undeniable instance of the apostles baptizing an infant of any, professor or profane, and we will give up the cause at once, and say no more. Nor did the apostles, nor could the apostles understand the commission as authorizing them to baptize infants. What this Gentleman observes, that the word teach is in the original to make disciples, or learn: Be it so, it is not applicable to newborn babes, who are not capable of learning anything, and much less of divine and spiritual things, of Christ and his gospel, and the doctrines of it; of which kind of learning only can the commission be understood: nor are the children of believing parents called disciples (Acts 15:10), adult persons are meant; and by the yoke attempted to be put on their necks, not circumcision, which was not intolerable, but the doctrine of the necessity of that, and other Mosaic rites, and even of keeping the whole law in order to salvation; this was intolerable.

This author further observes, that children must be included in the words all nations, mentioned in the commission. If they are included so as to be baptized, and if this phrase is to be understood without any limitation or restriction, then not only the children of Christian parents, but the children of Pagans, Jews, and Turks; yea, all adult persons, be they who they may, ever so vile and profligate, since these are included in all nations; but the limitation is to those that are taught, and learn to become the disciples of Christ, and believe in him, as appears from Mark 16:15, 16.[8] Nor does it appear from the scripture-accounts, that there is any probability, and much less the highest probability, as this writer says (p. 33), that it was the general practice of the apostles to baptize infants, and which he concludes from Lydia, the Jailor, and Stephanas; which instances do not afford the least probability of it.[9] To make it probable that there might be infant-children in those families, he observes, we read, when God smote the first-born in Egypt, there was not an house in which there was not one dead, consequently not an house in Egypt in which there was not a child: but he did not consider, that all the first-born of Egypt slain, were not infant-children; but many of them might be men grown, of twenty, or thirty years of age, or more; and of these,

with those under such an age, and in infancy, it is not strange that there should be found one in every house.[10] Our author adds, "suppose it had been said of one proselyted to the Jewish religion, that "he and his household, or that he and all his were circumcised, would any doubt "whether his infant-children were circumcised? I believe not:" and so do I too; but not for the reason given, which is a false one; for it never was a practice, either before or since Abraham's covenant, to receive children with their parents into a covenant-relation, if by that relation is meant relation to, and interest in the covenant of grace; but for this very good reason, because the Jews and their proselytes were commanded to circumcise their Infant-children; but God has no where commanded any to baptize their Infant- children; and therefore when households are said to be baptized, this cannot be understood of infants, and especially when those in these households are represented as hearers of the word, believers in it, and persons possessed of spiritual joy and comfort.

Seventhly, The evidence this author gives of the practice of Infant-baptism, from those that lived in the first, second, and third centuries (pp. 34-40), comes next. He produces no evidence from any writer of the first century, though there are several whose writings are extant, as Barnabas, Clemens Remanus, Hermas, Polycarp, and Ignatius. He begins with Irenæus, as he is twice called; Irenæus is meant, of whom he says, that he only mentions Infant-baptism transiently; but he does not mention it at all: it is not once mentioned in all his writings, as corrupted as they be; being some spurious, and for the most part translations, and these barbarous, and but few original pieces: the passage produced for his use, of the word regeneration for baptism, is not to the purpose; since by the command of regenerating, Christ gave to his disciples, is not meant the command of baptizing, but of teaching the doctrine of regeneration, and the necessity of it to salvation, and in order to baptism, the first and principal part of the commission of the apostles, as the order of the words shows. The other testimony which, he says, is plain for the baptism of infants, there is not a syllable of it in it: Irenæus only says, "Christ came to save all; all I say, that "are born again unto God; infants, and little ones, and children, and young "men, and old men." Which is most true; for Christ came to

save all of every age that are regenerated, and of which persons of every age are capable; but to interpret this of Christ's coming to save all that are baptized, is false; and is to make this ancient writer to speak an untruth: to prove that regeneration is used by him for baptism, a passage is produced out of Justin Martyr, said to be his contemporary, though Justin lived before him, in the middle of the second century, and should have been first mentioned; but will not serve his purpose: for Justin is speaking of the manner of adult-baptism, and not a word of infants; and of adult persons, not as regenerated by or in baptism; for he speaks of them before as converted and believers, and consequently regenerated; and their baptism is plainly distinguished from regeneration. Of the sense of the passages of these two writers, see more in the Reply, p. 16-18. The argument from apostolic Tradition (pp. 13, 14). Antipaedobaptism (pp. 9-20).

The next testimony produced is Origen, placed in the beginning of the third century, though it was rather towards the middle of it that he wrote and flourished in, and should have been mentioned after Tertullian. The passages quoted from him are, the first out of his eighth homily on Leviticus, though the last clause in it does not belong to that, but is in the fourteenth homily on Luke, and the other is out of his epistle to the Romans: Now these are all taken out of Latin translations, full of interpolations, additions, and detractions; so that, as many learned men observe, "one knows not when he "reads Origen, and is at a loss to find Origen in Origen." Now whereas there are genuine works of his still extant in Greek in them there is not the least hint of Infant-baptism, nor any reference to it, much less any express mention of it, not even as an apostolical tradition, as in the last passage produced; for so it should be rendered, not order, but tradition; on which I shall just observe what Bishop Taylor says: "A tradition apostolical, if it be not consigned with a fuller testimony than of one person (Origen) whom all after-ages have condemned of many errors, will obtain so little reputation among those, who know that things have, upon greater authority, pretended to derive from the apostles, and yet falsely; that it will be a great argument, that he is credulous and weak, that shall be determined by so weak a probation in a matter of so great concernment." [11] Tertullian is the

next writer quoted as giving plain proof that Infant-baptism was the constant practice of the church in his day: he is the first person known to have made any mention of it; who, as soon as he did, argued against it, and dissuaded from it; and though it will be owned, that it was moved in his day, and debated; yet that it was practiced, and much less constantly practiced, has not yet been proved.

The next evidence produced is Cyprian, who lived in the middle of the third century; and it will be allowed that it was practiced in the African churches in his time, where it was first moved, and at the same time Infant-communion was practiced also; of the practice of which we have as early proof as of Infant-baptism; and this furnishes with an answer to this author's questions (p. 42). When Infant-baptism was introduced, and by whom? It was introduced at the time Infant-communion was, and by the same persons. As for the testimonies of Ambrose, Austin, and Pelagius, they might have been spared, since they wrote in the fourth century, when it is not denied that Infant-baptism very much prevailed; of Austin, and particularly of what Pelagius says, see Argument from apostolic tradition (pp. 19-26). Antipaedobaptism (pp. 33-37). And from hence it appears, that it is not true what this author suggests (pp. 42, 52), that infant-baptism was the universal practice of the primitive churches in the three first centuries, called the purest times; when it does not appear to have been practiced at all until the third century, when sad corruptions were made in doctrine and practice.

Eighthly, This author proposes to answer some of the most material objections against Infant-baptism (p. 43), etc. as,

1. "That there is no express "command for it in scripture, and therefore unwarrantable." To which the answer is; that if there is no express command, there are virtual and implicit ones, which are of equal force with an express one, and no less than four are observed; one command is enough, this is over-doing it, and what is overdone is not well done: but let us hear them; the first is God's command to Abraham to circumcise his infant-children, which is a virtual and implicit command to believers to baptize theirs! The reason is, because they are Abraham's spiritual seed, and heirs according to the promise; but the

command to Abraham only concerned his natural, not his spiritual seed; and if there is any force in the reason given, or the command lays any obligation on the latter, their duty is not to baptize, but circumcise their children; since the sacramental rite commanded, it seems, has never been repealed, and still remains in full force. The next virtual and implicit command is in Matthew 19:14, but Christ's permission of children to come, or to be brought unto him, there spoken of, was not for baptism, or to be baptized by him, but for him to pray for them, and touch them, in order to cure them of diseases.[12] Another implicit, if not express command, to baptize infants, is in Matthew 28:19. This has been considered, and disproved already; (see p. 99). The fourth and last implicit command, the author mentions, is the exhortation in his text, Acts 2:38, 39, in which, as has been shown, there is not the least hint of Infant-baptism, nor anything from whence it can be concluded.

This author observes, that since virtual and implicit commands are looked on as sufficient to determine our conduct in other things, then why not in this? such as keeping the first-day-sabbath, attendance on public worship, and the admission of women to the Lord's-Supper. To which I reply, he has not proved any virtual and implicit command to baptize infants; and as to the cases mentioned, besides implications, there are plain instances in scripture of the practice of them; and let like instances of Infant-baptism be produced, and we shall think ourselves obliged to practice it. As to what this author says of an express, irrevocable command to children, to receive the seal of the covenant, and the constant practice of the church to administer the seal of it to them; if by the covenant is meant the covenant of grace, it never had any such seal as is suggested, which has been proved; nor has it any but the blood of Christ, called the blood of the everlasting covenant.

2. Another objection to Infant-baptism is; there is no express instance in all the history of the New-Testament of an Infant-child being baptized, and therefore is without any scripture-example. To which is replied, by observing that whole households were baptized; as there were, and which have been already considered; and these were baptized, not upon the conversion of the parent, or head of the family, but upon their own faith; and so were not infants, but adult

persons; though this author thinks that such accounts would easily be understood to include children, had the same been said of circumcision. They might so, when circumcision was in force and use; for this very good reason, because there was a previous express command extant to circumcise children, when there is none to baptize infants. He further observes, that from there being no express mention of Infant-baptism in the New Testament, it should not be concluded there was none, anymore than that the churches of Antioch, Iconium, of the Romans, Galatians, Thessalonians and Colossians, were not baptized, because there is no express account of it in the history of the New Testament: but of several of those churches there is mention made of the baptism of the members of them, of the Romans, Galatians and Colossians (Rom. 6:3, 4; Gal. 3:27; Col. 2:12), but what this author might imagine would press us hard, is to give a scripture-example of our own present practice. Our present practice, agreeable to scripture-examples, is not at all concerned with the parents of those baptized by us, whether believers or unbelievers, Christians or not Christians, Jews or Heathens, this comes not into consideration; it is only concerned with the persons themselves to be baptized, what they are. It seems, if we give a scripture-example of our practice, it must be of a person born and brought up of Christian or baptized parents, that was baptized in adult years; but our present practice is not limited to such persons. We baptize many whose parents we have no reason to believe are Christians, or are baptized persons; and be it that we baptize adult persons, who are born and brought up of Christian or baptized parents, a scripture-example of such a person might indeed be required of us with some plausible pretext, if the history of the Acts of the Apostles, which this writer says continued above thirty years, had given an account of the yearly or of frequent additions of members to the churches mentioned in it, during that space of time; whereas that history only gives an account of the first planting of those churches, and of the baptism of those of which they first consisted; wherefore to give instances of those that were born of them, and brought up by them as baptized in adult years, cannot be reasonably required of us: But, on the other hand, if Infant-children were admitted to

baptism in those times, upon the faith and baptism of their parents, and their becoming Christians; it is strange! exceeding strange! that among the many thousands that were baptized in Jerusalem, Samaria, Corinth, and other places, that there should be no one instance of any of them bringing their children with them to be baptized, and claiming the privilege of baptism for them upon their own faith, or of their doing this in any short time after; this is a case that required no length of time; and yet not a single instance can be produced.

3. A third objection is, that "infants can receive no benefit from baptism, "because of their incapacity; and therefore are not to be baptized." To which our author answers; that they are capable of being entered into covenant with God, of the seal of the covenant, of being cleansed by the blood of Christ, and of being regenerated by his Spirit: And be it so; what of all this! as I have observed in the Reply (p. 4). Are they capable of understanding the nature, design, and use of the ordinance of baptism? Are they capable of professing faith in Christ, which is a prerequisite to it, and of exercising it in it? Are they capable of answering a good conscience to God in it? Are they capable of submitting to it in obedience to the will of Christ, from love to him, and with a view to his glory? They are not: what benefit then can they receive by baptism? and to what purpose is it to be administered to them? If infants receive any advantage, benefit, or blessing by baptism, which our infants have not without it, let it be named, if it can; if none, why administered? why all this zeal and contention about it? A mere noise about nothing.

4. A fourth and most common objection, it is said, is, that "faith and repentance, or a profession of them at least, are mentioned in the New Testament as the necessary prerequisites of baptism, of which children are incapable, and therefore of the ordinance itself." To this it is answered; that children are capable of the habit and principle of faith: which is not denied, nor is it in the objection; and it is granted by our author, that a profession of faith is a prerequisite to baptism in adult persons, who embrace Christianity; but when they have embraced it, and professed their faith, in the apostles times, not only themselves, but their households, and all that were theirs, were baptized. It

is very true, those professing their faith also, as did the household of the Jailor, of whom it is said, that he was believing in God with all his house: His family believed as well as he, which could not have been known, had they not professed it. The instance of a professing stranger embracing the Jewish religion, in order to his circumcision, which, when done, it was always administered to his family and children, makes nothing to the purpose; since it is no rule of procedure to us, with respect to a gospel-ordinance.

Ninthly, The performance under consideration is concluded with observing many absurdities, and much confusion, with which the denial of Infant-baptism, as a divine institution, is attended. As,

1. It is saying the covenant made with Abraham is not an everlasting one; that believers under the gospel are not Abraham's seed, and heirs of his promise; that the engrafted Gentiles do not partake of the same privileges in the church, from which the Jews were broken off; and that the privileges of the gospel-dispensation are less than those of the law: all which are said to be flat contradictions to scripture. To all which I reply, that the covenant of grace made with, and made known to Abraham, is an everlasting covenant, and is sure to all the seed; that is, the spiritual seed; and is not at all affected by Infant-baptism, that having no concern in it. The covenant of circumcision, though called an everlasting covenant (Gen. 17:7), was only to continue unto the time of the Messiah; and is so called, just in the same sense, and for the same reason, the covenant of priesthood with Phineas has the same epithet (Num. 25:13). Believers under the gospel are Abraham's spiritual seed, and heirs of the same promise of spiritual things; but these spiritual things, and the promise of them, do not belong to their natural seed as such; the believing Gentiles, engrafted into the gospel church-state, partake of all the privileges of it, from which the unbelieving Jews are excluded, being for their unbelief left out of that state. The privileges of the gospel-dispensation are not less, yea far greater than those of the law; to believers, who are freed from the burdensome rites and ceremonies of the law, have larger measures of grace, a clearer ministration of the gospel, and more spiritual ordinances; nor are they less to their infants, who are eased from the painful rite of circumcision, have the advantage of a Christian

education, and of hearing the gospel as they grow up, in a clearer manner than under the law; which are greater privileges than the Jewish children had under the former dispensation; nor are all, nor any of these affected, or to be contradicted, by the denial of Infant-baptism.

2. It is observed, that to deny the validity of Infant-baptism, is saying that "there was no true baptism in the church for eleven or twelve hundred years after Christ; and that the generality of the present professors of Christianity "are now a company of unbaptized heathens" (p. 52, so p. 10). To which I reply, that the true baptism continued in the church in the first two centuries; and though Infant-baptism was introduced in the third, and prevailed in the fourth, yet in both these centuries there were those that opposed it, and abode by the true baptism. Besides, in the valleys of Piedmont, as many learned men have observed, there were witnesses from the times of the apostles, who bore their testimony against corruptions in doctrine and practice, and among whom Infant-baptism did not obtain until the sixteenth century; so that the true baptism continued in the church till that time, and it has ever since; (see the Reply, pp. 31, 32). As for the generality of the present professors of Christianity, it lies upon them to take care of their character, and remove from it what may be thought disagreeable; and clear themselves of it, by submitting to the true baptism according to the order of the gospel. As to the salvation of persons in or out of the visible church, which is the greater number, this author speaks of, I know nothing of; salvation is not by baptism in any way, but by Christ alone.

3. It is said, if Infant-baptism is a divine institution, warranted by the word of God, then they that are baptized in their adult age necessarily renounce a divine institution, and an ordinance of Jesus Christ, and vacate the former covenant between God and them. If it be; but it is not a divine institution, nor an ordinance of Jesus Christ, as appears from all that has been said about it in the foregoing pages; wherefore it is right to renounce and reject it, as an human invention: and as for any covenant between God and them vacated thereby, it will not, it need not give the renouncers of it any concern; being what they know nothing of, and the whole a chimerical business.

Nay, it is farther observed, that renouncing Infant-baptism, and making it a nullity, is practically saying there are no baptized persons, no regular ministers, nor ordinances, in all professing churches but their own, and as elsewhere (p. 41), no gospel-church in the world; and that the administrations of the ministers of other churches are a nullity, and the promise of Christ to be with his ministers in the administration of this ordinance to the end of the world, must have failed for hundreds of years, in which Infant-baptism was practiced. But be it so: to whom is all this owing? to whose account must it be put? to those who are the corrupters of the word and ordinances. Is it suggested by all this, that "God "in his providence would never suffer things to go such lengths?" Let it be observed, that he has given us in his word reason to expect great corruptions in doctrine and worship; and that though he will always have a seed to serve him, more or fewer, in all ages, yet he has no where promised that these shall be always in a regular gospel-church-state; and though he has promised his presence in his ordinances to the end of the world, it is only with those ministers and people among whom the ordinances are administered according to his word; and there was for some hundreds of years, in the darkness of popery, such a corruption in the ordinances of baptism, and the Lord's supper, in the administration of which the presence of God cannot be thought to be; nor were there any regular ministers, nor regular ordinances, nor a regular gospel-church, but what were to be found in the valleys of Piedmont; and with whom the presence of God may be supposed to be; who bore a testimony against all corruptions, and among the rest, against Infant-baptism.[13]

This writer further urges, that "if Infant-baptism is a nullity, there can be now no regular baptism in the world, nor ever will be to the end of it; and so the ordinance must be lost, since adult baptism cannot be traced to the apostles times, and as now administered, is derived from those that were baptized in infancy; wherefore if Infant-baptism is invalid, that must be so too" (so in p. 42)." To which it may be answered, that the first English Antipaedobaptists, when determined upon a reformation in this ordinance, in a consultation of theirs about it, had this difficulty started about a proper administrator to begin the work, when it

was proposed to send some to foreign churches, the successors of the ancient Waldenses in France and Germany; and accordingly did send some, who being baptized, returned and baptized others: though others were of opinion this too much favoured of the popish notion of an uninterrupted succession, and a right through that to administer ordinances; and therefore judged, that in an extraordinary case, as this was, to begin a reformation from a general corruption, where a baptized administrator could not be had, it might be begun by one unbaptized, otherwise qualified to preach the word and ordinances; which practice they were able to justify upon the same principles the other reformers justified theirs; who without any regard to an uninterrupted succession, let up new churches, ordained pastors, and administered ordinances. Nor is it essential to the ordinance of baptism, that it be performed by one regularly baptized, though in ordinary cases it should; or otherwise it could never have been introduced into the world; the first administrator of it must be an unbaptized person, as John the Baptist was. All which is a sufficient answer to what this writer has advanced on this subject.[14]

### **6 Infant Baptism: Part & Pillar Of Popery**

Being called upon, in a public manner, to give proof of what I have said concerning infant-baptism, in a preface to my reply to Mr. Clarke's Defense, etc. or to expunge it, I readily agree to the former, and shall endeavor to explain myself, and defend what I have written; but it will be proper first to recite the whole paragraph, which stands thus: "The Paedobaptists are ever restless and uneasy, endeavoring to maintain and support, if possible, their unscriptural practice of infant-baptism; though it is no other than a pillar of popery; that by which Antichrist has spread his baneful influence over many nations; is the basis of national churches and worldly establishments; that which unites the church and world, and keeps them together; nor can there be a full separation of the one from the other, nor a thorough reformation in religion; until it is wholly removed: and though it has so long and largely obtained, and still does obtain; I believe with a firm and unshaken faith, that the time is hastening on, when infant-baptism will be no more practiced in the world; when churches will be

formed on the same plan they were in the times of the apostles; when gospel-doctrine and discipline will be restored to their primitive luster and purity; when the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper will be administered as they were first delivered, clear of all present corruption and superstition; all which will be accomplished, when "The Lord shall be king over all the earth, and there shall be one Lord and his name one." Now the whole of this consists of several articles or propositions, which I shall reconsider in their order.

That infant-baptism is a part and pillar of popery; that by which Antichrist has spread his baneful influence over many nations: I use the phrase infant-baptism here and throughout, because of the common use of it; otherwise the practice which now obtains, may with greater propriety be called infant-sprinkling. That unwritten traditions with the Papists are equally the rule of faith and practice as the holy Scriptures will not be doubted of by any conversant with their writings. The Council of Trent asserts that "Traditions respecting both faith and manners orally delivered and preserved successfully in the Catholic church, are to be received with equal affection of piety and reverence as the books of the Old and New Testaments;" yea the Popish writers prefer traditions to the Scriptures. Bellarmine says, "Scriptures without tradition, are neither simply necessary, nor sufficient, but unwritten traditions are necessary. Tradition alone is sufficient, but the Scriptures are not sufficient." Another of their writers asserts, that "The authority of ecclesiastic traditions is more fit than the scriptures to ascertain anything doubtful, even that which may be made out from scripture, since the common opinion of the church and ecclesiastical tradition are clearer, and more open and truly inflexible; when, on the contrary, the scriptures have frequently much obscurity in them, and may be drawn here and there like a nose of wax; and, as a leaden rule, may be applied to every impious opinion." Bailey the Jesuit, thus expresses himself, "I will go further and say, we have as much need of tradition as of scripture, yea more; because the scripture ministers to us only the dead and mute letter, but tradition, by means of the ministry of the church, gives us the true sense, which is not had distinctly in the scripture; wherein, notwithstanding, rather consists the word of God than

in the alone written letter; it is sufficient for a good Catholic, if he understands it is tradition, nor need he to inquire after anything else;" and by tradition, they mean not tradition delivered in the Scripture, but distinct from it and out of it; unwritten tradition, apostolical tradition, as they frequently call it, not delivered by the apostles in the sacred Scriptures, but by word of mouth to their successors, or to the churches; that we may not mistake them. Andradius tells us, "That of necessity those traditions also must be believed, which can be proved by no testimony of scripture:" and Petrus a Soto still more plainly and openly affirms: "It is," says he, "a rule infallible and catholic, that whatsoever things the church of Rome believeth, holdeth and keepeth, and are not delivered in the scriptures, the same came by tradition from the apostles; also all such observations and ceremonies, whose beginning, author, and original are not known, or cannot be found, out of all doubt they were delivered by the apostles." This is what is meant by apostolic tradition.

Now the essentials of popery, or the peculiarities of it, are all founded upon this, even upon apostolic and ecclesiastic tradition; this is the Pandora from whence they all spring; this is the rule to which all are brought, and by which they are confirmed; and what is it, be it ever so foolish, impious and absurd, but what may be proved hereby, if this is admitted of as a rule and test? It is upon this foot the Papists assert and maintain the observation of Easter, on the Lord's Day following the 14th of March, the fast of Quadragesima or Lent, the adoration of images and relics, the invocation of saints, the worship of the sign of the cross, the sacrifices of the mass, transubstantiation, the abrogation of the use of the cup in the Lord's Supper, holy water, extreme unction or the chrism, prayers for the dead, auricular confession, sale of pardons, purgatory, pilgrimages, monastic vows, etc.

Among apostolical traditions infant-baptism is to be reckoned, and it is upon this account it is pleaded for. The first person that asserted infant-baptism and approved it, represents it as a tradition from the apostles, whether he be Origen, or his translator and interpolator, Ruffinus; his words are, "For this (i.e., for original sin) the church has received a tradition from the apostles, even to give baptism unto infants."

Austin, who was a warm advocate for infant-baptism, puts it upon this footing, as a custom of the church, not to be despised, and as an apostolic tradition generally received by the church; he lived in the fourth century, the same Ruffinus did; and probably it was from his Latin translation of Origen, Austin took the hint of infant-baptism being an apostolic tradition, since no other ecclesiastical writer speaks of it before as such; so that, as Bishop Taylor observes, "This apostolical tradition is but a testimony of one person, and he condemned of many errors; so that, as he says, to derive this from the apostles on no greater authority, is a great argument that he is credulous and weak, that shall be determined by so weak a probation, in a matter of so great concernment.;" and yet it is by this that many are determined in this affair: and not only Popish writers, as Bellarmine and others make it to be an apostolical tradition unwritten; but some Protestant-Paedobaptists show a good will to place infant-baptism among the unwritten sayings and traditions of Christ or His apostles, and satisfy themselves therewith. Mr. Fuller says, "We do freely confess that there is neither express precept nor precedent in the New Testament for the baptizing of infants;" yet observes that St. John saith, (21:25), "And there are also many other things, which Jesus did, which are not written; among, which for ought appears to the contrary, the baptizing of these infants (those whom Christ took in his arms and blessed) might be one of them." In like manner, Mr. Walker argues, "It doth not follow our Saviour gave no precept for the baptizing of infants, because no such precept is particularly expressed in the scripture; for our Saviour spoke many things to his disciples concerning the kingdom of God, both before his passion, and also after his resurrection, which are not written in the scriptures; and who can say, but that among those many unwritten sayings of his, there might be an express precept for infant-baptism?" And Mr. Leigh, one of the disputants in the Portsmouth-Disputation, suggests, that though infant-baptism is not to be found in the writings of the apostle Paul extant in the scriptures, yet it might be in some writings of his which are lost, and not now extant; all which is plainly giving up infant-baptism as contained in the sacred writings, and placing it upon unwritten, apostolical tradition, and that too,

conjectural and uncertain.

Now infant-baptism, with all the ceremonies attending it, for which also apostolical tradition is pleaded, makes a very considerable figure in the Popish pageantry; which according to pretended apostolical tradition, is performed in a very pompous manner, as by consecration of the water, using sponsors, who answer to the interrogatories, and make the renunciation in the name of the infant, exorcisms, exsufflations, crossings, the use of salt, spittle, and oil. Before the party is baptized, the water is consecrated in a very solemn manner; the priest makes an exorcism first; three times, he exsufflates or breathes into the water, in the figure of a cross, saying, "I adjure thee, O creature of water;" and here he divides the water after the manner of a cross, and makes three or four crossings; he takes a horn of oil, and pours it three times upon the water in the likeness of a cross, and makes a prayer, that the font may be sanctified, and the eternal Trinity be present; saying, "Descend from heaven and sanctify this water, and give grace and virtue, that he who is baptized according to the command of thy Christ, may be crucified, and die, and be buried, and rise again with him." The sponsors, or sureties, instead of the child, and in its name, recite the creed and the Lord's prayer, make the renunciation of the devil and all his works, and answer to questions put in the name of the child: the form, according to the Roman order, is this:

"The name of the infant being called, the presbyter must say, Dost thou renounce Satan? A. I do renounce; and all his works? A. I do renounce; and all his pomps? A. I do renounce: three times these questions are put, and three times the sureties answer." The interrogations are sometimes said to be made by a priest, sometimes by a presbyter, and sometimes by an exorcist, who was one or the other, and to which the following question also was added: "Dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth, etc.? A. I believe." Children to be baptized are first exsufflated or breathed and blown upon and exorcised, that the wicked spirit might be driven from them, that they might be delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of Christ: the Roman order is, "Let him (the minister, priest, deacon or exorcist) blow into the face of the person

to be baptized, three times, saying, Go out thou unclean spirit, and give place to the Holy Ghost, the Comforter." The form, according to St. Gregory, is, "I exorcise thee, O unclean spirit, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, that thou go out and depart from this servant of God." Salt also is put into the mouth of the infant, after it is blessed and exorcised, as a token of its being seasoned with the salt of wisdom; and that it might be preserved from the corruption and ill savor of sin: the priest first blesses the salt after this manner: "I exorcise thee, O creature of salt; and then being blessed, it is put into the mouth of the infant saying, Receive the salt of wisdom unto life everlasting." The nose and ears of infants at their baptism are touched with spittle by the priest, that they may receive the savor of the knowledge of God, and their ears be opened to hear the commands of God; and formerly spittle was put upon the eyes and upon the tongue, though it seems now disused as to those parts; and yet no longer than the birth of King James the First, it seems to have been in use; since at his baptism his mother sent word to the archbishop to forbear the use of the spittle, saying, "She would not have a pocky priest to spit in her child's mouth,;" for it seems the queen knew that the archbishop, who was Hamilton, Archbishop of St. Andrews, then had the venereal disease. And so in the times of the martyrs in Queen Mary's days; for Robert Smith, the martyr, being asked by Bonner, in what point do we dissent from the word of God? meaning as to baptism; he answered, "First, in hallowing your water, in conjuring of the same, in baptizing children with anointing and spitting in their mouths, mingled with salt, and many other lewd ceremonies, of which not one point is able to be proved in God's word." All which he calls a mingle mangle. Chrism, or anointing both before and after baptism, is another ceremony used at it; the parts anointed are the breast and shoulders; the breast, that no remains of the latent enemy may reside in the party baptized; and the shoulders, that he may be fortified and strengthened to do good works to the glory of God: this anointing is made in the form of a cross; the oil is put on the breast and beneath the shoulders, making a cross with the thumb; on making the cross on the shoulders, the priest says, "Flee, thou unclean spirit, give honour to the living and true God;" and

the form used in doing it is "I anoint thee with the oil of salvation, that thou mayest have life everlasting." The next ceremony is that of signing the infant with the sign of the cross: this is made in several parts of the body, especially on the forehead, to signify that the party baptized should not be ashamed of the cross of Christ, and not be afraid of the enemy Satan, but manfully fight against him. After baptism, in ancient times, honey and milk, or wine and milk, were given to the baptized, though now disused; and infants were admitted to the Lord's Supper, which continued some hundreds of years in the Latin church, and still does in the Greek church. Now for the proof of the use of these various ceremonies, the reader may consult Joseph Vicecomes, a learned Papist as Dr. Wall calls him, in his *Treatise de Antiquis Baptismi Ritibus ac Ceremoniis*, where and by whom they are largely treated of, and the proofs of them given. All which are rehearsed and condemned by the ancient Waldenses in a treatise of theirs, written in the year 1120. It may be asked to what purpose is this account given of the ceremonies used by Papists in the administration of baptism to infants by them, since they are not used by Protestant-paedobaptists? I answer, it is to show what I proposed, namely, what a figure infant-baptism, with these attending ceremonies, makes in popery, and may with propriety be called a part of it; besides though all these ceremonies are not used, yet some of them are used in some Protestant-paedobaptist churches, as sureties, the interrogations made to them, and their answers in the name of infants; the renunciation of the devil and all his works, and signing with the sign of the cross; and since these and the others, all of them claim apostolic authority, and most, if not all of them, have as good and as early a claim to it as infant-baptism itself; those who admit that upon this foot, ought to admit these ceremonies also. See a treatise of mine, called *The Argument from Apostolic Tradition in Favour of Infant-baptism Considered*. Most of the above ceremonies are mentioned by Basil, who lived in the 4th century, and as then in use, and which were had from apostolic tradition as said, and not from the scriptures; and says he, "Because this is first and most common, I will mention it in the first place, as that we sign with the sign of the cross; — Who has taught this in Scripture? We consecrate the water of baptism and

the oil of unction as well as him who receives baptism; from what scriptures? Is it not from private and secret tradition? Moreover the anointing with oil, what passage in scripture teaches this? Now a man is thrice immersed, from whence is it derived or delivered? Also the rest of what is done in baptism, as to renounce Satan and his angels, from what scripture have we it? Is not this from private and secret tradition?" And so Austin speaks of exorcisms and exsufflations used in baptism, as of ancient tradition, and of universal use in the church. Now whoever receives infant-baptism on the foot of apostolic tradition, ought to receive those also, since they stand upon as good a foundation as that does.

The Papists attribute the rise of several of the above ceremonies to their popes, as sponsors, chrisms, exorcisms, etc., though perhaps they were not quite so early as they imagine, yet very early they were; and infant-baptism itself, though two or three doctors of the church had asserted and espoused it, yet it was not determined in any council until the Milevitan Council in 418, or thereabouts, a provincial of Africa, in which was a canon made for Paedobaptism and never till then: So says Bishop Taylor, with whom Grotius agrees, who calls it the Council of Carthage; and who says in the councils no earlier mention is made of infant-baptism than in that council; the canons of which were sent to Pope Innocent the First, and confirmed by him: And Austin, who must write his book against the Donatists before this time, though he says the church always held it (infant-baptism) and that it is most rightly believed to be delivered by apostolic tradition; yet observes that it was not instituted, or determined and settled in or by councils; that is, as yet it was not, though it afterwards was in the above council confirmed by the said pope; in which council Austin himself presided, and in which is this canon, "Also it is our pleasure, that whoever denies that new-born infants are to be baptized, --- let him be anathema," and which is the first council that established infant-baptism, and anathematized those that denied it; so that it may justly be called a part of popery: besides baptism by immersion, which continued 1300 years in the Latin church, excepting in the case of the Clinicks, and still does in the Creek church, was first changed into sprinkling by the Papists; which is not an indifferent thing, whether performed

with much or a little water, as it is usually considered; but is of the very essence of baptism, is that itself, and without which it is not baptism; it being as Sir John Floyer says, no circumstance, but the very act of baptizing; who observes that aspersion, or sprinkling, was brought into the church by the Popish schoolmen, and our dissenters, adds he, had it from them; the schoolmen employed their thoughts how to find out reasons for the alteration to sprinkling, brought it into use in the 12th century: and it must be observed, to the honour of the Church of England, that they have not established sprinkling in baptism to this day; only have permitted pouring in case it is certified the child is weakly and not able to bear dipping; otherwise, by the Rubric, the priest is ordered to dip the child warily: sprinkling received only a Presbyterian sanction in times of the civil war by the Assembly of Divines; where it was carried for sprinkling against dipping by one vote only, by 25 against 24, and then established by an ordinance of Parliament, 1644: and that this change has its rise from the authority of the Pope, Dr. Wall himself acknowledges, and that the sprinkling of infants is from popery. "All the nations of Christians," says he, "that do now, or formerly did, submit to the authority of the Bishop of Rome do ordinarily baptize their infants by pouring or sprinkling; and though the English received not this custom till after the decay of Popery, yet they have since received it from such neighbor-nations as had began it in the times of the pope's power; but all other Christians in the world, who never owned the pope's usurped power, do, and ever did, dip their infants in their ordinary use;" so that infant-baptism, both with respect to subjects and mode, may with great propriety be called a part and branch of popery.

But it is not only a part of popery, and so serves to strengthen it, as a part does the whole; but it is a pillar of it, what serves greatly to support it; and which furnishes the Papists with one of the strongest arguments against the Protestants in favour of their traditions, on which, as we have seen, the essentials of popery are founded, and of the authority of the church to alter the rites of divine worship: they sadly embarrass Paedobaptist Protestants with the affair of infant-baptism, and urge them either to prove it by scripture, both with respect to mode and subjects, or allow of unscriptural traditions and the authority

of the church, or give it up; and if they can allow of unwritten traditions, and the custom and practice of the church, as of authority in one point, why not in others? This way of arguing, as Mr. Stennet observes, is used by Cardinal Du Perron, in his reply to the answer of King James the First, and by Mr. John Ainsworth, against Mr. Henry Ainsworth, in the dispute between them, and by Fisher the Jesuit, against Archbishop Laud; a late instance of this kind, he adds, we have in the controversy between Monsieur Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux, and a learned anonymous writer, said to be Monsieur de la Roque, late pastor of the Reformed church at Roan in Normandy. The Bishop, in order to defend the withholding the cup in the Lord's Supper from the laity, according to the authority of the church, urged that infant-baptism, both as to mode and subject, was unscriptural, and solely by the authority of tradition and custom, with which the pretended Reformed complied, and therefore why not in the other case; which produced this ingenuous confession from his antagonist, that to baptize by sprinkling was certainly an abuse derived from the Romish church, without due examination, as well as many other things, which he and his brethren were resolved to correct, and thanked the bishop for undeceiving them; and freely confessed, that as to the baptism of infants, there is nothing formal or express in the gospel to justify the necessity of it; and that the passages produced do at most only prove that it is permitted, or rather, that it is not forbidden to baptize them. In the times of King Charles the Second, lived Mr. Jeremiah Ives, a Baptist minister, famous for his talent at disputation, of whom the king having heard, sent for him to dispute with a Romish priest; the which he did before the king and many others, in the habit of a clergyman: Mr. Ives pressed the priest closely, showing the whatever antiquity they pretended to, their doctrine and practices could by no means be proved apostolic; since they are not to be found in any writings which remain of the apostolic age; the priest, after much wrangling, in the end replied, that this argument of Mr. Ives was as of much force against infant-baptism, as against the doctrines and ceremonies of the church of Rome: to which Mr. Ives answered, that he readily granted what he said to be true; the priest upon this broke up the dispute, saying, he had been cheated, and that he would proceed no

further; for he came to dispute with a clergyman of the established church, and it was now evident that this was an Anabaptist preacher. This behavior of the priest afforded his majesty and all present not a little diversion: and as Protestant Paedobaptists are urged by this argument to admit the unwritten traditions of the Papists; so dissenters of the Paedobaptist persuasion are pressed upon the same footing by those of the Church of England to comply with the ceremonies of that church, retained from the church of Rome, particularly by Dr. Whitby; who having pleaded for some condescension to be made to dissenters, in order to reconcile them to the church, adds: "and on the other hand", says he, "if notwithstanding the evidence produced, that baptism by immersion, is suitable both to the institution of our Lord and his apostles; and was by them ordained to represent our burial with Christ, and so our dying unto sin, and our conformity to his resurrection by newness of life; as the apostle doth clearly maintain the meaning of that rite: I say, if notwithstanding this, all our dissenters (i.e. who are Paedobaptists, he must mean) do agree to sprinkle the baptized infant; why may they not as well submit to the significant ceremonies imposed by our church? for, since it is as lawful to add unto Christ's institutions a significant ceremony, as to diminish a significant ceremony, which he or his apostles instituted; and use another in its stead, which they never did institute; what reason can they have to do the latter, and yet refuse submission to the former? and why should not the peace and union of the church be as prevailing with them, to perform the one, as is their mercy to the infant's body to neglect the other?" Thus infant-baptism is used as the grand plea for compliance with the ceremonies both of the church of Rome and of the church of England.

I have added in the preface referred to, where stands the above clause, that infant-baptism is "that by which Antichrist has spread his baneful influence over many nations;" which is abundantly evident, since by the christening of children through baptism, introduced by him, he has made whole countries and nations Christians, and has christened them by the name of Christendom; and thereby has enlarged his universal church, over which he claims an absolute power and authority, as being Christ's vicar on earth; and by the same means he retains his influence over nations, and

keeps them in awe and in obedience to him; asserting that by their baptism they are brought into the pale of the church, in which there is salvation, and out of which there is none; if therefore they renounce their baptism, received in infancy, or apostatize from the church, their damnation is inevitable; and thus by his menaces and anathemas, he holds the nations in subjection to him: and when they at any time have courage to oppose him, and act in disobedience to his supreme authority, he immediately lays a whole nation under an interdict; by which are prohibited, the administration of the sacraments, all public prayers, burials, christenings, etc., church-doors are locked up, the clergy dare not or will not administer any offices of their function to any, but such as for large sums of money obtain special privileges from Rome for that purpose: now by means of these prohibitions, and particularly of christening or baptizing children, nations are obliged to comply and yield obedience to the bishop of Rome; for it appears most dreadful to parents, that their children should be deprived of baptism, by which they are made Christians, as they are taught to believe, and without which there is no hope of salvation; and therefore are influenced to give-in to anything for the sake of what is thought so very important. Once more, the baneful influence spread by Antichrist over the nations by infant-baptism, is that poisonous notion infused by him, that sacraments, particularly baptism, confer grace ex opere operate, by the work done; that it takes away sin, regenerates men, and saves their souls; this is charged upon him, and complained of by the ancient Waldenses in a tract of theirs, written in the year 1120, where speaking of the works of Antichrist, they say, “the third work of Antichrist consists in this, that he attributes the regeneration of the Holy Spirit unto the dead, outward work, baptizing children in that faith, and teaching that thereby baptism and regeneration must be had; and therein he confers and bestows orders and other sacraments, and groundeth therein all his Christianity, which is against the Holy Spirit”: and which popish notion is argued against and exposed by Robert {Smith} the martyr; on Bonner’s saying “if they (infants) die, before they are baptized, they be damned;” he asked this question, “I pray you, my lord, shew me, are we saved by water or by Christ?” to which Bonner replied, “by both;” “then,” said Smith, “the

water died for our sins, and so must ye say, that the water hath life, and it being our servant, and created for us, is our Saviour; this my lord is a good doctrine, is it not?” And this pernicious notion still continues, this old leaven yet remains, even in some Protestant churches, who have retained it from Rome; hence a child when baptized is declared to be regenerate; and it is taught, when capable of being catechized to say, that in its baptism it was made a child of God, a member of Christ, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven, which has a tendency to take off all concern, in persons when grown up, about an inward work of grace, in regeneration and sanctification, as a meetness for heaven, and to encourage a presumption in them, notwithstanding their apparent want of grace, that they are members of Christ, and shall never perish; are children and heirs of God, and shall certainly inherit eternal life. Wherefore Dr. [John] Owen rightly observes “That the father of lies himself could not easily have devised a doctrine more pernicious, or what proposes a more present and effectual poison to the minds of sinners to be drank in by them.”

The second article or proposition in the preface is, as asserted by me, that infant-baptism “is the basis of national churches and worldly establishments; that which unites the church and world, and keeps them together;” than which nothing is more evident: if a church is national, it consists of all in the nation, men, women, and children; and children are originally members of it, either so by birth, and as soon as born, being born in the church, in a Christian land and nation, which is the church, or rather by baptism, as it is generally put; so according to the order of the Church of England, at the baptism of a child, the minister says, “We receive this child into the congregation of Christ’s flock.” And by the Assembly of Divines, “Baptism is called a sacrament of the New Testament, whereby the parties baptized are solemnly admitted into the visible church.” And to which there is a strange contradiction in the following answer, where it is said, that “baptism is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible church;” but if by baptism the parties baptized are solemnly admitted into the visible church, then before baptism by which they are admitted, they must be out of it: one or other must be wrong; either persons are not admitted into the visible church by baptism, or if they are, then before baptism they are out of it, and

have baptism administered to them in order to their being admitted into it; and Calvin says, according to whose plan of church-government at Geneva, that of the Scotch church is planned, that baptism is a solemn introduction to the church of God. And Mr. Baxter argues, that “if there be neither precept nor example of admitting church-members in all the New Testament but by baptism; then all that are now admitted ought to come in by baptism; but there is neither precept nor example in all the New Testament of admitting church members but by baptism; therefore they ought to come in the same way now.” So then infants becoming members of a national church by baptism, they are originally of it; are the materials of which it consists; and it is by the baptism of infants it is supplied with members, and is supported and maintained; so that it may be truly said, that infant- baptism is the basis and foundation of a national church, and is indeed the sinews, strength, and support of it: and infants being admitted members by baptism continue such when grown up, even though of the most dissolute lives and conversations, as multitudes of them are; and many, instead of being treated as church members, deserve to be sent to the house of correction, as some are, and others are guilty of such flagitious crimes that they die an infamous death; yet even these die in the communion of the church; and thus the church and the world are united and kept together till death doth them part.

The Independents would indeed separate the church and the world according to their principles; but cannot do it, being fettered and hampered with infant-church-membership and baptism, about which they are at a loss and disagreed on what to place it; some place it on infants’ interest in the covenant of grace; and here they sadly contradict themselves or one another; at one time they say it is interest in the covenant of grace that gives infants a right to baptism, and at another time, that it is by baptism they are brought and entered into the covenant; and sometimes it is not in the inward part of the covenant they are interested, only in the external part of it, where hypocrites and graceless persons may be; but what that external part is no mortal can tell: others not being satisfied that their infant-seed as such are all interested in the covenant of grace, say, it is not that, but the church-covenant that godly parents enter

into, which gives their children with them a right to church membership and baptism: children in their minority, it is said, covenant with their parents, and so become church members, and this entitles them to baptism; for according to the old Independents of New England, none but members of a visible church were to be baptized; though Dr. [Thomas] Goodwin is of a different mind: hence only such as were children of members of churches, even of set members, as they call them, were admitted, though of godly and approved Christians; and though they may have been members, yet if excommunicated, their children born in the time of their excommunication might not be baptized; but those children that are admitted members and baptized, though not confirmed members, as they style them, till they profess faith and repentance; yet during their minority, which reaches till they are more than thirteen years of age, according to the example of Ishmael, and till about sixteen years of age, they are real members to such intents and purposes, as, that if their parents are dismissed to other churches, their children ought to be put into the letter of dismission with them; and whilst their minority continues, are under church-watch, and subject to the reprehensions, admonitions, and censures thereof for their healing and amendment as need shall require; though with respect to public rebuke, admonition, and excommunication, children in their minority are not subject to church-discipline, only to such as is by way of spiritual watch and private rebuke. The original Independents, by the covenant- seed, who have a right to church membership and baptism, thought only the seed of immediate parents in church-covenant are meant, and not of progenitors. Mr. Cotton says infants cannot claim right unto baptism but in the right of one of their parents or both; where neither of the parents can claim right to the Lord’s Supper, there their infants cannot claim right to baptism; though he afterwards says it may be considered whether the children may not be baptized where either the grandfather or grandmother have made profession of their faith and repentance before the church, and are still living to undertake for the Christian education of the child; or if these fail, what hinders but that if the parents will resign their infant to be educated in the house of any godly member of the church, the child may be lawfully baptized in the right of its household-

governor, But Mr. Hooker, as he asserts, that children as children have no right to baptism, so it belongs not to any predecessors, either nearer or farther off removed from the next parents to give right of this privilege to their children; by which predecessors, he says, he includes and comprehends all besides the next parent; grandfather, great grandfather, etc.. So the ministers and messengers of the congregational churches that met at the Savoy declare “that not only those that do actually profess faith in, and obedience unto Christ, but also the infants of one or both believing parents are to be baptized, and those only”: and the commissioners for the review of the Common Prayer, in the beginning of the reign of King Charles the Second; those of the Presbyterian persuasion moved on the behalf of others, that “there being divers learned, pious, and peaceable ministers, who not only judge it unlawful to baptize children whose parents both of them are Atheists, Infidels, Heretics, or unbaptized; but also such whose parents are excommunicate persons, fornicators, or otherwise notorious and scandalous sinners; we desire, say they, they may not be enforced to baptize the children of such, until they have made open profession of their repentance before baptism.”: but now I do not understand that the present generation of dissenters of this denomination adhere to the principles and practices of their predecessors, at least very few of them; but admit to baptism, not only the children of members of their churches, but of those who are not members, only hearers, or that apply to them for the baptism of their infants, whether gracious or graceless persons: and were only the first sort admitted, children of members, what are they? No better than others, born in sin, born of the flesh, carnal and corrupt, are of the world, notwithstanding their birth of religious persons, until they are called out of it by the effectual grace of God; and as they grow up, appear to be of the world as others, and have their conversation according to the course of it; and many of them are dissolute in their lives, and scandalous in their conversation; and yet I do not understand, that any notice is taken of them in a church-way, as to be admonished, censured, and excommunicated; but they retain their membership, into which they were taken in their infancy, and continue in it to the day of their death: and if this is not uniting and keeping the world and church together, I know not what is.

Moreover all the arguments that are made use of to prove the church of Christ under the gospel-dispensation to be congregational, and against a national church, are all destroyed by the baptism and membership of infants. It is said in favour of the one, and against the other, that the members of a visible church are saints by calling, such, as in charitable discretion may be accounted so; but are infants who are admitted to membership and baptized, such? The holiness pleaded for as belonging to them, is only a federal holiness, and that is merely chimerical: are they called to be saints, or saints by effectual calling? Can they in charitable discretion, or in rational charity be thought to be truly and really holy, or saints, as the churches of the New Testament are said to be? and if they cannot in a judgment of charity, be accounted real saints, and yet are admitted members of churches, why not others, of whom it cannot be charitably thought, that they are real saints? Besides, it is said by the Independents, “that members of gospel churches are saints by calling, visibly manifesting and evidencing by their profession and walk their obedience to that call; who are further known to each other by their confession of faith wrought in them by the power of God; and do willingly consent to walk together according to the appointment of Christ, giving up themselves to the Lord and to one another by the will of God, in professed subjection to the ordinances of the gospel”: now are infants such? Do they manifest and evidence by a profession and walk their obedience to a divine call? And if they do not, and yet are admitted members, why not others, who give no more evidence than they do? Do they make a confession of faith wrought in them? Does it appear that they have such a faith? and in a confession made, and so made as to be known by fellow-members? and if not, and yet received and owned as members, why not others that make no more confession of faith than they do? Do infants consent to walk with the church of Christ, and give up themselves to the Lord and one another, and profess to be subject to the ordinances of the gospel? and if they do not, as most certainly they do not, and yet are members, why may not others be also members on the same footing? It is objected to a national church, that persons of the worst of characters are members of it; and by this means the church is filled with men very disreputable

and scandalous in their lives. And is not this true of infant members admitted in their infancy, who when grown up are very wicked and immoral, and yet their membership continues? and why not then national churches be admitted of, notwithstanding the above objection? So that upon the whole, I think, I have good reason to say, "that there cannot be a full separation of the one from the other, that is, of the church from the world, nor a thorough reformation in religion, until it (infant-baptism) is wholly removed."

In the said preface, I express my firm belief of the entire cessation of infant-baptism, in time to come: my words are, "though it (infant-baptism) has so long and largely obtained (as it has from the 4th century till now, and over the greater part who have since borne the Christian name) and still does obtain; I believe with a firm and unshaken faith, that the time is hastening on, when infant-baptism will be no more practiced in the world," I mean in the spiritual reign of Christ; for in His personal reign there will be no ordinances, nor the administration of them; and this is explained by what I farther say, "when churches will be formed on the same plan they were in the times of the apostles; when gospel-doctrine and discipline will be restored to their primitive purity and lustre; when the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper will be administered as they were first delivered; all which will be accomplished, when 'the Lord shall be king over all the earth, and there shall be one Lord and his name one;'" that is, when there shall be one Lord, one faith, and one baptism, acknowledged by all Christians; and they will be all of one mind with respect to the doctrines and ordinances of the gospel. And as it becomes every man to give a reason of the faith and hope he has concerning divine things, with meekness and fear; the reasons of my firm belief, that infant-baptism will be no more practiced in the latter day and spiritual reign of Christ, are, some of them suggested in the above paragraph, and others may be added, as

FIRST, Because churches in the time referred to, will be formed on the plan churches were in the time of the apostles; that this will be the case, see the prophecies in Is. 1:25,26; Jer. 30:18,20; Rev. 11:19. Now the apostolic churches consisted only of baptized believers, or of such who were baptized upon profession of their faith; the members of the

first Christian church, which was at Jerusalem, were first baptized upon their conversion, and then added to it; the next Christian church at Samaria, consisted of men and women baptized on believing the gospel, preached by Philip; and the church at Corinth, of such who hearing, believed and were baptized; and on the same plan were formed the churches at Rome, Philippi, Colosse, and others; nor is there one single instance of infant-baptism and of infant-church-membership in them; wherefore if churches in the latter day will be on the same plan, then infant-baptism will be no more practiced.

SECONDLY, Because, then the ordinances of the gospel will be administered, as they were first delivered, clear of all present corruption and superstition; this is what is meant by the temple of God being opened in heaven, on the sounding of the seventh trumpet (Rev. 11:19 and 15:5), which respects the restoration of worship, discipline, doctrines and ordinances, to the free use of them, and to their original purity; when, as the ordinance of the Lord's Supper will be administered clear of all corruptions and ceremonies introduced by Papists and retained by Protestants; so likewise the ordinance of baptism both with respect to subject and mode, which as it was first delivered was only administered to persons professing faith and repentance, and that by immersion only; and if this will be universally administered in the latter day, as in the first ages of Christianity, infant sprinkling will be practiced no more.

THIRDLY, Because Christ will then be king over all the earth in a spiritual sense; one Lord, whose commands will be obeyed with great precision and exactness, according to His will revealed in His Word; and as baptism is one of His commands He has prescribed, as He is and will be acknowledged the one Lord and head of the church, and not the pope, who will be no more submitted to; so there will be one baptism, which will be administered to one sort of subjects only, as He has directed, and in one manner only, by immersion, of which His baptism is an example; and therefore, I believe that infant sprinkling will be no more in use.

FOURTHLY, At this same time the name of Christ will be one, that is, His religion; which will be the same, it was at first instituted by Him. Now it is various, as it is professed and practiced by different persons that

bear His name; but in the latter day, it will be one and the same, in all its branches, as embraced, professed, and exercised by all that are called Christians; and as baptism is one part of it, this will be practiced in a uniform manner, or by all alike, that shall name the name of Christ; for since Christ's name or the Christian religion in all its parts, will be the same in all the professors of it; I therefore firmly believe, that baptism will be practiced alike by all, according to the primitive institution, and consequently, that infant-baptism will be no more: for

FIFTHLY, As at this time, the watchmen will see eye to eye (Is. 52:8), the ministers of the gospel will be of one mind, both with respect to the doctrines and duties of Christianity; will alike preach the one, and practice the other; so the people under their ministrations will be all agreed, and receive the truths of the gospel in the love of them, and submit to the precepts and institutions of it, without any difference among themselves, and without any variation from the word of God; and among the rest, the ordinance of baptism, about which there will be no longer strife; but all will agree that the proper subjects of it are believers, and the right mode of it immersion; and so infant-sprinkling will be no more contended for; saints in this as in other things will serve the Lord with one consent (Zeph. 3:9).

SIXTHLY, Another reason why I firmly believe, infant-baptism will hereafter be no more practiced, is, because Antichrist will be entirely consumed with the spirit or breath of Christ's mouth, and with the brightness of His coming (2 Thess. 2:8), that is, with the pure and powerful preaching of His word, at His coming to take to Himself His power, and reign spiritually in the churches, in a more glorious manner; when all Antichristian doctrines and practices will be entirely abolished and cease, even the whole body of Antichristian worship; not a limb of Antichrist shall remain, but all shall be consumed. Now as I believe, and it has been shown, that infant-baptism is a part and pillar of popery, a limb of Antichrist, a branch of superstition and will-worship, introduced by the 'man of sin, when he shall be destroyed, this shall be destroyed with him and be no more.

SEVENTHLY, Though the notion of infant-baptism has been embraced and practiced, by many good and godly men in several ages; yet it is part of the wood,

hay and stubble, laid by them upon the foundation; is one of those works of theirs, the bright day of the gospel shall declare to be a falsehood; and which the fire of the word will try, burn up, and consume, though they themselves shall be saved; and therefore being utterly consumed, shall no more appear in the world: for

EIGHTHLY, When the angel shall descend from heaven with great power, and the earth be lightened with his glory, which will be at the fall of Babylon and ruin of Antichrist (Rev. 18:1,2), such will be the blaze of light then given, that all Antichristian darkness shall be removed, and all works of darkness will be made manifest and cast off, among which infant-baptism is one; and then the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea (Is. 11:9), even of the knowledge of the word, ways, worship, truths, and ordinances of God, and all ignorance of them vanish and disappear; and then the ordinance of baptism will appear in its former lustre and purity, and be embraced and submitted to in it; and every corruption of it be rejected, of which infant-baptism is one.

NINTHLY, Whereas the ordinances of the gospel, baptism and the Lord's Supper, are to continue until the second coming of Christ, or the end of the world (Matt. 28: 19,20; 1 Cor. 11:26), and whereas there have been corruptions introduced into them, as they are generally administered, unless among some few; it is not reasonable to think, that those corruptions will be continued to the second coming of Christ, but that they will be removed before, even at His spiritual coming, or in His spiritual reign: and as with respect to baptism particularly, there must be a mistake on one side or the other, both with respect to subject and mode; and as this mistake I firmly believe is on the side of the Paedobaptists; so, I as firmly believe for the reason given, that it will be removed, and infant-sprinkling for the future no more used.

TENTHLY, the Philadelphian church-state, which answers to and includes the spiritual reign of Christ in His churches, is what I refer unto in the preface, as the time when the practice of infant-baptism will cease; in which I am confirmed, by the characters given of that church and the members of it; as that it kept the word of Christ; that is, not only the doctrines of the gospel, which will be then purely preached and openly professed, but the ordinances of it, baptism

and the Lord's Supper; which have been (particularly baptism) sadly corrupted in almost all the periods of the churches hitherto, excepting the apostolic one; but will in this period be restored to their pristine purity and glory; hence it is promised to this church, and that it represents, that because it kept the word of Christ's patience, truly and faithfully, it should be kept from the hour of temptation that should come on all the earth; and is exhorted to hold fast what she had, both the doctrines and ordinances, as they were delivered by Christ and His apostles, and as she now held them in the truth and purity of them. These are the reasons why I believe with a firm and unshaken faith, that the time is coming, and I hope will not be long, when infant-baptism will be no more practiced in the world.

Since, now at this time, we are greatly and justly alarmed with the increase of popery; in order to put a stop to it, let us begin at home, and endeavor to remove all remains of it among ourselves; so shall we with the better grace, and it may be hoped, with greater success oppose and hinder the spread of it.

#### POSTSCRIPT

The writer who lately appeared in a newspaper, under the name of Candidus, having been obliged to quit his mountebank-stage on which he held forth to the public for a few days; has, in his great humility, condescended to deal out his packets, in a less popular way; under the title of, *The True Scripture-Doctrine of the Mode and Subjects of Christian Baptism, etc.*, in six letters. It is quite unreasonable that we should be put, by every impertinent scribbler, to the drudgery of answering, what has been answered over and over again in this controversy. However I shall make short work of this writer, and therefore I have only put him to, and shall only give him a little gentle correction at the cart's tail, to use the phrase of a late, learned professor, in one of our universities, with respect to the discipline of a certain Bishop.

The first and second letters of Candidus, in the newspaper, are answered in marginal notes on my sermon upon baptism, and published along with it. His third letter is a mean piece of buffoonery and scurrility; it begins with a trite, vulgar proverb, in low language, fit only for the mouth of a hostler or a carman; and his friends seem to have spoiled one or other of these, by making him a parson. He goes on throughout the whole of the letter, as one that is in great haste,

running after his wits, to seek for them, having lost them, if ever he had any; and it concludes with a poor, pitiful, foolish burlesque, mixed with slander and falsehood, on an innocent gentleman; quite a stranger to him, and could never have offended him, but by a conscientious regard to what he believed was his duty. However, by this base and inhumane treatment, it appears that his moral character is unimpeachable, or otherwise it would have been nibbled at. His fourth letter begins with representing the sermon published, as so mangled, changed, altered and added to, that it has scarce any remains of its original; in which he must be condemned by all that heard it: and he has most unluckily charged one clause as an addition, which, there cannot be one in ten but will remember it; it is this, "if any man can find any others in his (the jailer's) house, besides all that were in it, he must be reckoned a very sagacious person;" and he himself, in his first letter published before the sermon was, has an oblique glance at it; calling me, in a sneering way, "the sagacious doctor." What he says in the following part of the letter, concerning the subjects of baptism, and what he intended to say concerning the mode in another letter, which was prevented, I suppose are contained in a set of letters now published; and which are addressed, not to Mr. Printer, who cast him off, but to a candid Anti-paedobaptist, and indeed the epithet of candid better agrees with that sort of people than with himself, of which he seems conscious, if he has any conscience at all; for it looks as if he had not, or he could never have set out with such a most notorious untruth, and impudent falsehood; affirming that I said in my sermon, that "the ten commandments, styled the moral law, were not binding on Christ's disciples:" a greater untruth could not well have been told: my writings in general testify the contrary, and particularly two sermons I have published, one called "The Law Established by the Gospel," and the other, "The Law in the Hand of Christ;" which are sufficient to justify me from such a wicked calumny; and the paragraph with which my sermon begins, attacked by him, and which I declare, are the words I delivered in the pulpit, that "the ten commandments, are the commands of God, and to be observed by Christians under the present dispensation;" for which I quoted 1 Cor. 9:21, this I say, must stare him in the face, and awaken his guilty conscience, if not seared as with a

red hot iron; which I fear is his case. As for his flings at eternal justification, which he has lugged into this controversy, and his grand concluding and common argument against it, that it is eternal nonsense, I despise; he has not a head for that controversy: and I would only put him in mind of what Dr. [John] Owen said to [Richard] Baxter, who charged him with holding it, "What would the man have me say? I have told him, I am not of that opinion; would he have me swear to it, that I am not? but though I am not, I know better and wiser men than myself that do hold it."

Somebody in the newspaper observing that this man was froward and perverse, and fearing he should do hurt to religion in general, in order to divert him from it, and guide him another way; complimented him with being a man of wit, and of abilities; and the vain young man fancies he really is one: and being a witty youth, and of abilities, he has been able to produce an instance of infant-baptism about 1500 years before Christian baptism was instituted; though he must not have the sole credit of it, because it has been observed before him: the instance is of the passage of the Israelites through the sea, at which time, he says, their children were baptized, as well as they: come then, says he, in very polite language, this is one scripture-instance; but if he had had his wits about him, he might have improved this instance, and strengthened his argument a little more; by observing that there was a mixed multitude, that came with the Israelites out of Egypt, and with them passed through the sea, with their children also. And since he makes mention of Nebuchadnezzar's baptism, it is much he did not try to make it out that his children were baptized also, then or at some other time. This is the true scripture doctrine, of the subjects of Christian baptism, according to his title.

That the Jews received their proselytes by baptism, before the times of Christ, he says, I know; but if I do, he does not. I observe, he is very ready to ascribe great knowledge of things to me, which he himself is ignorant of; I am much obliged to him: the great names he opposes to me, don't frighten me; I have read their writings and testimonies, and know what they were capable of producing, and to what little purpose; though I must confess, it is amazing to me, that any men of learning should give into such a notion, that Christian baptism is founded upon

a tradition of the baptism or dipping of proselytes with the Jews; of which tradition there is not the least hint, neither in the Old nor in the New Testament; nor in the Apocryphal writings between both; nor in Josephus; nor in Philo the Jew; nor in the Jewish Misnah, or book of traditions; compiled in the second century, or at the beginning of the third, whether of the Jerusalem or Babylonian editions. I am content to risk that little reputation I have for Jewish learning, on this single point; if any passage can be produced in the Misnah, mentioning such a tradition of the Jews, admitting proselytes by baptism or dipping, whether adult or children. I own it is mentioned in the Gemara, both Jerusalem and Babylonian, a work of later times, but not in the Misnah; though Dr. Gale has allowed it without examination. The only passage in it which Dr. Wall refers to from Selden, though not fully expressed, is this "a female stranger, a captive, a maiden, which are redeemed and become proselytes, and are made free; being under (the next paragraph is above) three years and one day old, are allowed the matrimonial dowry;" i.e., at marriage: but not a tittle is here or anywhere else in the Misnah, of receiving either minors or adult as proselytes by baptism or dipping: and supposing such a Jewish tradition, five hundred, or three hundred, or two hundred years after Christ; or even so many years before Christ, of what avail would it be? He must be strangely bigoted to an hypothesis, to believe that our Lord, who so severely inveighed against the traditions of the Jews, and particularly those concerning their baptisms or dippings; should found His New Testament ordinance of baptism, on a tradition of theirs, without excepting it from the other traditions, and without declaring His will it should be continued, which He has not done; and yet this, as Dr. Hammond suggests, in the basis of infant-baptism: to what wretched shifts must the Paedobaptists be driven for a foundation to place infant-baptism on, as to place it on such a rotten one; a tradition of men, who at other times, are reckoned by them, themselves, the most stupid, sottish, and despicable of all men upon the face of the earth? For the farther confutation of this notion, see Sir Norton Knatchbull on 1 Pet. 3:20,21; Stennett against Ruffen, p. 61; Gale's Reflections on Wall's History of Baptism, letters 9 and 10; Rees on Infant-Baptism, P. 17-29.

I shall not pursue this writer any farther, by giving

particular answers to his arguments, objections, and queries, such as they are; but shall only refer the reader to the answers that have been already given to them: as to the threadbare argument, from Abraham's covenant, and from circumcision; for Old Testament times and cases, are chiefly dealt in, to settle a New Testament ordinance, see Ewer's Answer to Hitchin, Rees against Walker, and my answers to Dickinson, Clarke, and Bostwick. Of the unreasonableness of requiring instances of the adult baptism of children of Christian parents, in the scriptures, see my Strictures on Bostwick's Fair and Rational Vindication, etc., p. 106. Of the testimonies of the ancient Christian writers, in favour of infant-baptism, see Gale's Reflections, etc., letters 11, 12, 13; Rees on Infant-baptism, p. 150 and etc.; some treatises of mine, The Divine Right of infant-baptism Examined, etc., p. 20-25; The Argument from Apostolic Tradition, etc.; Antipaedobaptism; Reply to Clarke, p. 18-23; Strictures on Bostwick, p. 100-103.

I called upon this writer, in the notes on my sermon, to name any lexicographer of note, that ever rendered the word baptize by "perfuno" or "aspergo," "pour" or "sprinkle;" and behold! Leigh's Critica Sacra, is the only book quoted! and he the only lexicographer mentioned, if he may be so called! a book which every one of our illiterate lay-preachers, as they are called, are capable of quoting, and of confronting this writer with it; by observing that Leigh says, that "the native and proper signification of the word, is to dip into water, or to plunge under water, Jn. 3:22,23; Matt. 3:16; Acts 8:38." In proof of baptism by immersion, and of the true signification of the word, see Gale's Reflections, etc., letters 3 and 4;

Rees on Infant-baptism, p. 121; and my treatises of The Ancient Mode of Baptizing and the Defense Of It, with The Divine Right of Infant-baptism Examined, etc., p. 90, etc.

I bid this writer adieu: God give him repentance for his sins, and the pardon of them; and this I am sure he cannot charge, neither with uncharitableness, nor with Antinomianism.

When the Paedobaptists write again, it may be expected they will employ a better hand; or should they choose to fix upon one of their younger sort again; let them take care, first to wring the milk well out of his nose, before they put a pen in his hand.

## 7 A Dissertation Concerning The Baptism Of Jewish Proselytes

Thou hast given a standard to them that fear thee; that it may be displayed because of the truth

Psalm 60:4

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### Chapter 1 Of The Various Sorts Of Proselytes Among The Jews

Intending to treat of the admission of proselytes into the Jewish church by baptism, or dipping; it may be proper to consider the different sorts of proselytes among the Jews, and which of them were thus admitted, as is said. The word "proselyte" is originally Greek, and is derived, as Philo[1] observes, apo tou proselhluyenai, "from coming to", that is, from one sect or religion to another, as from heathenism to the Jewish religion; and so Suidas[2] says, proselytes are they oi proselhluyotev, "who come from" the Gentiles, and live according to the laws of God; and such an one is called by the Septuagint interpreters of Exodus 12:19, Isaiah 14:1, and by the Greek writers following them, geiwrav, which is rightly interpreted by Hesychius, such of another nation who are called proselytes to Israel; and which word comes near to the Hebrew word rg and nearer still to the Chaldee word arwyg used for a proselyte; and is, by Eusebius, interpreted epimiktouv[3], such as were mixed with Israelites.

There were two sorts of proselytes with the Jews, some say three; a proselyte of the gate; a mercenary proselyte; and a proselyte of righteousness; the first and last are most usually observed.

I. First, One sort was called *r[ç] rg* “a proselyte of the gate”; and in scripture, “the stranger that is in thy gates”, (Deut.14:21, 24:14) being a sojourner, and permitted to dwell there; hence such an one had also the name of *bwçt rg* “a proselyte inhabitant” (see Ex. 12:15; Lev. 25:45,47); one who was allowed to dwell among the Jews on certain conditions; and is generally distinguished from another sort, called a “proselyte of righteousness”, of whom more hereafter. Though the Jews, not always consistent with themselves, and so not in this matter, sometimes interpret “the stranger in the gate”, of a proselyte inhabitant, or a proselyte by inhabitation, and sometimes of a proselyte of righteousness. So Nachmanides[4], having explained the stranger in the gate of a proselyte inhabitant, or one who obliged himself to keep the seven precepts of Noah, according to the usual interpretation of it, observes; “Our doctors interpret it differently, for they say, ‘thy stranger within thy gate’, simply denotes, a ‘proselyte of righteousness.’” So that according to them, such a stranger may be taken both for the one and for the other, in different respects; but commonly the proselyte inhabitant is only understood; who in general was obliged to promise, that he would not be guilty of idolatry, or worship any idol[5]; this he was to promise before three witnesses, for it is asked, “who is *Ger Toshab*; that is, a proselyte allowed to dwell in Israel? (the answer is) Whoever takes upon him, in the presence of three neighbours, that he will not commit idolatry.” It follows, “R. Meir, and the wise men say, whoever takes upon him the seven precepts which the sons of Noah obliged themselves to observe.” Others say, “these do not come into the general rule of such a proselyte. Who then is one? He is a proselyte who eats what dies of itself; (or) who takes upon him to keep all the commandments in the law, except that which forbids the eating of things which die of themselves[6];” but the usual account of such a proselyte is, that he agrees to observe the seven precepts enjoined the sons of Noah[7]; six of which were given to Adam, the first man, and the seventh was added to them, and given to Noah, and are as follow[8]:.a. Concerning idolatry; by this a son of Noah was forbid to worship the sun, moon, and stars, and images of any sort; nor might he erect a statue, nor plant a grove, nor make any image. b. Concerning blaspheming the name of God. Such an one might not blaspheme, neither the proper

name of God, Jehovah; nor any of his surnames, titles, and epithets. c. Concerning shedding of blood, or murder, the breach of which command he was guilty of, if he slew one, though an embryo in his mother’s womb; and one who pursued another, when he could have escaped from him with the loss of one of his members, etc. d. Concerning uncleanness, or impure copulations; of which there were six sorts forbidden a son of Noah; as, with an own mother, with a father’s wife (or stepmother), with another man’s wife, with his sister by the mother’s side, with a male, or with mankind, and with a beast. e. Concerning rapine, or robbery and theft; of which such were guilty, whether they robbed a Gentile or an Israelite, or stole money, or men, or suppressed the wages of an hireling; and the like. f. Concerning the member of a living creature, taken from it while alive, and eating it: this is the command, it is said, which was to Noah, and his sons, and of which the Jews interpret Genesis 9:4. g. Concerning judgments or punishments to be inflicted on those who broke the above laws: this command obliged them to regard the directions, judgment, and sentence of the judges appointed to see the said laws put into execution, and to punish delinquents.

Now such Gentiles, who laid themselves under obligation to observe these commands, had leave to dwell among the Israelites, though not in everyone of their cities; not in Jerusalem particularly[9]; wherefore those devout men and proselytes said to dwell in Jerusalem, Acts 2:5,10 were not proselytes of the gate, but proselytes of righteousness. Nor are such sort of proselytes now received, only while the Jews lived in their own land, and were not under the jurisdiction of another people; or as they express it, while jubilees were in use and observed[10]. This sort of proselytes, though they did not enjoy the privileges the proselytes of righteousness did, yet some they had; they might worship and pray in the court of the Gentiles, though not in the temple; they might offer burnt offerings, though not other sacrifices; their poor were fed with the poor of Israel, their sick were visited by Israelites, and their dead were buried with them[11].

Such proselytes as these, as they were not obliged to circumcision, nor to other commands peculiar to the Jews; none but those before observed; so neither were they baptized, or dipped, when made proselytes, which is said of others. Maimonides[12] affirms of

such a proselyte, that he is neither circumcised nor dipped. Bishop Kidder[13] is therefore mistaken in saying, that proselytes of the gate were baptized, but not circumcised.

II. Secondly, there was another sort of proselytes, which are taken notice of, at least, by some as such; who were called  $\mu\text{yrk}\acute{\kappa}$  “mercenary” ones, and are reckoned as between proselytes of the gate and Gentiles. In Exodus 12:44,45 a mercenary, or “hired servant”, is distinguished from a servant bought with money; he being hired only for a certain time, as for six years; and also from a foreigner, a stranger in the gate, a proselyte of the gate; and both of them are distinguished from the servant bought with money, who was circumcised, and might eat of the passover, when neither of the other might, being both uncircumcised; and therefore R. Levi Barzelonita[14] is thought to be mistaken when he says, “a mercenary is a proselyte, who is circumcised, but not dipped; for so the wise men explain it:” but if a stranger or proselyte of the gate was not circumcised, much less a mercenary, who was far below him; besides, if he was circumcised, he might eat of the passover; which is denied him: and so Ben Melech observes[15] of these two, the foreigner and the hired servant; they are Gentiles, and uncircumcised: and Abendana, in his notes upon him, from the Rabbins, says, the former is a proselyte inhabitant, or a proselyte of the gate, who takes upon him the seven precepts of the sons of Noah; the latter is a servant whose body is not possessed, that is, is not in the possession of his master, not being bought with his money, is only an hired servant, and so not circumcised. But perhaps Jarchi’s note will reconcile this to what Barzelonita says; “Toshab, a foreigner, this is a proselyte inhabitant; and Shacir, or hired servant, this is a Gentile;” but what is the meaning? are they not uncircumcised? (that is, both of them) and it is said, “No uncircumcised person shall eat thereof”: but they are as a circumcised Arabian, and a circumcised Gabnunite, or Gabonite[16], though circumcised yet not by Israelites, but by Gentiles, which gave no right to the passover. Hottinger[17] thinks these mercenary proselytes, and with him Leusden[18] seems to agree, were mechanic strangers, who left their own country, and came among the Jews for the sake of learning some mechanic art; and who, conforming to certain laws and conditions, prescribed by the Jews, were

permitted to sojourn with them until they had learnt the art. There are but few writers who speak of this sort of proselytes. However, it seems agreed on all hands, that whether circumcised or not, they were not baptized, or dipped.

III. Thirdly, There was another sort of proselyte, called  $qdx\ rg$  a “proselyte of righteousness”[19]; see Deuteronomy 16:20 a stranger circumcised, and who is so called when he is circumcised; and sometimes  $tyrb\ \acute{b}\ rg$  “a proselyte, the son of the covenant”[20], the same as an Israelite; see Acts 3:25. This sort of proselytes were the highest, and had in greatest esteem; who not only submitted to circumcision, but embraced all the laws, religion, and worship of the Jews; and were in all respects as they, and enjoyed equally all privileges and immunities, civil and religious, as they did; except being made a king, though one might if his mother was of Israel[21]; and being members of the great Sanhedrim, yet might be of the lesser, provided they were born of an Israelitish woman[22]; nay, even such have been in the great Sanhedrim, as Shemaiah and Abtalion, who were of the posterity of Sennacherib[23]; but their mothers being Israelites, it was lawful for them to judge, that is, in the great Sanhedrim; for one was the prince, and the other the father of that court[24]. So the Jews say[25], the posterity of Jethro sat in Lishcat Gazith, that is, in the great Sanhedrim, which sat in that room; and for which they quote 1 Chronicles 2:55 yet it has been a question, whether a proselyte should be made a public minister, or president of the congregation, called  $rwbx\ jyl\acute{\kappa}$ ; but the common opinion was, that he might be one[26]: of this sort of proselytes, of whom they boast, some were persons of note for learning, or wealth, or worldly grandeur[27]; but without sufficient ground. Some, they own, were not sincere who became proselytes, either through fear, or to gratify some sensual lust, or for some sinister end or another. Some were called “proselytes of lions”[28], who became so through fear; as the Samaritans, because of the lions sent among them, and that they might be freed from them, embraced the worship of God, though they retained also the worship of their idols. Others were called “proselytes of dreams”; who were directed and encouraged to become proselytes by such who pretended to skill in dreams, as being omens of good things to them. Though some, in

the place referred to, instead of twmlj “dreams”, read “windows”, and render the words “proselytes of windows”, so Alting[29], meaning the windows of their eyes, who, to gratify the lust of the eyes, became proselytes; as Shechem, being taken with the sight of Dinah, submitted to circumcision for the sake of her; and others were called “proselytes of Mordecai and Esther”, who were like those who became Jews in their times (Esther 8:17) through fear of the Jews, as there expressed. Others were true and sincere proselytes, who cordially embraced the Jewish religion, and from the heart submitted to the laws and rules of it; these were called  $\mu\gamma\rho\rho\gamma\ \mu\gamma\rho\beta$  “drawn proselytes”[30], who were moved of themselves, and of their own good will, without any sinister bias, and out of real love and affection to the Jewish religion, embraced it. Compare the phrase with John 6:44. And such, they say[31], all proselytes will be in the time to come, or in the days of the Messiah; and yet sometimes they say, that then none will be received[32]: and when persons propose to be proselytes, the Jews are very careful to ask many questions, in order to try whether they are sincere or not; and such as they take to be sincere they speak very highly of; they say[33], “Greater are the proselytes at this time, than the Israelites when they stood on mount Sinai; because they saw the lightning, heard the thunder, and the sound of the trumpet; but these saw and heard none of these things, and yet have taken upon them the yoke of the kingdom, and are come under the wings of the Shechinah” though elsewhere, and in common, they speak but slightly of them, and say; “They are as grievous to Israel as a scab in the skin, or as a razor to it[34], because they often turn back again, and seduce the Israelites, and carry them off with them; yea, they say they stop the coming of the Messiah[35].” However, they have a saying[36] which shows some regard to them; “A proselyte, even to the tenth generation, do not despise a Syrian, or an heathen before him, he being present, or to his face; because till that time their minds are supposed to incline towards their own people;” and so it is said[37], the daughter of a proselyte may not be married to a priest, unless her mother is an Israelitess, even unto the tenth generation. And there is another saying[38] of theirs, Do not trust a proselyte until the twenty fourth generation, that is, never; not only priests, Levites, and Israelites, but even bastards, and the Nethinim,

or Gibeonites, were preferred to proselytes[39]. Some of these sayings do not seem so well to agree with the words of Christ (Matthew 23:15) to reconcile which, it is thought[40], that while the temple was standing, the desire of making proselytes was stronger than after it was destroyed by the Romans; resenting that, they became indifferent about making proselytes, and were unconcerned about the salvation of the Gentiles, and contented themselves with receiving such only who freely came over to them. It never was deemed so honourable to be the descendants of proselytes, as of original Hebrews. Hence the apostle Paul gloried that he was an Hebrew of the Hebrews, both his parents being Hebrews. A Rabbi of note among the Jews, whose parents were both proselytes, or Gentiles, is called not by his proper name, Jochanan, but Ben Bag-Bag; that is, the son of a Gentile man, and the son of a Gentile woman; and for the same reason he is called in a following paragraph, Ben He-He, numerically He being the same with Bag; though it is said, these abbreviations were used from reverence to him, and a regard for him[41]; and, indeed, the Jews were not to reproach and upbraid proselytes with what they and their ancestors had been, or had done; they were not to say to a proselyte, Remember thy former works; nor were they to say to the sons of proselytes, Remember the works of your fathers[42]; for this is the affliction and oppression of them, as they understand it, they are cautioned against (Ex. 22:21; Lev. 19:33), nay, they were to love them as themselves, because the Lord God loved the stranger (Lev. 19:34; Deut.10:18), for of proselytes of righteousness they interpret these passages[43].

Now it is of this sort of proselytes, proselytes of righteousness, that it is said, they were admitted into covenant, and into the Jewish church, as the Israelites were; the males by circumcision, by tlybj “baptism”, or dipping, and by sacrifice; and the females by baptism, or dipping, and by sacrifice; and it is the baptism or dipping of these proselytes, that will be inquired into, and be the subject of the following Dissertation.

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## Chapter 2 The Occasion Of This Dissertation

I. Several learned men, and some of our own nation, whom I shall chiefly take notice of, have asserted, that it was a custom or rite used by the Jews before the times of John the Baptist, Christ, and his

apostles, to receive proselytes into their church by baptism, or dipping, as well as by circumcision; and these both adult and infants; and that John and Christ took up the rite of baptizing from thence, and practised, and directed to the practice of it, as they found it; and which, they think, accounts for the silence about infant baptism in the New Testament, it being no new nor strange practice. The writers among us of most note, who make mention of it are, Broughton, Ainsworth, Selden, Hammond, and Lightfoot; men justly esteemed for their learning and knowledge in Jewish affairs. Mr. Hugh Broughton is the first of our nation I have met with who speaks of it. He says[44], "The Babylonian Talmud, and Rambam (Maimonides) record, that in the days of David and Solomon, when many thousands of heathens became proselytes, they were admitted only by baptism, without circumcision. So now, when the New Testament was to be made for the many, that is, for all nations, baptism was not strange; neither is John an astonishment for that; but demanded whether he be Elijah or Christ, or that special prophet named in Deuteronomy." A little after he observes, that "Christ from baptism used of them (the Jews) 'without commandment, and of small authority,' authorizes a seal of entering into the rest of Christ, using the Jews' 'weakness' as an allurements thither." Where, by the way, he makes this usage to be "without commandment", that is, of God, and to be but of "small authority", even from men, and a piece of "weakness" of the Jews, and yet authorized by Christ; which seems incredible. Mr. Henry Ainsworth is the next I shall mention, who takes notice of this custom. His words are[45], "That we may the better know how they (the Jews) were wont to receive heathens into the church of Israel; I will note it from the Hebrew doctors:" and then gives a large quotation from Maimonides; the substance of which is, that as by three things Israel entered into the covenant, by circumcision, and baptism, and sacrifice; in like manner heathen proselytes were admitted; on which he makes this remark: "Whereupon baptism was nothing strange unto the Jews when John the Baptist began his ministry (Matthew 3:5,6), they made a question of his person that did it, but not of the thing itself (John 1:25)." Dr. Hammond, another learned man, speaks of this same custom or rite with the Jews: he says[46], that "proselytes born of heathen parents,

and become proselytes of justice, were admitted by the Jews, not only by circumcision, (and while the temple stood) by sacrifice; but also with the ceremony or solemnity of washing, that is, ablution of the whole body, done solemnly in a river, or other such great place or receptacle of water." So he says, Jethro, Moses's father-in-law, was made a proselyte in this way; and that this ceremony of initiation belonged not only to those, which being of years, came over from heathenism to the Jews' religion, but also to their children infants, if their parents, or the consessus (the sanhedrim) under which they were, did in the behalf of their children desire it; and on condition that the children, when they came to age, should not renounce the Jewish religion; nay, he says, the native Jews themselves were thus baptized; for all which he refers to the Talmud, Tr. Repud. by which I suppose he means the tract Gittin, concerning divorces. But I have not met with anything relating thereunto in that treatise. For the same purposes it is quoted by Dr. Wall, who, I suppose, goes upon the authority of Dr. Hammond, since he acknowledges he was not so well acquainted with the books to be searched for such quotations. Now Dr. Hammond observes, that "having said thus much of the custom among the Jews, it is now most easy to apply it to the practice of John, and after of Christ, 'who certainly took this ceremony from them';" and further observes, that by this it appears, how little needful it will be to defend the baptism of Christian infants from the law of circumcising the infants among the Jews; "the foundation being far more fitly laid" in that other of Jewish baptism. Yea, in another of his works he suggests that this custom is the "true basis of infant baptism"[47]. The very learned Mr. Selden is more large in his quotations in various parts of his works[48], from both Talmuds and other Jewish writers, concerning this rite and custom; which authorities produced by him, and others, will be given and considered hereafter. At the close of which he makes these remarks[49]; that the Jewish baptism was as it were a "transition" into Christianity, or however, a shadow of a transition, not to be passed over in silence; and that it should be adverted to, that the rite or sacrament of baptism, used at the beginning of Christianity, and of the gospel by John, and by the apostles, was not introduced as a "new action", and as

not before heard of, “even as a religious action”, but as well known to the Hebrews, as a rite of initiation, from the use and discipline of their ancestors, and as joined with circumcision. Dr. Lightfoot, who must be allowed to be well versed in Jewish literature, has produced the same authorities Selden has, if not more, in support of the said rite or custom, as in early use with the Jews, and exults and triumphs abundantly over the Antipaedobaptists in favour of infant baptism, on account thereof: he asserts, that “baptism had been ‘in long and common use’ among them (the Jews) many generations before John the Baptist came; they using this for admission of proselytes into the church, and baptizing men, women, and children for that end:—hence a ready reason may be given why there is ‘so little mention’ (no mention at all) of baptizing infants in the New Testament; and that there is neither ‘plain precept’ nor ‘example’ for it, as some ordinarily plead; the reason is, because there needed none, baptizing infants having been as ‘ordinarily used’ in the church of the Jews, as ever it hath been in the Christian church:—that baptism was no strange thing when John came baptizing; but the rite was known so well by everyone, that nothing was better known what baptism was, and therefore there needed not such punctual and exact rules about the manner and object of it, as there had needed, if it had never been seen. before:—that Christ took up baptism as it was ‘in common and known use,’ and ‘in ordinary and familiar practice’ among that nation; and therefore gave no rules for the manner of baptizing, nor for the age and sex of persons to be baptized, which was well enough known already, and needed no ‘rule’ to be prescribed:—observing how very known and frequent the use of baptism was among the Jews, the reason appears very easy, why the Sanhedrim, by their messengers, inquired not of John, concerning the reason of baptism, but concerning the authority of the baptizer; not what baptism meant; but whence he had a licence so to baptize (John 1:25). Hence also the reason appears why the New Testament does not ‘prescribe,’ by some more ‘accurate rule,’ who the persons are to be baptized:—the whole nation knew well enough that little children used to be baptized; there was no need for a precept for that, which had ever by common use prevailed[50].” Dr. Wall, upon these authorities, has thought fit to premise an account of this Jewish

baptism, to his history of infant baptism, as serving greatly the cause of it, and as throwing light upon the words of Christ and his apostles, concerning it, and the primitive practice of it; and, animated by such authorities, every puny writer, who does not know his right hand from his left in this matter, takes it up, and swaggers with it. And, indeed, scarce any will now venture in the defence of infant baptism without it. This is the last refuge and dernier resort of the Paedobaptists; and, indeed, a learned baronet[51] of our nation says, he knows not of any stronger argument in proof of infant baptism than this is.

Now since so great a stress is laid upon it, and it is made a matter of such great importance, as to be a “transition” into Christianity, and to be “closely connected” with Christian baptism; that from whence it is taken, and is the “rule” to direct how to proceed, both with respect to the manner and objects of it; yea, is the “basis and foundation” of infant baptism, and the “strongest argument” in proof of it; and which makes other arguments, heretofore thought of great weight, now “unnecessary”: it is highly proper to inquire what proof can be given of such a rite and custom being in use among the Jews, before the times of John Baptist, Christ, and his apostles; and if so, what force and influence such a custom can and ought to have on the faith and practice of Christians. The proof of which will next be considered.

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### **Chapter 3 The Proof Of The Baptism Of Jewish Proselytes Inquired Into**

#### **Whether There Is Any Proof Of It Before, At, Or Quickly After The Times Of John And Christ**

The inquiry to be made is, whether there are writings or records before the times of John, Christ, and his apostles, or at or near those times, or in the third and fourth century from the birth of Christ, or before the Talmuds were written; which make any mention of, or refer to any such rite and custom in use among the Jews, as to admit proselytes to their religion by baptism, or dipping, along with other things. Now upon search it will be found,

I. First, That nothing of this kind appears in the writings of the Old Testament, which chiefly concern the Jewish nation. We read of many who either were, or are supposed and said to be made proselytes; as the Shechemites in Jacob’s time, the multitude that came

out of Egypt with the Israelites[52], Jethro, Moses's father in law[53], Shuah[54], Tamar[55], Rahab[56], and Ruth[57]; and many in the times of Mordecai and Esther, who became Jews[58], Esther 8:17 but not a word of their being admitted proselytes by baptism. Dr. Lightfoot indeed says[59], that Jacob admitted the proselytes of Shechem and Syria into his religion by baptism, but offers no proof of it; the Jews[60] pretend, that Pharaoh's daughter was a proselytess, and the Babylonian Talmud[61], quoting the passage in Exodus 2:5. "And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself"; R. Jochanan says, she came down to wash herself from the idols of her father's house, and the Gloss on the place is, "to dip on account of proselytism;" but then the Gloss is the work of Jarchi, a writer in the twelfth century; and was it so said in the Talmud itself, it would be no sufficient proof the fact. Dr. Hammond says, that Jethro was made a proselyte this way; but produces no scripture for it; but refers to the Talmud, Tr. Repud; but there it is not to be found, as before observed: and Schindler[62] asserts the same, as said by the Jews, and seems to refer to the same Tract in general, without directing to any particular place: and from him Hammond seems to have taken it upon trust, and some other writers also, without examination; since no such passage is to be found in that Tract. Pfeiffer[63], in proof of it, refers to a book called Zennorena, a commentary on the law, written in Hebrew-German, in the seventeenth century, by R. Jacob Ben Isaac, a German Jew[64]. Indeed, in the Talmud[65], Jethro is said to become a proselyte, but no mention is made in what manner he was made one; and elsewhere[66] explaining these words, djyw "and Jethro rejoiced", says Rab, he made a sharp sword to pass over his flesh; that is, according to the Gloss, he circumcised himself, and became a proselyte; but not a word of his baptism, or dipping; and so the Targum on Exodus 18:6,7 is, "And he said to Moses, I Jethro, thy father-in-law, am come unto thee 'to be made a proselyte'; but if thou wilt not receive me for myself, receive me for the sake of thy wife, and her two children, who are with her; and Moses went out from under the clouds of glory to meet his father-in-law, and bowing himself, kissed him, and he made him a proselyte; but nothing is said of the manner of doing it." Mr. Broughton also, as before quoted, says, that the Babylonian Talmud, and Rambam record, that

in the days of David and Solomon, many thousands of heathens were made proselytes, and admitted by baptism only; but this instance is not to be met with in the Babylonian Talmud; yea, that expressly denies it in two different places[67]; and in which it is asserted that they did not receive proselytes neither in the days of David, nor in the days of Solomon; Solomon's wife, Pharaoh's daughter, is indeed excepted; because the reason for which they say, proselytes were not then received; namely, because they might be desirous of being made proselytes, that they might be admitted to the king's table, could have no influence on her, since she was the daughter of a mighty king; and yet it is said[68] by some, that though it was Solomon's intention to make her a proselyte, yet he was not able to do it; and she became one of his troublers; and by what is said of her, in 2 Chronicles 8:11 it looks as if she did not become a proselyte; Rambam, or Maimonides, indeed, to reconcile what later writers have said, with those words of the Talmudists, have contrived a distinction between the Sanhedrim and private persons; as if proselytes, though not received in those times by the former, were by the latter. He says[69], there were many proselytes in those times who were made so before private persons, but not before the Sanhedrim; he owns the Sanhedrim did not receive them, and though they were dipped, yet not by their order, and with their consent; but he produces no passage of scripture to support this private dipping; nor do the scriptures any where speak of such numbers of proselytes in those days, and much less of their baptism; and the strangers, who in the Greek version are called proselytes, whom Solomon numbered and employed at the building of the temple (2 Chron. 2:17), at most could only be proselytes of the gate, not of righteousness, and so there can be no pretence for their admission by baptism, or dipping; nor is there anything of this kind with respect to any persons to be found in the writings of the Old Testament. There is a plain and express law for the admission of proselytes to the Jewish religion, and for what, as a qualification, to partake of the ordinances and privileges of it; particularly to eat of the passover; and that is the circumcision of them, with all their males; and on this condition, and on this only, they and theirs were admitted without any other rite annexed unto it, they were obliged unto;

nor does it appear that ever any other was used; no, not this of baptism; there was but one law to the stranger or proselyte, and to the home born Israelite (see Exodus 12:48,49). There were proselytes in the times of Hezekiah (2 Chron. 30:25) who came out of the land of Israel, to eat the passover at Jerusalem, who therefore must be circumcised, according to the said law; but there is no reason to believe they were baptized. There was a law concerning the marriage of a captive woman taken in war (Deut. 21:10-14), previous to which she must become a proselytess; and the law enjoins various particular rites to be observed in order to it, as shaving her head, paring her nails, and putting off the raiment of her captivity; but not a word of her baptism; which one would think could never be omitted, had such a custom prevailed as early as the times of Moses and Jacob, as is pretended. There were various bathings, baptisms, or dippings incumbent on the Israelites, and so upon such proselytes who were upon an equal footing with them, and equally under obligation to obey the ceremonial law; which consisted of various washings, baptisms, or dippings, yet none of them for proselytism; but for purification from one uncleanness or another, in a ceremonial sense: these seem to be what a learned writer<sup>[70]</sup> calls "aquilustria", "lustrations by water"; which he thinks it is clear the captive Jews in Babylon observed, from having their solemn meetings by rivers (Ezek. 3:15; Ezra 8:15,21), but it is not so clear they had their abode in such places, whether for a longer or shorter time, on account of them; and it is still less clear what he further says, that these lustrations had a promise of grace annexed to them, were sacraments of the Old Testament, and a type of our baptism. However, though he supposes the returning Jews and proselytes were circumcised, he does not pretend they were baptized; nor does he attempt to prove proselyte baptism from hence. Among the ten families said<sup>[71]</sup> by the Jews to come out of Babylon, the proselytes are one sort; but they say nothing of their baptism (see Ezra 6:21). As for those scriptures of the Old Testament the Rabbins make use of to justify this custom of theirs, they will be considered hereafter.

II. Secondly, whereas there are several books called Apocrypha, supposed to be written between the writing of the books of the Old Testament and those of the New, and are generally thought to be written by

Jews, and to contain things which chiefly have respect to them; and though there is sometimes mention made in them of proselytes to the Jewish religion, yet not a syllable of any such rite or custom, as of baptism or dipping at the admission of them; particularly of Achior the Ammonite, in the times of Judith; upon her cutting off the head of Olophernes it is said, that "he, seeing all that the God of Israel did, strongly believed in God, and circumcised the flesh of his foreskin, and was added to the house of Israel unto this day;" that is, he and his posterity continued in the Jewish religion. Now here is mention made of his being circumcised, previous to his addition, or his being proselyted to the Jewish church; but not a word of baptism, or dipping, in order to it; see Judith 14:6 in the Apocrypha.

III. Thirdly, mention is made of proselytes in the New Testament (Matthew 23:15; Acts 2:10, 6:5, 13:43), but nothing is said concerning their admission, and the manner of it. Indeed, in the Ethiopic version of Matthew 23:15 the words are rendered, "They baptize one proselyte"; which seems to have respect to the custom under consideration; but then this is but a translation, and not a just one. The Ethiopic version is not only reckoned not very good, but of no great antiquity. Ernestus Gerhard says<sup>[72]</sup> of the antiquity of it, he dare not affirm anything certain. And Ludolph, in his history of Ethiopia, relates<sup>[73]</sup>, that he could find nothing certain concerning the author and time of this version but thinks it probable it was made at the time of the conversion of the Habessines, or a little after, but not in the times of the apostles, as some have affirmed; and in the margin, a little after, he observes, that in an Ethiopic martyrology, St. Frumentius, called abbot of Salama, is said to be the author of it; who, according to another place in the said history<sup>[74]</sup>, seems to have lived in the fourth century, in the times of Athanasius, and is thought to be the first founder of the Christian religion in Ethiopia, and the first bishop in it. Scaliger takes the Ethiopic version to be a recent one; and Deuteronomy Dieu<sup>[75]</sup>, from what the author or authors of the version of the evangelist Matthew, add at the end of it, suspects that they were of the Maronites, who became subject to the pope of Rome A. D. 1182, and so this version is too late a testimony for the antiquity of such a custom; and the closing the translation of some of the epistles with desiring the prayers of Peter

and others, shows what sort of persons they were who translated them, and in what times they lived. The title of the book of the Revelation in this version, is, "The vision of John, which John was bishop of the metropolis of Constantinople, when he suffered persecution;" by which it appears not to be ancient. Hence Dr. Owen[76] calls it a "novel" endeavour of an illiterate person; and the translation of the clause itself in Matthew 23:15 is censured by Ludolphus[77] as ridiculous; the word by which it is rendered being used in the Ethiopic language to convert a man to Christianity, or to make a man a Christian; which is by it absurdly attributed to the Scribes and Pharisees.

IV. Fourthly, as there are no traces of this custom in the writings before, at, or about the times of John, Christ, and his apostles; so neither are there any in those which were written in any short time after; as, not in Philo the Jew, who lived in the first century; who, though he is said by some to be ignorant of Jewish customs, yet one would think he could not be ignorant of such as were used at the admission of proselytes; since he lived at Alexandria, where it may be supposed many proselytes were, more than in Judea, and of the manner of their admission he could not but have knowledge, both then and in former times; and he makes mention of proselytes, and of them as equally partakers of the same privileges, and to be treated with the same honour and respect as home born citizens[78], and as they were admitted by Moses; but is altogether silent about this custom of baptizing, or dipping them; nor is there the least trace or hint of this custom in any Rabbinical books, said by the Jews to be written a little before, or after; such as the books of Bahir, Zohar, the Targums of Onkelos on the Pentateuch, and of Jonathan Ben Uzziel on the prophets.

V. Fifthly, Josephus, the Jewish historian, lived in the same age, a little after Philo, was well versed in the affairs of the Jews, even in their religious rites and ceremonies, having been a priest among them. He not only observes, that many of the Gentiles came over to their religion[79], but even speaks of whole nations who became Jews, and that they were made so by circumcision; as of the Idumaeans, whom Hyrcanus conquered, and suffered to remain in their own land, on condition that they would be circumcised, and conform to the laws of the Jews; and who, out of love

to their country, did comply with circumcision, and so became Jews[80], and of the Ituraeans, whom Aristobulus fought against, and added part of their country to Judaea, and obliged the inhabitants, if they would remain in their country, to be circumcised, and live after the laws of the Jews; and quotes Strabo, who, upon the authority of Timogenes, says, that he enlarged the country of the Jews, and made part of the country of Ituraea theirs, joining them to them by the bond of circumcision[81]. By which accounts it appears, that both these people were made Jews, or were proselyted to them by circumcision; but not a word is said of their baptism, or dipping; which, according to this custom, as is said, must have been of men, women, and children, which, had it been practised, could not have been well omitted by the historian. He also speaks[82] of Helena, queen of Adiabene, and of her son Izates, embracing the Jewish religion; and relates how desirous Izates was of being circumcised, that he might be a perfect Jew, without which he could not; but for a time he was dissuaded from it by his mother, and a Jew merchant, who instructed them; but afterwards, being exhorted to perfect the work by one Eleazer, who was more skilful in Jewish affairs, he submitted to circumcision: but neither Josephus nor Eleazer say a word about his baptism, or dipping; which yet, according to the pretended custom as then prevailing, was necessary, as well as circumcision, to make him a complete proselyte. Nor is any mention made of the baptism or dipping of Helena; which, had it been at this time, would not have been omitted by the historian; since it was by that only, according to this notion, that females were then made proselytes. He also speaks[83] of another son of Helena, Monbaz, embracing the Jewish religion; but says nothing of his baptism.

VI. Sixthly, it may be inquired, whether or no any mention is made of this custom of receiving proselytes among the Jews by baptism, or dipping, in the Targums, or Chaldee paraphrases. The most ancient ones extant are those of Jonathan Ben Uzziel of the prophets, and of Onkelos of the Pentateuch; the one at the beginning, the other toward the end of the first century; in which nothing is met with concerning the admission of Jewish proselytes by dipping. The other paraphrases are by uncertain authors, and of an uncertain age. The Targum of the Megillot, or five

books of Ruth, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, Lamentations, and Esther, is written by an unknown author; it is the latest of all the Targums. In that of Esther only the phrase became Jews (Esther 8:17), is rendered, became proselytes; but nothing is said of their manner of becoming such. In that of Ruth 1:16 the requisites of a proselyte are particularly observed; where Ruth is introduced, saying, that she desired to be made a proselyte; when Naomi informs her what commands the Jews were obliged to observe; as to keep the Sabbaths and festivals, and not to walk beyond two thousand cubits (on the Sabbath day); not to lodge with Gentiles; to observe the three hundred and thirteen commands; not to worship an idol, etc. to all which Ruth is made to agree; but not a syllable is said about baptism, or dipping; whereas, that, with a sacrifice along with it, before the building of the temple, and while the temple stood, and since, without it, is the only thing, according to this notion, by which females were admitted proselytes. In the Targum of Jonathan of Genesis 9:27 the sons of Japheth are said to be made and to dwell in the school of Shem. In the Jerusalem Targum, and in that of Pseudo- Jonathan, the souls that Abraham and Sarah got in Haran (Gen. 12:5), are said to be the souls who were made proselytes by them; and In the same Targum of Genesis 21:33 at Beersheba, where Abraham planted a grove, he is said to make proselytes, and teach them the way of the world, of the world to come; but nothing more is said of the way and manner in which they were made such. In the Targum of Pseudo-Jonathan of Genesis 38:2 Judah is said to make the daughter of a Canaanite a proselytess, and then married her; and in the same Targum of Numbers 11:4 the mixed multitude who came with the Israelites out of Egypt, are interpreted proselytes; and no doubt but many of them were such; and Jarchi thinks the son of the Israelitish woman, whose father was an Egyptian, was a proselyte, since he was among the children of Israel (Lev. 24:10). And Africanus affirms[84], that the Jews genealogical tables, in which an account was kept of original Jews and of proselytes; as of Achior the Ammonite, and Ruth the Moabitess, and those who came out of Egypt mixed with the Israelites; and which continued to the times of Herod, who burnt them, that his family might not be known. But to return to the Targums; in the Pseudo-Jonathan's of Exodus 18:6,7, Jethro is made to

say to Moses, as before observed, that he was come to be made a proselyte; and Moses is said to make him one; but in what manner it is not said; and so the rest before mentioned; indeed, the same Targum of Exodus 12:44 is, "And every stranger who is sold for a servant to an Israelite, bought with money, then thou shalt circumcise him, and thou shalt 'dip him,' and so shall he eat of it;" the passover. Now in this Targum of Exodus 26:9 not only mention is made of the Misnah, but it abounds with Talmudic fables and traditions, and so must be written after both the Misnah and Talmud; and in the Targum of Numbers 24:19 mention is made of the city of Constantinople, which shows it to be not ancient, and that it is not the work of the true Jonathan. And besides all this, the case of the servant refers not to a proselyte, who became so of choice, but to a bought servant, who, according to the original law in Genesis 17:12,13, was obliged to be circumcised; and so, according to the Rabbinic custom, to be dipped; but then, according to these writers, baptism, or dipping for servitude, was a different thing from baptism, or dipping for proselytism; the one was on a civil, the other on a religious account; the one was repeated when a servant was made a free man, and the other never[85]. The same Pseudo-Jonathan in his Targum of Deuteronomy 21:13, to the conditions required of a beautiful captive, in order to be married to an Israelite, this is added, that she should dip herself, and become a proselytess in his house; but the text has nothing of it, nor the Targum of Onkelos; nor is this custom to be met with in the paraphrases of the true Jonathan; only in this, which was written after the Talmud, and does not come within the time under consideration.

VII. Seventhly, nor is there any mention of such a custom in the Jew's Misnah, or Book of Traditions; which is a collection of all the traditions among the Jews, which had been handed down from age to age, and were collected together from all parts, and written in a book of this name, in order to be preserved. This was written by R. Judah Hakkadosh, in the middle of the second century, A. D. 150 or as others in the beginning of the third century, reckoning the date of it one hundred and fifty years from the destruction of the temple; which brings it to the year 220 and here, if anywhere, one might expect to meet with this rite or custom; but no mention is made of it. Dr. Gale[86]

seems to allow it upon what Dr. Wall has transcribed from Selden, which he granted without examination. The doctor says[87], It is not only mentioned in the Gemara, but in the text of the Misnah itself; which, as he suggests, speaks of a child becoming a proselyte by baptism, or dipping; but the passage he has from Selden[88] says no such thing; which runs thus[89]; "A she stranger, a captive, and a maiden, who are redeemed and become proselytes, and are made free, being 'under' (or, as in the following section, above) three years and one day old, are allowed the matrimonial dowry;" that is, when they come to age, and are married; but not a word is here of their being made proselytes by baptism, or dipping; indeed, the tradition shows, that minors may be proselyted, and that a man's sons and daughters may become proselytes with him; but there is no need to have recourse to a tradition for this; the law is express, that a stranger who desires to be a proselyte to the Jewish religion, and to eat of the passover, must be circumcised, and all his males, and then he and all his children, males and females, may be admitted to eat of it, Exodus 12:48,49 only the circumcision of the males is required, but no baptism, or dipping of any. There is a passage in the Misnah[90], which perhaps some may think countenances this custom; which is this, "A stranger who is made a proselyte, on the evening of the passover, the house of Shammai say, he 'dips' and eats his Passover in the evening; but the house of Hillell say, he that separates from uncircumcision, is as he that separates from a grave." Now it should be observed, 1. That here is a division about this matter, be it what it may; Shammai, and his party, assert, that a proselyte newly made, might dip and eat his passover that evening; but Hillell, and his party, dissent, for a reason given; and the determination, in all cases, was generally according to Hillell, as it was in this; so we learn from Maimonides[91]. 2. This baptism, or dipping, was not on account of proselytism, but for ceremonial uncleanness; for it goes along with cases of that kind, instanced in before. The canon begins thus, "A mourner (who was unclean according to the ceremonial law) dips and eats his passover in the evening; but eats not of the holy things: he that hears tidings of the death of his (friend or relation), and who gathers to him bones, dips, and eats of the holy things:" and then it follows, "A stranger who is made

a proselyte, etc." 3. This rule, according to Shammai, was concerning one already made a proselyte, and therefore the dipping, or baptism, he prescribes to him, in order to his eating the passover that evening, was not to make him a proselyte; but for some other reason. Wherefore, 4. This strongly makes against admission of proselytes by baptism, or dipping, at that time; for if he had been made a proselyte that way, there would have been no reason for a second dipping to qualify him for the passover. 5. The case of such an one, according to Hillell, is, that being just come out of heathenism, he was unclean, as one that touched a dead man, a bone, or a grave; and therefore could not eat of the passover that evening, but must wait seven days, until he was purified according to the law in Numbers 19:11-19. 6. After all, the view of Hillell, in putting such a person off from eating the passover the evening he became a proselyte for the reason given, was with respect to the next year, and by way of caution; fearing that should he be then in any uncleanness, which required purification, he would say, Last year I did not dip, or purify myself from any uncleanness, and yet I eat, and now I must dip and eat; not considering that the last year he was an heathen, and incapable of uncleanness, according to the law, but now he was an Israelite, and capable of it; and so it is explained in the Gemara[92] and Gloss on it, and by other interpreters[93]. Besides, this baptism, or dipping, was not on account of proselytism, but was common to, and obligatory upon, a circumcised Israelite, in order to eat of the passover; as is acknowledged by all. There were several in the times of the Misnic doctors, and before the Misnah was compiled, who were persons of eminence, and said to become proselytes; as Onkelos the Targumist, who, it is said, was made a proselyte in the days of Hillell and Shammai[94], hence he is called Onkelos the proselyte[95]; some say[96] he was a sister's son of Titus the emperor, and by whom three Roman troops, sent one after another, to take him, were made proselytes also[97]; and Aquila, the author of the Greek version of the Bible, became, as is said[98], a proselyte in the times of Adrian and so the emperor Antoninus Pius, and Ketiah, a nobleman in Caesar's court, as before observed: yea, the famous R. Akiba, a Misnic doctor, was a proselyte[99]; and so was R. Meir[100]. And of the circumcision of most of these

we read; but nothing of their baptism; neither in the Misnah, nor in any other Jewish writings. Not to take notice of those very early masters of tradition Shemaia and Abtalion, before observed, who were proselytes of righteousness[101]; there were also women of note within this time, who became proselytes; as queen Helena[102], with her two sons, of whom mention is made in the Misnah[103]; and Beluria, the proselytess, who had a discourse with R. Gamaliel[104]; and the wife of Turnus Rufus, whom R. Akiba married, after she was proselyted[105]. Now though female proselytes were admitted by baptism only, as is pretended, yet nothing is said of the baptism of these women. And as there is no mention of this custom in the Misnah, so neither have I observed any notice taken of it in the Rabbot, which are commentaries on the Pentateuch and five Megillot, before named; and which were written by R. Bar Nachmoni, about A. D. 300, according to Buxtorf[106] in one of which the text in Genesis 12:5 is commented on; "And the souls they had gotten in Haran"; which the Targums of Pseudo-Jonathan and Jerusalem, interpret of the souls they proselyted, before observed; and here it is said[107], "These are the proselytes which they made:—R. Hona said, Abraham proselyted the men, and Sarah proselyted the women;" but not a word is said about the baptism or dipping of either. Yea, Abraham and Sarah are said to be proselytes[108] themselves; but it is not suggested that they were baptized. In these commentaries mention is made of the circumcision of proselytes, particularly of king Monbaz, and his brother, said to be the sons of king Ptolemy[109]; and of Aquila, the Greek translator[110]; but nothing is said of their baptism.

VIII. Eighthly, nor is this rite or custom of receiving Jewish proselytes by baptism, or dipping, once spoken of by any of the Christian fathers of the first three or four centuries; which they could not be ignorant of, if from hence Christian baptism was taken, and especially such who were Jews, or had any connection with them, or were acquainted with them, and with their affairs, as some of them were. Barnabas was a Jew, and an apostolic man, contemporary with the apostles; there is an epistle of his still extant, in which he treats chiefly of Jewish rites, and of their being typical of evangelic things, and of their having their fulfilment in them; and yet says not a word of

this initiating baptism, which he could not have failed making mention of had he known anything of it; yea, he sets himself to find out what was beforehand said concerning the ordinance of baptism; he says[111], "Let us inquire whether the Lord has taken any care to make manifest beforehand anything concerning the water;" that is, concerning baptism: and then he adds, "Concerning the water, it is written to Israel, how the baptism that leads to the remission of sins, they would not; but appointed for themselves;" meaning their superstitious worship, our Lord inveighs against; but says not a word here, nor elsewhere, of the baptism of proselytes, for which he had a fair opportunity, had he known anything of it. Justin Martyr, who lived in the second century, was a Samaritan, and had knowledge of Jewish affairs; and had a dispute with Trypho the Jew, the same with Tarphon, a Jewish doctor, frequently mentioned in the Misnah; yet neither he nor Trypho say anything of this custom. In answer to a question put by Justin, what was necessary to be observed; Trypho replies[112], "To keep the Sabbath; to be circumcised; to observe the new moons; to be baptized, or dipped, whoever touches any of these things forbidden by Moses;" meaning, that such should be baptized, or dipped, who touched a dead body, or bone, or grave, etc. but not a syllable is here of the baptism, or dipping of proselytes. And Justin himself makes mention of Jewish proselytes, and calls them circumcised proselytes[113], but not baptized; by which it seems he knew nothing of any such custom, as to baptize them; yea, he does, in effect, deny there was any such custom of baptizing any, that universally obtained among the Jews, since he speaks of a certain sect, whom he will not allow to be truly Jews, called by him Baptists[114]. Whereas, if it was the practice of the whole nation to receive proselytes by baptism, or dipping, a particular sect among them, would not be stigmatized with such a name, since they must be all Baptists, both original Jews and proselytes, if they were all admitted into the Jewish church by baptism, as is affirmed. Origen, who lived in the beginning of the third century, in the city of Alexandria, where were great numbers of Jews, with whom he was acquainted, and must know their customs, says of Heracleon, an heretic, he opposes[115], "That he was not able to show that ever any prophet baptized;" meaning, a common and ordinary one; and if none of these ever baptized,

what foundation could there be for the baptism of proselytes before the times of Christ? Epiphanius, in the fourth century, was born in Palestine, lived some time in Egypt, had great knowledge of the Jews, and of their affairs; but seems to know nothing of this custom, as used neither in former nor in later times: he says[116], neither had Abraham baptism, nor Isaac, nor Elias, nor Moses, not any before Noah and Enoch, nor the prophet Isaiah; nor those who were after him and he speaks of the Samaritans, that when they came over to the Jews, they were circumcised again; and gives an instance in Symmachus, who, when he became a proselyte, was circumcised again. So likewise he speaks of Theodotion being proselyted to Judaism[117], and of his being circumcised; but not a word of the baptism, or dipping, of either of them. He also speaks of Antipater[118], the father of Herod the king, that when he became procurator of Judaea, he was made a proselyte, and was circumcised, both he and Herod his son; but says nothing of their baptism, or dipping; so Herod is called by the Jews a Proselyte[119]; and his reign, and that of his posterity, *μῆρῃ τῶν κλημ* “the reign of the proselytes”[120], who became so by circumcision, and that only, for ought appears. And of him, as a proselyte, but not of his baptism, speaks Jerome[121]; he lived in the same century, and great part of his time in Judaea, was acquainted with several Jews he had for his teachers, and with their traditions, of many of which he makes mention, but never of this of admitting proselytes by baptism, or dipping. He speaks of proselytes, and of their circumcision; and says[122], that “if strangers received by the law of the Lord, and were circumcised, and were eunuchs, as was he of the queen of Candace, they are not foreign from the salvation of God;” but not a word of their baptism or dipping. The instances given by Dr. Wall[123], from Tertullian, Cyprian, Gregory Nazianzen, and Basil, only respect either the figurative baptism of the Israelites at the Red Sea; or their baptisms and bathings by immersion, for their purification from ceremonial uncleanness; but not for proselytism. So when the same writer[124] quotes Arrianus, an heathen Stoic philosopher of the second century, as speaking of *τὸν βεβημῆνον*, “a baptized Jew”[125], or one that was dipped; by whom the doctor thinks is meant one made a proselyte by baptism; no other may be designed than either a Jew

who bathed his whole body, to purify himself from legal pollutions; or an Hemero-baptist, a sect of the Jews, who bathed themselves every day; or rather a Christian, as many learned men are of opinion[126]; since it was not unusual with heathen writers to call Christians, who were baptized, Jews; because the first Christians were Jews, and came from Judaea, into other parts of the world, and were reckoned by the heathens a sect of the Jews[127], and were often confounded with them. Now since it appears there is no mention made of any such rite or custom of admitting Jewish proselytes by baptism, or dipping, to the Jewish religion in any writings and records before the times of John the Baptist, Christ, and his apostles; nor in any age after them, for the first three or four hundred years; or, however, before the writing of the Talmuds; it may be safely concluded there was no such custom, which had obtained in that interval of time. It remain therefore to be considered, what is the true ground and foundation of such a notion and from whence it sprung, which will be done in the following chapter.

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#### **Chapter 4 The Proof Of This Custom Only From The Talmuds And Talmudical Writers**

Seeing the rite of receiving proselytes by baptism, or dipping among the Jews, is nowhere mentioned in any writings before the times of John and Christ, nor in any after, nearer than the third and fourth centuries; it is next to be inquired, when and where we first hear of it; and upon inquiry it will be found, that the first mention of it, for ought as yet appears, is in the Jewish Talmuds. The testimonies from thence concerning it, and the whole evidence, as there given of it, will now be laid before the reader. There are two Talmuds, the one called Jerusalem, the other Babylonian; the one written for the Jews at Jerusalem, and in Judaea, after the destruction of the city and temple, and in the Jerusalem dialect. The other for the use of the Jews in Babylon, and in those parts, and in their style. The former is the most ancient, and therefore I shall begin with it, being finished, as generally supposed, in the year 230; but if the Misnah was not compiled till the year 220, being one hundred and fifty from the destruction of Jerusalem, there must be a longer space of time than that of ten years between the one and the other. David Nieto, lately belonging to a Jewish

synagogue here in London, says[128], the Jerusalem Talmud was written near a hundred years after the Misnah; but other Jews make it later still, and make a difference of two hundred and thirty three years between the finishing of the one and the other; the one being finished in 189, and the other in 422[129], which is much more probable; and so this Talmud was not earlier than the beginning of the fifth century; nay, sometimes they place it in the year 469, the latter end of that century[130]. Scaliger places[131] it in the year 370. Mr. Whiston[132] in 369. And so Elias Levita[133] writes, that R. Jochanan compiled it three hundred years after the destruction of Jerusalem; but Morinus[134] will have it to be after the year 600, which is carrying it down too low. The passages I have met with in it any way relating to the case under consideration; for it will be allowed there are some; and therefore it will be owned, that Mr. Rees[135] was mistaken in saying it was not pretended to be found in it. The passages are as follow. In one place[136], a certain Rabbi is represented as saying to another, "Wait, and we will 'dip' this proselytess tomorrow. R. Zera asked R. Isaac Bar Nachman, Wherefore? because of the glory of that old man, or because they do not dip a proselyte in the night. He replied to him, Why do not they dip a proselyte in the night? Abda came before R. Jose (and said), What is the meaning then of not dipping a proselyte in the night?" And a little after, in the same column, a saying of R. Hezekiah is reported; "A man finds an infant cast out (an exposed infant), and he dips it in the name of a servant;" or for a servant, on account of servitude; but then dipping for servitude, and dipping for proselytism, were two different things with the Jews, as before observed; and yet this is the only clause produced by Dr. Lightfoot out of this Talmud, for the above purpose; or by any other that I have seen. However, there are others which speak of the dipping of adult proselytes; which became a matter of controversy. In another treatise, in the same Talmud[137], mention is made of a proselyte circumcised, but not dipped; (and it is added) all goes after circumcision; that is, that denominates a proselyte. "R. Joshua says, yea, dipping stays (or retards) it; and Bar Kaphra teaches, that he who is not dipped, this is right (a true proselyte); for there is no proselyte but dips for accidents;" that is, for accidental and nocturnal pollutions; and

it seems such a dipping sufficed for proselytism. Of so little account did these Rabbins make of dipping for proselytism, who first mention it, not only make it insignificant, but as a delay of it, and what was an obstruction and hindrance of it: and further on it is said[138], "A proselytess less than three years of age and one day, she has not knowledge for dipping (or when she is dipped); and afterwards returns and is dipped for the name of the Holy One of Israel; every one is a proselytess, and she is a proselytess." This looks like Anabaptism, or rebaptization for want of knowledge when first dipped. And a little further still[139], "A stranger or a proselyte who has children, and says, I am circumcised, but I am not dipped; he is to be believed, and they dip him on the Sabbath."

In another treatise[140], a mention is made of a proselyte who dipped after the illumination of the East, that is, after sunrising. These are all the places I have met with in the Jerusalem Talmud any way relating to this custom. Dr. Wall[141] refers to two or three other passages in this Talmud, through mistake for the Babylonian Talmud; in which he may be excused, because, as he himself says, he was not well acquainted with these books; but he cannot be excused of inadvertency in transcribing from his authors, unless they have led him wrong.

The Babylonian Talmud is next to be considered; from whence testimonies may be brought relating to the custom under consideration. This Talmud was finished, as is usually said, about A. D. 500; according to the account of the Jews it was finished three hundred and sixteen years after the Misnah, and eighty three after the Jerusalem Talmud[142]. Though Morinus thinks it did not appear until the seventh or eighth century. According to the Jewish doctors, as related in this Talmud, the Israelites, and the proselytes, were admitted into covenant in the same way and manner; and which they conclude from Numbers 15:15 "As ye are, so shall the stranger be, before the Lord": on which they thus descant[143]: "As your fathers entered not into covenant but by circumcision and dipping, and acceptance of blood or sacrifice; so they (the proselytes) enter not into covenant, but by circumcision, and dipping, and through acceptance of blood," or sprinkling of blood, as the Gloss is; or by sacrifice, as it is sometimes expressed, which is favourably accepted of God; and without both

circumcision and dipping, none were reckoned proper proselytes; this is said two or three times in one leaf[144]; “A man is not a proselyte unless both circumcised and dipped.” R. Chiyah Bar Abba went to Gabla, it is said, and he saw the daughters of Israel pregnant by proselytes, who were circumcised but not dipped; he went and told R. Jochanan, who declared their issue bastards, and not children of the law, or legitimate: about this a controversy was raised, related in the same place; “A stranger that is circumcised and not dipped, R. Eliezer says, lo, this is a proselyte; for so we find by our fathers, that they were circumcised, but not dipped; one that is dipped, and not circumcised, R. Joshua says, lo, this is a proselyte; for so we find by our mothers (not maids, or maidservants, as Dr. Lightfoot[145] translates it) that they were dipped and not circumcised.” Had the account stopped here, the decision must have been against dipping: for it is a rule with the Jews, that when R. Eliezer and R. Joshua dissent, the decision is according to R. Eliezer[146], whom they often call Eliezer the Great[147], and say many extravagant things of him; particularly, that if all the wise men of Israel were put into one scale, and Eliezer the son of Hyrcanus, into the other, he would weigh them all down[148]; yet here the wise men interpose, and say, “He that is dipped and not circumcised, circumcised and not dipped, is no proselyte, until he is both circumcised and dipped; for R. Joshua may learn from the fathers, and R. Eliezer from the mothers.”

And so in this way they reconciled both; but R. Eliezer continued in the same sentiments, which he afterwards declared for, and affirms, that a proselyte that is circumcised, and not dipped, *awh ayl[m rg]* “he is an honourable proselyte”[149]; so that according to him, dipping was not necessary to one’s being a proselyte; and R. Barzelonita[150] says, of a sort of proselytes which have been taken notice of, he is a proselyte who is circumcised and not dipped. So that the Jews are not agreed among themselves about this point. The manner of receiving a proselyte, and dipping him, when circumcised and healed of his wound, and of the dipping of women also, is related in the same treatise of the Babylonian Talmud[151]; “A stranger when he comes to be made proselyte, “at this time”, they say unto him, What dost thou see, to become a proselyte? Dost thou not know that the

Israelites “at this time” are in distress, and in sorrowful circumstances, driven about and scattered, and are reproached, and chastisements come upon them? If he says, I know this, and I am not worthy (to be joined with them), they receive him immediately; and make known unto him some of the light, and some of the heavy commands (the particulars of which follow); if he receives them, they immediately circumcise him; and if there be anything remains, which hinders circumcision, they return and circumcise him a second time, and when he is healed, they dip him immediately, and two disciples of the wise men stand by him, and make known to him some of the light and some of the heavy commands; then he dips, and goes up, and he is an Israelite. If a woman, the women set her in water up to her neck, and two disciples of the wise men stand by her without, and make known some of the light and some of the heavy commands.” Maimonides[152] adds, “After that she ‘dips’ herself before them, and they turn away their faces, and go out, so that they do not see her when ‘she goes up out of the water.’” Of a woman big with child when she is dipped they have this rule[153], “A stranger pregnant, who is made a proselytess, her child has no need of dipping, that is, for proselytism, as the Gloss; is because sufficient for it is the dipping of its mother; and a woman that is dipped as unclean, according to the doctors, that is sufficient to make her a proselytess.” Says R. Chiyah Bar Ame, “I will dip this heathen woman, in the name or on account of a woman;” that is, as the Gloss is, for the dipping of uncleanness, she being a menstruous woman, and not for the dipping of proselytism. Says R. Joseph, “I will make it right;” that is, pronounce that she is a perfect proselytess; for though she is not dipped for proselytism, yet being dipped for uncleanness, it serves for proselytism; for a stranger or a heathen is not dipped for uncleanness[154]. There are various circumstances observed in the same treatise concerning the dipping of proselytes; as the place where they are dipped; “In a place it is said[155], where a menstruous woman dips, there a proselyte and a freed servant dip;” that is, as the Gloss is, in a quantity of forty seahs of water: the time of its being done is also signified; as that they do not dip in the night; and it is disputed whether it should be done on the Sabbath day: three witnesses also were required to be present; and where there are three, he (the proselyte)

“dips” and goes up, and lo, he is as an Israelite[156]. It is said[157], “It happened in the house of R. Chiya Bar Rabbi, where were present R. Oschaia Bar Rabbi, and R. Oschaia Bar Chiya, that there came a proselyte before him who was circumcised, but not dipped; he said unto him, Wait here till tomorrow, and we will dip thee. Three things are to be learnt from hence. 1. That three persons are required (at the dipping of a proselyte). 2. That he is not a proselyte unless he is circumcised and dipped. 3. That they do not dip a proselyte in the night;” to which may be added, 4. That they must be three Rabbins who are promoted, that is, are famous and eminent ones, who are witnesses, as it seems these three were. There is but one instance in this Talmud, that I have met with, of the dipping of a child or a minor, made a proselyte; and a male is so called until he is thirteen years of age and one day; of such an one it is said[158], “A proselyte, a little one (a minor), they dip him by the decree of the Sanhedrim;” that is, as the Gloss is, one that has no father, and his mother brings him to the Sanhedrim, to be made a proselyte, and there are three at his dipping; and they are a father to him, and by their means he is made a proselyte. And in the same place it is observed of a stranger, whose sons and daughters are made proselytes with him, and acquiesce in what their father has done, when they are grown up, they may make it void. There is another instance of the dipping of a minor; but not for proselytism, but for eating the Trumah, or the oblation of the fruits of the earth. So a certain one says[159], “I remember when I was a child, and was carried on my father’s shoulders, that they took me from school, and stripped me of my coat, and dipped me, that I might eat of the Trumah in the evening;” but this was not a proselyte, but an Israelite, the son of a priest, who, it seems, was not qualified to eat of the oblation without dipping. This as one of their various baptisms, or dippings.

This now is the whole compass of the evidence from the Talmuds for the rite of admitting proselytes among the Jews by baptism, or dipping. I have not omitted anything relating to it in them that has fallen under my observation. As for the quotations usually made from Maimonides, who lived in the twelfth century, in proof of this custom; whatever may be said for him as an industrious and judicious compiler of things, out of the Talmud, which he has expressed in purer language,

and digested in better order; he cannot be thought to be of greater and higher authority than those writings from whence he has derived them; for his work is only a stream from the Talmudic fountain. And as for later writers; as the authors of Lebush, Schulchan Aruch, and others, they derive from him. So that the Talmuds appear to be the spring and source of what is said of this custom, and from whence the proof and evidence of it is to be fetched; but whether the reasonings, decisions, and determinations therein concerning it, can be judged a sufficient proof of it, without better testimonies, especially from the scriptures, deserves consideration.

It must not be concealed, that it is pretended there is proof of it from scripture; which I shall attend unto. The proof of the Jewish fathers entering into covenant by baptism, or dipping, is fetched from Exodus 19:10 where, two or three days before the giving of the law, the Israelites were ordered to “wash” their clothes; hence it is said in the Talmud[160], to prove that dipping was used at the entrance of the Israelites into covenant, according to which the baptism, or dipping of proselytes, is said to be; “From whence is it (or a proof of it?) From what is written Exodus 19:10 where there is an obligation to wash clothes, there is an obligation to dip.” And again (Ex. 24:8), “Moses ‘took it (the blood) and sprinkled it on the people’; and there is no sprinkling without dipping.” And in another place[161], “Sprinkling of blood (or sacrifice, by which also the Israelites, it is said, were admitted into covenant) of it, it is written, ‘And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings,’ etc. But dipping, from whence is it? From what is written; ‘And Moses took half of the blood, and sprinkled it on the people’; and there is no sprinkling without dipping.”

This is the proof, which surely cannot be satisfactory to a judicious mind; dipping is inferred from sprinkling; but though the blood was sprinkled upon the people, they were not dipped into it surely; nor even into water, from what appears; and though dipping and sprinkling are sometimes used together, as in the cleansing of the leper, and in the purification of one unclean, by the touch of an unclean bone, etc. (Lev. 14:7; Num. 19:19), yet the one was not the other. From washing of clothes dipping is also inferred, without any reason; for these two, in the above places,

and in others, are spoken of as two distinct acts, and are expressed by different words; and yet it is upon this single circumstance the proof depends. Now, as Dr. Owen[162] observes, “this washing of clothes served that single occasion only of showing reverence of the divine presence, at the peculiar giving of the law; nor did it belong to the stated worship of God; so that the necessity of the baptism of bodies, by a stated and solemn rite for ever, should arise from the single washing of garments, and that depending upon a reason, that would never more recur; of the observation of which no mention is made, nor any trace is extant in the whole Old Testament, and which is not confirmed by any divine command, institution, or direction, seems altogether improbable” And he elsewhere[163] says, “From this latter temporary occasional institution (ceremonial washing at Sinai) such as they (the Jews) had many granted to them, while they were in the wilderness, before the giving of the law, the Rabbins have framed a baptism for those who enter into their synagogue; a fancy too greedily embraced by some Christian writers, who would have the holy ordinance of the church’s baptism to be derived from thence. But this “washing of their clothes”, not of their bodies, was temporary, never repeated; neither is there anything of any such baptism or washing required in any proselytes, either men or women, where the laws of their admission are strictly set down.” And it may be further observed, that the Talmudists give this only as a proof of the admission of Israelites into covenant; whereas, the solemn admission of them into it, even of the whole body of them, men, women, and children, and also of the proselytes who were in their camp, as all the Targums and the Greek version have it, when on the plains of Moab, at Horeb, before their entrance into the land of Canaan (Deut.29:10-12), was not by “any” of the “three” things they say the admission was, that is, by circumcision, baptism, and sacrifice; of the two latter not the least hint is given, and the former was not practised while the Israelites were in the wilderness, not till Joshua had introduced them into the land of Canaan. The Jews seem to be conscious themselves that the baptism or dipping of proselytes, is no command of God; since at the circumcision of them, in the form of blessing they then use, they take no notice of it, which runs thus[164]. “Blessed

art thou, O Lord God, the King of the world, who has sanctified us by his precepts, and has ‘commanded’ us ‘to circumcise proselytes,’ and to fetch out of them the blood of the covenant; for if it was not for the blood of the covenant the heaven and earth would not be established; as it is said, ‘If my covenant with day and night,’ etc. Jeremiah 33:25.”

Dr. Lightfoot[165] carries this custom of admitting proselytes by baptism, or dipping, higher than the Jews themselves do. He ascribes the first institution and use of it to Jacob, when he was going to Bethel to worship, after the murder of the Sechemites by his sons; when, the doctor says, he chose into his family and church, some of the Shechemites and other heathens. But some learned men of the Paedobaptist persuasion, have thought the notion is indefensible, and judged it most prudent to leave it to himself to defend it, or whomsoever may choose to undertake it[166]; and he himself was in doubt about the first institution of this sort of baptism; for he afterwards says, “We acknowledge that circumcision was of divine institution; but by whom baptism, that was inseparable from it, was instituted, is doubtful.” Certain it is, it has no foundation in what Jacob did, or ordered to be done, when he was about to go to Bethel, and worship there; previous to which he ordered his family to “put away the strange gods” that were among them, which they had brought with them from Shechem; and he likewise ordered them to be “clean”, and “change their garments”; which cleanness, whether to be understood of abstaining from their wives, as some interpret it; or of washing of their bodies, as Aben Ezra, as a purification of them from the pollutions of the slain, as the Targum paraphrases it, and after that Jarchi: and which change of garments, whether understood of the garments of idolaters, which the sons of Jacob had taken and put on, when they stripped them; or of their own garments, defiled with the blood of the slain; or of their meaner or more sordid garments, for more pure and splendid ones. All that can be concluded from hence is, and is by the Jews concluded, that when men come before God, they should come with clean bodies, and with clean garments; as an emblem of the more inward purity of their minds, which is necessary to every religious service and act of devotion, such as Jacob and his family were now about to perform, and which the very heathens themselves had a notion of;

“Casta placent superis, pura cum veste venito”[167]. But not a word is here of any covenant Jacob and his family entered into, and much less of any proselytes from Shechem and Syria being brought into it with them, by baptism, or dipping, as is pretended.

I have met with another learned man[168], who carries up this custom higher still; and asserts, that Jacob did not feign out of his own brain this practice of washing the body, and of change of garments; but took it from the history of Adam, and from his example; and he supposes that Adam, at the solemn making the covenant with him, was washed in water, before he put on the garments given him of God; and that as he was the first who sacrificed, he was the first who was baptized by the command of God; and so baptism was the most ancient of all the sacred rites. But let the history of Adam be carefully read over by any man, and he will never find the least hint of this, nor observe the least shadow or appearance of it; but what is it that the imagination of man will not admit and receive, when once a loose is given to it? Pray, who baptized Adam, if he was baptized? Did God baptize him? Or did an angel baptize him? Or did Eve baptize him? Or did he baptize himself?

Since then this rite or custom of admitting into covenant, whether Israelites or proselytes, by baptism or dipping, has no foundation but in the Talmuds; and the proof of it there so miserably supported from scripture, surely it can never be thought that Christian baptism was borrowed from thence; or that it is no other which is continued in the Christian church, being taken up as it was found by John the Baptist, Christ, and his apostles; the folly and falsehood of which will be evinced in the following chapter.

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### **Chapter 5 The Reasons Why Christian Baptism Is Not Founded On, And Taken From, The Pretended Jewish Baptism Of Israelites And Proselytes**

Having traced the admission of the Jewish proselytes by baptism, or dipping, to the spring head of it, the Jewish Talmuds; I shall now proceed to give reasons, why Christian baptism cannot be thought to be taken from such a custom; nor that to be a rule according to which it is to be practised.

I. First, the Talmuds are of too late a date to prove that such a custom obtained before the times of John and Christ, since they were written some centuries

after those times, as has been shown; and besides, there is in them a plain chronological mark, or character, which shows that this custom took place among the Jews since they were driven out of their own land, and scattered among the nations, and suffered reproach and persecution; for among the interrogatories put to persons who came to them to be made proselytes, this question was asked[169], “What dost thou see to become a proselyte? dost thou not know, or consider, that the Israelites are ‘now’ hzh `mzb ‘at this time’, in sorrowful circumstances, driven about and scattered, and loaded with reproaches and afflictions? If he says, I know this; and I am not worthy (that is, to be joined to them) they receive him immediately.” Many are the surmises and conjectures of learned men concerning the original and rise of this custom. It is scarce worth while, to take notice of the notion of Grotius[170], that this custom was taken up on account of the flood, and in commemoration of the world’s being purified by it: nor of Sir John Marsham’s[171], that it was taken up by the Israelites, in imitation of the Egyptian’s manner of initiating persons into the mysteries of their goddess Isis, by washing them; for which he cites Apuleius. A goodly pattern of Christian baptism this! it is much it never entered into the thoughts of these learned men, or others, that the Jews took up this rite of dipping their proselytes, as they found it among the Medes and Persians, when they lived in their countries, and so brought it into Judaea, some hundreds of years before the coming of Christ, and his forerunner John the Baptist; since of the eighty rites the Persians used in the initiation of men into the mysteries of Mithras, their chief deity, the first and principal was baptism. They “dipped” them in a “bath”, and “signed” them in their “foreheads”, and had a sort of an “Eucharist”, an oblation of bread, as Tertullian has it, and an image of the resurrection (that is, in their baptism); promising the expiation of sins by the laver; and also had an imitation of martyrdom[172]. Some say[173], this custom of the Jews was taken up by them out of hatred to the Samaritans, and was added to circumcision, to distinguish them from them: but if so, it is very much that Symmachus the Samaritan, when he came over to the Jews, was not only circumcised again, as he was, but also baptized, or dipped; of which Epiphanius, who gives an account of his becoming a proselyte to them, and of his being circumcised, but not of his being

baptized, as before observed. Dr. Owen thinks[174] this custom was taken up by some Antemishnical Rabbins, in imitation of John the Baptist; which is not very probable, though more so than anything before advanced. To me it seems a clear case, that this custom was framed upon a general notion of the uncleanness of heathens, in their state of heathenism, before their embracing the Jewish religion; and therefore devised this baptism, or dipping, as a symbol of that purity, which was, or ought to be, in them, when they became Jews, of whom they might hope to gain some, they being now dispersed among the nations; and of some they boast, even of some of note: and this was first introduced when they digested the traditions of the elders into a body, or pandect of laws; and were finishing their decisions and determinations upon them, to be observed by their people in future time. Since I wrote the preceding chapters, I have met with a quotation; for I will not conceal anything that has occurred to me in reading, relative to this custom of dipping Jewish proselytes; I say, I have met with a quotation by Maimonides[175], out of a book called Siphri, an ancient commentary on Numbers and Deuteronomy, which has these words: "As the Israelites did not enter into covenant but by three things, by circumcision, dipping, and acceptation of sacrifice; so neither proselytes likewise." Now if this is the ancient book of Siphri, from whence this passage is taken, as may seem, which is a book of an uncertain author and age; and is allowed to be written after the Mishnah[176]; yet if it is the same that is referred to in the Babylonian Talmud[177], it must be written before that was published, though it might be while it was compiling, and it may be, by some concerned in it; since the rite referred to is expressed in the same words in the one as in the other[178]; and is founded upon and argued from the same passage of scripture (Num. 15:15), and seems to be the language and reasoning of the same persons. However, "if" the passage quoted by Maimonides stands in that book, which is a book I never saw, though printed; "if", I say, these several things can be made plain; it is indeed the earliest testimony we have of this custom; especially if the book was written before the Jerusalem Talmud, which yet is not certain: but be it as it may, it is a testimony of the same sort of persons, and of no better authority than what has been before produced, and serves to

confirm, that this custom is a pure device of the Jewish doctors, and is merely "Rabbinical"; and besides, at most, it can only carry up this custom into the "fifth" century, which is too late for John Baptist and Christ to take up the ordinance from it; and on account of these testimonies not being early enough for such a purpose, the late Dr. Jennings[179] has given up the argument from them, in favour of infant baptism, as insufficient. His words are, "After all, it remains to be proved, not only that Christian baptism was instituted in the room of proselyte baptism; but that the Jews had any such baptism in our Saviour's time: the earliest accounts we have of it, are in the Mishna (but in that we have none at all) and Gemara." And again he says, "here wants more evidence of its being as ancient as our Saviour's time, than I apprehend can be produced to ground an argument upon it, in relation to Christian baptism."

II. Secondly, this custom, though observed as a religious action, yet has scarce any appearance of religion and devotion in it; but looks rather like a civil affair, it being in some cases under the cognizance and by the direction of the Sanhedrim, or court of judicature. There was no divine solemnity in the performance of it. It was not administered in the name of the God of Israel, whom the Jews professed; nor in the name of the Messiah to come, expected by them, as was the baptism of John; nor in the name of the Three divine Persons in the Trinity, which yet the ancient Jews believed. They dipped their proselytes indeed, according to their account,  $\mu\tau\beta$  "in the name" of a proselyte, or as one; and a servant, "in the name" of a servant, or on account of servitude; and a free man, "in the name" of a free man; but neither of them in the name of any divine Person, or with the invocation of the name of God; so that it had no appearance of a religious solemnity in it. To which may be added, that this custom gave a licence to things the most impure and abominable, things contrary to the light of nature, and not to be named among the Gentiles, and which must make it detestable to all serious persons. According to the Jews, it dissolved all the ties of natural relations, which before subsisted among men; for according to them, "As soon as a man is made a proselyte, a soul flies out of a (celestial) palace, and gets under the wings of the Shechinah, (or divine Majesty) which kisses it, because it is the fruit of the righteous,

and sends it into the body of a proselyte, where it abides; and from that time he is called a proselyte of righteousness[180]; so that now he has a new soul, and is a new man, another man than he was before;” not a better man, but, to use our Lord’s words, he is made “twofold more the child of hell”. For, according to them, all his former connections with men are broken, and all obligations to natural relations are dissolved; and he may, without any imputation of crime, be guilty of the most shocking incest, as to marry his own mother or his own sister. But hear their own words, “When a Gentile is made a proselyte, and a servant made free, they are both as ‘a newborn babe’; and all the relations which they had when a Gentile or a servant, are no more relations to them;” or their kindred and relation by blood is no more; as brother, sister, father, mother, and children, these are no more to be so accounted; insomuch, that, “when one becomes a proselyte, he and they (his quondam kindred) are not guilty, by reason thereof, on account of incest, at all; so that it is according to law (the civil law of the Jews) that a Gentile may marry his own mother, or his sister, by his mother’s side (his own sister), when they become proselytes.” But though they allow it to be lawful, they have so much modesty and regard to decency, or rather to their own character, that it is added; “But the wise men forbid this, that they (the proselytes) may not say, we are come from a greater degree of holiness to a lesser one; and what is forbidden today is free tomorrow; and so a proselyte who lies with his mother or his sister, and they are in Gentilism, it is no other than if he lay with a stranger[181].” Now can any man, soberly thinking, judge that the New Testament ordinance of baptism was taken up by John and Christ from such a wretched custom, which gave licence to such shocking immorality and uncleanness; or that Christian baptism is built on such a basis as this?

III. Thirdly, to suppose that John took up the practice of baptizing as he found it among the Jews, and from a tradition and custom of theirs, greatly detracts from the character of John, his divine mission, and the credit of baptism, as administered by him; and is contrary to what the scriptures say concerning him. They represent him as the first administrator of baptism, and, for a while, the sole administrator of it; for, for what other reason do they call him the Baptist, and distinguish him by this title, if it was then

a common thing, and had been usual in time past, to baptize persons? The scriptures say he was a man sent of God, and sent by him “to baptize with water” (John 1:6,33). But what need was there of a mission and commission to what was in common use, and had been so time out of mind? The Jews hearing of John’s baptizing persons, sent messengers to him, to know who he was that took upon him to baptize; who asked, “Why baptizest thou, if thou art not that Christ, nor Elijah, nor that prophet?” As if it was a new thing; and that it was expected he should be some extraordinary person who baptized. But why should such questions be put to him, if this was in common use, and if any ordinary person, however any common doctor or Rabbi, had then, and in former times, been used to baptize persons[182]? The scriptures speak of John’s baptism as the “counsel of God”: but according to this notion, it was a device and tradition of men; and had this been the case, the Jews would not have been at a loss, nor under any difficulty, to answer the question Christ put to them, nor indeed, would he ever have put such an one; “The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or from men?” for his putting the question thus, supposes the contrary, that it was not from men, but from God: and if it was not of God, but a tradition of men, they could have readily said, “Of men”; without being confuted by him, or exposed to the people; but being thrown into a dilemma, they took the wisest way for themselves, and answered, “We cannot tell”. Dr. Wall[183] says, If John had been baptizing proselytes, and not natural Jews, the Pharisees would not have wondered at it, it being so well known to them; and he suggests, that the wonder was, that natural Jews should be baptized: but why so! for according to this notion, the original natural Jews were received into covenant by baptism; they as the proselytes, and the proselytes as they; the case, according to them: was similar. But let us examine this affair, and see how the fact stands. When John first appeared baptizing, the Pharisees and Sadducees, who were natural Jews, came to his baptism, and were not admitted to it, but rejected from it, as unfit and improper persons; and others of the same nation and profession, in their turn, “rejected the counsel of God against themselves, not being baptized by John” (Matthew 3:7; Luke 7:30). On the other hand, publicans, the Roman tax gatherers, of whom some indeed

were Jews, others heathens, both equally odious, and therefore joined together, these “justified God”, being baptized with the baptism of John; and these “went into the kingdom of God”, into the gospel state, before the Pharisees, and embraced its doctrines, and submitted to its ordinances (Luke 7:29, 3:12; Matthew 21:31), and even soldiers, Roman soldiers, for no other soldiers were then in Judea, were among the multitude who came to be baptized by him, to whom he gave good instructions, but did not refuse to baptize them (Luke 3:7,14), and our Lord Jesus Christ, whose forerunner John was in his ministry and baptism, gave orders to his disciples to baptize indiscriminately persons of all nations, Jews and Gentiles, who believed in him; and who accordingly did baptize them: so that baptism, in those early times of John, Christ, and his apostles, was not confined to natural Jews; the wonder and the question upon it, as above, were not about the persons baptized, whether Jews or Gentiles, but about baptism itself, and the administrator of it, as being altogether new. The account which Josephus[184], the Jewish historian, who lived soon after the times of John, gives of him, and his baptism, agrees with the sacred scriptures; and which testimony stands not only in the common editions of that historian, but is preserved by Eusebius[185], as a choice piece of history; in which, he not only says John was a religious and good man, but, with the scriptures, that he was surnamed the Baptist, to distinguish him from others; and that he ordered the Jews who lived righteous and godly lives to come to baptism, and such only did John admit of; and that baptizing was acceptable to God, when used not for removing some sins (by which his baptism is distinguished from Jewish baptisms, which were used to purge from sin in a ceremonial sense) but for the purity of the body, the soul being before purified by righteousness. Also he observes, with the scriptures, that multitudes flocked to him; and that Herod, fearing that by his means his subjects would be drawn into a revolt, put him to death. But why such flockings to him, if baptism had been a common thing? And what had Herod to fear from that? He might reasonably conclude, that if this was no other than what had been usually practised, the people would soon cease from following him. Nay, Josippon Ben Gorion[186]; the Jew’s Josephus, the historian whom they value and prefer to the true Josephus, says of that hlybj hç[ “he

made”, instituted, and performed baptism, as if it was a new thing, founded by him; and for which later Jews express their resentment at him. One of their virulent writers says[187], “Who commanded John to institute this baptism? in what law did he find it? neither in the old nor in the new.” Now this would not be said by the Jews, if John had taken up his baptism from a custom of theirs; nor would they speak of the ordinance of baptism in such a scandalous and blasphemous manner as they do, and in language too shocking to transcribe[188].

IV. Fourthly, the Jews will not allow that any proof of baptism can be produced out of the writings of the Old Testament, nor out of their Talmuds. Such passages in the Old Testament which speak of washing, and in which men are exhorted to “wash” and be “clean”, as Isaiah 1:16 it is said, are to be understood of men cleansing themselves from their sins, and not of plunging in water; “To plunge a man in water, is no where written; why therefore did Jesus command such baptism,” or dipping[189]? and whereas the passage in Ezekiel 16:9 “Then washed I thee with water”, is by some interpreted of baptism; the Jew observes[190] the words are not in the future tense; “I will wash thee”: but in the past tense; “I have washed thee”; and so cannot refer to baptism. And whereas the promise in Ezekiel 36:25 “I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness”, etc. is brought by some, I suppose he means some popish writers, as another proof of baptism the Jews replies[191], “What sin and uncleanness does baptism take away? and what sin and uncleanness are there in newborn babes? Besides, says he, you do not do so; you do not sprinkle, but you are plunged into water:” which, by the way, shows that sprinkling was not used in baptism when this Jew wrote, which was in the twelfth century, as Wagenseil, the editor of his work, supposes. The same Jewish writer[192] asks, “If the law of Jesus, and his coming, were known to the prophets, why did not they observe his law? and why did not they ‘baptize themselves’, according to the law of Jesus?” And he represents[193] David as praying (it must be supposed, under a prophetic spirit) for those who should, in this captivity of the Jews, be forced, against their wills, to baptism, and that they might be delivered from it, Psalm 69:1,15 144:7. Nor does this writer take any notice of receiving proselytes by

baptism; though he makes mention of receiving men proselytes[194], yet by circumcision only; and also of women proselytes, but not a word of baptism of either; and had he thought the baptism their Talmud speaks of, had any affinity with our baptism, and was the ground of it, he would not have been so gruelled with an objection of the Christians, as he was; which is put thus[195], “We baptize male and female, and hereby receive them into our religion; but you circumcise men only, and not women:” to which he appears to be at an entire loss to answer; whereas he might have readily answered, had the case been as suggested, that we baptize women as well as men, when they are received proselytes among us. But that the Jews had no notion that Christian baptism was founded upon any prior baptism of proselytes, or others, among them, as related in their Talmud, is manifest from a disputation had between Nachmanides, a famous Jew, and one brother Paul, a Christian, in the year 1263[196]. Brother Paul affirmed, that the Talmudists believed in Jesus, that he was the Messiah, and was both God and man: the Jew replied, after observing some other things, “How can brother Paul say so, that they believed in him; for they, and their disciples, died in our religion? and ‘why were they not baptized’, according to the command of Jesus, as brother Paul was? And I would be glad to hear,” says he, “‘how’ he learned baptism from them (the Talmudists) and ‘in what place’ (of the Talmud)? did not they teach us all our laws which we now observe? and the rites and customs they gathered together for us, as they were used when the temple was standing, from the mouths of the prophets, and from the mouth of Moses, our master, on whom be peace? And if they believed in Jesus, and in his law, they would have done as brother Paul has; does he understand their words better than they themselves?”

V. Fifthly, to say, as Dr. Lightfoot does, that Christ took baptism into his hands as he found it, that is, as practised by the Jews, is greatly to derogate from the character and authority of Christ; it makes him, who came a Teacher from God, to teach for doctrines the commandments of men, which he himself condemns. It makes that “all power in heaven and in earth,” said to be given him, in consequence of which he gave his apostles a commission to “teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and

of the Holy Ghost”; I say, it makes it to dwindle into this only, a power to establish a tradition, and commandment of men long in use before he came. Again, who can believe that Christ, who so severely inveighed against the traditions of the Jews, could ever establish any one of them, and make it an ordinance of his; and particularly, should inveigh against those, respecting the baptisms, or dippings of the Jews then in use among them; and especially without excepting that of their baptism of proselytes from the rest, and without declaring it his will that it should be continued and observed; neither of which he has done.

VI. Sixthly, such a notion as this highly reflects dishonour on the ordinance of baptism; that one of the principal ordinances of the New Testament, as that is, should be founded on an human tradition, an invention of men; it must greatly weaken the authority of it, as well as disparage the wisdom of the Lawgiver; and must have a tendency to bring both the author and the ordinance into contempt. Nothing can make an ordinance a Christian ordinance, but its being instituted by Christ. If baptism is an institution of men, and received and retained from men, and regulated according to their device, it is no Christian ordinance: and, as Witsius says[197], “Whatever may be said of the antiquity of that rite (proselyte baptism, which yet with him was dubious and uncertain) there can be no divine institution of it (of baptism) before John, the forerunner of Christ, was sent of God to baptize; for to him that was expressly commanded; ‘The word of God came unto John,’ Luke 3:2 John 1:33, etc.”

VII. Seventhly, if it was the custom of the Jews before the times of John and Christ, to receive young children as proselytes by baptism, or dipping, and this was to be as a rule according to which Christian baptism was to be practised; then most surely we should have had some instances of children being baptized by John, or by the apostles of Christ, if “baptizing infants had been as ‘ordinarily used’ in the church of the Jews, as ever it hath been in the Christian church,” as Dr. Lightfoot says; and yet we have not one instance of this kind; we no where read of any children being brought to John to be baptized, nor of any that were baptized by him; nor of any being brought to the apostles of Christ to be baptized, nor of their being baptized by them; from whence it may be concluded there was no such custom before their

times; or if there was, it never was intended it should be observed by Christians in later times; or otherwise there would have been some precedents of it, directing to and encouraging such a practice: many things would follow on such a supposition, that Christian baptism is borrowed from and founded on proselyte baptism, and the latter the rule directing the practice of the former; for then,

VIII. Eighthly, Self-baptizing, or persons baptizing themselves, without making use of an administrator, might be encouraged and established; which is what the Paedobaptists charge, though wrongly, some of the first reformers of the abuses of baptism with; since it is plain, from the quotations before made, that though it is sometimes said, “they”, that is, the doctors or wise men, “baptize”, or “dip”, yet it is also said, both of men and women, that they “dipped themselves”; as of a man *lkj* awh “he dipped himself”, and went up from the water; and of a woman, being placed by women in the water, *lkj* “she dipped”, that is, herself; and so Leo of Modena says[198], of a Jew proselyte, that after he is circumcised, and well of his sore, “he is to wash himself all over in water”, in the presence of three Rabbins, or other persons in authority, and from thenceforth he becomes as a natural Jew; and, indeed, all the Jewish baptisms, or bathings, commanded in the law, were done by persons themselves (see Lev. 14:8,9; Num.19:7,8). And Dr. Lightfoot[199] thinks that John’s baptism was so administered; he supposes, that men, women, and children came unto it; and that they standing in Jordan, were taught by John, that they were baptized into the name of the Messiah, ready to come, and into the profession of the gospel, about faith and repentance; and that “they plunged themselves into the river”, and so came out.

IX. Ninthly, if this Jewish custom is to be regarded as a rule of Christian baptism, it will tend to establish the Socinian notion, that only the first converts to Christianity in a nation, they and their children are to be baptized, but not their posterity in after ages; for so both Lightfoot and Selden, with others, say, who were sticklers for Christian baptism being taken from the custom of baptizing, or dipping Jewish proselytes, and their children; that only the children of proselytes, born before their parents became such, were baptized, or dipped; but not those born afterwards: baptism was never repeated in their posterity; the sons of proselytes,

in following generations, were circumcised, but not baptized[200]; and, as Dr. Jennings[201] rightly observes, “it was a maxim with the Rabbins, ‘Natus baptizati, habetur pro baptizato.’” This “restriction of baptism to children born before their parents’ proselytism, rests on the same authority as the custom of baptizing any children of proselytes.” So that if the one is to be admitted, the other is also; and so the children of Christian parents are not to be baptized, only the converts from another religion; and these the first, and their then posterity, but not afterwards.

X. Tenthly, if this custom, said to be practised before the times of John and Christ, is the rule to direct us in Christian baptism, there were several circumstances attending that, which should be observed in Christian baptism, to make it regular; it must be done before three witnesses, and these men of eminence; but who, of such a number and character were present at the baptism of the apostle Paul? (Acts 22:16, 9:18). Nor was it to be performed in the night; what then must be said of the baptism of the jailor, and his family? (Acts 16:33) nor on a Sabbath day; nor on a feast day; yet Lydia, and her household, were baptized on a Sabbath day (Acts 16:13,15), and the three thousand Christian converts were baptized on the day of Pentecost? and which was also the first day of the week, the Christian Sabbath (Acts 2:1,41). Wherefore, if this Jewish custom was the rule of baptism, and from whence it was taken, and by which it should proceed; (for if in one case, why not in others?) these instances of Christian baptism were not rightly performed.

XI. Eleventhly, if the Ethiopian eunuch Philip baptized, was a proselyte, as Grotius and others say, he must be either a proselyte of the gate, a proselyte inhabitant, or a proselyte of righteousness; not the former, for he was no inhabitant in any part of Judea; but most probably he was the latter, since he was a very devout and religious man, had an high opinion of the worship of God among the Jews, and had travelled from a far country to worship at Jerusalem; and so Dr. Jennings[202] justly observes, that “he seems to be rather a proselyte of the covenant, or completely a Jew; not only from his reading the scripture, but because he had taken so long a journey to worship at Jerusalem at the feast of Pentecost, one of the three grand festivals; when all the Jewish males, who were able, were, according to the law, to attend the worship of God

at the national altar." He appears to have thoroughly embraced the religion of the Jews, even their whole law, and was conversant with their sacred writings; he was reading in one of their prophets when Philip joined his chariot, and was taken up into it by him: whereas a son of Noah, as the Jews called a proselyte of the gate, might not study in the law, according to their canons[203], which they say he had nothing to do with; only with the seven precepts of Noah; and, indeed, no Gentile or uncircumcised person[204]. And if the eunuch was a proselyte of righteousness, according to the pretended custom of dipping such, he must have been baptized, or dipped, when he became a proselyte; and since, according to this notion, he must have been baptized with a baptism which John and Christ took up as they found it among the Jews, and which is the basis and foundation of Christian baptism, and the rule to direct in the performance of it, it is much he should desire baptism again! and that Philip, who is thought to be a proselyte also (Acts 6:5), and must know the custom of making proselytes, should administer it to him: and if he had been baptized before, must he not then be an Anabaptist? And so the proselytes in Acts 2:10 were, as Drusius and others think, proselytes of righteousness, who had embraced the Jewish religion, and were circumcised, and, according to this notion, baptized. Besides, none but proselytes of righteousness might dwell in Jerusalem; as has been observed, Chap. 1. And also proselytes of the gate were never called Jews, as these were; only proselytes of righteousness: and if any of these were among the three thousand converted and baptized by the apostles, which is not improbable, must not they be also Anabaptists? The Grecians, or Hellenists, whose widows were neglected in the daily ministrations, are thought by Beza, and others, to be widows of Jewish proselytes, and therefore it is highly probable, that their husbands had been members of the Christian church at Jerusalem, and so must have been rebaptized; and most certain it is, that Nicholas of Antioch, who was one of the seven appointed to take care of these widows, was a proselyte, and as Grotius truly thinks, a proselyte of righteousness; and so, as he must have been baptized according to this notion, when he became a proselyte, he must have been rebaptized when he became a member of the Christian church at Jerusalem, of which he most

certainly was, being chosen out of it, and appointed to an office in it (Acts 6:1,5).

XII. Twelfthly, it may be observed, in a quotation before made, that if a proselytess big with child was baptized, or dipped, her child needed not baptism, or dipping, the mother's baptism, or dipping, was sufficient for it: but this is not attended to by Paedobaptists; it seems, in the beginning of the fourth century, there were some of the same opinion with the Jews; but a canon in the council of Neocaesarea was made against it; which, as explained, declared that the child of such a person needed baptism, when it came to be capable of choosing for itself[205]; which canon should not have been made, if this Jewish custom is to be regarded as a rule.

XIII. Lastly, As an argument "ad hominem", it may be observed, that if this custom is to be considered as a rule of Christian baptism, then sprinkling ought not to be used in it; for the baptism of Jewish proselytes, men, women, and children, was performed by dipping; as all the above quotations show. To which may be added, that one of their rules respecting proselyte baptism is, that a proselyte must dip in such a place (or confluence of water) as a menstruous woman dips herself in[206], or which is sufficient for such an one; and that, as the Gloss is, was what held forty seahs of water; and to this agrees the account Maimonides[207] gives of such a confluence of water, that it must be "sufficient for the dipping of the whole body of a man at once; and such the wise men reckon to be a cubit square, and three cubits in depth; and this measure holds forty seahs of water." And he further says[208], "that wherever washing of the flesh, and washing of clothes from uncleanness, are mentioned in the law, nothing else is meant but the dipping of the whole body in a confluence of water—and that if he dips his whole body, except the top of his little finger, he is still in his uncleanness:—and that all unclean persons, who are dipped in their clothes, their dipping is right, because the waters come into them (or penetrate through them) and do not divide," or separate; that is, the clothes do not divide, or separate between the water and their bodies, so as to hinder its coming to them; so the menstruous woman dipped herself in her clothes; and in like manner the proselyte. Let such observe this, who object to the baptism of persons with their clothes on. Again, as an

argument of the same kind, if baptism was common in all ages, foregoing the times of John, Christ, and his apostles, as is said, then it could not succeed circumcision, since it must be contemporary with it. Upon the whole, what Dr. Lightfoot[209], and others after him, have urged in favour of infant baptism from hence, is quite impertinent; that “there was need of a plain and open prohibition, that infants and little children should not be baptized, if our Saviour would not have had them baptized; for since it was most common in all ages foregoing, that little children should be baptized, if Christ had been minded to have had that custom abolished, he would have openly forbidden it; therefore his silence, and the silence of the scripture in this matter, confirms Paedobaptism, and continues it unto all ages” But first, it does not appear that any such custom was ever practised before the times of John, Christ, and his apostles, as to admit into the Jewish church by baptism, proselytes, whether adult or minors. No testimony has been, and I believe none can be given of it. And, as some very learned men have truly observed[210], and as Dr. Owen[211] affirms, there are not the least footsteps of any such usage among the Jews, until after the days of John the Baptist, in imitation of whom, he thinks, it was taken up by some Ante- Mishnical Rabbins; and, as he elsewhere says[212], “The institution of the rite of baptism is no where mentioned in the Old Testament; no example is extant; nor during the Jewish church, was it ever used in the admission of proselytes; no mention of it is to be met with in Philo, Josephus, nor in Jesus the son of Syrach; nor in the evangelic history.” What testimony has been given of this custom, falls greatly short of proving it; wherefore Christ could have no concern about abolishing a custom which had not obtained in his time; nor was there any room nor reason for it, since it had never been practised, for ought appears: his silence about what never existed, can give no existence to it, nor to that which is founded on it, Paedobaptism; and which is neither warranted and confirmed by any such custom, nor by the word of God, in which there is an high silence about both. This custom of baptizing little children was so far from being common in all ages foregoing the times of John, Christ, and his apostles, that not a single instance can be given of anyone that ever was baptized; if there can, let it be produced; if

not, what comes of all this bluster and harangue? With much more propriety and strength of reasoning might it be retorted; that since it is plain the children of the Jews, both male and female, did eat of the passover, which was not an human custom and tradition; but an ordinance of God, common in all ages foregoing the times of John, etc. and since, according to the hypothesis of the Paedobaptists, the Lord’s supper came in the room of the passover; for which there is much more reason in analogy, than for baptism coming in the room of circumcision; it should seem, if our Saviour would not have had children eat of the Lord’s supper, as they did of the passover, he would have openly forbidden it. A plain and open prohibition of this was more needful than a prohibition of the baptism of infants, if not his will, had there been such a custom before prevailing, as there was not; since that could only be a custom and tradition of men; and it was enough that Christ inveighed against those of the Jews in general, which obtained before, and in his time; and against their baptisms and dippings in particular. And after all, it is amazing that Christian baptism should be founded upon a tradition, of which there is no evidence but from the Rabbins, and that very intricate, perplexed, and contradictory, and not as in being in the times referred to; upon a tradition of a set of men blinded and besotted, and enemies to Christianity, its doctrines and ordinances; and who, at other times, reckoned by these very men, who so warmly urge this custom of theirs, the most stupid, sottish, and despicable, of all men upon the face of the earth! If this is the basis of infant baptism, it is built upon the sand, and will, ere long, fall, and be no more. I conclude this Dissertation in the words of Dr. Owen[213], “That the opinion of some learned men concerning transferring the rite of Jewish baptism, by the Lord Jesus, which, indeed, did not then exist, for the use of his disciples, is destitute of all probability.” And after all, perhaps, the Paedobaptists will find their account better in consulting the baptism of the ancient heathens, and its rites, than that of the Jews; said[214] to be in use before the times of Moses, and in ages since, and that among all nations; and being more ancient than Christian baptism, a learned writer referred to, says, it is as a sort of preamble to it. And from whom the Paedobaptists may be supplied with materials for their purpose.

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**8 The Duty Of A Pastor To His People**

Preached At The Ordination Of The Reverend George Braithwaite, M.A.

March 28, 1734. 2 TIMOTHY 4:16

Take heed unto thyself, and unto thy doctrine; for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

The part of the work of this day assigned to me, is to give a word of exhortation to you, my Brother; who have been at this time solemnly ordained a pastor or overseer of this church, Your tong standing, and usefulness in the ministry, might justly excuse every thing of this kind, did not: custom, and the nature of this day's service, seem to require it. You will there.. fore suffer a word of exhortation, though it comes from a junior minister, since you know in what situation we are; our senior ministers are gone off the stage of this world, who used to fill up this place, and whose years best became it: Our fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever? Give me leave to address you in the words of the great apostle of the Gentiles to Timothy, Take heed unto thyself, and unto thy doctrine; for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself, and than that hear thee; since this epistle was written, not for his sake only, but for the use and service also of other ministers of the gospel in succeeding ages; that they might know how they ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth. In it the apostle gives a large account of the proper qualifications of the officers of churches, bishops, and deacons; and in this chapter descends to some particular advice and directions to Timothy, and which are designed for the benefit and advantage of other preachers of the word, and pastors of churches. I shall not take any notice of them here, seeing I shall have occasion to make use of them in some parts of the following discourse; and shall therefore immediately attend to the words of my text, in which may be observed,

I. A charge or exhortation given to Timothy.

II. Some reasons to support it, and engage his regard unto it.

I. Here is a charge or exhortation given, which consists of three parts:

First, To take heed to himself. Secondly, To take heed to his doctrine. Thirdly, To continue therein.

First, The apostle exhorts Timothy to take heed to himself. This is not to be understood of him merely as a man, that he should take care of his bodily health, his outward concerns of life, or make provision for his family, if he had any; not but that these things are to be equally regarded by a minister of the gospel, as by any other person. Though he ought to be diligent in his studies, laborious in his work, and preach, the gospel in season and out of season; yet he ought to be careful of the health of his body, and not destroy his natural constitution. The words of the wise man are applicable to our present purpose, be not righteous over-much, neither make thyself over-wise, why shouldst thou destroy thyself? (Eccl. 7:16). The apostle Paul, in this epistle, advises Timothy to take care of himself in this sense, seeing he had much work upon his hands, and but of a weakly constitution; he exhorts him, that he would drink no longer water, but use a little wine, for his stomach's sake, and his often infirmities (1 Tim. 5:23); and it is alike true of a minister as of any other man, what is elsewhere said, If any provide not far his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel (1 Tim. 5:8). But this is not what the apostle has here in view, when he says take heed to thyself.

Nor is this exhortation, given to Timothy under the character of a believer, or private Christian. There are some things which are common to ministers, and private Christians; their cases, in some respects, are alike, and cautions to them are equally necessary: they have the same corruptions, are subject to the same temptations, and liable to the same daily failings and infirmities; and therefore such, whether ministers or people, who think they stand, should take heed lest they fall. Unbelief, and distrust of divine providence, presence, power, and assistance, have a place in the hearts of ministers as well as others, and sometimes rise to a considerable pitch, and do very much prevail; when such advice as this must be needful, take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. There are many instances which might be produced, in which this exhortation would appear to be suitable to Timothy, and so to any other gospel minister, considered as a believer and a Christian.

But I apprehend, that the apostle regards him in his ministerial capacity, as a preacher of the word; and is desirous, that he would take heed to himself, as a minister, and to the ministry which he had received in the Lord, that he fulfill it. It becomes a minister of the gospel to take heed to his gifts bestowed upon him, by which he is qualified for his work, that he does not lose, but use and improve them; to his time, that he spends it aright, and does not squander it away; of the errors and heresies which are in the world, that he is not infected by them; to his spirit, temper, and passions, that he is not governed by them; to his life and conversation, that it be exemplary, becoming his office, and makes for the glory of God; and to the flock committed to his care, which is the other part of himself.

1. A minister ought to take heed to his gifts bellowed upon him, whereby he is qualified for the work of the ministry. Jesus Christ, when he ascended on high, received gifts for men, such as were proper to furnish, and fit them for ministerial service; and he has given them to men, he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors, and teachers (Eph. 4:11): that is, he gave gifts, to qualify them for these several offices; and he still continues to give gifts to some, by which they become capable of discharging the work and office of pastors of churches; and where these are given, they ought to be taken care of. Now, a minister of the gospel should take heed to his gifts, that he does not lose them. The gifts, and calling of God are without repentance (Rom. 11:29). Gifts of special and saving grace are irreversible; God never repents of them, or revokes them, or calls them in; where they are once bestowed, they are never taken away; but gifts fitting men for public work and usefulness, as they may be where true grace is not, so they may be removed, when saving grace never will. This we may learn from the parable of the talents, where our Lord says, Take therefore the talent from him, and give it to him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance. But from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath (Matthew 25:29, 30). Wo therefore to the Idol Shepherd (Zech. 11:17), the shepherd of no account, who is good for nothing; for an idol is nothing in the world; who leaveth the flock, makes no use of his gifts, deserts his station,

forsakes the flock; the sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye; his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened. All his light and knowledge, his abilities and usefulness, shall be taken from him. Hence the apostle exhorts Timothy, to keep by the holy Ghost the good thing which was committed to him; by which he means, not grace, but either the gospel, or the gift of preaching it; grace cannot, gifts may be lost.

Moreover, a gospel minister should take heed to his gifts, that he uses them. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, says the apostle to Timothy; which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery (1 Tim. 4:14). A minister may be tempted to neglect, lay aside, and disuse his gifts, for want of success in his work, or because of the flight and contempt which may be cast upon him, or by reason of the rage, fury, and persecutions of men; something of this nature was discouraging to Timothy in the exercise of his gifts, which occasioned the apostle to put him in remembrance, that, says he, thou stir up the gift of God: which is in thee, by the putting on of my hands; for God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner; but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel, according to the power of God (2 Tim. 1:6-8). As if he should say, "Let not that gift which God has bestowed upon thee lie dormant, and be neglected by thee, through a timorous and cowardly spirit; but boldly and bravely preach the gospel of the grace of God, though thou art sure to endure much affliction and persecution." Wo to that man, who, from any consideration whatever, wraps up his talent in a napkin, and hides it in the earth; such an one Christ, at the great day of account, will call wicked and slothful; and give orders to cast such an unprofitable servant into outer darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 25:26, 30).

Besides, a minister ought not only to take heed that he uses his gifts, but also that he improves them; and indeed, they are generally improved by using. Gifts, like pieces of armor, through disuse, grow rusty,[1] but the more they are worn the brighter they are. There are several things, which have a tendency to improve, and, with the blessing, of God, do improve

spiritual gifts, such as prayer, meditation, and reading. These the apostle directed Timothy to, for the improvement of his mind: Till I come says he, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine (1 Tim. 4:15); meditate upon these things, give thyself wholly to them, (Υςτουτοιςιοδει) or, be thou in them; be constantly intent upon them, that thy profiting may appear to all, (Ες πασιν) or in all things, that is, in all parts of useful knowledge. It is the duty of ministers to stir up the gift of God which is in them (2 Tim. 1:6). Gifts are sometimes like coals of fire, covered and buried in ashes, to which there is an allusion in this passage,[2] which must be stirred up, or blown off, that they may revive and be re-inflamed, and so communicate more light and heat. It is true, ministers cannot procure gifts for themselves, nor increase them of themselves; but God is pleased to give to his servants greater abilities, more light and knowledge, in the diligent use of means, for unto every one that hath, that is, that has gifts, and makes use of all proper methods to improve them, shall be given, and he shall have abundance.

2. A minister ought to take heed to his time, that he spends it aright, and does not squander it away. Time is precious, and ought to be redeemed, and diligently improved, by all sorts of men; but by none more than the ministers of the gospel, who should spend it in frequent prayer, constant meditation, and in daily reading the scriptures, and the writings of good men; which are transmitted to posterity for the benefit and advantage of the churches of Christ. They should give themselves up wholly to these things, and daily, and diligently study to shew themselves approved unto God, workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth (2 Tim. 2:25). They ought not to spend their time in an unprofitable manner, or in needless and unnecessary visits. It is a mistake which prevails among church-members, that they must be visited, and that very often: if ministers are not continually calling on them they think themselves neglected, and are much displeased; not considering, that Ouch a frequency of visits, as is desired by them, must be the bane and ruin of what might otherwise be a very valuable ministry; and at the same time furnishes an idle and lazy preacher with a good excuse to neglect his studies, and that with a great deal of peace and quietness of conscience, whilst he fancies he is about

his ministerial work. I would not be understood, as though I thought that visits were needless things, and that they are no part of a minister's work: I am sensible, that he ought to be diligent to know the state of his flock; and that it is his business to visit the members of the church, at proper times, and on proper occasions; what I complain of, is the too great frequency of visits as is desired, and when they are unnecessary.

3. A minister ought to take heed to himself, that he is not infected with the errors and heresies which are in the world. There always have been, and still are, heretics among men, and there must be; that they which are approved, are faithful and approved ministers of Christ, might be made manifest, to the churches, and the world, by their zeal for truth, and against error. And whereas ministers, as well as others, are liable to have their minds corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ, and to be led away with the error of the wicked, and for all from their own stedfastness; it becomes them therefore, to take heed to themselves. This was the reason of the apostle's advice to the elders of the church at Ephesus, at his taking his leave of them; when he said to them, take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock: — for, says he, I know this, that after my departing, shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock; also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Take heed, beware therefore, of these perverse men and things, lest you also be drawn after them, and be carried away by them. Our Lord Jesus Christ thought it necessary to exhort his own disciples, to beware of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees; and to take heed, that they were not deceived by false Christs, and false prophets. Ministers, of all men, ought to be most careful to shun error, and avoid false doctrines; since their seduction may be the means of a greater spread of them, and of the ruin of multitudes of souls.

4. A minister ought to take heed to his spirit, his temper, and his passions, that he is not governed by them. The preachers of the gospel are men of like passions with others: Some of Christ's disciples were very hot, fiery, and passionate; they were for calling for fire from heaven to consume such who had displeased them; hence our Lord said unto them, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of (Luke 9:55). One that has the government of his passions, and can

rule his own spirit and temper, is very fit to rule in the church of God. He that is flow to anger, is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh, a city (Prov. 16:32). But if a man is influenced and governed by his passions, he will be led by them to take indirect and imprudent steps; and to manage affairs with partiality, to the prejudice of the church, and members of it.

5. A minister ought to take heed to his life and conversation, that it be exemplary to those who are under his care. Private Christians may, and ought to be examples one to another; they should be careful to maintain, (Προϊπαοθαι, Titus 3:8) or go before each other in good works; but more especially, ministers ought to be examples to the flock. This is the advice the apostle gave Timothy; be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity (1 Tim. 4:12). They ought to be careful how they behave themselves in their families, in the church, and in the world; that they give no offense in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed, and so become useless and unprofitable. This was what the apostle Paul was careful of, with respect to himself, and his ministry; I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection (1 Cor. 9:27).

I do not indulge, but deny myself all carnal lusts and pleasures, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away; that is, not one rejected of God, or a reprobate; for he knew whom he had believed, and was persuaded, that nothing could separate him from the love of God; he had no fearful apprehensions of this kind; though he was jealous and cautious, lest he should be guilty of misconduct in his outward conversation among men; and so become ἀδοκιμος rejected, and disapproved of by men, and be useless in his ministry. Every Christian ought to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, but most especially the preachers of it their lights should so shine before men, that they seeing their good works, may glorify their father which is in heaven. The name of God, the ways of Christ, and the truths of the gospel, are blasphemed, and spoken evil of, through the scandalous lives of professors, and especially ministers. Nothing is more abominable<sup>[3]</sup> than that one, whose business it is to instruct and reprove others, is himself notoriously culpable; to such a person and case, the words of the apostle are

very applicable, Thou therefore that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? Thou that preachest, a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest, a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God? for the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you (Rom. 2:21-24).

6. A minister ought to take heed to the flock, committed to his care; which is but the other part of himself. There is a mutual relation, a close union, between a pastor and, a church; they are in some sense one, and, their interests are one; so that, a pastor, by taking heed to himself takes heed to his flock, and by taking heed to his flock takes heed to himself, Hence these two are joined together in the apostle's advice to the elders of the church at Ephesus, Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church (Acts 20:28). Pastors of churches should be careful that they feed the saints with knowledge and understanding; that they feed the flock, and not themselves; that they perform the whole office of faithful shepherds to them; that they strengthen the diseased, heal the sick, bind up the broken, bring again that which was driven away, and seek up that which was lost; all which they should take diligent heed unto, since they must be accountable to the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls, for all those who are under their care. But so much for the first branch of the exhortation; I proceed to consider,

Secondly, The second part of the charge, which is to take heed to his doctrine, that is, to the doctrine to which he has attained, which he has a knowledge of, and ought to preach to others; otherwise the doctrine is not his own but another's; as Christ says of himself as man, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me (John 7:16).

Christ received his doctrine from his Father, and his ministers receive it from him, and deliver it to the people. The doctrine which a gospel minister preaches, is in the same sense his, in which the apostle Paul calls the gospel, my gospel, or our gospel; not that it was a system of doctrines drawn up, and composed by him; but what was given him by the revelation of Christ, was committed to his trust, what he ought to preach,

and in which he was made useful to the souls of many.

Now a minister ought to take heed to his doctrine, that it be according to the scriptures, all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine (2 Tim. 3:16). True doctrine springs from it, is agreeable to it, and may be confirmed and established by it; therefore if any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God (1 Pet. 4:11). He should be careful, that his doctrine has a place in the word of God, that it takes its rise from it, is consonant to it, and capable of being proved by it: To the law, and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them (Isa. 8:20). Whatever doctrines do not spring from these fountains of light and truth, or are disagreeable to them, must be accounted divers and strange doctrines.

Care should also be taken by a minister of the gospel, that his doctrine be the doctrine of Christ; that is, such as Christ himself preached, which he has delivered out by revelation to others, and of which he is the sum and substance. We preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness (1 Cor.1:23). This doctrine is most likely to be useful for the conversion of sinners, and comfort of saints; and a man that does not bring this with him is to be discouraged and rejected Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God: He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed (2 John 9,10).

Moreover, a minister should take heed that his doctrine be the same with that of the apostles. It was the glory of the primitive Christians, that they continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine; and it must be the excellency of a man's ministry, that it is agreeable to that faith which was once delivered to the saints. Jesus Christ received his doctrine from his Father, which he delivered to his apostles: I have given unto them says he, the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them (John 17:8); who also were guided by the spirit of truth into all truth, as it is in Jesus; and under the inspiration of the same spirit have left the whole of it in writing to the churches of Christ; which should be the standard of a gospel-ministry throughout all generations. Besides, it becomes a preacher of the Word to be careful that

the doctrine he teaches be according to godliness; that it is not contrary to the moral perfections of God, or has a tendency to promote a loose and licentious life; but that it is agreeable to, and may be a means of increasing, both internal and external holiness. Sin, as it is a transgression of the law, so it is contrary to sound doctrine; which sound doctrine is according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God (1 Tim. 1:10, 11).

The gospel no more countenances sin, than the law does; the grace of God, the doctrine of the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, the news of it to sinners, hath appeared to all men, Gentiles as well as Jews; teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. Whatever doctrines are subversive of true piety, or strike at the life and power of godliness, are to be rejected: if any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but dotting about questions, and strife of words, whereof cometh envy, strifes, railings, evil furnishings, etc. (1 Tim. 6:3-5). Again, it is highly necessary, that a pastor of a church should be careful that his doctrine be such as makes for the edification of the people; it ought to be solid and substantial, suited to their capacities, and what is food convenient for them; he should nor, therefore, give heed to fables, and endless genealogies; he ought, in his ministry, to shun profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of silence, fairly so called. He should not strive about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers; and should carefully and diligently avoid foolish and unlearned questions, knowing that they do gender strifes (1 Tim. 1:4; 6:20; 2 Tim. 2:14, 16, 23).

In a word, he should take heed, that his doctrine be found and incorrupt, pure. and unmixed, and that it be all of a piece, and consistent with itself. He ought to speak the things which become sound, doctrine; that is, such things as are agreeable to it, and consistent with it, and which are wholesome and healthful to the souls of men. In his doctrine he ought to shew uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, and use sound speech, which cannot be condemned (Titus 2:1, 7, 8); he should not teach for doctrines the commandments of men, or join, or mix divine truths with human

inventions. The chaff and the wheat should be kept separate; nor should he blend law and gospel, grace and works together; and so be like them that corrupt the word of God, *καπηλευοντες τον λογον του θεου*, “adulterate it, by mixing it with their own fancies;” as unfair dealers in liquors mix water with them, which is the sense of the word here used; but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God,[4] should a gospel-minister speak in Christ. He ought to take heed that what he preaches is consistent with itself; that it has no yea and nay, no contradiction in it, and does not destroy itself; and so bring a reproach upon him, and he become useless to his hearers; for if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for the battle? (1 Cor. 14:8); consistence, harmony, and connection of things with each other, are the beauty and glory of a man’s ministry; which must needs recommend it, and make it most useful, profitable and pleasant. It is also very advisable that he take heed that he express his doctrine in the best manner, and to the best advantage. He ought to be careful about the manner as well as the matter of his ministry; that he speak plainly, intelligibly, and boldly, the gospel, as it ought to be spoken: Elocution, which is a gift of utterance, a freedom of expression, with propriety of language, is one of the gifts fitting for public usefulness in the work of the ministry; and which may be improved by the use of proper means. The example of the royal preacher is worthy of our imitation, because the preacher was wise he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs: the preacher sought to find out acceptable words; and that which was written was upright, even words of truth (Eccl. 12:9, 10): he not only fought for proper and agreeable truths, but was careful to express them in the most acceptable manner.

To conclude this head; when a minister has used his care and diligence about his doctrine, that it be according to the scriptures, agreeable to the doctrine of Christ and his apostles; that it be according to godliness, and makes for the use of edifying; that it be found and incorrupt, pure and unmixed, and consistent with itself; and that it be expressed in the best manner, and to the best advantage, he ought to take heed to defend it whenever opposed; for ministers are not only set to preach the gospel, but for

the defense of it; they should by sound doctrine both exhort and convince gainsayers (Titus 1:8); for which purpose; they should use the two-edged sword, the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God; and is both an offensive and defensive weapon, by which, at once, error is refuted, and truth established, I go on to consider,

Thirdly, The third part of this exhortation, which is to continue in them. Some read the words, Continue with them, (*Επιμενε αυτοις*) that is, with the people at Ephesus, where Timothy was, and where the apostle would have him remain; as appears from what he says to him at the beginning of this epistle, I besought thee to abide here at Ephesus (3:14). But I choose rather to consider them as they are in our translation rendered, continue in them; that is, in the doctrines which thou dost well to take heed unto. Much such advice does the apostle give to Timothy, in his second epistle to him, continue thou, says he, in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them. It is very unbecoming ministers of the word, to be like children tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine; daily shifting sides, and changing sentiments.

He that would be a preacher of the gospel to others, ought so to study the scriptures, and learn the doctrines of grace, as to be assured of them, to beat a point, at a certainty concerning them; that he may be able to speak them boldly, as they ought to be spoken; and when he has so done, he ought to adhere to them, abide by them, and continue in them; even though a majority may be against them, for we are not to follow a multitude to do evil (Ex. 23:2). Truth is not to be judged of by the number of its admirers; if this was a sure and safe rule to go by, the church of Rome would have the best pretensions to the truth of doctrine, discipline, and worship; for all the world wondered after the beast (Rev. 13:3). It should be no discouragement to a gospel-minister to observe, that there are but few that receive the doctrines of grace. Yea, he should abide by them, though they are opposed by men of learning and reputation. Truth does not always lie among men of that character; God is pleased to hide the mysteries of the gospel from the wise and prudent, and reveal them unto babes; and by the foolishness of preaching confound the wise, and save them that believe. It was an objection to

our Lord's ministry, that not any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him; but this people who knoweth not the law are cursed (John 7:48, 49).

Ministers of the gospel should abide by, and continue in the doctrines of it, though it is only received by the poor and ignorant, and opposed by the rich and wise: Nay, they ought to do so, though there are some things in them which cannot be comprehended by corrupt and carnal reason; this should be no objection to a reception of them, or continuance in them. There are some things in the gospel which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, that is, a natural man, to conceive of; wherefore it is no wonder, that the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned (1 Cor. 2:9-14). Nor should the charges and imputations of novelty and licentiousness frighten and deter the ministers of Christ from abiding by the doctrines of grace, since there were the very reproaches and calumnies that the doctrines of Christ and his apostles were loaded with, What thing is this? What new doctrine is this? Say some concerning Christ's ministry (Mark 1:27; Acts 17:19); and so the Athenians to Paul, May we know what this new doctrine whereof thou speakest is? They looked upon the more substantial truths of the gospel as novelties, upstart notions, such as were never heard of before; nay, they were accounted by some as having a tendency to open a door to all manner of wickedness and looseness of life; which occasioned the apostle to say, And not rather; as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm, that we say, Let us do evil that good may come; whose damnation is just (Rom. 3:8). In a word, it becomes Christ's ministers to, abide by, and continue in the doctrines of grace, though they risk their good name, credit, and reputation, are in danger of losing their outward maintenance, or worldly substance, yea, life itself; for whosoever will save his life, shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it (Mark 8:35).

I now hasten briefly to consider,

II. The reasons given by the apostle to support the whole of this charge or exhortation; and to

engage Timothy's, and so every other gospel-minister's, regard unto it.

First, His first reason is, For is doing this thou shalt save thyself. Jesus Christ is the only efficient and procuring cause of salvation: There is no salvation in any other; say there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12). Ministers cannot save themselves by any works of righteousness done by them; no, not by their ministerial services; it is in vain to expect salvation, by any, or from any other than Christ Jesus: But ministers, by taking heed to themselves, may, through a divine blessing, and the influences of the Spirit of God, save themselves from an untoward generation, and be preferred from the pollutions of the world; may keep their garments, their outward conversation garments, so that they do not walk naked, and others see their shame. By taking heed to their doctrine they may save themselves from being infected with false doctrines, errors and heresies: those roots of bitterness, which springing up in churches, trouble same, and defile others, And by continuing in their doctrines, may save themselves from the blood of all men, with whom they are concerned. The work of a minister is an awful, solemn, and weighty one; if he does not warn and instruct both the righteous and the wicked, their blood will be required at his hand; but if he perform his office faithfully, he delivers his soul, that is, he saves himself from such a charge against him; as did the apostle Paul, who could say, I am pure from the blood of all men; for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God (Acts 20:26, 27). Thus, by a minister's taking heed to himself and to his doctrine, and continuing therein, he saves himself from all just blame in his character and office; and may be truly accounted a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith, and of good doctrine, whereunto he hath attained (1 Tim.3:6).

Secondly, His other reason is, thou shalt also save them that hear thee; that is, by being an example to them both in word and conversation, thou shalt be the means of preferring them both from erroneous principles and immoral practices; or, thou shalt be instrumental in their eternal salvation. Ministers are instruments by whom souls believe, and so are saved; the word preached by them being, by the grace of the spirit, an engrafted word, is able to save them; and the gospel being attended with the demonstration of the spirit; is the power of God unto salvation. What can,

or does, more strongly engage ministers to take heed to themselves, to their doctrine, and abide therein, than this? That they may be useful in the conversion, and so in the salvation of precious and immortal souls, which are of more worth than a world: He that converteth a firmer from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins (Jam. 5:20).

A hopeful view of this supports ministers in their work, and carries them cheerfully through many difficulties that attend it; for such souls whom they have been useful to, will be their joy, and crown of rejoicing, in the great day of the Lord. These reasons, I trust, will engage you, my Brother, who have been this day set apart to the pastoral office in this church, in take heed to yourself, your gifts, time, temper, life and conversation, and to the flock now committed to your care: And I conclude, that these will also engage you to take heed to your doctrine; that it be according to the scriptures, the doctrine of Christ, his apostles, and true godliness; and such as will be profitable to them that hear it; that it be found and incorrupt, pure and unmingled, and consistent with itself; that it be delivered out in the best manner you are able, and defended, to the utmost of your ability, by which you will abide, and in which you will continue: In doing this you will be most likely to be instrumental in the conversion of sinners, and edification of saints. God give success to all your ministrations.

### **9 The Work Of A Gospel Minister Recommended To Consideration.**

A Charge Delivered At The Ordinations Of The Reverend MR. JOHN GILL,

MR. BONNER STONE, MR. JAMES LARWILL,  
MR. ISAAC GOULD, MR. WALTER RICHARDS.

2 TIMOTHY 2:7

Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.

That part of the service of this day; which is assigned to me, being to give a word of exhortation to the pallor of this church, now appointed and ordained to that office, and invested with it; I have chosen to do it in the words read; in which may be observed,

I. An exhortation of the apostle Paul to Timothy, to consider what he had said, was saying, or about to say to him; to attend to it, revolve it in his mind, and lay it

up in his memory.

II. A prayer, or wish for him, that the Lord would give him understanding, in all that was, or should be said; and in everything else that might be serviceable and useful to him.

I. An exhortation to consider well what had been, or should be said unto him; for it may refer both to what goes before, and to what follows after; to what goes before, to the advice given to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus; to have recourse to Christ for gifts and grace to fit him more and more for his work, and carry him through it; and strongly to believe that there is a fullness of them in Christ, and that he should receive a sufficient supply from him to help him in every time of need; and also to the instructions delivered to him, to commit the doctrines of the gospel he had heard of him to faithful men, and such as were of capacity to teach others; and likewise to the characters he himself bore, as a soldier, a soldier of Jesus Christ, a good soldier of his; and therefore should patiently and constantly endure hardships, reproaches, and persecution, for the sake of him and his gospel; and should not unnecessarily entangle himself with the affairs of this life, but attend to military ones, that so he might please him that had chosen him to be a soldier; and as he was a combatant, that he must not expect the crown, unless he strove lawfully; and as a husbandman, bearing the precious seed of the word, that he must labor before he could partake of the fruits of it: or this may have respect to what follows after; that he would consider the sum and substance of the gospel he was to preach, and for which the apostle suffered, which was a risen Saviour, and includes his incarnation, obedience, sufferings, and death, with all the doctrines of grace in connection with them; as also that it became him to be very studious and diligent in the use of means, that he might acquit himself with honour in the discharge of his ministerial work; that he might appear approved of God, a workman not to be ashamed of his work, at all times rightly dividing the word of truth, shunning every thing contrary to faith and holiness; likewise, that he ought to flee youthful lusts, his age inclined unto, and follow righteousness, faith, charity and peace; and meekly to instruct those who contradicted themselves and their profession, that, if it was possible, they might be recovered out of the snare they were

fallen into; to these this exhortation may refer, with other things that may be observed in the context. What farther improvement I shall make of it, will be to lay before you, the pastor of this church, for your consideration, various things relative to the work you have been chosen, and called unto, and the office you have been invested with.

First, Consider the work itself, and what a work it is you are engaged in: it is a work, and not a sinecure, but a service; there is business to be done, and a great deal of business too; it is called the work of the ministry (Eph. 4:12), from the subject-matter of it, the ministry of the word, and the administration of ordinances; and the work of the Lord and of Christ (1 Cor. 16:10; Philip. 2:30), from the concern the Lord Jesus Christ has in it; he is the sum and substance of it, he calls unto it, and qualifies for it, assists in it, and when it is rightly done, it makes for his glory. Consider that it is a laborious work; ministers of Christ are not to be loiterers, but laborers in his vineyard; it requires much reading of the scriptures, frequent prayer; constant meditation, and study to prepare for it; and much study is a weariness to the flesh (Eccl. 12:12): and in the performance of this service, with that zeal, fervor, and affection, which are necessary to it, a man, to use the apostle's phrase, may spend and be spent (2 Cor. 12:15); spend his animal spirits until they are quite exhausted and gone; for this work, followed with close application, will try the best constitution in the world, and at length waste and consume it: Epaphroditus, a faithful and laborious minister of the word, was nigh unto death, for, or through the work of Christ (Philip. 2:30): but then consider, for your encouragement, it is an honourable work; if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work (1 Tim. 3:1): which is pleasantly, profitably, and honourably good; for what is more honourable than to be the servants of the most high God, and to be employed in such service of his, as to shew unto men the way of salvation? Than to be the ambassadors of Christ, and stand in his stead, and beseech men to be reconciled to God? Than to be stewards of the mysteries of Christ, and of the manifold grace of God? Than to be the lights of the world, stars in Christ's right hand, the messengers or angels of the churches, and the glory of Christ? Moreover, consider that this work well performed, is deferring of esteem from men;

they that labor in the word and doctrine are worthy of double honour (1 Tim. 5:17), of an honourable maintenance, and of honourable respect; they are to be received with gladness, and had in reputation; and to be known, owned, and acknowledged by those over whom they are as fathers, guides, and governors: and to be highly esteemed for their works sake: add to all this, that this is a work in which God is with his ministers, and they with him; for, says the apostle (1 Cor. 3:9), we are laborers together with God, ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building; the churches are God's husbandry, and to be manured and cultivated, planted and watered; which is a laborious work, and constantly to be attended to; and nothing can be done to any purpose, and with any effect, but through the presence and blessing of God; neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, which to do is the work of gospel-ministers, but God that giveth the increase (1 Cor. 3:7); and as the people of God, in a church-state, are his building, and who are to be edified and built upon their most holy faith; except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; (Ps. 127:1); but when his ministers go forth in his name and strength, preaching his gospel, and he grants his gracious presence and assistance, and he, the Lord, is working with them (Mark 16:20), they go on in their work with cheerfulness and success.

Secondly, Consider the several parts of this work you are called unto and engaged in, which are to be performed by you, and are as follow;

1. The ministration of the word, which is a principal part of the work of a minister of Christ; the apostles, and first preachers of the gospel, besides the spiritual, had the secular affairs of the church upon their hands; which lying too heavy on them, they desired to be eased, by appointing proper persons to take care of the latter; that so they might give themselves up wholly and constantly to prayer, and to the ministry of the word (Acts 6:4): Now consider what that is, that is to be ministered, it is the word of God, and not man; which, as it demands the attention of the hearer, so the assiduous application of the preacher: it is the gospel that is to be preached, the good news and glad tidings of peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation by Christ; it is the gospel, which is given in commission to preach; it is the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which ministers are entrusted with; and there is a woe

upon them, if they preach it not; they are appointed ministers of the new testament; not of the law, the killing letter, the ministration of condemnation and death; but of the gospel, the quickening spirit, the ministration of the spirit, of righteousness and of life: consider, that only the pure unmixed gospel of Christ is to be preached, the sincere milk of the word, unadulterated, and clear of all human mixtures; it is not to be blended and corrupted with the doctrines of men: the word of God is not to be handled craftily; the hidden things of dishonesty are to be renounced, and the manifestation of the truth is to be made to every man's conscience, in the fight of God: and the whole of the gospel is to be delivered; no truth of it is to be dropped, concealed, or kept back, upon any pretense whatsoever, though it may be displeasing to some; such a question is never to be admitted and reasoned upon one moment in your private studies and preparations, whether such a truth you are meditating upon will be pleasing or displeasing? for if you seek to please men, you will not be the servant of Christ; the only thing to be considered is, is it truth? If it is, speak it out, without fear of man; and though it may be traduced as irrational, or licentious, and be loaded with reproach, and charged with dangerous consequences; yea, it may be urged, that admitting it to be truth, since an ill use may be made of it, it should not be preached; but let none of these things move you; preach truth, every truth, and leave it with the God of truth, who will take care of it, and use it to his own ends and purposes.

Consider, that Christ is the sum and substance of the gospel-ministry; and that he, as to his person, offices, and grace, is chiefly to be insisted upon; we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord (2 Cor. 4:5); as the anointed prophet, priest, and king; as Jesus the alone Saviour; as the Lord our righteousness, even Christ crucified, and slain for the sins of men; though such preaching may be a stumbling-block to some, and foolishness to others (1 Cor. 1:23). The great apostle Paul, who well understood the nature and import of the gospel-ministry, declares, that he determined not to know any thing, that is, not to make known, or preach anything, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified (1 Cor. 2:2); and as Christ is the alpha and omega of the scriptures, so he should be of all your discourses and sermons; whatever subject you are upon, keep Christ in your eye, and let it appear, some way or other, it

has a connection with him, and centers in him. The gospel to be preached, is the gospel of the grace of God; and it is sometimes called the grace of God itself; the doctrines of it are the doctrines of free grace, and declare, that the salvation of men, from first to last, and in all the parts of it, is of grace, and not of works; and these are to be faithfully dispensed, as that the first step to the salvation of men, the choice of them to it, is of grace, and not of works; that men are justified freely by the grace of God, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and not by the works of the law; that the full forgiveness of sins, though by the blood of Christ, is according to the riches of God's grace; and that eternal life is the free gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord: Yea, every truth that is contained in the scriptures, and is agreeable to them, is to be preached; for all scripture is profitable for doctrine (2 Tim. 3:16); from thence it is to be fetched, and by it to be supported and maintained; this is the standard of faith and practice; and as it is by this the hearers of the word are to try what they hear, and judge whether things are right or wrong, they hear; so this should be the rule to ministers to preach by; to the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them (Isa. 8:20).

The doctrinal part of the scripture is more especially to be attended to, because that is the food with which the flock and church of God is to be fed, by those who are the pastors and overseers of it; and therefore, as they should take heed to themselves, and to the flock under their care, so to their doctrine; that it be found doctrine, pure, and incorrupt; that it be entirely agreeable to the sacred writings; that it be the doctrine of Christ, which comes from him, and is concerning him; that it be such as was preached by his apostles, and is contained in their discourses and epistles; and that it be according to godliness: though not the doctrines of the gospel only are to be preached, but the duties of religion are also to be inculcated in their proper place and course, and to be pressed on believers upon gospel principles and motives; the churches are to be taught to observe all things which Christ has commanded, every ordinance of his, and every duty enjoined, both with respect to God and men; saints are to be put in mind to be ready to every good work; and those that have believed in God, are to be charged to be careful to maintain good works for

necessary uses; every doctrine and every duty, in their turns, are to be insisted on, throughout the circle of the evangelic ministry.

Let controversy, as little as may be, be brought into the pulpit; controversial sermons, when best managed, are generally unedifying ones to the people in common; tend to damp the true spirit of religion and devotion, which it is the design of preaching the word to excite; and serve to entangle, perplex, and confound weak minds; objections are often started to be solved, which are not easily done; by which means captious persons, and such as are disinclined to receive the truth, are furnished with them, who otherwise would not; and sometimes the solutions of such objections are not quite satisfactory to the friends of truth, and so rather tend to stagger than to establish: Upon the whole, it is best to preach the pure truths of the gospel in the plainest manner, and endeavor to illustrate and confirm them by scripture-testimonies, and by reasonings drawn from thence, and leave them with their native evidence upon the minds of men.

Now consider, that all this is to be done completely, constantly, and consistently; the gospel is to be preached fully, as it was by the apostle Paul (Rom. 15:19), according to the measure of the gift of grace given; and when a man preaches the whole gospel of Christ, and delivers out all the doctrines of it, and urges to all the duties relative to it, and declares the whole counsel of God; then may he be said to do the work of an evangelist, and to make full proof of his ministry, and to fulfill the ministry which he has received of Christ: and this is to be done constantly; these things, says the apostle, I will that thou affirm constantly (Titus 3:8); the truths, before spoken of, concerning the state of God's people in unregeneracy, the loving-kindness of God to them in their redemption by Christ, the saving them by the washing of regeneration, the justification of them by the free grace of God, and their heirship and title to eternal life, upon that; the word must be preached in season, and out of season, as often as opportunity offers; and the ministers of Christ must be stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing their labor is not in vain in the Lord: and care should be taken, that this work is done consistently; that the ministry is uniform, and all of a piece; that there is no contradiction, no yea and nay in it; otherwise great

confusion will be created in the minds of hearers, and they will be thrown into the utmost perplexity, not knowing what to believe, or receive; for if the trumpet given an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? (1 Cor. 14:8).

2. Another part of the work to be performed by you, is the administration of gospel-ordinances, and they are principally Baptism and the Lord's supper: the administration of baptism goes along with the ministry of the word; such, who have a commission from Christ to teach and instruct men in divine things, have a commission also to baptize those who are taught and instructed by them, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the holy Ghost; nor have any other a right to do it: some have thought that Philip who baptized the eunuch and others, was Philip the deacon; but be it so, he was an evangelist also, a preacher of the gospel, as it is plain he was; and therefore he baptized, not by virtue of his office as a deacon, but as a teacher and a preacher of the word of God. The apostle Paul indeed says, Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel (1 Cor. 1:17); but then his meaning is, that he was not sent only to baptize, or this was not the principal part of his ministry; it was chiefly to preach the gospel, though not to the exclusion of the administration of ordinances; nor does he say this, as thinking, or speaking meanly of the ordinance of baptism; but because some persons had made an ill use of their being baptized by him; and were ready to boast of it, as if they were baptized in his name. It is incumbent on you, to administer this ordinance to the persons which are described in the word of God, and of which there are examples in it, and in the manner therein directed to, and practiced. The ordinance of the Lord's supper, being an ordinance in the church, is to be administered by the pastor of it; such who break the bread of life in the ministry of the word, are to break the bread in the ordinance of the supper: the apostle Paul broke bread to the disciples, to whom he preached; and this ordinance is to be administered frequently, as is suggested in those words, as often as ye eat this bread, etc (1 Cor. 11:26); in it the sufferings of Christ should be described, and his love set forth in the most moving and pathetic strains; and he be represented as crucified and slain, in as lively a manner, as the administrator is capable of.

3. Another part of your work, is to take care of the

discipline of the house of God; for though everything is to be done by the vote and suffrage of the church, the power of discipline being lodged in it by Christ, the head of it; yet the executive part of it will lie chiefly upon you; though none are to be admitted to, or excluded from the communion of the church, but according to its voice, and with its consent: yet it should be greatly your concern, to examine things closely, whether the persons are fit to be received or rejected; and to take care, that nothing be done through favour or affection, and with partiality. Pastors of churches have a rule and government committed to them; they are set over others in the Lord; they are not indeed to lord it over God's heritage, to rule them in an haughty and imperious manner, but according to the laws of Christ: which they are carefully to observe, and point out to the church, and see that they are put in execution; in doing which their government chiefly lies; you are therefore to take care, that everything in the church be done decently, and in order, and according to the rule of the divine word: particularly, care should be taken that no case in difference, of a private nature, be brought into the church, before the rule is observed, which Christ has given in reference to such a case; that the offended brother should first tell the offender of his fault alone, and endeavor to convince him of it; and if he should not succeed, then to take one or two more, and try by them to bring him to an acknowledgment of it; but, if after all he is obstinate and incorrigible, then bring it to the church (Matthew 18:15-17). But as for those that sin openly, that are guilty of notorious and scandalous crimes, in a public manner, to the great disgrace of religion, as well as grief of the church, these are to be rebuked before all, without anymore to do, that others may fear (1 Tim. 5:20): the several rules to be attended to, with respect to church-discipline, you are to inculcate to the church, at proper times, and on proper occasions; as to admonish persons guilty of immorality and error, to withdraw from those that walk disorderly, after all methods taken to reclaim them are vain and fruitless; and to reject an heretic, after the first and second admonition (2 Thess. 3:6; Titus 3:10), when without effect.

4. Another part of your work, is to visit the several members of the church, as their cases may require, especially when distressed, either in body or mind;

then to pray with them, and for them, to speak a word of comfort to them, and give them your best counsel and advice; and this will introduce you into divers families; but take care not to meddle with family-affairs; what you hear and see in one family report it not in another; this may be attended with bad consequences: and whatever differences may arise between one and another, interfere as little as possible; choose rather that differences between members be composed by other persons, the officers of the church, than by you, that no prejudices be entertained against your ministry; and particularly be careful to avoid that scandalous practice, the disgrace of the pulpit, bringing matters of difference into it, whether between yourself or others, or whether between one member and another, one side of which you may incline to take; for why should the peace and edification of a whole community be destroyed, through the noise and din of private quarrels? As this is a practice exceeding mean, it is very unbecoming the gospel of peace, and the ministers of it. Moreover, you will be called upon sometimes to visit sick persons, who are not members of the church; and who may be strangers to the grace of God, and the way of salvation by Christ; and who have been either profane persons, or resting upon their civility and morality, pleasing themselves, that they have wronged no man, and have done that which is right between man and man; and now in dying circumstances, hope, on this account, things will be well with them; and whose relatives may be afraid of your saying anything to interrupt this carnal peace; yet, be faithful, labor to show the one and the other their wretched and undone state by nature; the necessity of repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, in his blood, righteousness, and atoning sacrifice, for peace, pardon, justification, and salvation. This is a case, I assure you, will require a good deal of care, judgment, and faithfulness. And now, I doubt not, but by this time you will be ready to say, who is sufficient for these things? (2 Cor. 2:16). Wherefore,

Thirdly, Consider the qualifications necessary to the performance of the ministerial work; and what things are requisite and useful for the due discharge of it: and here let it be observed, that there are some things which are serviceable and useful in it, which, properly speaking, are not the qualifications for it; as

for instance, the grace of God is a prerequisite to this work; it is highly proper that those who are engaged in it, should be partakers of it in truth: yet grace is not the ministerial qualification; for this is what all the saints have in common, the graces of the spirit, faith, hope, and love; they all obtain like precious faith, for nature, kind, and object, though not to the same degree, one as another; they are all called in one hope of their calling, by the same grace, to the same glory; and they are all taught of God to love God, Christ, and one another; yet this does not qualify them for ministers of the word; if grace was a ministerial qualification, all the Lord's people would be what Moses wished they were, even all of them prophets. Human learning is very useful and serviceable to a minister of the gospel; to have such a share of it, as to be capable of reading the scriptures in the original tongues in which they were written; and by means of knowledge of languages, to be able to read the writings of many excellent good men, written therein, to their profit and advantage; as well as to know the use of words, and the propriety of speech: and such who are called to the work of the ministry, who have not had a liberal education, and yet have time and leisure, are not easily to be excused, if they do not make use of their time, and those means that may be had, to improve themselves in useful knowledge; and yet, after all, the highest attainments in human literature are not ministerial qualifications; for a man may be able to read the Bible in the languages in which it was written, and yet not understand the things contained in it; for it is a sealed book, which when put into the hands of a learned man to read and interpret, he cannot, because it is sealed. Good natural parts are of great service and use to a minister of the word; as to have a clear understanding, a solid judgment, a lively fancy, a fruitful invention, and a retentive memory; but these a man may have, and yet not be fit to be a minister of the gospel; yea, men may have all the above things, grace, learning, and natural parts, and not be qualified for this work. The apostle Paul had all of them; he was a man of good natural parts, which his adversaries perceived and owned; his letters, say they, are mighty and powerful (2 Cor. 10:12), wrote in a masculine style, and full of strong reasonings, and nervous arguments; he had a large share of human literature, being brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, in all the learning of the Jews, and

of other nations; and he also was called by the grace of God; yet he does not ascribe his being a minister of the gospel to either, or all of their, but to a gift which he had received; a peculiar gift, fitting and qualifying him for this important work; for, speaking of the gospel, he says, whereof I was made a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me (Eph. 3:7); with which agree the words of the apostle Peter, as everyone has received the gift, even so minister the same one to another (1 Pet. 4:10): in some this gift may be greater, in others lets; but in all where it is, it more or less qualifies for the service of the ministry: having then gifts, differing according to the grace that is given unto us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion or analogy of faith (Rom. 12:6); that is, let us interpret the scriptures, or preach the word, agreeable to the tenor of it: Now this gift lies in a competent knowledge of the scriptures, and of the things contained in them, and of a faculty of interpreting them to the edification of others; for the work of evangelical pastors or teachers, is to feed the churches with knowledge and understanding (Jer. 3:15); which, unless they have a considerable share of themselves, they will not be able to do with any profit and advantage to others: these are spiritual men, who having spiritual gifts, are capable of making judgment of all things necessary to be known unto salvation; of this knowledge and of this gift the apostle is speaking, when he says, whereby when ye read ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ (Eph. 3:4).

But now, besides this share of knowledge and furniture of the mind, there must be a capacity of expressing it to others, to make up the ministerial qualification; a man must not only have wherewith to teach others, or matter to instruct them in, but he must be capable of doing it in an apt and suitable manner, that tends to edification; which the apostle means by utterance, which is a gift, and by men being able to teach others also, and by being apt to teach (Eph. 6:19; 2 Tim. 2:2; 1 Tim. 3:2); for it signifies little what a man knows, or how great soever is the furniture of his mind, or the largeness of his ideas, and the compass of his knowledge, if he is not capable of clothing his ideas with apt and suitable words to convey them to the understanding of others. So then this gift consists of knowledge and elocution; and on whomsoever this

gift is bestowed, whether on a gracious or a graceless person, on a John or a Judas; [1] or whether on a learned or unlearned man, on a Paul or a Peter; on a man of good natural parts or one of a meaner capacity; that is it that qualifies for the ministry; where indeed grace, learning, and natural parts all meet together in a man with this gift, they make him a very considerable and distinguished man. Now, there are various things that are requisite, in order to the due and regular exercise of this gift to usefulness.

1. There must be a call to the exercise of it: besides the inward call or disposition of the mind to such service, and which must be submitted to others; for the spirit of the prophets is subject to the prophets (1 Cor. 14:32); there must be an outward call by the church: it being notified to it by some means or another, that such an one is thought to have a gift for the ministry, the church calls him to the exercise of it, tries his gift, and judges of it; and upon approbation, such are separated and sent forth into the ministry, as Saul and Barnabas were; for no modest man will take this honour to himself, or thrust himself into this work, unless he is called to it; though in this rambling age of ours, there are many run who were never sent, and take upon them this work, without having a gift qualifying them for it, or a call from God or men unto it.

2. Where there is a gift, diligence and industry must be used to improve it; for otherwise it may decline, become less, and in length of time useless; yea, may be entirely lost or taken away; for gifts are not like grace; grace, though it may decline as to exercise, can never be lost; but gifts may, as appears from the parable of the talents, by which I understand ministerial gifts; the man that had one talent wrapped it up in a napkin, and hid it in the earth, that is, he neglected it, and made no use of it; wherefore orders are given to take it from him, and give it to others; for unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; everyone that hath a gift, and is diligent and constant in the use of it, that shall increase; but from him that hath not, who, though he has a gift, is as if he had none, neglecting to cultivate it, and make use of it, shall be taken away even that which he hath (Matthew 25:29). Gifts, like some metals, unless frequently used, become rusty and good for nothing; hence the exhortation of the apostle to Timothy, not to neglect,

but to stir up the gift of God that was in him (1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6), as you stir up coals of fire, that they may give more light and heat; so gifts by use become brighter and brighter, and more beneficial.

3. Faithfulness is necessary to the due exercise of this gift; those that have it, are, or should be, good stewards of the manifold grace of God; and now it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful (1 Pet. 4:10; 1 Cor. 4:2); to dispense the mysteries of God, of which they are stewards, unto others; and when God has counted a man faithful, putting him into the ministry (1 Tim. 1:12), he ought to continue faithful to him that has put him into it, to the souls of men committed to his care, and to the gospel, and the truths of it he is entrusted with. For he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully, what is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord of hosts (Jer. 23:28).

4. Wisdom and prudence are also very requisite in the exercise of this gift, both in the choice of subjects, and in the manner of treating them; a man that is a steward must be wise as well as faithful, to give to every one of the household their portion of meat in due season (Luke 12:42;) and a man that labors in the word and doctrine should be skillful in the scriptures, that he may rightly divide the word of truth (2 Tim. 2:15); and he that has to do with persons in various cases, and different circumstances, had need to have the understanding and tongue of the learned to speak a word in season to him that is weary (Isa. 1:4).

5. Ministers of the word ought to be careful of their lives and conversations; or otherwise, let their gifts be what they may, they will become useless and unprofitable; they therefore should take heed to themselves (Acts 20:28), to conduct and behave becoming their work and office; and so to walk as to an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity (1 Tim. 4:12), and to take care they give no offense to the church, nor to the world, that the ministry be not blamed (2 Cor. 6:3); for it is a most shameful thing, that they which teach others not to sin, but to guard against it, should be guilty of the same themselves; see >Romans 2:23, 24, where the apostle enlarges on this subject. Fourthly, Consider the means that are to be made use of for the cultivation and improvement of the ministerial gift; and for the better discharge of the work and office to which you have been called and ordained. The

directions the apostle gives to Timothy on this head, are well worthy of your notice, and should be closely pursued; give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. — Meditate on these things, give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all (1 Tim. 4:13, 15): in the first and chief place study the Bible, read that attentively, compare one passage with another, spiritual things with spiritual, parallel places together; and particularly those that are more dark and obscure with those that are more clear and plain; that thereby you may know more of the mind of the Spirit of God and Christ in the sacred pages; for the inspired writings are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works (2 Tim. 3:16, 17): for these will furnish out sufficient matter, both for things doctrinal and practical, to be insisted on in the ministry of the word; and with whatsoever may be necessary for the discharge of the ministerial office. Read also the writings of good men, for these are not preferred and transmitted to posterity for nothing, but for use; but then read them with care and caution, as human writings, liable to mistakes, and having their imperfections; compare them with the word of God, and so far as they agree with that, and are consistent with themselves, regard them, and not otherwise. Meditate much on divine things, on the scriptures, and the doctrines contained in them: it is the character of every good man, that he meditates in the law (Ps. 1:2), or doctrine of the Lord continually; and he finds his account in it; his meditation of God, of Christ, and of spiritual things, is sweet (Ps. 104:34), and delightful to him; and much more should it be the constant work and employment of a minister of the word. Luther, as I remember, it is said of him, that he used to say, “Meditation, temptation, and prayer, make a “divine.” For prayer is also very necessary to be frequently repeated, since this goes along with the ministry of the word, and is so very useful in respect of it. The apostles desired to be eased of the worldly concerns of the church, that they might give up themselves to prayer, as well as to the ministry of the word (Acts 6:4); and to the former in order to the latter. Ministers of the gospel should pray often, not only in public, but in private; not only for others, but for themselves; that they might be more qualified for

their work, as well as be more successful in it; that they might have more spiritual light, knowledge, and understanding, and be more capable of instructing and feeding the people under their care; that they might have the eyes of their understandings more enlightened, to behold the wonderful things that are in the law, or doctrine of the Lord; and be better able to point them out to others.

Fifthly, Consider on the one hand the difficulties and discouragements that attend the ministerial work; and on the other hand, the encouragements to proceed on in it.

1. The difficulties and discouragements that attend it; these, I would observe, not to distress you in, or deter you from your work; but that, when you meet with them, they may not seem as though some strange or uncommon thing had happened unto you. There are some, which come from within a man's self; from in-dwelling sin, from a law in the members warring against the law of the mind; you will find when you would do good, evil is present with you, as particularly to hinder you in the pursuit of your studies; you will find a kind of slothfulness and disinclination to the work; nay, sometimes when the spirit is willing the flesh will be weak (Matthew 26:42), and wilt make excuses to put off preparation for it to another time. Sometimes you will be in darkness, and under divine desertions, and be in very uncomfortable frames; yet still you must go on, and prepare, in the best manner that you can, for instructing and comforting others; this is hard and difficult work, but it must be done: and difficulties and discouragements sometimes arise from Satan's temptations, who is very busy with all good men, especially with ministers of the gospel: he desired to have Peter in his hands; he buffeted the apostle Paul; he levels his arrows at those who are the most fruitful, flourishing, and useful; as the archers that shot at Joseph, that fruitful bough by a well, and grieved him, though his bow abode in strength, the arms of his hands being made strong by the mighty God of Jacob. You must expect Satan's temptations; he will tempt you to that which is unbecoming your character and office; he will tempt you perhaps to entertain groundless jealousies of one or other of the members of the church; he will tempt you to drop your ministry, or however, in this place, and to do it in a pet and humor: these, and such like temptations, should

be guarded against. Other discouragements will arise from the world, and the men of it, from their revilings and reproaches, wrath, rage, and persecutions in one shape or other; but none of these things should move you from your work, or cause you to desert it. Remember you are chosen, and called to be a soldier of Jesus Christ; and, as a good one, should endure hardness, hard words, and hard usage, for his sake: yea, the difficulties and discouragements of gospel-ministers are increased by professors of religion themselves; not only by those of other communities, who may traduce and speak ill of such, who are not altogether of the same principles with themselves, but by the members of the churches over which they are pastors; some of which are very weak and imprudent, and oftentimes make a minister very uncomfortable and uneasy by their words and actions; though these things should be considered as their weakness and infirmities, and to be bore with; for we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not please ourselves (>Rom. 15:1); yet these must be reckoned among a minister's difficulties and discouragements; but,

2. You are to consider the encouragements to go on in your work, notwithstanding what may be met with in it which is difficult and discouraging; and which is a superabundant counterbalance to that. Remember the gracious promises Christ has made of his presence with his ministers, and of his protection of them, and of his assistance in their work, and of a reward, though not of debt, yet of grace, that shall be given them: he has promised he will be with his ministers in successive generations, unto the end of the world, to supply and support them; he holds them in his right hand, and will not suffer any to set upon them, to hurt them, until they have done the work he has called them to, and is designed to be done by them; his power and grace are sufficient to bear them up in, and carry them through whatever service he engages them in; his strength is made perfect in their weakness, and as their day is, their strength is; so he has promised, and so he performs. Remember and consider, that they that be wise, and teach and instruct others, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament in the kingdom-state; and they that turn many to righteousness, or justify many, by teaching the doctrine of justification, or directing souls to the righteousness of Christ alone

for it, shall be as the stars forever and ever (Dan. 12:4); that those who have taken good heed to their flocks, over which the Holy Ghost hath made them overseers, and have faithfully fed them, and carefully watched over them, when the chief shepherd shall appear, shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away (1 Pet. 5:4) and will hear from Christ, well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord (Matthew 25:21). But I proceed to observe,

II. The prayer or wish of the apostle for Timothy, that the Lord would give him understanding in all things; and upon this I shall be very short; only drop a few things by way of explanation of it: and by all things, in which he desires he might have an understanding, he does not mean all things natural and civil; indeed the understanding of all such things comes from God; every good and perfect gift in nature, or in providence, as well as in grace, comes from the Father of lights (Jam. 1:17); all the wisdom and knowledge which Bezaleel and Aboliab, had for devising and working curious works for the tabernacle, were of God; he put it into their hearts, and filled them with wisdom, knowledge, and understanding in these things; yea, even all the understanding the plowman has in plowing the ground, and breaking the clods, and harrowing them, and in sowing his seed, is all from God; he instructs him to discretion; this comes from him who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working; and so the same may be said of knowledge of all natural and civil things, of all arts and sciences, liberal and mechanic: and indeed a minister of the word had need to be acquainted with all things in nature and civil life, thoroughly to understand all things contained in the scriptures of truth; since there are such a variety of metaphors, and so many allusions to things natural and civil; and such an adorable fullness in them, as Tertullian expresses it. But the apostle, no doubt, means understanding in spiritual things, in the scriptures, in the doctrines and mysteries of grace. The understanding of man is naturally dark as to those things; it is the Lord that gives men an understanding to know them, that opens their hearts, and enlightens their minds by the spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of them; for whatever understanding natural men may have of natural things, they have none of spiritual ones; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh

after God (Rom. 3:12).

Now, besides the understanding of spiritual things, which God gives in common to his people, he gives to his ministers a larger understanding of divine things, and of the scriptures and the truths of them; he opens their understandings, as Christ did his disciples, that they may understand the scriptures; he gives unto them to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, to a greater degree than he does to others; and he enlarges their understandings, and increases their gifts, their light, and knowledge; which is what the apostle in a more especial manner prays for here, on the account of Timothy; that he might be better instructed in everything relative to his office, as an evangelist and minister of the word, and know how to behave in the church of God, which is the house of God, the pillar and ground of truth; and which is the principal end of his writing this; and the former epistle to him. I have only one observation more to make, and that is, that the clause may be considered as an assertion, or a promise, and the Lord will give thee understanding in all things; and so is used as an encouragement to consider well what had been said, and to expect a richer furniture of knowledge, and a larger measure of spiritual light and understanding; and as Christ gives more light to his people, who are made light by him; and there is such a thing as growing in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ, and of all spiritual things, in common Christians; and the path of the just is as the shining light that shines more and more unto the perfect day; so faithful ministers of the word, who are diligent and industrious in their work, may expect, and be assured, that God will give them an enlarged knowledge and understanding of divine truths, and of everything necessary to the due performance of that sacred work they are called unto, and holy office they are invested with. I shall close, as I begun, with the words of my text, Consider what I say, or have been saying; consider the work of the ministry, that it is a work, and a laborious one, yet honourable and deserving of esteem from men; and that God will never leave his servants in it: consider the several parts of it, as the ministration of the gospel, the administration of ordinances, the care of the discipline of Christ's house, and visiting the afflicted and distressed: consider the necessary qualifications for it, and the things that are useful to the performance

of it: consider the means to be made use of to enable for the better and more regular exercise of spiritual gifts; and the difficulties and discouragements that, on the one hand, attend this work; and, on the other, the encouragements to go on in it; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things; in all divine and spiritual things, in the truths of the gospel, and in everything relative to your office, and the due discharge of it, you have this day been invested with. May the blessing of God rest upon you, and may you have success in your work.

#### ENDNOTES:

1[1] Judas had the same call and mission from Christ to preach the gospel with the rest of the apostles; and had the same gifts, ordinary and extraordinary qualifying for it; and behaved so well in his office, that the rest of the disciples rather distrusted themselves than him, on Christ's declaring, one of them should betray him, saying each, Is it I? (Matthew 10:1-8; 26:21, 22). And, though I am of opinion, that for the most part, God gives special grace to those on whom he bestows gifts for the ministry, yet not always; as the instances in Matthew 7:22, 23 and Philippians 1:15, 16, show, and is a case the apostle supposes (1 Cor. 9:27; 13:1, 2), and such may be the means of the conversion and edification of men: the reason of which is, it is the word of God they preach, and God can and does make use of his own word, to such purposes, by what instruments he pleases.

### **10 The Doctrine Of The Cherubim Opened And Explained.**

A Sermon at the Ordination of the Reverend Mr. John Davis, at Waltham Abbey. Preached August 15, 1764.

#### EZEKIEL 10:20

This is the living creature, that I saw under the God of Israel, by the river of Chebar; and I knew that they were the Cherubim.

Being desired to say something to you, my Brother, on this occasion, relative to the ministerial character you bear, and to the work you have been called to, and to the office you have been at this time invested with; my thoughts have been led to this passage of scripture, This is the living creature; or creatures, the singular for the plural for there were four living creatures which Ezekiel saw in the vision he refers to; these

he saw under the God of Israel, under a firmament over the heads of these creatures; above which was the appearance of a man in a most glorious and illustrious form; and who was no other than the Son of God, who was to be incarnate, and here called the God of Israel; and which is no inconsiderable proof of our Lord's proper Deity, for the God of Israel must be the true God: this vision the prophet had by the river of Chebar; a river in Chaldea, where the captive Jews assembled, and Ezekiel with them; and when he had the vision, as now repeated to him, the objects in it became more familiar to him; and he more wistly looked at them, and perceived and was well assured, that the living creatures he saw were the cherubim; or were of the same form and figure with the cherubim in the tabernacle of Moses and the temple of Solomon; for though he was not a high priest, only a common priest, and so could never have seen the cherubim in the most holy place himself yet he might have had an account of them from a high priest who had seen them and besides there were figures of the cherubim carved upon the walls of the temple all around, and upon the doors of it; which, as his business was to be frequently in the temple, he must have often seen, and full well knew them. See also verse 15, where the same is affirmed as here.

It may seem strange to you at first, that I should read such a passage of scripture on such an occasion; but it will not appear so long, when I inform you that my intention is, by opening and explaining the emblems of the cherubim, to lay before you the qualifications, duties, work, and usefulness of the ministers of the gospel; to make way for which, it will be proper to inquire what the cherubim were, and what they signified; in order to which we must look both backwards and forwards, to the account of them in scripture, both before and after these visions of Ezekiel. The

account begins early, proceeds gradually, and by degrees becomes more clear, distinct, and perfect. The first mention of the cherubim is in Genesis 3:24, quickly after the fall of man, and at his expulsion from the garden of Eden; when Jehovah placed at the east of the garden of Eden, cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life; but we are not told what these cherubim were, whether real creatures or only figures, nor what their

form, nor their number, only their position at the east end of the garden of Eden, and their use, to keep the way of the tree of life, the meaning of which will be given hereafter; only it may be observed, that Moses calls them the cherubim, for the word in the original has the pre-positive and emphatic article; as if they were well known, as they were to Moses, and might be to the people of Israel through him, who could inform them of them for the book of Genesis was written after Moses had the order to make the cherubim, and place them with the mercy-seat over the ark in the holy of holies, as related in Exodus 25:18-22, from whence we learn, that the cherubim were figures of winged creatures; that they were in number two; that they were made of gold, of the same mass with the mercy seat; that they stood at both ends of it, looking to one another and to that, and overshadowed it with their wings; and were so placed as to make a seat for the divine Majesty, who took up his residence here, and therefore afterwards is often described by him that dwelleth between the cherubim. The same figures were set in the most holy place in Solomon's temple; and where also were, two others of a larger size, made not of gold, but of olive-wood gilded, and whose wings extended, and touching each other, reached from one side of the holy of holies to the other; but still we are at a loss for the exact form of these figures: this is supplied in the visions of Ezekiel, related in this and in the first chapter; in which, four living creatures, he asserts to be the cherubim, are particularly described by their faces, their wings, their hands, and their feet, and by the shining appearance of the whole; but still we are left in the dark what these creatures were emblems of, until the gospel-dispensation took place, which brings dark things into light; when John had a vision similar to those of Ezekiel, with a very little variation, in which he had a more perfect view of the living creatures, and which gives a more exact description of them, of their situation and employment; that they were round about the throne of God, were rational creatures, and spiritual and constant worshippers of the divine Being, or however, emblems of such; with other marks and circumstances, by which it may be known with some certainty, who they were or who are intended by them. The vision is related in Revelation 4:6-9, and as the key to the interpretation of the cherubim. From whence it appeal's.

First, That these were not emblems of the divine

persons in the Godhead, It is a fancy that some of late have embraced and are greatly elated with it, as a wonderful discovery; that the cherubim are an hieroglyphic, the three faces of the ox, lion, and eagle, of the Trinity of persons in the Deity, and the face of a man joined to them, of the incarnation of the Son of God; and would have the word cherubim pronounced ce-rubbim, and translated as the mighty ones; but this is a mere fancy and false notion: For,

1. John's four beasts, or rather living creatures, as the word should be rendered, for that of beasts is an uncomely translation, the same with Ezekiel's living creatures, and which he affirms to be the cherubim, are represented as worshippers of the divine Being, and therefore cannot be emblems of the object of worship. They are said not only to be about the throne of God, and to admire and adore the attribute of holiness, and ascribe it to the almighty Being; but to give glory, honour, and thanks to him; to fall down and worship God, yea, to fall down before the Lamb in a worshipping posture, and to give the lead to others in divine worship. See Revelation 4:8-10 and verse 8:14, and 19:4.

2. The cherubim are in many places most manifestly distinguished from the divine Being; they are represented as the seat and throne on which he sits, and as a vehicle in which he rides; so they are described at the first mention of them in Genesis 3:24, where the words may be rendered he, Jehovah, inhabited the cherubim, or dwelt with, over, or between them; and so he did in the cherubim over the mercy-seat, from between which he promised to commune with Moses; and therefore, as before observed, is often described as dwelling between the cherubim, and on which he is said to ride. See Exodus 25:22, Psalm 80:1 and 18:10, and here the living creatures in my text are said to be under the God of Israel, and so distinct from him and in John's vision are described as about the throne of God, and as distinct from him that sat upon it; and the seraphim in Isaiah's vision, the same with the cherubim here, are also distinguished from the Lord sitting on a throne high and lifted up; and are represented as attendants on him, and worshippers of him, Isaiah 6:1-3.

3. If the cherubim could be thought to be emblems of a plurality in the Deity, they would be emblems, not of a trinity of persons, but rather of a quaternity,

since the cherubim had four faces, each distinct from one another: yea, John's four living creatures were four distinct animals, each having a distinct head and face; and the face of a man, both in his and Ezekiel's living creatures, is as a distinct a face as any of the rest; and if they were emblems of persons; that must be so too; whereas the human nature of Christ; this is said to be an emblem of, is no person; Christ did not take an human person, but an human nature into union with his divine person, for reasons that might be given much less is it a person in the Godhead, as this supposed emblem would make it to be. Besides, the human nature in Christ is his inferior nature, whereas the face of a man in the cherubim is the superior face, the rest being faces of irrational animals.

4. If the cherubim were an hieroglyphic of the Trinity, this would give a similitude of the divine Being, and of that in him which is the most incomprehensible to us, a Trinity of persons in the Deity; and would furnish with an answer to such a question, suggested as unanswerable, To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare with him? Isaiah 40:18, 25, and 46:5, for then it might be replied, To the cherubim; but there is no likeness of God, nor any to be made of him; though the Son of God often appeared in an human form, and in the fulness of time became incarnate; and the holy Ghost once descended as a dove; yet the Father's shape was never seen at any time, John 5:37. This notion also is repugnant to the second command, which forbids the making any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, Exodus 20:4, and then most certainly forbids the making of any likeness of the divine Being. Supposing the cherubim at the garden of Eden were made by God himself, as those in the tabernacle and temple were made by his order; yet he would never make, nor order to be made, such as he forbid, which he must, if they bore the similitude of him; but the truth is, the cherubim were not a likeness of any thing above in heaven, nor of any thing on earth; there never having been seen nor known by any man on earth, as Josephus affirms, any such creature whom they describe; and a certain Jewish writer observes, the making of them came not under the interdict or prohibition of the second command; which if made in the likeness of God it would.

5. To all which may be added, if the cherubim were known emblems of the Trinity, it can hardly be

thought that any man would take the name of Cherub to himself, or impose it upon any of his family, or should be so called by others; yet we find a man with his family of this name, Ezra 2:59; Nehemiah 7:61, and still less would it be given as it is, to Antichrist, the antitype of the king of Tyre, the man of sin and son of perdition, Ezekiel 28:14, where he is called the anointed cherub; which can never be in allusion to the divine Being, and the persons in the Godhead; but may be in allusion to the ministers of the word, the cherubim are the emblems of; as will be presently seen; since he is an ecclesiastical person, calls himself a bishop, an universal Bishop, Christ's anointed Vicar, and Head of the church, the sole and infallible interpreter of the sacred scriptures. Nor,

Secondly, Are the angels meant by the cherubim; though this is a much better sense than the former, and has been generally received by the Jews and Christians: and what has led many to embrace this sense is, the supposed allusion to the cherubim looking to the mercy-seat, 1 Peter 1:12, where mention is made of angels being desirous to look into the mysteries of grace though it may be observed that ministers of the word are sometimes so called, and may be there meant: however, John's four living creatures cannot be angels, since they are so often distinguished from them not only by their names, the one being called angels and the other living creatures in the same place; but also by their situation, the living creatures are represented as nearest to the throne of God, and round about it, then the four and twenty elders next to them, and round about them, and then the angels as round about both; but what puts it out of all doubt is, that these living creatures are by themselves owned to be redeemed to God by the blood of the Lamb, out of every kindred and tongue, people and nation: which cannot be said of angels; for as they never sinned, they never stood in need of the blood of Christ to redeem them. See Revelation 5:8, 9, 11, and 7:11, and 15:7. Wherefore,

Thirdly, Since the four and twenty elders in the visions of John are the representatives of the gospel-churches, so called in allusion to the twenty-four courses of the priests, and the twenty-four stations of the Levites, fixed in the times of David; who, as they in turn attended the service of the temple, represented the whole body of the people of Israel; so these twenty-four elders before the throne, and the temple of God,

represent the whole Israel of God, all the members of the gospel-church-state from first to last; and since the four living creatures are clearly distinguished from them both by name and by situation, and by giving the lead to them in divine worship, as ministers of the word do to the churches: it remains, that the ministers of the gospel only can be meant by the living creatures, or the cherubim. See Revelation 4:4, 6, 9, 10 and 5:8, 11, 14, and 7:11, and by considering the several places where they are made mention of; this will appear to be the truth of the matter. As,

1. Genesis 3:24, where they are first spoken of; and are said to be placed at the east of the garden of Eden, with a flaming sword, to keep the way of the tree of life; I am quite content to have the phrase rendered, to observe the way of the tree of life, as the word is often translated by us. (see Ps. 107:43; Eccl. 11:4; Isa. 42:20; Jonah 2:8) The flaming sword may be an emblem of the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, and which is sharper than a two-edged sword, and has itself two edges, law and gospel; by the one, when it enters and cuts deep, is the knowledge of sin, and of the sad consequences of it, and leaves a sense of wrath and fiery indignation; and by the other, the knowledge of Christ and salvation by him, and is called the gospel of salvation; and the flame of it may denote the light, heat and glory, which are in the word, when accompanied with a divine influence; so the cherubim may be an hieroglyphic of the ministers of it; and it is the sense of some, both Jews and Christians, that the ministry of the word is referred to and intended by the whole.

When Adam had sinned, he was driven out of the garden of Eden, to prevent his eating of the tree of life, lest he should imagine that by that action of his, his life was preserved and continued, and would be for ever; teaching him thereby, that he was not to expect salvation and eternal life by any acts and works of his own, nor by any creature, nor by any outward means: and cherubim were placed without the garden, not to guard the way of the tree of life, literally understood, or to prevent Adam's access unto it; that was sufficiently done by his being driven out of it; but to observe and point out to him, for his comfort and relief, the way to a nobler tree of life than that in the garden; to the true and antitypical tree of life, Jesus Christ, that tree of life that stands in the midst of the paradise of God, the church, of which every overcomer of sin, Satan, and

the world, may take and eat, Revelation 2:7. Christ, the Wisdom and Word of God, who is a tree of life, the author and giver of life eternal to all those that lay hold by faith upon him; and happy is every one that so doing retains him, Proverbs 3:18, even Christ the way, the truth, and the life, the true way to eternal life. Now the cherubim were in this emblems of ministers of the gospel, the servants of the most high God; whose work it is to shew unto men the way of life and salvation by Jesus Christ.

And this is the business that you, my Brother, should be constantly employed in, in instructing men that they are not to be saved by their own works, duties and services; that God saves and calls men, not according to their works, but according to his purpose and grace; that men are to expect the pardon of sin, not on the account of their repentance and humiliation, but through the blood of Christ, and according to the riches of God's grace; that by the deeds of the law no flesh living can be justified in the sight of God but that a man is justified by faith in the righteousness of Christ, without the deeds of the law; that men are not saved by the best works of righteousness done by them, but by the abundant mercy and free grace of God, through Christ. You are to acquaint all that you are concerned with, that salvation is by Christ alone; that God has chosen and appointed him to be his salvation to the ends of the earth; and that he has appointed men to salvation alone by him; that he has sent him into the world to be the Saviour of them; this is the faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, you are to publish and proclaim, that Christ came into the world to save the chief of sinners; and that by his obedience, sufferings, and death, he is become the author of eternal salvation to them; and that there is salvation in him, and in no other; and that there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby they can be saved. Souls sensible of sin and danger, and who are crying out, What shall we do to be saved? you are to observe, and point out Christ the tree of life unto them; and say, as some of the cherubs did to one in such circumstances, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, Acts 16:31. Your work is to lead men, under a sense of sin and guilt, to the blood of Christ, shed for many for the remission of sin; and in his name you are to preach the forgiveness of it to them; you are to direct believers, under your

care, to go by faith daily to Christ the mediator, and deal with the blood of sprinkling for the remission of their sins, and the cleansing of their souls; which sprinkled on them speaks peace and pardon, purges the conscience from dead works, and cleanses from all sin. You are to point out the righteousness of Christ, as the only justifying righteousness of men, by whose obedience only men are made righteous; the ministration of the gospel is a ministration of righteousness, even of the righteousness of Christ, which is revealed in it from faith to faith; and such should be your ministration. You are to acquaint men, that this righteousness is unto all, and upon all that believe; and that, such are justified from all things by it, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses; and that the acceptance of men with God, is only in Christ the beloved. You are to observe to men the atoning sacrifice of the Son of God and to direct them, as one of the cherubs did, pointing to him, and saying, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world! John

1:29, to bid them view the sin-bearing and sin-atoning Saviour, and look to the Lamb in the midst of the throne as though he had been slain; by whose slain sacrifice sin is put away, and they perfected for ever that are sanctified. But more of this may be observed.

2. In the account of the cherubim over the mercy-seat in Exodus 25:18, &c. there they are said to be two, and were emblems of the prophets of the Old Testament, and of the apostles of the New, with their successors, the ministers of the word in all generations; between whom there is an entire harmony and agreement; the prophets spoke of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow; and the apostle Paul, and the other apostles, said no other things than what Moses and the prophets did say, that Christ should suffer, and be the first that should rise from the dead; they both agreed in laying ministerially Christ as the foundation, and in directing men to build their faith and hope upon him, as well as they themselves were laid on him; and therefore he is called the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Ephesians 2:20, even as the mercy-seat was the basis on which the two cherubim stood, and by which they were supported: and it may be observed, in agreement with the number of the cherubim, that the seventy disciples of Christ were sent forth by him two by two to preach his

gospel; and the ministers of the word that prophesy in sackcloth during the reign of antichrist, are called the two witnesses, Luke 10:1; Revelation 11:3, and the addition of two other cherubim of a larger size in Solomon's temple, may signify the greater perfection of the gospel ministry, and the larger number of gospel ministers, in the gospel church of the New Testament, of which Solomon's temple was a type. The matter of which the cherubim over the mercy-seat were made, was pure gold, and of the same mass with the mercy-seat; denoting the rich gifts and graces of the spirit, with which ministers of the gospel are qualified for their work; and which are of the same kind and nature with those of Christ, as man; only in measure, his without; and the rich treasure put into these earthen vessels, and the precious truths of the gospel, comparable to gold, silver and precious stones, committed to their trust to minister. The use of the cherubim was to overshadow the mercy-seat, and therefore they are called the cherubim of glory shadowing the mercy-seat, Hebrews 9:5, which they did with their wings; denoting in ministers their ministrations, the readiness and cheerfulness of them; the cherubim looked towards one another, and towards the mercy-seat, and pointed to that.

And this, my Brother, is a principal part of your work, as one of the cherubs, to direct to Christ the mercy-seat, the channel of the grace and mercy of God to the souls of men; as God set forth Christ in his eternal purposes and decrees to be a propitiation, *ἰλαζήθιον*, Romans 3:25, the same word the Greek interpreters use for the mercy-seat in Exodus 25, so you are to set him forth in your ministrations as the propitiation, propitiatory, and mercy-seat: let the mercy-seat be ever in view; keep in sight in all your ministrations the doctrine of atonement and satisfaction by the blood and sacrifice of Christ; let this be the pole-star by which you steer the course of your ministry; direct souls to the throne of grace, to the mercy-seat, to God in Christ, where they may hope to find grace and mercy to help them in time of need: and, for your encouragement, observe the situation of the cherubim, they were upon the mercy-seat, at the ends of it, being beaten out of the same mass of gold with that; denoting the nearness of ministers to Christ, their union to him, and dependence on him, and support by him, who holds the stars in his right

hand: and also his presence with them; for between the cherubim, the shekinah, or glorious majesty of God, dwelt; and Christ has promised to be with his ministers unto the end of the world. But I go on,

3. To consider the living creatures in the visions of Ezekiel and John, called the cherubim; and who will appear. to be proper emblems of the ministers of the gospel, by considering their names and numbers, their form in general, and the several parts by which they are described in particular.

1st, Their names and number.

(1.) What both John and Ezekiel saw are called living creatures; for the ζῶα in John's vision exactly answer to the *חַיִּים* in Ezekiel's, and both signify animals that have life and breath: ministers of the word are creatures, both as men and as ministers; as men they are the creatures of God, as others; though they are the ambassadors of God, and stand in his stead, yet they are men and not gods, frail, mortal men; the prophets, do they live for ever? no: they are also sinful men, as the apostle Peter, one of the cherubs, owned himself to be; and men of like passions with others, as the apostle Paul, another of the cherubs, acknowledges; and therefore allowances must be made for their weaknesses and infirmities: and they are creatures as ministers, they are made so, not by themselves nor by other men: Paul an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, Galatians 1:1, he did not thrust himself into the ministry, but God put him into it; nor did he become a minister of the word by his own attainments, not by all the learning he acquired at the feet of Gamaliel, or elsewhere; but he was made a minister, as he himself says, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto him, Ephesians 3: 6, 7, and so all that are made able ministers of the New Testament, are made so of God; for they are not sufficient of themselves, but their sufficiency is of God, 2 Corinthians 3:5, 6. And they are living creatures, they are regenerated, quickened, and have spiritual life in them; and so say the things which they have seen, and heard, and felt; which, if unregenerate, they would not be able to do: and it is requisite they should be lively in their ministrations; it is most comfortable to themselves, and best for those to whom they minister, when they are lively in their frames, lively in the exercise of grace, and in the discharge of duty; when they are fervent in

spirit, while they are serving the Lord their God; and under a divine influence, they are the savour of life unto life; the instruments and means of quickening dead sinners, and of reviving and refreshing drooping saints; and happy are those that sit under the ministry of the living creatures, regenerate men, the living and lively ministers of the gospel.

(2.) These living creatures are called cherubim. Ezekiel affirms they were the cherubim, and he knew them to be so. Many are the etymologies given of this word, and it is difficult to come at the true meaning of it. I shall not trouble you with every thing that is said, only what may seem proper, suitable, and pertinent. And, 1. Philo the Jew says, the cherubim signify much knowledge; and in which sense he is followed by many ancient writers, who interpret the word of large knowledge; and fulness of it; but for what reason, I must own, I cannot see; but be it so, this I am sure of; the ministers of the gospel have need of a large share of knowledge, both of things natural and spiritual; knowledge of themselves, and of their state by nature and by grace, and an experience of the work of the spirit of God upon their hearts; knowledge of Christ, his offices, and grace; knowledge of the scriptures, which Timothy knew from a child, which are able to make men wise to salvation, are profitable for doctrine and instruction, and to fit and furnish ministers for the work they are employed in; knowledge of the mysteries of grace, of God, and of Christ; all which are quite necessary for them, since their business is to feed men with knowledge and understanding, and to train them up in it, till they come to the unity of the faith, to a perfect knowledge of the Son of God, and to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.—2. Others think the word has the signification of might, power, and strength; in which sense the root of it is used in the Syriac language: the ministers of the gospel are called strong; we that are strong, Romans 15:1, and they have need of all the strength they have, as to bear the infirmities of weak saints, so the insults, indignities, reproaches and persecutions of sinful men; they have need to be strong in the grace that is in Christ, that they may be able to do the duties of their office, and to endure hardness as good soldiers of Christ; they have need to be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might; that they may be able to wrestle against principalities and powers, the rulers of

the darkness of this world; they ought to be strong to labour in the word and doctrine, to do the work of the Lord as it should be done: but who is sufficient for these things?—3. Others observe that the word Cherub, by a transposition of letters, is the same with recub, which signifies a chariot; in which form the cherubim are supposed to be, hence we read of the chariot of the cherubim, 1 Chronicles 28:18, and nothing is more common in Jewish writers than the mercavah, the chariot of Ezekiel, meaning the cherubim; and the living creatures, and the wheels might he in such a form as to resemble a chariot; and those who plead for angels being meant by them, with pertinency enough to their hypothesis, apply the words in Psalm 68:17. The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels, the Lord is among them as in Sinai. But why may not the cherubim, admitting this sense of the word, be applied to the ministers of the gospel; since they are represented as vehicles, as chosen vessels to bear the name of Christ, to carry and spread his gospel in the world? and, which conveys the same sentiment, are signified by the white horse on which Christ is said to sit, and go forth conquering and to conquer. See Acts 9:15; Revelation 6:2.—But, 4. What I am most inclined to give into is, that the word cherubim is derived from Carab, which in some of the eastern languages signifies to plow; and in plowing, oxen were used formerly, and so they are in some places at this day; now not only one of the faces of the cherubim is the face of an ox, but that face particularly is called the face of the cherub, as may be observed by comparing Ezekiel 1:10. with chapter 10:14. See also 1 Kings 7:29. So that the cherubim seem to have their denomination from this particular face of theirs: and that oxen were emblems of ministers of Christ, as will be considered more particularly hereafter, is evident from the apostle Paul, who having quoted the law concerning not muzzling the ox when it treads out the corn, adds, Doth God take care for oxen? or saith he it altogether for our sakes? for the sake of us ministers? for our sakes, no doubt, this is written: and from oxen he catches at once the idea of plowing, and applies it to ministers, that he that ploweth should plow in hope, that is, enjoying the fruit of his labour, 1 Corinthians 9:9, 10. There is a prophecy of gospel-times, and of ministers in them, which runs thus, Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien

shall be your plowmen; that is, Gentiles should be pastors of christian churches, and feed them as flocks are fed; and that some of such who are aliens from the commonwealth of Israel should be employed in the Lord's husbandry, and be instruments in breaking up the fallow ground of men's hearts, and of sowing the seed of the word in them, Isaiah 61:5.

(3.) To these names of the living creatures, the cherubim, may be added that of seraphim in Isaiah 6:2. The Jewish writers are generally agreed that the visions of Isaiah and Ezekiel relate to the same thing; and whoever closely compares them, will see a likeness between them: and have no doubt remain, but the Cherubim and Seraphim design the same persons; the ministers of the gospel may be called by the latter name, which signifies burning, because of their ministerial gifts, comparable to coals of fire; and because of their fervent love to Christ and the souls of men, and because of their flaming zeal for the cause and interest of their Master.

(4.) The number of the living creatures, both in the visions of Ezekiel and John, being four, as the four chariots and the four spirits of the heavens, in the visions of Zechariah chapter 6:1, 5, may have respect to the four parts of the world; the commission of gospel-ministers being to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

2dly, The form of the living creatures, and the several parts by which they are described, agree with the ministers of the word. The general form is not agreed upon on all hands: some think that it inclined mostly to that of the ox or calf: to which they are induced by what has been observed, the face of the ox and of the cherub being the same; and some suppose that the golden calf made by Aaron and the calves of Jeroboam, were made after the model of the cherubim upon the mercy-seat; but this is without foundation. Others suppose them of a mixed form, and that their faces are not to be understood of their faces strictly taken, but of their general forms and appearances; as that they had the face of a man, the breasts and mane of a lion, the shoulders and wings of an eagle, and the feet of an ox or calf; which seems not probable: rather the general form of them was human, and most resembled that, except in the parts which are otherwise described; for it is expressly said, they had the likeness of a man, Ezekiel 1:5, and the ministers of

the gospel are men: they are redeemed from among men; their business lies with men; they are sent to teach all nations of men, to preach the gospel to every human creature, and to and among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. But this will appear by considering the several parts by which the living creatures or cherubim are described.

(1.) By their faces, which are four.—1. The face of a man; intimating, that the ministers of the word should be humane, courteous, and civil to all men they are concerned with; pitiful and compassionate to wounded consciences, tempted souls, troubled and distressed minds, as well as to backsliders, in restoring them; and be men in understanding, knowing, rational, wise and prudent; and be manly and courageous, quit themselves like men, and be strong and valiant in the cause and interest of their Master.—2. The face of a lion, the strongest among beasts, Proverbs 30:30, the strength of ministers has been hinted at already: the lion is remarkable for its boldness and intrepidity; the righteous are said to be bold as a lion, Proverbs 28:1, to be bold and intrepid, and not fear the faces of men, is a proper qualification of the ministers of the gospel; such were John and Peter, and the apostle Paul was not inferior to them in boldness and courage; though to shew how necessary such a qualification was, he desires the Ephesians to pray for him, that utterance might be given him, that he might open his mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, and therein speak boldly, as he ought to speak, Ephesians 6:19, 20. Yet this was not wanting in him; for he elsewhere says, We were bold in our God to speak of the gospel of God with much contention, 1 Thessalonians 2:2.—3. The face of an ox; a creature made for labour, and when in a good state and plight, fit and strong for labour, and used to be employed in plowing the ground and treading out the corn; and is a fit emblem of gospel-ministers, employed in tilling God's husbandry, plowing the fallow ground of men's hearts, and treading out the corn of the word for their use, labouring in the word and doctrine; and, it may be, an emblem of them not only in labour but in patience; the ox that is accustomed to the yoke, patiently bears it; and which is seen not only in bearing the yoke of the ministry, but the weaknesses of the saints, and the reproaches of wicked men; in meekly instructing those that oppose themselves, and in waiting for the

fruit and success of their labours.—4. The face of an eagle; a creature that soars high, has a strong and clear sight, and can look steadfastly on the sun; it espies its prey at a great distance, scents the carcass where it is, and gathers itself and its young to it; for wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered also, Matthew 24:28, fitly represents gospel-ministers, who have a clear sight into the sublime mysteries of grace, and see things which eye has not seen, the vulture's eye, the most sharp-sighted among carnal men: and who make it their business to preach a slain crucified Christ, and direct souls to him to feed by faith upon him; we preach Christ crucified, &c. 1 Corinthians 1:23, and 2:2.—5. These faces were stretched upwards, for so the words may be rendered in Ezekiel 1:11, thus their faces and their wings were stretched upwards, towards heaven; signifying that ministers of the gospel look upwards to Christ in heaven for fresh supplies of gifts and grace, an increase of light and knowledge, of wisdom and strength, to fit them more for their work, and to enable them to perform it; being sensible that without him, his grace and strength, they can do nothing; but through him strengthening them they can do all things, Philippians 4:13.

(2.) The living creatures, who are the cherubim, are described by their eyes; particularly in John's vision of them, where they are said to be full of eyes before, and behind and within, Revelation 4:6, 8, see also Ezekiel 10:12. The eye is the light of the body; and what the eye is to the natural body, the ministers are to the church, the body of Christ; yea, they are the light of the world; and if the eye be single, if ministers be sincere, and have a single view to the glory of Christ and the good of souls, the whole body will be full of light, the church will be illuminated by them, Matthew 5:14, and 6:22, they are Argos-like, have many eyes; and they have need of all they have to look into the sacred scriptures, which are a sealed book to learned and unlearned men, destitute of the Spirit of Christ; only to be looked into so as to be understood by such who have their eyes enlightened, their understandings opened by Christ, as were the disciples; the scriptures are to be diligently searched into, and explored for the rich treasure that is in them; and those that search into them, as for hid treasure, shall find knowledge of great and excellent things; but these escape the sight of all but those who have spiritual eyes to see.

Ministers of the gospel had need to be full of eyes, to look to themselves, and to the flocks committed to them; to take the oversight of them, and feed them with the words of faith and sound doctrine; to take heed to themselves and to their doctrine, that it be wholesome, pure and incorrupt; and to their lives and conversations, that they give no offence to Jew or Gentile, nor to the church of God, that the ministry may not be blamed and rendered useless; and also to espy dangers, and give warning and notice of them, arising whether from without or from within; to look diligently lest any root of bitterness, of error or heresy, or of immorality and profaneness, spring up in the churches, and trouble some and defile others; and to watch against false teachers, and to be careful to keep up the discipline of Christ's house. They have, as they should have, eyes before and behind; eyes behind, to observe things past, the fulfillment of prophecies, promises, and types in Christ: before, to look to predictions yet to be fulfilled relating to the church and kingdom of God; behind them to watch against Satan, who goes about seeking whom he may devour, and who comes upon the back of them at unawares; and before them, to watch over the flocks they have the oversight of; behind them, to the twenty-four elders, the members of the churches to whom they minister, so situated with respect to the four living creatures; and before them, to the throne of God and the Lamb, on whom is their dependence, from whom they expect supplies, and whose glory they are concerned for: and they have also eyes within, to look into the sinfulness and corruption of their nature, and which is a means of keeping them humble under all their attainments, gifts and usefulness; and into the state and ease of them own souls, and their inward experience; which qualifies them to speak to the cases of others, and by which they can make better judgment of the truth of doctrines, having a witness of them within themselves; and to look into the treasure that is put into them, in order to bring forth from thence things new and old, both for the profit and pleasure of those that hear them.

(3.) The living creatures, or cherubim, are described by their wings, The cherubim over the mercy-seat had wings, but how many is not expressed; but it is the opinion of some, both ancient and modern, that they had six, and so many had the Seraphim in Isaiah's

vision, chapter 6:2, and the same number had the living creatures in Ezekiel's vision; for though they are said to have four, chapter 1:6, yet not four only from verses 11, 23, it seems as if they had two more, and it is certain the living creatures in John's vision had six, Revelation 4:8 and, —1. With two of them particularly they flew, as Isaiah's Seraphim did; which in ministers denote their swiftness, readiness and cheerfulness to do the work of God, to minister the word, and to administer ordinances, to visit the members of the churches when needful, and to do all good offices for the saints, that lay in their power. The Greek version of Ezekiel 1:7, is, their feet were winged; expressive of the same thing, particularly of their readiness to preach the gospel, their feet being shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; and for the same reason, a set of gospel-ministers are represented by an angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to all nations, Revelation 14:6.—2. With other two wings they covered their face; ministers, sensible of the purity and holiness of God, and the spirituality of his law, in comparison of which they see themselves unholy, carnal and sold under sin, blush at their sins and imperfections, and are conscious of their unworthiness to be employed in such service, looking upon themselves to be less than the least of all saints, the chief of sinners, and unfit to be ministers of the word; and are ashamed of their poor performances, and acknowledge that they have nothing but what they have received, and therefore have nothing to glory of at best.—3. With other two wings the living creatures covered their feet: however beautiful the feet of gospel ministers may appear to others, to whom they come running with the good tidings of peace, life, righteousness, and salvation by Christ; yet they, sensible of their deficiencies, confess, that having done all they can, and in the best manner they could, they are but unprofitable servants. So Isaiah's Seraphim covered their feet with two of their wings, but Ezekiel's living creatures covered their bodies with them, and seem to have made use of four for that purpose, chapter 1:11, 23.—4. Their wings were stretched upwards, verse 11, so ministers look towards heaven, up towards Christ, from whence are all their expectations of grace to help them to perform their works, and of all success in it: and their wings were also joined one to another; that is, the wings of one

living creature to that of another; denoting ministers affection to each other, their giving mutual assistance to one another, their concern in the same work of the Lord, preaching the same truths, and administering the same ordinance, having the same zeal for the glory of God, love to Christ and to the souls of men, and being of the same mind and judgment and specially they will be so in the latter day, when they shall see eye to eye, Isaiah 52:8.—5. The sound of their wings is worthy of notice, and is repeated once and again, that it might be observed, said to be like the noise of great waters; as the voice of the almighty, when he speaketh, chapter 1:24, 3:13. and 10:5, which is no other than the gospel ministered by them, a joyful sound, a sound of love, grace and mercy, peace, righteousness and salvation; and which, like the sound of waters, was heard at a distance, when by the ministry of the apostles it went into all the earth: the voice of Christ, and which is the gospel also, is compared to the same, Romans 1:15, for its rapidity and force, under the divine influence; and which is not the voice, sound and word of man, but of God himself; which appears by its powerful effects on the hearts of saints and sinners, when attended with a divine energy; and indeed it is the Lord God almighty that speaks in ministers, and speaks powerfully by them, 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Corinthians 13:3.

(4.) These living creatures, or the cherubim, are described by having the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides, Ezekiel 1:8, and 10:8, this denotes the activity of gospel-ministers, who have not only the theory and knowledge of things, but are men of practice and business; they have much work to do all around them, on every side preaching the gospel, administering ordinances, visiting their people, praying with them, and giving them counsel and advice, instruction and exhortation, when needful; and they have hands to work with and strength given them, and which they employ, and are steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; and they do it with judgment, acting like men of understanding and reason: and their hands being under their wings, shew, that besides their public work they do much in private, in their studies and closets, in meditation and prayer, where no eye sees them but the eye of God; and also in private houses where they pray, instruct, counsel and advise, as the nature of cases that present require; and whatever they do,

whether in private or public, they do it not to be seen of men; or in an ostentatious way, as the Scribes and Pharisees; they boast not of their own performances, they ascribe all to the grace of God which is with them, and own that it is by that they are what they are, and do what they do; such is their modesty and humility, which this phrase is expressive of.

(5.) The living creatures, or cherubim, are described by their feet, which are said to be straight; and with them they went every one straight forward, and they turned not when they went, Ezekiel 1:7, 9, 12, they made straight paths for their feet, and went not into crooked paths; they turned not, neither to the right hand nor the left; their eyes looked right on, and their eyelids right before them, and steered their course accordingly: thus faithful ministers of the word walk uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, and go in the paths of truth and righteousness; and neither turn to error on the one hand, nor to immorality on the other; and having put their hand to the plough of the gospel, neither look back nor turn back; for such that do so, are not fit for the kingdom of God, Luke 9:62. Moreover, it is said of the living creatures, the cherubim, that the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot; round, the hoof divided, and fit for treading out the corn, and which is more firm and sure than the sole of a man's foot, which is apt to slip and turn aside; and so may denote the firmness, steadiness, and constancy of faithful ministers in their work, particularly in treading out the corn of the word for the nourishment of souls to whom they minister: and it is also added of the cherubim, that their feet sparkled like the colour of burnished brass; which may not only signify the strength and firmness of ministers to support under all the weight of work and sufferings, expressed by brass; so Christ's feet are said to be like unto fine brass, as they burned in a furnace, Revelation 1:15, but also the brightness of their conversations, and the shining purity and holiness of their lives; and when the light of their works, as well as of their doctrines, shine before men, they look as bright as polished brass, and become examples of the believer, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity, 1 Timothy 4:12. Moreover, the living creatures were directed by the Spirit, whither the Spirit was to go, they went, Ezekiel 1:12, 20, so, as the prophets of the Old Testament spake as they were

moved by the Holy Ghost, the ministers of the New Testament are led by the Spirit, and guided by him in their ministrations into all truth as it is in Jesus; as well as they are influenced by him in their conversations, to walk as becomes the gospel of Christ; and as they are qualified by him with gifts and graces for the work of the ministry, so he disposes of them where he pleases, and makes them overseers of such and such flocks in such and such places, according to his will; and they go as they are led by him, where he has a work for them to do. A remarkable instance of this see in Acts 16:6-10. where the apostles were forbid by the Holy Ghost preaching in one country; and, assaying to go into another, the Spirit suffered them not; but they were directed to steer their course another way, and to another place, where souls were to be converted, and a gospel-church planted. Once more when and where the living creatures went, the wheels went; and according to the motion and position of the one, were the motion and position of the other: when the living creatures went, the wheels went by them; and when the living creatures were lift up from the earth, the wheels were lift up; when those went, these went, and when those stood, these stood, Ezekiel 1:19, 21 and 10:16, 17, the wheels signify the churches; and where there is the ministry of the word by the living creatures, the ministers of the gospel, there generally churches are raised and formed by them; and as the ministry of the word is continued or removed, so is a church-state fixed or changed; it is in this way and by this means that the candlestick is either continued or removed out of its place: and it may be observed in John's vision, agreeably to this, that when the four living creatures gave glory to God, the four and twenty elders fell down before him and worshipped him, Revelation 4:9, 10 and verse 14. Ministers begin the worship of God, move first in acts of devotion, and then the churches and the members of them follow and join with them; and as they receive their doctrine, and are guided by them in matters of worship, so they copy after them in their conversations; and, generally speaking, as ministers be, churches are; if ministers have raised affections and elevated frames, so it often is with the churches, and the members of them, that sit under their ministrations; if ministers are active and lively, the churches are so too; but if dull, indolent, and inactive, so are church-members; if ministers are

evangelical in their preaching, so are the people that hear them; but if they minister in a legal manner, of the same complexion, spirit, and temper, will the members and hearers be.

(6.) The living creatures, or cherubim, are described by the appearance of them, like burning coals, and like lamps, Ezekiel 1:13, 14. Ministers of the gospel may be thus described, because of their ministerial gifts; the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit are signified by cloven tongues as of fire, Acts 2:3, and ordinary gifts for the ministry are represented as coals of fire, which are to be stirred up and inflamed, and not lie neglected, disused, or quenched, 2 Timothy 1:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:19. And the cherubim or ministers may be set forth hereby, because of the clear light of truth that shines in them, and because of their ardent love to Christ and the souls of men, which is one qualification for the ministry; hence says Christ to Peter, when he had affirmed once and again that he loved him, and appealed to his omniscience for the truth of it, Feed my lambs, feed my sheep, John 21:15-17, intimating, that such a lover of him was a fit person to feed the flock or church of God; even one whose love is so ardent that the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame, that many waters cannot quench; even waters of afflictions, reproaches, persecutions, and sufferings for the sake of Christ and his gospel: and by coals of fire may they be described, because of their burning zeal for the glory of God and the interest of a Redeemer; hence they are called Seraphim, fiery or burning, as before observed; and it is not unusual for ministers of the gospel to be compared to lamps; the apostles are called the lights or lamps of the world; and John the Baptist was a shining and burning light or lamp; and so others have been, holding forth the word of light and life to men: and whereas it is said that it, the fire, went up and down among the living creatures; this is true of the word of God, compared to fire, Jeremiah 20:9 and 23:29, by which the minds of ministers are enlightened, their hearts warmed, and are filled with zeal for God, and become the means of enlightening and warming others; which fire was bright, clear, as the word of God is; and out of the fire went forth lightning; denoting the quick and penetrating efficacy of the word, and the sudden increase of the kingdom and interest of Christ by it, which, like lightning, has been spread

from east to west. Thus I have opened and explained the doctrine of the cherubim in the best manner I could, and have shewn the agreement between them and the ministers of the gospel. And now, my Brother, from these emblems you may discern what is your principal work and business as a minister of the gospel; that it is to preach salvation by Christ, the doctrines of pardon by his blood; of justification by his righteousness, and of atonement and satisfaction for sin by his sacrifice, with other truths of the gospel; that you are to be laborious in this work, diligent and industrious, constant and immoveable in it; that you are to be bold and intrepid in it, not fearing the faces of men; and to be watchful over yourself and others that are your charge, to be tender and compassionate to all in distress, whether of body, mind or estate, and to be humane in your deportment to all; that you are to walk uprightly, and be an example to the flock in your life and conversation; that you are to look up to heaven for fresh supplies of grace to carry you through your ministrations in all the branches of it; and through the whole express fervent love to Christ and the souls of men, and a zeal for his glory: and may you be a shining and burning light in your day and generation, and successful in the work of the Lord, and have many to be your joy and crown of rejoicing at the Coming of Christ.

### **11 The Form Of Sound Words To Be Held Fast A Charge,**

Delivered At The Ordination Of The Rev. Mr. John Reynolds.

2 TIMOTHY 1:13

Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus.

That part of the work of this day; which I have been derived to take, is to give the Charge to you, my Brother, who have been at this time ordained pastor of this church; and which I have chore to do in the above word's of the apostle Paul to Timothy, to whom this epistle is directed.

The connection between the apostle and Timothy was such, that betides his being an apostle, and an inspired one, it gave him a just claim to use the authority and freedom he does in giving him this charge; and was such as laid Timothy under an obligation to pay a regard unto it; which was this, he

had been an hearer of the apostle; and it is observed in the charge itself, which thou hast heard of me; and is used as a reason and argument why he should attend unto it; he had been instructed by him in the mysteries of grace and doctrines of the gospel; and besides, was a son of his after the common faith. Now, though, my Brother, there is no such connection between you and me, to give me a like claim, and lay you under a like obligation; yet, what is here urged and pressed, being an incumbent duty on every one that is engaged in the sacred work of the ministry, you will suffer this exhortation kindly, and take it in good part: in which may be observed,

I. The principal thing it is concerned about, the form of sound words.

II. The exhortation respecting it, to hold it fast.

III. The manner in which it is to be held, unless it should be rather a reason why it should be held fast, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus.

I. The principal thing this charge is about, the form of sound words. By words are not meant mere words, of there we should not be tenacious, when one may as well be used as another, to express the sense and meaning of any doctrine; when words are synonymous, signify the same thing, and convey the same idea, to wrangle and dispute about them would be vain and trifling; such mere logomachies and strivings about words to no profit, are condemned and dissuaded from, by our apostle (1 Tim. 6:4; 2 Tim. 2:14.) Yet when words and phrases have long obtained in the churches of Christ, and among the faithful dispensers of the word; the sense of which is determinate and established, and well known, and they fitly express the meaning of those that use them; they should not be easily parted with, and especially unless others and better are substituted in their room; for there is often truth in that maxim, *qui singit nova verba, nova gignit dogmata*, "he that coins new words, coins new doctrines." Should any man require of me to drop certain words and phrases in treating of divine truths, without offering to place others and better in their room; I could consider such a man in no other view, than that he had an intention to rob me, to rob me of what is more precious than gold and silver, that is, truth. There are certain words and phrases excepted to by the adversaries of truth, because they are not, as

said, syllabically expressed in scripture; but be it so, if what they signify is contained in scripture, they may be lawfully and with propriety used, and retained in use: some concern the doctrine of the divine Being, and others the work of Christ; some relate to the divine Being, as essence, unity, trinity in unity, and person. Essence is no other than that by which a thing or person is what it is, and may with great propriety be attributed to God, who is *το ον*, the being, who is, exists, and which his glorious name JEHOVAH is expressive of, deciphered by the apostle John, who is, and was, and is to come (Rev. 1:4).

Nor need we scruple the use of the word unity with respect to him, since our Lord says, I and my Father are one (John 10:30); one in nature and essence, though not in person; nor the phrase trinity in unity, since the apostle John says, there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the holy Ghost; and these three are one (1 John 5:7): as for the word person, that is used in scripture both of the Father and of the Son; the Son is said to be the express image of his person (Heb. 1:3), that is, of the person of God the Father; and the Son must be a person, too, or he would not be the express image of his Father's person; besides, the word is used of him also, for we read of the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 4:6); or in the person of Christ, and so the phrase is rendered in the same epistle (2 Tim. 2:10); for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ. Such phrases as concern the work of Christ objected to, are the imputation of his righteousness to his people, and the imputation of their sins to him, and the falsification made by him for them; as for imputed righteousness, that is nearly syllabically expressed, even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works (Rom. 4:6); and as for the imputation of sin to Christ, though it is not in so many syllables expressed, the thing itself is plain and clear: he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin (2 Cor. 5:21); that is, God made him sin by imputing sin to him, for in no other way could he be made sin, since no sin was inherent in him; and this agrees with the language of the Old Testament, the Lord hath laid on him, or made to meet on him, the iniquity of us all (Isa. 53:6); that is, by imputing it to him. And though the word satisfaction is not used of

the work of Christ in scripture, yet what is meant by it is plentifully declared in it; as that Christ has done and suffered in the room and stead of his people, every thing with well-pleas'dness to God, and to the full content of law and justice; as when it is said, The Lord is well-pleas'd for his righteousness sake (Isa. 42:21); the reason follows, he will magnify the law, and make it honourable; and also Christ hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God far a sweet smelling savor (Eph. 5:2); so that it may be truly said, God is fully satisfied with the obedience, righteousness, sufferings, death and sacrifice of Christ, But after all, the apostle in the charge given does not design mere words but doctrines; so the words of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Tim. 6:3), he somewhere speaks of, are no other than the doctrines preached by Christ, or the doctrines concerning his person, offices and grace; and the words of the apostles of Christ, are no other than their doctrines; their found went into all the earth, and their words, that is, their doctrines, unto the ends of the world (Rom. 10:18); and these are the words of faith and good doctrine, in which Timothy was nourished (1 Tim. 4:6): and these are found words or doctrines; so we often read of sound doctrine, as, if there be any other thing, that is contrary to found doctrine; and the time will come, when they will not endure, sound doctrine; and that he may be able by sound doctrine to exhort, etc. and speak thou the things which become sound doctrine (1 Tim. 1:10; 2 Tim. 4:3; Titus 1:9; 2:1); and which may be called sound, in opposition to the doctrines of false teachers, the perverse disputings men of corrupt minds, destitute of the truth, and reprobate concerning the faith (1 Tim. 6:5; 2 Tim. 3:8); whose words or doctrines eat as doth a canker (2 Tim. 2:17), prey upon the vitals of religion; and are said to be pernicious, ruinous, and destructive to the souls of men; and some of which the apostle, without any breach of charity, borrows the epithet of damnable upon (2 Pet.2:1,2): and good doctrines may be called sound, because they are in themselves salutary and healthful; pleasant words, as the wise man says (Prov. 16:24), and such evangelical doctrines be; they are as an honey-comb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones: the words or doctrines of our Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles are wholesome ones, salubrious and nourishing; the words of faith and good doctrine have

a nutritive virtue in them, under a divine blessing, to nourish persons up unto eternal life; they contain milk for babes, the sincere milk of the word, which they desire that they may grow thereby; and meat for strong men, who have their spiritual senses exercised, to discern between good and evil; and there being found by believing fowls, are eaten, and prove to be the joy and rejoicing of their hearts, and are more esteemed of by them than their necessary food.

Now there is a form of these sound words or doctrines: by which may be meant the form or manner of teaching them; as the Jew, who was an instructor of others, had his form of knowledge and of truth in the law (Rom. 2:20), a method of instructing in the knowledge of it, and of teaching the truths contained in it; so a Christian teacher has the form of godliness (2 Tim. 3:5), a form of knowledge of it, and a method of teaching the mysteries of godliness, though sometimes without the power of it: or rather, here it signifies a brief luminary or compendium of truths; the Jew had his creed, which contained the fix principles, the beginning of the doctrine of Christ, the author of the epistle to the Hebrews speaks of; which the believing Christian was not to stop at and stick in, but to go on to perfection; to embrace and profess doctrines more sublime and perfect.[1]

The apostle Paul, that complete, exact, and accurate preacher of the gospel, reduced the subject of his ministry and the doctrine he preached, to two heads, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 20:21); he gives a most excellent form of sound words, and a summary of the gospel in Romans 8:29,30. Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate: — moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified; and which some, not improperly, have called the golden chain of man's salvation; every link in it is precious, and not to be parted, and the whole is not to be departed from: the word *υποτυπωσις*, here used, may signify a pattern, and so it is rendered 1 Timothy 1:16, the allusion is thought to be to painters, who first form a rough draught, or draw the outlines of their portrait, which is as a pattern to them, within the compass of which they always keep, and beyond which they never go. A scheme, a system of gospel-truths may be extracted from the scriptures, and

used as a pattern for ministers to preach by, and for hearers to form their judgments by, of what they hear; which seems to be what the apostle calls the analogy or proportion of faith (Rom. 12:6), which should not be deviated from: if any man teach otherwise, and continue not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing (1 Tim. 6:3): and again, says the apostle, though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, and he adds, than that ye have received, let him be accursed (Gal. 1:9,10); and this is the *τύπος*, or form of doctrine (Rom. 6:17), which is delivered to the saints, or into which they are delivered, as into a form or mold, and become evangelized by it; and according to this they are to form their judgment of preachers, and shape their conduct and behavior towards them; for if they bring not the doctrine of Christ with them, they are not to receive them, nor bid them God-speed (2 John 1:10): if ministers, when they have formed and digested from the scriptures a scheme and system of gospel-truths, would be careful to say nothing contradictory to it; there would not be that want of consistency, so justly complained of, in the present ministry in common, nor that confusion in the minds of hearers.

I have hitherto dealt chiefly in generals, I shall now descend to the particulars of this form of sound words or doctrines, which you, my Brother, should hold fast; and shall begin,

First, With the doctrine of the Trinity of persons in one God, which is the foundation of revelation, and of the economy of man's salvation; it is what enters into every truth of the gospel, and without which no truth can be truly understood, nor rightly explained: it consists of various branches; as that there is but one God, and that there are three distinct persons in the Godhead, Father, Son and holy Spirit, and that there are equally and truly God. There is but one God; this is the voice both of reason and revelation; it is the doctrine of the Old and of the New Testament; it is the doctrine of Moses and the prophets; hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord (Deut. 6:4): and it is the doctrine of Christ and his apostles; of Christ, who calls the above words, the first of all the commandments (Mark 12:39); and of the apostles, who declare, there

is one God and one Mediator (1 Tim. 2:5), to believe and profess this truth is right and well, thou believest that there is one God, thou dost well (Jam. :19): all professing Christianity are Unitarians in a sense, but not in the same sense; some are Unitarians in opposition to a trinity of persons in one God; others are Unitarians in perfect consistence with that doctrine. Those of the former sort stand ranked in very bad company; for a Deist: who rejects divine revelation in general, is an Unitarian; a Jew that rejects the writings of the New Testament, and Jesus of Nazareth being the Messiah, is an Unitarian; a Mahometan is an Unitarian, who believes in one God, and in his prophet Mahomet; a Sabellian is an Unitarian, who denies a distinction of persons in the Godhead; a Socinian is an Unitarian, who asserts that Christ did not exist before he was born of the virgin, and that he is God, not by nature, but by office; an Arian may be said, in a sense, to be an Unitarian, because he holds one supreme God; though rather he may be reckoned a Tritheist, since along with the one supreme God, he holds two subordinate ones. Those only are Unitarians in a true and found sense, who hold a trinity of distinct persons in one God. This is the doctrine of divine Revelation, the doctrine of the Old and of the New Testament, the doctrine of that famous, text before mentioned, hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord; the word for our God is plural, the word used is Elohim, a word of the plural number, and expressive of a plurality of persons; and the sense of the words is, and it is the sense of the ancient Jews,[2] our God, Eloheinu, the three divine persons are one Jehovah, one Lord; and with this perfectly agrees what the apostle John says, there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one,(1 John 5:7), are one God. The authenticity of this. passage has been disputed, but not disproved; the knowledge and use of it may be traced up to the times of Tertullian, who lived within a hundred years or thereabouts of the writing of the autograph itself by the apostle John; but could it be disproved, the doctrine is to be defended without it, as it was by the ancient Christians against the Arians: the proof of it is abundant; not to take notice of any other but the baptism of Christ, and the form of the administration of baptism prescribed by him; at the baptism of Christ, all the three divine

persons appeared; there was the Son of God clothed in human nature, submitting in that nature to the ordinance of baptism, being baptized of John in Jordan's river; and there was the Father, who by a voice from heaven declared, saying, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased (Matthew 3:17); and there was the Spirit of God, who descended upon him as a dove; this was reckoned so clear a proof of a trinity of persons, that the ancients used to say, "Go to Jordan, and there learn the doctrine of the trinity:" and the form of the administration of baptism prescribed by our Lord, which was to baptize in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (Matthew 28:19); is such a testimony of a trinity of persons in unity, that the whole herd of Antitrinitarians, of whatsoever name, are not able to destroy; a proof this of the divinity of each person, since baptism administered in their name, is a lateran act of religious worship, and which otherwise would be idolatry; and of the equality of each person, since it is ordered to be administered equally in the name of the one, as in the name of the other; not in the name of one supreme God, and in the name of two inferior ones; and of the distinction of there by the relative properties in the divine nature, paternity, filiation and spiration; and of their unity as the one God, since the order is to administer baptism not in the names, but in the name of Father, Son and Spirit. And now it is to be believed and to be held fast, that there are equally and truly God: of the Father there is no dispute; and of the deity of the Son there need be no question, since of the Son of God it is expressly said, this is the true God and eternal life (1 John 5:20); and again, unto the Son, he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever (Heb. 1:8); the divine names he bears, and the divine nature and perfections, and the fullness of them he is possessed of; the divine works which are attributed to him, and the divine worship paid him, are full proofs of his true and proper deity: and that the holy Spirit is truly and properly God, is manifest in that, lying to him is called lying to God: the name Jehovah is given him which belongs only to the most High; he is described as a person, having understanding and will, and to whom personal actions are ascribed, and as a divine person, possessed of eternity, immensity, omnipresence, omniscience, etc. and the do, fine of the deity of these persons should be held fast, since

this has an influence on the works ascribed to them, and without which they could not have been performed by them: and along with this is to be taken the doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son of God, and which, with the rest, my Brother, you are to hold fast; since this is the hinge on which the doctrine of the trinity defends, without this it cannot be supported; take away this, and it falls to the ground; this the Antitrinitarians of every name are sensible of, and therefore bend all their force and spite against: it, and is a reason why it should be held fast: by us: that Christ is the Son of God, is attested by the divine persons themselves; and has been acknowledged by angels and men, good and bad but the thing is, in what sense he is so: not in any of the Socinian senses; I say, not in any of them, because they are many, which shows the wretched puzzle and uncertainty they are at about it; for there can be but one true sense in which Christ is the Son of God: he is not called the Son of God, because of some likeness in him to God, as they sometimes say; nor because of the affection of God to him, as at other times; nor is he so by adoption; nor on account of his miraculous incarnation; nor of his resurrection from the dead; nor of his mediatorial office: but since he is said to be the begotten Son of God, and to be the only begotten of the Father, and the Father is laid to be his own Father, his proper Father, and so not in an improper, figurative and metaphorical sense, he appears to be the Son of God by the generation of him, who said, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee (Ps. 2:7): how and in what manner the Son is begotten of the Father, I do not pretend to explain, nor ought any; but I firmly believe he is, and that for this very good reason, because the scripture asserts it; we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father (John 1:14); we know but little of our own nature, and still less of the nature of God, and should be content with the account which he himself has given of it, who best understands it. For what is his name? that is, his nature, and what is his Son's name, if thou canst tell? (Prov. 30:4). I have said, that "the doctrine of a trinity of persons in the unity of the divine essence, depends upon the article of the son's generation, and therefore if this cannot be maintained, the other must fall of course;" and for my own part, could I be prevailed upon to part with this article of faith, I would at once give up the doctrine of

the trinity, as quite indefensible; and indeed it would be the height of folly[3] to talk of a distinction of persons in the Deity, when the foundation of such distinction is removed; for we pretend to no other distinction in it, but what arises from the internal relative properties in God, as paternity, filiation and spiration, the ground of which is, the eternal generation of the Son; for without that there can be neither Father, nor Son, nor Spirit. The works of God done by him, such as those of creation, redemption and grace, and offices bore, serve to illustrate the distinction made, but could never make any: the works of God are ad extra, and are common to the three persons, and therefore do not distinguish them; for though some works are more peculiarly attributed to one than to another, each has a concern in them all: besides they come too late, they are wrought in time, whereas the nature of God, be it what it may, is eternal; and if there is any distinction in it, it tour be natural, original and eternal; and indeed the Father was never without the Son, nor the Son without the Father, but was the eternal Son of the eternal Father and neither of them without their breath or spirit, the Spirit which proceedeth from the Father, and is the Spirit of the Son: besides, as what God is, and he is what he always was, he is, and was so necessarily; and if there is any distinction in his nature, it is of necessity, and not of will; whereas the works of God are arbitrary things, which might or might not have been, according to the will and pleasure of the divine Being; but God would have been what he is, and if there is any distinction in him, it must have been, if these had never had been; if there never had been an angel created, nor a man redeemed, nor a sinner sanctified, nor any office sustained by Christ as mediator, which is arbitrary also. This then being the case, if the article of the Son's generation cannot be maintained, as then there can be no distinction of persons, we must unavoidably sink into the Sabellian folly; therefore, my Brother, hold fast: this part and branch of the form of sound words.

Secondly, Another part of this form of found words to be held fast, is the doctrine of the everlasting love of the three persons to the elect; the love of the Father in choosing them in Christ, providing a Saviour for them, and fending him in the fullness of time to work out their salvation; the love of the Son in becoming a surety for them, in the assumption of their nature,

and in suffering and dying in their room and fiend, to obtain their eternal redemption; and the love of the Spirit in applying grace unto them, implanting it in them, in being their Comforter, the Spirit of adoption to them, and the earnest of their inheritance, and the sealer of them up unto the day of redemption: this love is to be held, and held fast, as being sovereign and free; nor arising from any cause or causes in men, from any motives and conditions in them; not from their loveliness, being defiled and loathsome as others, and by nature children of wrath; nor from their love to God, since he loved them first, and when they did not love him; nor from their obedience and good works, since while they were foolish and disobedient, the love and kindness of God the Saviour towards man appeared; but from the will and pleasure of God, who loved them because he would love them. And this doctrine of the love of God is to be held, and held fast, as being special and discriminating; not as a love of all, but of some only; for though the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord, and all the inhabitants of it partake thereof, and share the bounties of his providence; his tender mercies are over all his works, and he causes his sun to shine, and rain to descend on the just and unjust; yet he has a peculiar people whom he has chosen for himself, and to whom he bears a peculiar love; hence David desired (Ps. 106:4), that he would remember him with the favour he bore to his own people. This should be held, and held fast, as being what commenced from everlasting, and continues to everlasting; it was taken up in the heart of God before the world was, and he rests and abides in his love, and nothing is able to separate from it: it is as immutable and invariable as himself; as he is the Lord that changes not such is his love, yea, he himself is love, God is love (1 John 4:16); the states and conditions of men are various, but the love of God is the same in all; he may change his dispensations, but he never changes his love; when he hides his face, he still loves; and when he chides, chastises and corrects, he does not utterly take away nor at all take away his loving, kindness. This doctrine in this light is to be held fast, because the everlasting love of God is the bond of union to him, and is the source and spring of all the blessings of grace, which are exhibited and held forth in the several doctrines of grace.

Thirdly, The doctrine of eternal, personal, and

particular election, is another part of the form of sound words to be held fast; as that election is eternal, was from the beginning, as the apostle tells the Thessalonians (2 Thess. 2:13); not from the beginning of the gospel coming unto them, or from the beginning of their conversion and faith, but from the beginning of time, or before time: for the phrases, from the beginning, and from everlasting, are the same, as appears from Proverbs 8:23. Besides, the apostle expressly says, this choice was made before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4). It is also personal and particular; not a choice of propositions and characters, but of persons, he hath chosen us, as in the same place; not a choice of whole bodies of men, of nations, and churches, but of particular persons, known to the Lord by name; the Lord knows them, that are his (2 Tim. 2:19); I know whom I have chosen, says Christ (John 13:18): they are as if they were particularly named: hence their names are said (Philip. 4:3; Rev. 13:8; 17:8; 20:15): to be written in the Lamb's book of life. This choice is of pure grace; not on the foresight of faith; for faith is the fruit of it, flows from it, and is secured by it; as many as were ordained unto eternal life, believed (Acts 13:48): nor on the foresight of holiness, or on account of that; for God chose his people, not because they were holy, but that they might be so: he chose them through sanctification before time, and therefore calls them to holiness in time: nor because of their good works; for the children not being yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth (Rom. 9:11). And here it is called the election of grace (Rom. 11:5,6), and strongly argued not to be of works, but of the pure sovereign grace of God: and it is both to grace and glory, to special blessings of grace, of faith, and holiness, to conformity to the image of Christ now, and, to eternal glory and happiness hereafter, which is ensured by it; for, whom he predestinates; he also glorifies. Now, this part of the form of found words is to be held fast, because it stands foremost in the blessings of grace, and is the standard and rule according to which God proceeds in dispensing the rest; for he blesses his people with all spiritual blessings in Christ, according as he hath chosen them in him (Eph. 1:3).

Fourthly, The doctrine of the covenant of grace is to be held fast, made between the eternal three, when

there were none in being but themselves; no creature, neither an angel, nor a man, nor the soul of a man; none but God, Father, Son and Spirit, between whom and them alone the covenant transactions were; even before the world was, or any creature whatever in being; hence it is called an everlasting covenant (2 Sam. 23:5.) being from everlasting; as well as it will continue to everlasting; which appears from Christ's being set up so early as the mediator of it, from the provision of blessings of grace in it so early, which were given to the elect in Christ, and they were blessed with them in him before the world was; and from promises made in it so early, particularly the promise of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began (Titus 1:2). It is absolute and unconditional; no conditions in it but what were engaged to be performed, and have been and are performed by the Son of God, and by the Spirit of God: with respect to the persons on whose account the covenant was made; all the promises run in this stile, "I will be their God, and they shall be my people; I will put my fear in their hearts, and they shall not depart from me: I will take away the stony heart, and give them an heart of flesh; a new heart and a new spirit will I give them, and I will put my spirit within them, and cause them to walk in my statutes; and they shall keep my judgments, and do them" (Jer. 32:38-40; Ezek. 36:26,27). It is a covenant of pure grace to the elect; and is sure, firm, and inviolable: it is ordered in all things and sure; its blessings are the sure mercies of David, and its promises are all yea and amen in Christ (2 Sam. 23:5; Isa. 55:3; 2 Cor. 1:20). It is a covenant God will not break, and men cannot: it is immovable, and more so than rocks and mountains; the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but the covenant of peace shall never be removed (Isa. 54:10). Now the doctrine concerning this is to be held fast, because it is the basis of the works done by the Son and Spirit of God; of the Son's work in redemption, according to his suretyship-engagements in this covenant; and of the Spirit's work in sanctification, according to his own agreement in it.

Fifthly, The doctrine of original sin, which opens and describes the state and condition of men by nature, is another part of the form of found words to be held fast; as that all men sinned in Adam, in whom they were federally as their covenant-head; in

which respect he was the figure or type of him that was to come (Rom. 5:14); that is, of Christ. Hence the apostle gives the parallel between these two covenant-heads; the one, as conveying grace, righteousness, and life, to his feed; and the other, as conveying sin, condemnation, and death, to all his posterity. Besides, all men were in Adam seminally, in like sense as Levi was in the loins of Abraham, when he paid tithes to Melchizedek (Heb. 7:9,10): so all men were in the loins of their first father, and when he sinned, sinned in him, and were made, constituted, reckoned, and accounted sinners, by his disobedience. The guilt of his sin is imputed to them, so as that judgment comes upon them all to condemnation; and death reigns over them, and all die in him, and a corrupt nature is propagated from him to them: they are all, like David, shapen in iniquity, and conceived in sin: and indeed how can it otherwise be? for who can bring, a clean thing out of an unclean? not one (Job 14:41). There never was but one instance of Adam's race free from his sin, and that was the human nature of Christ: but then that did not descend from him by ordinary generation, but was brought into the world in a supernatural way, and so escaped the contagion of sin. Now it is necessary that this doctrine should be held fast, since it accounts for the corruption of human nature; shows the reason of men being so prone to sin, and biased to it; so impotent to that which is good; and so averse to it: and also shows the necessity of redemption, regeneration, and sanctification.

Sixthly, The doctrine of redemption by Christ, is another part of the form of sound words to be held fast; as that it is special and particular; though, Christ gave his life a ransom for many, yet not for all: those that are redeemed by him are redeemed from among men, out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation: they are Christ's special people he came to save: his sheep the Father gave him, and he undertook the care or, he laid down his life for: the children of God, that were scattered abroad, he came to gather together by his sufferings and death; and his church he gave himself for, even the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven: and that this redemption is procured by way of satisfaction to the justice of God; he redeemed his people by paying a price for it, even his, precious blood. Redemption was obtained by Christ through his sufferings, the

just for the unjust; by his being wounded, bruised, and stricken, for the transgressions of his people; by bearing their iniquities, and the punishment of them; by his being made sin and a curse for them, thereby redeeming them from sin and the curses of the law; and this doctrine of redemption by the blood of Christ, and atonement by his sacrifice, should be held fast, it being the foundation of a sinner's peace, joy, and comfort.

Seventhly, The doctrine of justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ, is another branch of the form of sound words to be held fast: this proceeds from the free grace of God, through the redemption that is in Christ; the matter of it is what is commonly called the active and passive obedience of Christ, which, with the holiness of his nature, are imputed, for justification, being what is required to it by the holy law of God; and hence sometimes men are said to be made righteous by the obedience of Christ, and sometimes to be justified by his blood (Rom. 5:9,10), which is put for his whole sufferings and death; by the one Christ has fulfilled the preceptive part of the law; and by the other has bore the penalty of it; and by both has given full satisfaction to it: the form of it is the imputation of righteousness without works, by an act of God's grace: this righteousness is revealed in the gospel from faith to faith; and faith is wrought in the soul, to lay hold on it, receive it, and plead it as its justifying righteousness, from whence much peace and comfort flow. Justification may be considered as a sentence conceived in the divine mind from eternity; and as pronounced on Christ, the head and surety of his people, when he rose from the dead, and upon them in him; and as it is again pronounced in the conscience of a believer, when the righteousness of Christ is revealed to him, and received by him; and as it will be notified, and be openly and publicly pronounced before angels and men, when all the seed of Israel, or the whole elect in a body, shall be justified and shall glory. This is to be held fast; for, as Luther called it, it is *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiae*, "the article by which the church stands or falls."

Eighthly, The doctrines of pardon, peace, and reconciliation by the blood of Christ, are parts of this form of sound words to be held fast; that the pardon of sin is through the blood of Christ, which, as it was shed for the remission of sin, through it we have it, and

through that only, and not on account of repentance, humiliation and confession, as meritorious or procuring causes of it; and that peace is made by the blood of Christ, from whence peace of conscience flows; and that both reconciliation for our sins, and reconciliation of our persons to God, is made by the death of Christ; hence the gospel which publishes this is called the word of reconciliation, and the gospel of peace (2 Cor. 5:19; Eph. 6:15), which therefore should be held fast.

Ninthly, The doctrines of regeneration, effectual calling, conversion, and sanctification by the spirit, power, and grace of God, are parts of the same form and system; the necessity of regeneration, without which there is no seeing nor entering into the kingdom of God, must be asserted; and that it is not of man, of the power and will of man, but of the power and will of God: that effectual vocation is by the grace of God, and not according to the works of men; that conversion is not of him that willeth nor runneth, but of the mighty power of God, who works in men both to will and to do; that sanctification is absolutely necessary to salvation, for without holiness no man shall see the Lord; that this is the work of the Spirit Of God, and is therefore called the sanctification of the Spirit (1 Pet. 1:2.), and which he gradually carries on, and will perform until the day of Christ. Wherefore,

Tenthly and lastly, and which bring up the rear, the doctrine of the saints final perseverance is a part of this form of sound words to be held fast; even that all that are chosen by the Father, and redeemed by the Son, and sanctified by the Spirit, shall persevere in faith and holiness to the end; being encircled in the arms of everlasting love, secured in the everlasting covenant, united to Christ their head, surety, and Saviour, built on him the rock of ages, against which the gates of hell cannot prevail, and so are like mount Zion, which can never be removed; and being in the hands of Christ, out of whose hands none can pluck, and who is able to keep them from failing; and being kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. These are at least some of the principal things which make up the form of sound words, which you, my Brother, are to hold fast, maintain and publish in your ministry. What remains now to be considered are the exhortation to hold it fast, and the manner in which it is to be done, on which I shall not long dwell.

II. The exhortation respecting the form of sound words, hold fast. This supposes a man to have it, as all such exhortations suppose persons to have what they are exhorted to hold, and hold fast; and which is sometimes expressed; as, that which ye have already, hold fast till I come; and again, hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown (Rev. 2:25; 3:14): and Timothy, to whom the exhortation in the text is given, was in possession of the form of sound words; it was a sacred depositum committed to his trust. Hence it follows, that good thing, which was committed unto thee, keep by the holy Ghost which dwelleth in us; it was in his hand, in his head, and in his heart; the word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith which we preach (Rom. 10:8); and what is had should be held; it should be held forth, holding forth the word of life (Philip. 2:16); and the word of light. Ministers are lights, and have light communicated to them, which should shine forth, and not be put under a bushel; what they have freely received they should freely give; what is told them in private in their studies, they should publicly declare, and affirm those things constantly; they should hold fast the faithful word, as they have been taught, and have taught others, and tenaciously abide by it; so Timothy was exhorted to do, and which will serve more fully to confirm and explain the exhortation here, continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them (2 Tim. 3:14).

This exhortation to hold fast the form of sound words, is opposed to dropping or departing from it, which may be done by those who have had it; men may receive the grace of God in vain; that is, the doctrine of the grace of God; they may first receive it with seeming pleasure and satisfaction, and afterwards reject it; they may fail of the grace of God in this sense, and fall from it partially or totally; so such that seek for and hold justification by the law, are fallen from grace (2 Cor. 6:1; Heb. 12:15; Gal. 5:4); from the doctrine of grace, and particularly from the doctrine of justification by the grace of God through the righteousness of Christ: and as private professors may drop and depart from the doctrines of the gospel formerly received and held by them, so may ministers of the word drop and depart: from found words and doctrines they have formerly professed and preached. And it is opposed

to wavering about the form of sound words, and instability in it; and suggests, that such who have it should not be like children, tossed about with every wind of doctrine, nor be carried about, like meteors in the air, with divers and strange doctrines, doctrines various in themselves and foreign to the word of God; but should affirm constantly with boldness, confidence and courage, the truths of the gospel; for this also stands opposed to timidity, cowardice and pusillanimity; when they should be valiant for the truth, stand fast in the faith, quit themselves like men, and be strong; and not give way, no not for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with the faints.

Moreover this exhortation, considered in this light, supposes that Timothy, and so other gospel- ministers, may at times be under temptations to let go the form of found words, or drop the truths of the gospel, through fear of men, and because of the obloquy, reproaches and persecutions of men, see verses 7, 8, 12, they may be tempted hereunto, as on the one hand to escape being censured as bigots, enthusiasts, narrow-spirited men, and void of common-sense and reason; and on the other hand to obtain the characters of men of sense, of moderate principles, of candor and ingenuity, and of being polite and rational preachers. And it also suggests that there might be such persons who fought every opportunity to wring this form of found words out of the hands of Timothy, and so of any other minister of the word, as well as of those under their ministry; men that lie in wait to deceive, to beguile and corrupt the minds of men from the simplicity in Christ, and therefore to be guarded against.

III. The manner in which the form of found words is to be held fast; in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus: which words may be connected with the phrase which thou hast heard of me. Timothy had heard the apostle preach those found doctrines with great faithfulness; for he was a faithful minister of the gospel, who kept back nothing that was profitable, and shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God; he had heard him speak the truth in love, with great warmth of affection, with much vehemence and fervency of spirit; and he himself had heard and received the word preached in faith, and had mixed it with faith, and digested it by it, and was nourished with it; he had received the love of the truth, and the

truth in the love of it: and the phrase, viewed in this light, contains a reason why therefore he should hold fast: the form of found words he had received in such a manner: or they may be considered as connected with the form of found words; as if faith and love were the subjects of it; that it lay in things to be believed, as the gospel does; and therefore called the word of faith, the faith of the gospel, and the faith once delivered to the faints; and in duties and ordinances to be observed from love to God and Christ; and so is a reason as before, why it should be held fast: or else it is to be connected with the exhortation hold fast; and so directs to the manner in which it is to be held; the faithful word, the word to be believed, is to be held, held forth, and held fast in faithfulness; he that hath my word, this form of sound words in his head, and in his mouth and heart, let him speak my word faithfully; what is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord (Jer. 23:28), and this word of truth is to be held fast and spoken in love; in love to God, to Christ, to the word, and to the souls of men. It follows, which is in Christ Jesus; either the form of found words is in him; all truth is in him, he is full of that as well as of grace; all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, of the mysteries of grace, are hid in him (1 Tim. 4:12-16), and they come from him; the words or doctrines of wisdom and knowledge are given from one shepherd (Col. 2:3), Christ, to his under shepherds, to feed his churches with knowledge and understanding; or else this is to be understood of the graces of faith and love, in the exercise of which the word is to be preached, heard and held fast; there are originally in Christ, and come from him; the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus (Eccl. 12:11); as well as they are exercised on him as the object of them.

Thus have I considered this charge of the apostle to Timothy, in the method proposed; and you, my Brother, should receive it as if it had been delivered to you, it being what concerns and is obligatory upon every minister of the gospel: I shall close with some other branches of the apostle's charge, to Timothy, which you would do well also to advert unto; Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. — Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine-neglect not the gift that is in thee — meditate upon

these things, give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all. — Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine, continue in them; for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee (1 Tim. 1:14). I have done; God give success to your ministrations.

ENDNOTES:

1[1] See my Comment on Hebrews 6:1.

1[2] Zohar in Genesis 1:3, and in Exodus 18:3,4, and in Numbers 67:3.

1[3] Of such absurdity and inconsistency the late Dr. Ridgley was guilty; exploding the doctrine of the generation of the Son of God, and adopting the Socinian notion of sonship by office; and yet at the same time declaring for a distinction of three divine persons in the Godhead. A strange paradox this! and it is a disgrace to that body of men of whole denomination the Doctor was, that none of his brethren attempted to refute him, though they in general disliked his opinion and dissented from him; perhaps they thought the contradiction was so glaring, that his own notions confuted themselves; this is the best apology I can make for them

## 12 The Faithful Minister Of Christ Crowned.

Occasioned by the Death of Mr. William Anderson, Baptist Minister.

Preached September 20, 1767.

2 TIMOTHY 4:6, 7

I have fought a (or the) good fight, I have finished my (the) course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not unto me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

These words are read unto you on account of the death of Mr. William Anderson, late minister of the gospel. It was the latter of these two verses the deceased took notice of on his death-bed, and repeated with a singular appropriation to himself, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, etc. for which reason it is judged a proper subject of a funeral discourse. I have read both verses, because there is a close connection between them, and they depend one on another; and the sense of the one cannot be understood so fully and clearly without the other; and the beauty of the passage would otherwise be greatly

lost. The apostle, in the preceding part of the chapter, gives a strict charge to Timothy, in a very solemn manner, before God and his son Jesus Christ, whom he describes as judge of quick and dead: the charge is, to perform diligently the several parts of his ministerial office, the particulars of which you may read at your leisure; and to urge him the more strongly to attend to this charge, he suggests to him, that it was delivered by him as a dying man; and that this was the last time he might expect to have any charge, counsel, directions, and instructions from him; for, says he, I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand; phrases very significant, and very expressive of his death: the former of them represents his death as a sacrifice, I am ready to be offered, or to be poured forth as a libation or drink-offering; not by way of sacrifice, to make atonement for sin, either his own or others, this he knew was made by the sacrifice of Christ; but by way of martyrdom, as a victim to the cause of truth, for the sake of the gospel, and the confirmation of it: and if laying down his life would be of any service to the interest of Christ and his people, he was ready to do it with all cheerfulness and pleasure; as he elsewhere says (Philip. 2:17), yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all. The latter phrase, the time of my departure is at hand; is an expression of death in a very familiar manner; a way of speaking used by our Lord, and by our apostle in another place (John 13:1; Philp. 1:23); signifying, that death is not the annihilation of men, there is a state of existence after it; it is only a departing elsewhere: it is indeed a dissolution of the union between soul and body, an analysis, as the word in the text is, or a resolution of the body into its original principles; a departure out of one world into another; a removing, as it were, from one house to another, from an earthly house of this tabernacle, to an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; for which there is a time fixed, beyond which life cannot pass: and this the apostle, with respect to himself, knew was at hand; and which he might conclude, either from his years, or rather from the state and situation in which he was, being in bonds for the gospel, and having been brought before Nero a second time; and perhaps the sentence of death was passed upon him by that Emperor, and the dead warrant was come for his execution, or at least he soon

expected it; or he might know his death was near, by an impulse upon his mind, and a particular Rev. from God; and in the cheerful view of it he expresses the words first read. In which may be observed,

I. A pleasing reflection on his past conduct, or on what through the grace of God he had been enabled to do.

First, He had fought a good fight. Secondly, Had finished his course. Thirdly Had kept the faith.

II. A delightful and comfortable prospect, and the firm belief he had of future happiness; which happiness is,

First, Expressed by a crown, by a crown of righteousness, by a crown laid up, and that in particular for him.

Secondly, Of which happiness he was assured, that it would be given him; and by whom, the Lord, the righteous Judge; and in what manner, by way of gift; and at what time, at that day. And, Thirdly, For the encouragement of common saints and believers in Christ to expect the same, he adds, and not unto me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing; the appearing of Christ. The apostle looked backward to what was past, and forward to what was to come.

Here is,

I. A pleasing reflection on his past conduct, or on what through the grace of God he had been enabled to perform; this he could not do before, but now he could: a minister of Christ, whilst he is fighting with enemies, running his race, and discharging his trust, cannot stop, and is not at leisure to make such a reflection, nor can he with propriety do it; but when all is over, when the battle is fought, and the victory got, when the race is ended, and he is come to the goal, is in fight of the prize, and just stretching out his hand to receive the crown; and when he has faithfully discharged his trust, and is delivering it up; then he can, and not till then, with pleasure express himself in the following manner the apostle does.

First, That he had fought a good fight; or rather, the good fight, as in 1 Timothy 6:12, or the fight, that good fight; [1] for the article is doubled, which makes it the more emphatical. The present state of life is a state of warfare, in which every man is engaged: is there not a warfare to man on earth? as the words may be rendered, Job 7:1, there is; especially for a Christian man, whose warfare is as good as accomplished, as it most

certainly will be; and more especially for a minister of the gospel, who is in peculiar circumstances, and is directed by peculiar means to war a good warfare, for which he has weapons peculiarly fitted and adapted: the weapons of our warfare, of us ministers, are not carnal, but mighty through God (1 Tim. 1:18; 2 Cor. 10:4), to answer particular purposes; for the demolition of Satan's kingdom, and the spread and enlargement of the kingdom of Christ: every Christian is a soldier; all the Lord's people are volunteers in Christ's service; thy people shall be willing, or volunteers, in the day of thy power, or in the day of thine army (Ps. 110:3), when that is collected together and mustered; but a minister of the gospel is particularly called to endure, and he ought to endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ (2 Tim. 2:3).

Ministers of the word are meant by the valiant men of Israel; who guard the bed of Solomon, the church, and are well accoutered for that service; having their loins girt with the girdle of truth; their feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; and every man his sword on his thigh (Song of Solomon 3:7, 8); the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: and being thus armed, their business is to fight the battles of the Lord; to play the men for their God, and the cities of their God; for Christ, and for his interest: and, as they have enemies in common with other Christians, and by whom they are more especially assaulted, they fight with them.

1. With the corruptions of their own hearts, those fleshly lusts which war against the soul; striving against sin (Heb. 12:4), or acting the part of an antagonist with it, even indwelling sin: and the great apostle Paul, though so holy a man, was not exempt from this combat. He found a law in his members, warring against the law of his mind (Rom. 7:23): he found himself under a necessity of keeping under his body, the body of sin, and not to make provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts of it; but to keep a strict eye and hand over it, and to use a kind of severe discipline with it, lest whilst he preached to others, he himself should be a cast-away (1 Cor. 9:27): but now the conflict was over; and he, being on the shores of eternity, saw those spiritual enemies, the Egyptians who had distressed him, all slain and dead, and found himself a triumphant conqueror over them.

2. With Satan, and his principalities and powers.

None of the saints in this life are free from Satan's temptations; nay, generally speaking, the most eminent, fruitful, and useful of them, are most furiously assaulted by him. Joseph was a fruitful bough by a well; and the archers shot at him, and sorely grieved him, though his bow abode in strength (Gen. 49:22-24). At those who are the most eminent for grace and usefulness, he lets fly his fiery darts thick and fast: the apostle Paul did not escape his buffetings; a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan was sent to buffet him (2 Cor. 12:7); he had many combats with him: we wrestle, I and other ministers, as well as the rest of saints, against principalities, against powers (Eph. 6:12), even the powers of darkness, Satan and his angels; and minister shave their peculiar temptations, with which they are assaulted by him; many are the difficulties, obstructions and impediments, he throws in their way; our apostle was not clear of them: we would have come to you, says he, writing to the Thessalonians (even I Paul) once and again, but Satan hindered us (1 Thess. 2:18); but now the battle with him was over, and Satan was bruised under his feet.

3. With the world, the reproaches and persecutions of it, and a great fight of afflictions in it: and particularly ministers have to do with false teachers in it, who resist the truth, as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses. Some think such as these were the beasts at Ephesus the apostle fought with; men, comparable to beasts, wolves in sheep's clothing, which entered the flock, and did damage to it by their pernicious doctrines; with whom the apostle had disputes in the school of Tyrannus, whilst he resided in those parts; though I see no reason to depart from the literal sense of the words: yet however it is certain, the apostle met with such men of corrupt minds, more or less, wherever he came; to whom he gave place, no, not for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with the churches; but now his contests and sharp disputes with them were at an end. This fight is called a good fight, and elsewhere the good fight of faith: the fight of faith, because faith, as a doctrine, is what is fought for; the Philippians are exhorted by the apostle to stand fast in one spirit, striving together, with him and with one another, for the faith of the gospel (Philp. 1:27); and, as Jude's phrase is, contend earnestly, even to an agony, for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints (Jude 3); and faith, as a grace, is the weapon

saints fight with, especially with Satan, whom resist, stedfast in the faith (1 Pet. 5:9): and it is called a good fight, because it is in a good cause, the cause of God and truth; fought under a good captain, Christ, the captain of our salvation; under the banner of him, the Lord of hosts; and with good weapons the whole armor of God, armor of proof, than which none is better, and which always issues well, it ends in victory. It is said of Camillus, that he fought many and good fights;[2] that is, many famous battles; but none so famous as this, fought by our apostle and others; in which the Christian combatants are always conquerors, and more than conquerors, through Christ, who has loved them.

Secondly, The apostle with pleasure observes, that he finished his course; which is what he had wished for, and cared not what he met with, so that he could but finish it with joy (Acts 20:24); and now it was done: by which may be meant, either the course of his life, of his days; the time of his departure was near; he was just going the way of all the earth, as Joshua expresses it; his age was departed, as Hezekiah says; his days were extinct, and the grave was ready for him, as Job thought was his case; his last sands were now dropping: or else his Christian race, called a course, in allusion to the Grecian games, in which men ran races, and to which the apostle frequently alludes, particularly in 1 Corinthians 9:24, etc. and in Philippians 3:13, 14, know ye not that they which run in a race, run all — so run, that ye may obtain: the stadium, or race-plot, which reaches from the place of starting to the goal, in which the Christian racer runs, is this world; what answers to the white line between the two terms, within which the racers were to run, and according to which they steered their course, that they might not go in and out, but move straight forward, is Christ; and who is the mark that is always to be kept in sight; and the prize run for, is the high calling of God in Christ, or the heavenly glory: or rather, by his course may be meant the course of his ministry; thus John's ministry is called his course, which he fulfilled; and so the apostle calls his, that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus (Acts 13:25; 20:24), and now it was just finishing; he was come to the end of his line, to Rome, where he was to bear his last testimony for Christ (Acts 23:11): all these three

may be taken into the sense of the passage, the course of his life, his Christian race, and the course of his ministry; for they were all finished together.

Thirdly, The apostle observes, with like pleasure, that he had kept the faith: meaning, not the grace of faith; for though that is an abiding grace, and cannot be lost; is much more precious than gold, because that may perish, but this cannot; yet it is not in any man's own keeping; it is preserved and supported by Christ, through his powerful mediation and intercession; who, as he prayed for Peter, so he prays for all his ministers, and all his saints, that their faith fail not; he is the author, and he is the finisher of it (Luke 22:32; Heb. 12:2): nor is a profession of faith meant; for though believers ought, and they are encouraged to hold fast the profession of their faith, from the priesthood of Christ, and the promises of God; yet this is what formal professors may do, and the foolish virgins did; they took their lamps of profession, and trimmed them too, so that they looked bright and splendid as to outward show; and they held and kept them likewise until the coming of the bridegroom: rather the doctrine of faith is intended, the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to the trust of the apostle; a sacred depositum lodged in his hands, which he was careful to keep, and had kept; what he exhorted Titus and Timothy to do, he had done himself, namely, to hold fast the faithful word; to hold fast the form of sound words, and keep the good thing committed to them (Titus 1:9; 2 Tim. 1:13, 14); this he had done, and had not suffered the gospel to be wrenched out of his hands, neither through the force of furious persecutors, nor through the art and sophistry of false teachers: unless it can be thought his fidelity is meant; God, when he put him into the ministry, counted him faithful, having made him so; and through the grace of God, he maintained his integrity, kept his fidelity; which appeared in declaring the whole counsel of God, and in keeping back nothing that was profitable to the saints; and he continued faithful unto death; and now, henceforth *λοιπον*, it remained, and nothing else remained for him to do, but to receive the crown of life and righteousness. Which brings me to consider,

II. The delightful and comfortable prospect, and firm belief the apostle had of his future happiness; which,

First, Is described by a crown, by a crown of

righteousness, by a crown laid up, and that for him in particular. It is described by a crown; either,

(1) In allusion to royal crowns, such as are wore by kings and princes; and that partly for the glory of it, nothing being more glorious, more grand, and more august than a crown: and this is called a crown of glory, or a glorious crown; and indeed it excels all others in glory: crowns of gold are weighty things, but do not endure always; but the heavenly happiness is an eternal weight of glory (2 Cor. 4:17): this will consist of a glory put upon the saints; upon their bodies, which, though sown in dishonour, will be raised in glory, and fashioned like to the glorious body of Christ; and upon their souls, which will be possessed of perfect knowledge, purity and holiness: and of a glory that will be revealed in them, and that will be revealed to them, and beheld by them, even the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ; with whom they will appear in glory, and be forever with him to behold his glory. And partly the heavenly happiness may be described by such a crown as suitable to the character of saints, who are made kings, as well as priests unto God by Christ; and who shall reign as such on earth, and that for the space of a thousand years, and then reign with him forever in heaven (Rev. 1:6; 5:10; 20:6; 22:5). Nor are they mere titular kings; they have not only the title of kings, but they have a kingdom, a kingdom of grace now, which cannot be moved, and which lies in righteousness, peace, and joy in the holy Ghost: and they are heirs of another kingdom; the kingdom of glory, prepared for them from the foundation of the world; and though they were in their nature-state beggars upon the dunghill, they are raised from thence to inherit the throne of glory; and thrones will be placed for them to fit upon; yea, every overcomer will sit down with Christ on his throne: and so likewise crowns are prepared for them; thus the four and twenty elders, the representatives of gospel-churches, and the members of them, are said to have on their heads crowns of gold (Rev. 4:4). Or rather,

(2) The future happiness is described by a crown, in allusion to crowns given to conquerors in the Grecian exercises; one of which was running of races, as well as fighting, wrestling, etc. to which the apostle manifestly alludes in 1 Corinthians 9:24, 25. Know ye not that they which run in a race, run all; but one receiveth the prize: so run, that ye may obtain. And every man

that striveth for the mastery, is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible. The apostle justly observes, that in those races men strove for mastery; and indeed for that only, for victory; merely for the honour and glory of being conquerors: as for the crowns that were given them, they were nothing worth, being only garlands made of the branches or leaves of laurel, or of olive, or of pines, and sometimes of parsley-leaves, things of no intrinsic value; nor was it for the sake of those they ran, but for the honour annexed to them, of being crowned with them. But the crown which the Christian racer, being a conqueror, obtains, is of real worth and value; sometimes expressed by the true riches, real and substantial; by an house, not made with hands; by an inheritance of the saints in light; by a city which has foundations; and by a kingdom and glory. The crown run for in the Grecian games was a corruptible one: the Corinthians knew full well what the apostle meant by a corruptible crown; for the Isthmian races were ran in their neighborhood, and the presidents and judges[3] were of their city; and they must be sensible of the propriety of this epithet corruptible, since the crowns given to the conquerors in those races, were made of nothing but parsley;[4] some say, dried: hence we read of persons being ornamented and honoured with Corinthian parsley,[5] or parsley-crowns; whereas the heavenly happiness is an incorruptible crown: so when it is spoken of as an inheritance, it is said to be an incorruptible one (1 Pet. 1:4); it cannot be corrupted itself; it lies where moth and rust corrupt not: nor can it be enjoyed by corrupt persons; corruption cannot inherit incorruption; in order to enjoy it, the dead will be raised incorruptible, and this corruptible must put on incorruption (1 Cor. 15:50, 52, 53), and be clear of every corruption, natural and sinful. Again, the crown the racers in the above exercises ran for, was a withering and fading one, as even those made of green and living parsley used in the Nemean exercises were;[6] but the crown of eternal glory and happiness, is a crown of glory that fadeth not away; an amaranthine crown, as the word is,[7] alluding to such crowns as were made of the herb amaranthus, which is immarcessible, and never fades, as its name imports;[8] and of which crowns were made in the winter-season: so when this happiness is signified by an inheritance, it is called an inheritance that fadeth

not away; it is durable and lasting, yea, everlasting; and therefore expressed by everlasting habitations; by an house eternal; by an eternal inheritance; and by the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ: and for the same reason it is sometimes called the crown of life (Jam. 1:12; Rev. 2:10), because it is a crown for life, as all crowns are not, even for an eternal life; yea, is eternal life itself, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.

2. The happiness the apostle had a view of, and faith in, is further described as a crown of righteousness; still alluding to the crowns given to conquerors in the Grecian exercises, such as were obtained in a lawful manner, and legally adjudged to them; for, as the apostle says elsewhere, alluding to the same custom, if a man strive for masteries, who shall have the honour of being declared the conqueror, yet is he not crowned, except he drive lawfully (2 Tim. 2:5); if he used any illicit methods to obtain the prize, when detected, even after the prize was declared for him, he was disgraced, and the true and right conqueror, even though he might be dead, had the crown adjudged to him;[9] such strict justice was observed in those exercises; hence the crowns thus distributed were called *θεμιπλεκτοι*,[10] “crowns wreathed or platted by justice:” in allusion to which, the apostle calls the heavenly happiness a crown of righteousness; it is what the saint comes at in a legal manner, what he has a just right unto; it is a kingdom his heavenly Father has bequeathed unto him; it is an inheritance he is born heir apparent to, and for which he has a meetness through the grace of God; and his title to it lies in the righteousness of Christ: no unrighteous man can inherit this crown and kingdom; and he must have a better righteousness than his own, or he will never be put into the possession of it; wherefore our apostle desired to be found in Christ, not having on his own righteousness, but the righteousness which is through the faith of Christ (Philp. 3:9); by which being justified, such become heirs of eternal life, are entitled to it, and shall most surely possess it. Moreover, though this crown is not given for the fidelity and integrity of those that fight and run, and keep the faith; yet it is the consequence thereof, and follows thereon, according to the divine promise, Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life (Rev. 2:10).

Besides, this epithet of righteousness, may express the state and condition of the happy crowned ones; that it is a state of purity, holiness and righteousness; a state in which none but righteousness dwells, or righteous persons, who are made righteousness itself in the Lord; and so is called the crown of righteousness, just as it is the hope of righteousness (Gal. 5:5); that is, a state of righteousness which is hoped and waited for.

3. This happiness is further described as laid up; laid up in the covenant of grace, which is ordered in all things, and sure; where all grace and all spiritual blessings are secured for the saints, and their glory also; it cannot be said how great that goodness is, which is there laid up for them: this crown is also laid up in the hands of Christ the mediator; in whose hands the saints themselves are, and are safe; and where all fullness of grace is treasured up for them, and their life of glory is hid and preserved: it is also laid up in heaven, and is the same with the hope laid up in heaven (Col. 1:5), that is, the heavenly glory hoped for; and the inheritance reserved in heaven (1 Pet. 1:4): things that are laid up, are hid and out of sight; the glories of another world are invisible; they are things that are not seen and hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? (2 Cor. 4:18; Rom. 8:24, 25), and they are also safe. Crowns are generally laid up in places of great strength and safety; the crown of England is secured in the tower of London; though as strong a place, and as well guarded as that is, the crown was near being stolen and carried off in the last age: but the crown of life and glory is laid up where thieves do not break through, nor steal (Matthew 6:20), and this crown is laid up for particular persons; for me; and me, and me; for all the vessels of mercy before prepared for glory; for all chosen in Christ to holiness and happiness, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus; for all that love him, and love his appearing.

Secondly, The assurance the apostle had of his enjoying this happiness thus described; from whom he expected it would be bestowed upon him; in what way and manner, and at what time.

1. The person who, he was well assured, would give it to him, is Christ, who is described by the Lord, the righteous Judge; he is Lord of all, Lord of lords, and King of kings; who sets them up, and puts them down at his pleasure: and he who has the disposal of

kingdoms, crowns and scepters, the apostle believed would give to him a crown of life and immortality: he who upon his ascension was made or declared Lord and Christ, and constituted head over all things to the church, and fills all in all; fills all the members of it with gifts and grace, and crowns them with loving-kindness and tender mercies; he had in his hands a crown of glory to bestow on him: he whom David could call my Lord, and Thomas, my Lord and my God, the apostle knew he had an interest in as such: and therefore counted all things but loss, says he, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord (Philp. 3:8): and from this his interest in him, no doubt he concluded he should receive the crown from him; whom he also considered, for his further encouragement to believe it, as a righteous Judge: this character best agrees with Christ; for the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son (John 5:22); he has appointed him to be Judge of quick and dead ( Acts 10:42); which office he will execute at his appearing, when the crown will be given, verse 1, and for which office he is abundantly qualified, being God omniscient and omnipotent: he is omniscient; he knows all persons and things; he is the living Word, before whom all things are naked and open, with whom we have to do, or to whom we must give an account; he has no need that any man should testify of men to him, for he knows what is in men; and therefore can bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the heart, and judge the secrets of all men: and he is the Almighty, the Lord God omnipotent that reigns, and so is able by his power to raise the dead at his coming; to summon all nations before him; to separate one sort of men from another; to pass the decisive sentence on them, and execute it: and he is a righteous Judge; Jesus Christ the righteous (1 John 1:1), the Judge of the whole earth, who will do right; who will judge the world in righteousness, and the people with equity: as in the execution of all his offices, so in this, righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins (Isa. 11:5).

Now from the purity, justice and integrity of Christ as a Judge, the apostle had no doubt of the crown of righteousness being given him by him; and here also the apostle alludes to the Grecian exercises, in which crowns were given to the conquerors in strict

justice:[11] at first they had only one judge of them, afterwards the number was increased; but always care was taken that men of strict justice and uprightness were chosen into that office, who would pass a righteous sentence, and give the crown to whom it of right belonged; and if any were found tardy in this matter, and gave it wrong, by an appeal to an higher court of judicature, if found guilty, they were severely mulcted;[12] it was always from the judges[13] the conqueror received the crown.

2. The manner in which the apostle expected to have the crown; by way of gift; which the righteous Judge shall give me: not by way of merit; he knew his best works were not meritorious of eternal life; that what he did was not in his own strength, but by the grace of God; that there is no proportion between works of righteousness done by the best of men, and the crown of life; that the purest services of the saints, which are their sufferings for Christ, are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in them; he knew that though he fought and ran, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy (Rom. 9:16): the crown of life is promised as a gift, Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life (Rev. 2:10); the heavenly kingdom is what it is the Father's good pleasure to give; and eternal life is the free gift of God through Christ; Christ gives grace, and he gives glory; he has power to give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him; and he does give it to all his sheep, that hear his voice, and follow him. Some translate the words of our text, which the righteous judge shall render unto me;[14] and so they may be translated without any contradiction to the crown being a free gift; for that will be rendered, not as the reward of men's works, or according to their deserts, but as the fruit of Christ's righteousness, satisfaction, and atonement; so our salvation, and all the parts of it, are both in a way of grace, and in a way of justice: God is a just God, and a Saviour; just, and yet the justifier of him that believes in Jesus; and just and faithful to forgive sin, and cleanse from all unrighteousness; justification, though by the free grace of God, yet being through the righteousness of Christ, is according to the strict justice of God; and pardon of sin, though according to the riches of grace, is an act of justice; mercy and truth, righteousness and peace, meet together in the

salvation of sinners, in their grace and in their glory: with respect to them, it is of grace; with respect to Christ, and to his satisfaction and righteousness, it is of justice; and so it is given and rendered according to both.

3. The time when the apostle expected the crown, at that day; a phrase used by him in other places in this epistle, as in chap. 1:12, 18, that famous day, that well-known day, looked for by all the saints; even the day of Christ's appearing to take his kingdom, and to judge the dead; which is the day of his second coming, as is clear from ver. 1. then he, in his whole person, soul and body, he believed, should enjoy the everlasting happiness, signified by the crown of righteousness.

Thirdly, The apostle adds, by way of encouragement to all believers in Christ, and lovers of him in common, that this crown was laid up for, and would be given to, not him only, and such as he, eminent for gifts and usefulness, but all them also who love his appearing: the appearing of Christ. In this there is a difference between the crown given to the runner in the Grecian races, the apostle has a respect unto; that crown was given to one only, this to many; of which the apostle thus speaks, Know ye not that they which run in a race, run all; but one receiveth the prize? (1 Cor. 9:24), but they which run in the Christian race, every runner therein, everyone that is tried and endures temptation, everyone that is faithful unto death, everyone that endures to the end, every persevering saint, every overcomer, receives the crown of life; everyone that loves the appearing of Christ, be their gifts, their grace, their usefulness, what they may. It will be proper to inquire,

1st, What is meant by the appearing of Christ; his second appearance is intended: he appeared once in the end of the world; in the end of the Jewish world, their state, civil and ecclesiastic, when he became incarnate, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; which having done, he is gone to heaven again; where he indeed appears in the presence of God for his people, as their advocate and intercessor; but to them that look for him, shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation (Heb. 9:24, 26, 28): and this is the appearing which is here meant, when he will come to judge the quick and dead; which will be at his appearing and his kingdom, as says the apostle in ver. 1, of this chapter; then the dead in Christ will

arise, and their bodies be united to their souls, Christ will bring with him: and the living saints will be changed; and both will be caught up together in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and this will be a virtual judgment of them, and a declaring them to be the happy persons to whom the crown belongs: as there will be also a judging of the wicked then found alive, who will perish in the general conflagration, when the earth, and all therein, shall be burnt up; and when Christ will enter upon his personal reign and kingdom, which will continue a thousand years; at the close of which all the wicked will be raised, and stand, small and great, before the judgment-seat, and will be adjudged to the lake which burns with fire and brimstone.

This appearance of Christ will be a glorious one; his first appearance was mean; he had no form nor comeliness desirable by men; he appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh, and in the form of a servant: but his second appearance will be without sin, and any sinless infirmities; it will be a glorious one: he will come in his own glory; in the glory of his divine nature, the perfections of which will be gloriously displayed; and in the glory of his human nature, being in it crowned with glory and honour; and in the glory of his office, as mediator: and in his Father's glory; the same with his own, as a divine person, as the only begotten of the Father; and clothed as a Judge, with authority and power by him, to judge the quick and dead; and in the glory of his holy angels (Luke 9:26), as attendants on him, and ready to obey his commands: this appearance of Christ will be personal; he himself in person shall descend from heaven; not by another, by a deputy, or by the effusion of the Spirit, but he himself in person; in like manner as he went up to heaven at his ascension, will he come down from thence at his second coming: and this appearance will be visible; he will be seen in the air by all the risen and living saints; and he will be seen in the clouds of heaven; every eye shall see him (Rev. 1:7), even all the kindreds of the earth.

2dly, This appearance of Christ is to be loved, and is loved by some: to some indeed it will be the great and dreadful day of the Lord; which will burn like an oven, and consume the wicked root and branch; on sight of him, and even of the sign of the Son of man in heaven, all the tribes of the earth will mourn; and

persons of the highest rank and class will flee to rocks and mountains, to hide them from his face, the great day of his wrath being come, and at which also the devils will tremble; but he shall appear to the joy of saints, when others will be ashamed and confounded.

Now such may be said to love his appearing, who pray for his appearing and kingdom, or that his kingdom may come, and he appear in his glory; who took earnestly and wistly for the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who long for it, and hasten in their affections, desires, and petitions for it; and say, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly;" as it shows love to a man and his presence, when one most pressingly desires it, and most earnestly and ardently wishes and longs for it: and there are many reasons to be given, why the appearance of Christ should be loved by his saints.

1. Because then they shall see the person whom they love, in all his beauty, glory and excellencies; now whom having not seen, they love (1 Pet. 1:8); they have not seen him with their bodily eyes, and yet having heard and known much of him, their affections are towards him; but then they shall see him in the flesh, and with their eyes behold him, and not another: now sometimes they lose sight of him in a spiritual sense; he withdraws himself from them, and they know not where he is, and they go in quest of him, saying to one and another, saw ye him whom my soul loveth? (Song of Solomon 3:1), but now he will be always in view, and they will see him, of whom they have often said, whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth that I desire besides thee! (Ps. 73:25).

2. Because they will then see him who has so loved them; so loved them, as to become incarnate for them; so loved them, as to lay down his life for them; so loved them, as to wash them from their sins in his blood; so loved them, as to bear their sins, and all the punishment due unto them, to suffer, the just for the unjust; so loved them, as to be delivered into the hands of justice and death for their offenses, and to rise again for their justification; the appearance and sight of such a person, must needs be loved by those to whom he has shown so much love.

3. Because his appearance will be a glorious one, as before observed, and therefore to be looked for gladly, to be loved and longed for; looking for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and

our Saviour Jesus Christ (Titus 2:13).

4. Because when Christ shall appear, his saints shall appear with him; their souls will be brought along with him, and their bodies will be raised, and both reunited, and they all appear in glory (Col. 3:4) with him, with a glory both on their souls and bodies: when he shall appear, they shall be like him, for they shall see him as he is (1 John 3:2); see him in his glory, and be conformed unto him, and changed into the same image and likeness, so far as they are capable of; and then shall they be completely satisfied, and not before; as for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake in thy likeness (Ps. 17:15); and it is not to be wondered at, that such persons should love the appearing of Christ.

5. Because the saints at Christ's appearing shall not only see him, and be like him, but they shall receive much from him; much grace they have received from him now, but they will then receive it in its full perfection; wherefore they are exhorted to gird up the loins of their mind, be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto them at the Rev. of Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 1:13): and when also they shall receive from him the crown of life and righteousness; for when the chief shepherd shall appear, not only the under-shepherds that are faithful, but even all the sheep themselves, that hear the voice of Christ, and follow him, shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away (1 Pet. 5:4).

6. Because then the saints will be put into the possession of their complete salvation; for to them that look for him, will Christ appear the second time without sin unto salvation (Heb. 9:28): when he came the first time, salvation was wrought out by him for them, he became the author of it; and it is brought home to them by the Spirit of God at conversion, and applied unto them, and they are shown their interest in it; but as yet are not in the full enjoyment of it; though now is their salvation nearer than when they first believed, and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time (Rom. 13:11; 1 Pet. 1:5); that is, when Christ shall appear, and reveal it to them, and put them in the full possession of it.

7. The appearing of Christ is to be loved by the saints, because they shall be with him, and be forever with him, and never part more: here they have a visit

from Christ now and then, and this but short; he is like a wayfaring man that tarries for a night; but when he shall come again from heaven, with all the saints, the dead raised, and the living changed, they shall be caught up to meet him, and so shall they be ever with the Lord (1 Thess. 4:17, 18); with which words they may comfort one another now, whilst they are looking and longing for the appearing of Christ.

Thus have I considered this passage of scripture, as briefly as I well could, at the request of the surviving relative of the deceased; of whom it may be expected I should give some account: his person, doctrine, and manner of life, were known to many, if not most of you; some things I may be able to say, not known by you, or but by a few.

The Reverend Mr. William Anderson was called by the grace of God under my ministry, between forty and fifty years ago; for I find on search, that he was baptized by me on a profession of his faith, Jan. 1, 1723-4, near forty-four years ago; and soon after was received into fellowship with this church, with which he walked very honourably and comfortably as a private member for several years: and in process of time, it being perceived and thought by some that he had a gift for public usefulness, he was called by the church to the exercise of it; and after sufficient trial, he was regularly sent forth to preach the gospel, where God in his providence might call him; and for some

time he preached occasionally among the churches, with good liking and approbation; and in a course of time, I am not able to say exactly how long, he was invited by a small destitute people in Westminster, to preach unto them; which he accordingly did, to their great satisfaction; and after some time they chose him to be their pastor, and gave him a call to take upon him that office, which he accepted of; and was ordained, May 12, 1743, upwards of twenty-four years ago. This charge he undertook, not with any sinister and worldly views, the people being few, and for the most part poor, and were far from being capable of providing a proper maintenance for him; and certain it is, he left a very lucrative employment to serve them, and the interest of Christ among them, on which his heart was set; and it pleased God to bless his labors, both for edification and conversion, so that there was an increase both of audience and members; and he laid himself out indefatigably to serve them, both as

to their temporals and spirituals: by his means, and through his interest, a commodious house for worship was built, which they greatly wanted; and he also brought them to be one of the churches in the fund, for the assistance of poor ministers and churches in the country; in short, he was the instrument of raising them from a low and mean condition, to a greater degree of credit and reputation among the churches than they ever had before: and thus they went on comfortably and harmoniously for many years; but of late a sad retaliation has been made him for all his work and labor of love! the walls of that house, built by him, through his interest, and the pulpit in it, out of which he was kept, will be standing witnesses against the people that meet in the one, and the man that fills the other, for their unparalleled ingratitude to him; I say, unparalleled, for I am persuaded, that neither the memory of any man living, nor perhaps the history of any age, can furnish an instance similar to this case; that a worthy minister of the gospel should be divested of his office, and turned out of his place, when no charge, neither of immorality nor of false doctrine, was laid against him. Such hard usage did this faithful minister of Christ meet with! these were the wounds he received in the house of those he once thought his friends; the pain of which went to his heart, and the anguish thereof drank up his spirits. Nevertheless he ceased not from his Master's work; and which he performed with more vigor, comfort and cheerfulness, than could have been expected, among those few that cleaved unto him, and abode with him; and so he continued till his last illness seized him, which it seems was in this pulpit a few weeks ago. This affliction he bore with great patience; though his bodily pains were sometimes so great, as caused him to cry out in the extremity of them, and to pray and desire his friends to pray for him, that the God of patience would give him more: not a murmuring word against the hand of the Lord was heard from him throughout the whole; nor did any worldly concerns, or any others, distress his mind; nor was the enemy of souls suffered to buffet him, which he thought a great mercy. He expressed the inward joy and comfort he felt, to various persons at different times: to one, that the doctrines he had preached to others, he now found to be the comfort of his soul: — to another, that he saw Christ to be his foundation, and doubted not of his interest in him;

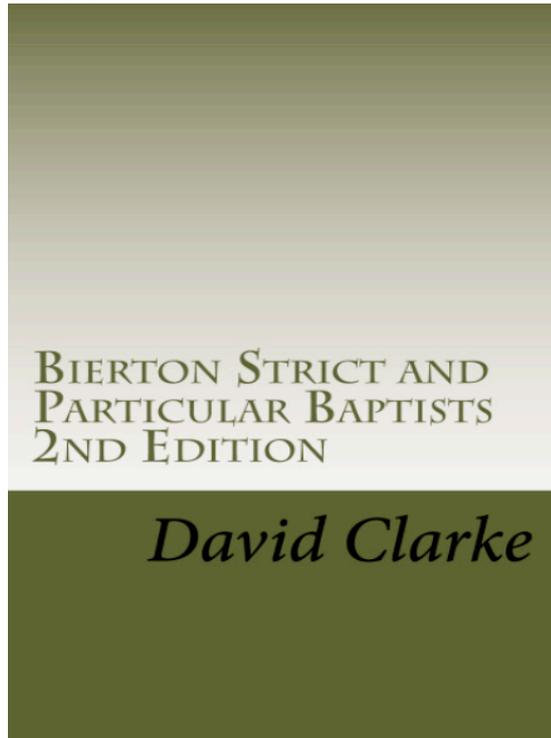
and in the presence of several declared, that Christ was the only bottom he had to rest on; and that he was precious to him, had been, and would be so: — to another, that the indissoluble union between Christ and his people, was his great support; but wanted to find himself in a more waiting posture: — to another, who said to him, Sir, you have almost finished your course; he answered, Yes; but I know, said he, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which he spoke with an emphasis: — to another, What, my dear child, my joy and crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord! this he spoke with an ecstasy of joy: — to another, that saw his lips move, and asked him what he said, his answer was, though I am so unworthy in myself, yet I am complete in him; meaning in Christ: — at another time he was heard to say, "Is Ephraim a dear son? is he a pleasant child? can it be that he is a pleasant child? he answered, yes, he is;" and with an appropriation to himself. — A few hours

before his death, he thus expressed himself, in the words of the church, in the hearing of many friends, let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for thy love is better than wine; I say, is better than wine: a ministering brother coming into the room, and to his bedside at the same time, he said to him, "I am going home;" to which the brother replied, I perceive you are, and going apace; are you comfortable? he said, "I am; "God is with me, and will be with me." — About an hour before he died, he uttered these words, "my God, my God, "my God in Christ!" Then, Sir, said a stander by, you have enough; he replied, "I have." Thus died this worthy servant of Christ, who is now entered into the joy of his Lord, and into his rest; and you, his mournful widow, may dry up your tears, and rather rejoice that he is gone: where he is free from all trouble and distress; where there is no more pain, no more sorrow and crying, no more death; where he is delivered from, and is out of the reach of every open enemy, and every faithless friend; and where he enjoys uninterrupted communion with God, Father, Son; and Spirit, and with angels and glorified saints. And as for you, his little flock who cleaved unto him, and followed him in his adversity, as I understand you design to keep together to see what the Lord will do with you, be encouraged so to do; for though you may be saying, By whom shall Jacob arise? for he is

small; the God of Jacob can raise you up; and multiply you, that ye be not few; and glorify you, that ye be not small; sometimes from small beginnings great things arise: if God should send you a pastor, to feed you with knowledge and understanding, which I perceive you have some hope of; if God should bless his labors, the place of your tent may be enlarged, and the curtains of your habitations may be stretched forth, and God may increase you with men as a flock; frequently meet together, pray earnestly and constantly, who knows but God may have a blessing in store for you? To conclude; since we have all in one shape or another a warfare to war, a race to run, and a trust to discharge; let us manfully fight till the warfare is accomplished; and run, with patience and diligence, the remainder of the race set before us; and faithfully perform the trust reposed in us; that when all is done and over, we may enjoy the crown of righteousness, which is in common provided for all that love the appearing of Christ.

**Bierton Strict and Particular Baptists**

2nd Edition



Authored by Mr David Clarke Cert.

List Price: \$13.99

5.25" x 8" (13.335 x 20.32 cm)

Black & White on White paper

356 pages

ISBN-13: 978-1519553287 (CreateSpace-Assigned)

ISBN-10: 1519553285

BISAC: Biography & Autobiography / Religious

This book tells the story and life of David Clarke in the form of an autobiography. It is no ordinary book in that David and his brother were both notorious criminals in the 60's, living in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, where they were MODs and were both sent to prison for and malicious wounding and carrying a fire arm without a license . They were however both converted from crime to Christ and turned their lives around.

This story tells of David's conversion to Christianity in 1970 and that of Michael's conversion, 1999 some 30 years later.

It tells of their time in HMP Canterbury Prison and David's time in HMP Wormwood Scrubs and Dover Borstal. It also tells of David's criminal activity and the crimes he committed before his miraculous conversion from crime to Christ, during a bad experience on LSD, in 1970.

It tells how he became a Christian over night and how he learned to read in order to come to a fuller knowledge of the gospel. He learned to read through reading the bible and classical Christian literature. David tells of the events that led to him making a confession to the police about 24 crimes he had committed since leaving Dover Borstal in 1968 and of the court case where he was not sentenced. It tells how David's educated himself and went on to Higher education, and graduated with a Certificate in Education and how he went on to teach Electronics, for over 20 years, in colleges of Higher and Further Education.

It tells of his life as a member of the Bierton Strict and Particular Baptist church, which was a Gospel Standard cause, and how he was called by the Lord and sent by the church to preach the gospel. David tells of the various difficulties that he faced once he discovered the many doctrinal errors amongst the various Christian groups he met and of the opposition that he experience when he sought to correct them. David recorded his experience and finding in his book "The Bierton Crisis" 1984, written to help others.

David's tells how his brother Michael was untouched by his conversion in 1970 and continued his flamboyant lifestyle ending up doing a 16 year prison sentence, in the Philippines, in 1996.

David tells how Michael too was converted to Christianity through reading C.S. Lewis's book, "Mere Christianity", and him being convinced that Jesus was the Christ the Son of the living God. David then tells of his mission to the Philippines, to bring help and assistance to Michael, in 2001 and of their joint venture in helping in the rehabilitation of many former convicted criminals, not only in New Bilibid Prison but other Jails in the Philippines.

David tells how he felt compelled to write this story in his book , "Converted On LSD Trip". once he got news of his brothers arrest, in the Philippines, via ITN Television news broadcast, in 1995. This book was published when he got news of his brothers conversion from crime to Christ in 1999, which was after serving 5 years of his 16 year sentence.

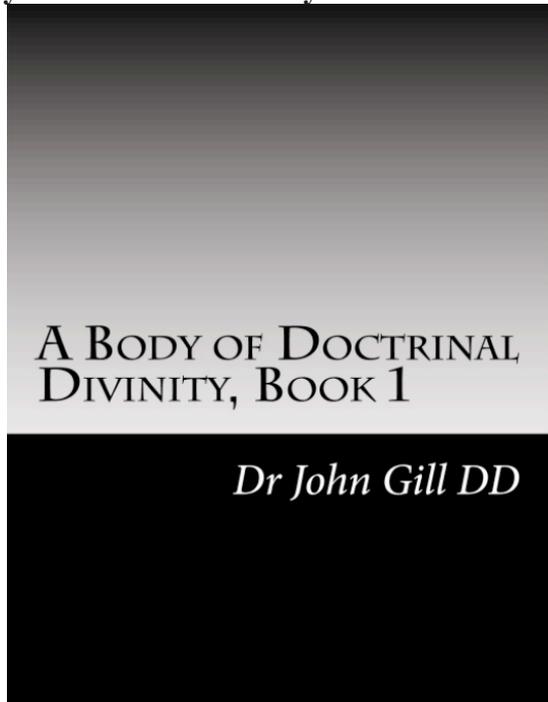
This story is told in their joint book, "Trojan Warriors", that contains the testimonies of 66 notorious criminals who too had turned there lives around, from crime to Christ, 22 of which testimonies

are men on Death Row.

David says he believes his story could be of great help to any one seeking to follow the Lord Jesus Christ but sadly Michael died in New Bilibid Prison of tuberculosis, in 2005 before their vision of bringing help to many was realized.

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### **A Body of Doctrinal Divinity Book**



A System of Practical Truths

Authored by Dr John Gill D.D, Created by David Clarke Cert Ed

List Price: \$8.99

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176 pages

ISBN-13: 978-1543085945 ISBN-10: 1543085946

BISAC: Religion / Christian Theology / Systematic

THIS IS BOOK 1 Of The Seven Books Treating The

Subjects:

Of God, His Works, Names, Nature, Perfections And Persons.

And Contains:

Chapters

1 Of The Being Of God

2 Of The Holy Scriptures

3 Of The Names Of God

4 Of The Nature Of God

5 Of The Attributes Of God In General, And Of His Immutability In Particular.

6 Of The Infinity Of God,

7 Of The Life Of God.

8 Of The Omnipotence Of God.

9 Of The Omniscience Of God.

10 Of The Wisdom Of God.

11 Of The Will Of God And The Sovereignty Of It

12 Of The Love Of God

13 Of The Grace Of God.

14 Of The Mercy Of God.

15 Of The Long suffering Of God.

16 Of The Goodness Of God.

17 Of The Anger And Wrath Of God.

18 Of The Hatred Of God.

19 Of The Joy Of God.

20 Of The Holiness Of God.

21 Of The Justice Or Righteousness Of God.

22 Of The Veracity Of God.

23 Of The Faithfulness Of God

24 Of The Sufficiency And Perfection Of God.

25 Of The Blessedness Of God.

26 Of The Unity Of God.

27 Of A Plurality In The Godhead, Or, A Trinity Of Persons In The Unity Of The Divine Essence.

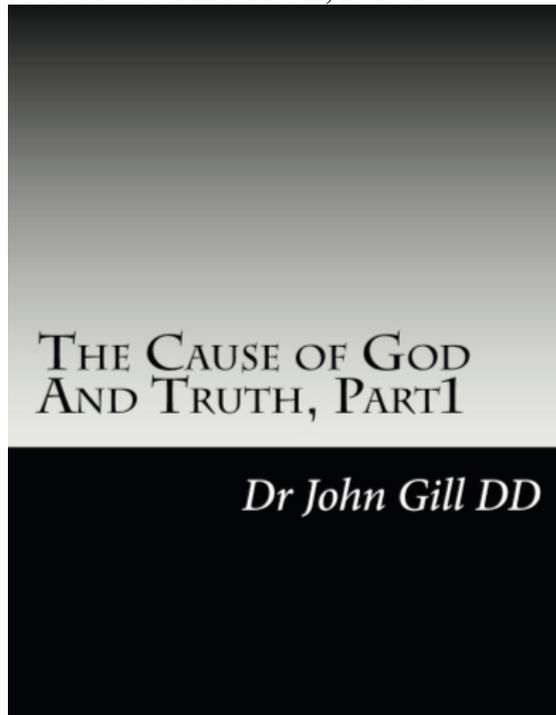
28 Of The Personal Relations; Or, Relative Properties, Which Distinguish The Three Divine Persons In The Deity.

29 Of The Distinct Personality, And Deity Of The Father.

30 Of The Distinct Personality, And Deity Of The Son.

31 Of The Distinct Personality, And Deity Of The Holy Spirit.

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**The Cause of God And Truth, Part 1**

Authored by Dr John Gill DD, Created by David Clarke CertEd

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Black & White on White paper

94 pages

ISBN-13: 978-1544094670 (CreateSpace-Assigned)

ISBN-10: 1544094671

BISAC: Religion / Christian Theology / Systematic

The following work was undertaken and begun about the year 1733 or 1734, at which time Dr. Whitby's Discourse on the Five Points was reprinting, judged to be a masterpiece on the subject, in the English tongue, and accounted an unanswerable one ; and it was almost in the mouth of every one, as an objection to the Calvinists, Why do not ye answer Dr. Whitby ? Induced hereby, I determined to give it another reading, and found myself inclined to answer it, and thought this was a very proper and seasonable time to engage in such a work.

In the year 1735, the First Part of this work was published, in which are considered the several passages of Scripture made use of by Dr. Whitby and others in favour of the Universal Scheme, and against the Calvinistical Scheme, in which their

arguments and objections are answered, and the several passages set in a just and proper light. These, and what are contained in the following Part in favour of the Particular Scheme, are extracted from Sermons delivered in a Wednesday evening's lecture.

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Psalms 125:3.

Psalms 145:9.

Proverbs 1:22-30.

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Isaiah 30:15.

Isaiah 55:1.

Isaiah 55:6.

Isaiah 55:7.

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Acts 3:19.

Acts 7:51.

Romans 5:18.

Romans 11:32.

Romans 14:15.

1 Corinthians 8:11.

1 Corinthians 10:12.

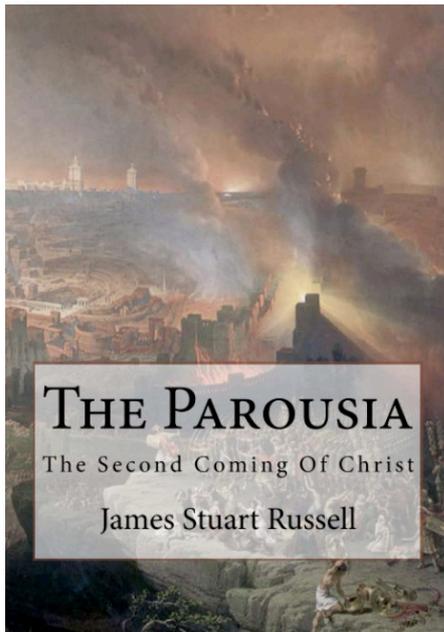
2 Corinthians 5:14,15.

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 The Epistle to the Hebrews.  
 Hebrews 2:9.  
 Hebrews 6:4-6.  
 Hebrews 10:26-29.  
 Hebrews 10:38.  
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 2 Peter 2:1.  
 2 Peter 2:20-22.  
 2 Peter 3:9.  
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 Jude 1:21.  
 Revelation 2 and Revelation 3.  
 Revelation 3:20.

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### The Parousia



The Parousia 2nd Edition: The Second Coming Of Christ

Authored by James Stuart Russell, Preface by Mr David Clarke, Preface by Dr Don K Preston DD

List Price: \$17.85

7" x 10" (17.78 x 25.4 cm)

Black & White on White paper

404 pages

ISBN-13: 978-1519610942

ISBN-10: 1519610947

BISAC: Religion / Theology

A reformation – indeed – a revolution of sorts is taking place in modern evangelical Christianity. And while many who are joining in and helping promote this movement are not even aware of it, the book you hold in your hand has contributed greatly to initiating this new reformation. This “new” movement is sometimes called full preterism, (Also, and preferably by this writer, Covenant Eschatology). It is the belief that all Bible prophecy is fulfilled.

The famous evangelist Charles H. Spurgeon was deeply impressed with the scholarly, solid research in the book, although he did not accept the “final” conclusions reached by Russell. In modern times, this work has, and continues to impress those who read it. The reason is simple, the New Testament is emphatic and unambiguous in positing Christ’s coming and the end of the age for the first century generation. To say this has troubled both scholars and laymen alike is an understatement of massive proportions.

This book first appeared in 1878 (anonymously), and again in 1887 with author attribution. The book was well known in scholarly circles primarily and attracted a good bit of attention, both positive and negative. The public, however, seemed almost unaware of the stunning conclusions and the research supporting those conclusions, until or unless they read of Russell’s work in the footnotes of the commentaries.

Scholars have recognized and grappled with this imminence element, that is the stated nearness of the day of the Lord, seldom finding satisfactory answers. Scholars such as David Strauss accused Jesus of failure. Later, Bultmann said that every school boy knows that Jesus predicted his coming and the end of the world for his generation, and every school boy knows it did not happen. C.S. Lewis also could not resolve the apparent failed eschatology. Bertrand Russell rejected Christianity due to the failed eschatology - as he perceived it - of Jesus and the Bible writers. As a result of these “skeptical” authors, modern Bible scholarship has followed in their path and Bible commentaries today almost casually assert the failure of the Bible writers - and Jesus - in their eschatological predictions.

This is where Russell's work is of such importance. While Russell was not totally consistent with his own arguments and conclusions, nonetheless, his work is of tremendous importance and laid the groundwork for the modern revolution known as the preterist movement.

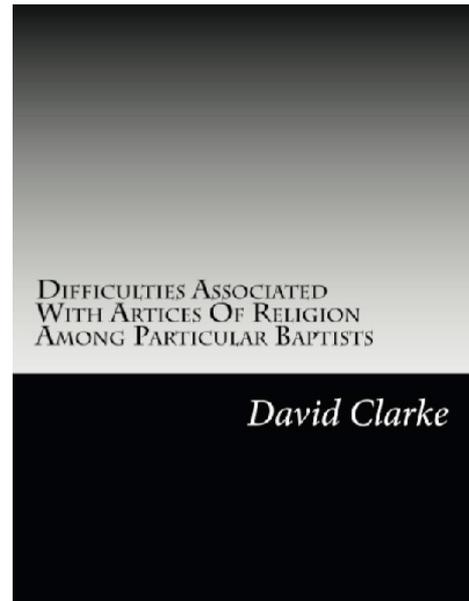
Russell systematically addressed virtually every New Testament prediction of the eschaton. With incisive clarity and logical acumen, he sweeps aside the almost trite objections to the objective nature of the Biblical language of imminence. With excellent linguistic analysis, solid hermeneutic and powerful exegetical skills, Russell shows that there is no way to deny that Jesus and his followers not only believed in a first century, end of the age parousia, but, they taught it as divine truth claiming the inspiration of the Holy Spirit as their authority.

Russell not only fully established the undeniable reality of the first century imminence of "the end," he powerfully and carefully shares with the reader that "the end" that Jesus and the N.T. writers were anticipating was not the end of the time space continuum (end of the world). It was in fact, the end of the Old Covenant Age of Israel that arrived with the cataclysmic destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in AD 70. Russell properly shows how the traditional church has so badly missed the incredible significance of the end of that Old Covenant Age.

Russell's work is a stunning rejection -- and corrective -- of what the "Orthodox" historical "Creedal" church has and continues to affirm. The reader may well find themselves wondering how the "divines" missed it so badly! Further, the reader will discover that Russell's main arguments are an effective, valid and true assessment of Biblical eschatology. And make no mistake, eschatology matters.

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### **Difficulties Associated With Articles Of Religion Among Particular Baptists: Second Edition**



Authored by David Clarke

List Price: \$7.00

8.5" x 11" (21.59 x 27.94 cm)

Black & White on White paper

72 pages

ISBN-13: 978-1976541438

ISBN-10: 1976541433

BISAC: Religion / Christian Theology / Systematic

Articles of religion or confessions of faith are used to inform others of what a person, a church or society believe with respect to religious beliefs. Some churches restrict membership to those who will subscribe to their articles of religion. One of the problems that this brings is that there comes a time when a new believer cannot, in conscience, subscribe to a tenet of belief that they do not understand. It may be the article is badly worded or poorly written or may, in fact, be in error. In which case a new believer could not in conscience subscribe to something they do not understand. Or it may be a member of the church begins to realize their articles of religion are in error.

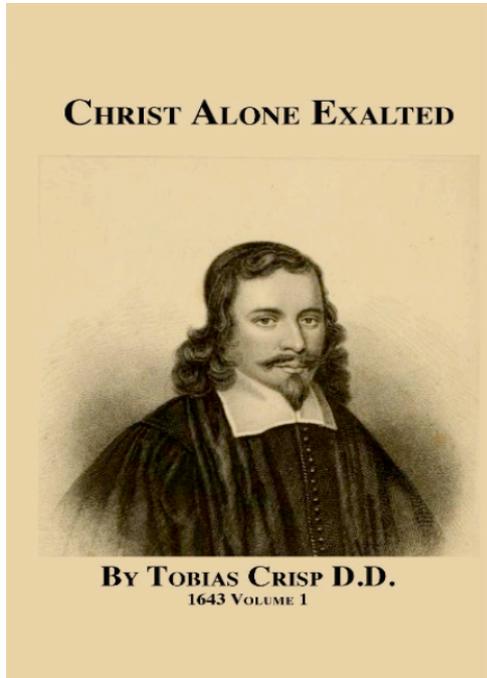
This book seeks to inform of the difficulties that articles of religion among Particular Baptists have experienced since the first London Baptists 1646 2nd Edition was published and offers an alternative solution to this problem.

This book contains the First Particular Baptists London Confession 1646 2nd Edition, The Second

London Baptists Confession 1689, Bierton Particular Baptists 1831, The Gospel Standard articles of religion 1878 and Bierton Particular Baptists, Pakistan 2016 with observations of the difficulties that have proven difficult, in the past.

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**Christ Alone Exalted: Volume 1**



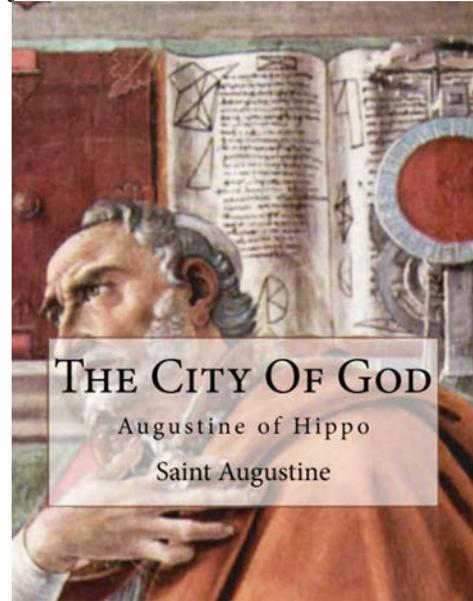
Authored by Tobias Crisp D.D.,  
by David Clarke  
List Price: \$10.10  
5.5" x 8.5" (13.97 x 21.59 cm)  
Black & White on White paper  
266 pages  
ISBN-13: 978-1535296922 (CreateSpace-Assigned)  
ISBN-10: 1535296925

BISAC: Religion / Christian Theology / Soteriology  
Tobias Crisp was preacher of the gospel in England. He was born in 1600 and died in 1643 at which time these 13 sermons were first published. Within 3 years further sermons were published in further volumes this is the first. He lived at the time when The First London Baptist Confession of Faith 1644 was being prepared for publishing and it is clear from these sermons he taught Calvinistic truths. He preached the doctrines of grace and was charged with being an Antinomian and provoked opposition from various quarters. Dr John Gill in defence of Crisp republished these sermons along with his own notes showing that

Tobias Crisp taught clearly the truths of the lord Jesus Christ

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**The City Of God:**



Augustine of Hippo

Authored by Saint Augustine, Authored  
by David Clarke  
List Price: \$10.28  
8.5" x 11" (21.59 x 27.94 cm)  
Black & White on White paper  
272 pages  
ISBN-13: 978-1547278985 (CreateSpace-Assigned)  
ISBN-10: 1547278986

BISAC: Religion / Christian Theology / Soteriology  
The City of God, is a book of Christian philosophy written in Latin by Augustine of Hippo in the early 5th century AD. The book was in response to allegations that Christianity brought about the decline of Rome and is considered one of Augustine's most important works.

The City of God is a cornerstone of Western thought, expounding on many profound questions of theology, such as the suffering of the righteous, the existence of evil, the conflict between free will and divine omniscience, and the doctrine of original sin.

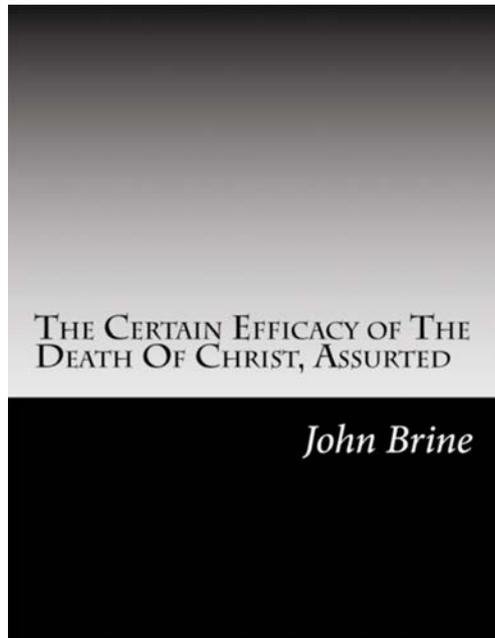
Augustine is recognized as a saint in the Catholic Church, the Eastern Christian Church, and the Anglican Communion and as a preeminent Doctor of the Church.

Many Protestants, especially Calvinists and

Lutherans, consider him to be one of the theological fathers of the Protestant Reformation due to his teachings on salvation and divine grace. Lutherans, and Martin Luther in particular, have held Augustine in preeminence (after the Bible and St. Paul). Luther himself was a member of the Order of the Augustinian Eremites (1505–1521).

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### **The Certain Efficacy of The Death Of Christ, Assured**



Authored by John Brine,

Created by David Clarke

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8.5" x 11" (21.59 x 27.94 cm)

Black & White on White paper

114 pages

ISBN-13: 978-1973922254 (CreateSpace-Assigned)

ISBN-10: 1973922258

BISAC: Religion / Christian Theology / Soteriology

This work declares the Glory of God in all his Perfections, the Honour of Christ, and the eternal Happiness of his People, all of which are intimately concerned in them. This is treated in four parts: In the First John Brine endeavours to prove the limited Extent of the Death of CHRIST, and the certain Salvation of all those for whom he died.

In the Second, the Objections which are usually urged by the Arminians, and others, will be answered.

In the Third shall attempt to prove the Impossibility

of the Salvation of the Non-Elect, upon the Supposition of no other than a conditional Provision of Salvation being made for them.

In the Fourth Part shall attend to what he delivers on the Subjects of the Imputation of original Sin to Men, the Charge of Sin on CHRIST, and the Imputation of his Righteousness to his People.

This has been republished by Bierton Particular Baptists to further the cause of God and truth, it opposes Arminianism, Islam, and duty faith.

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