

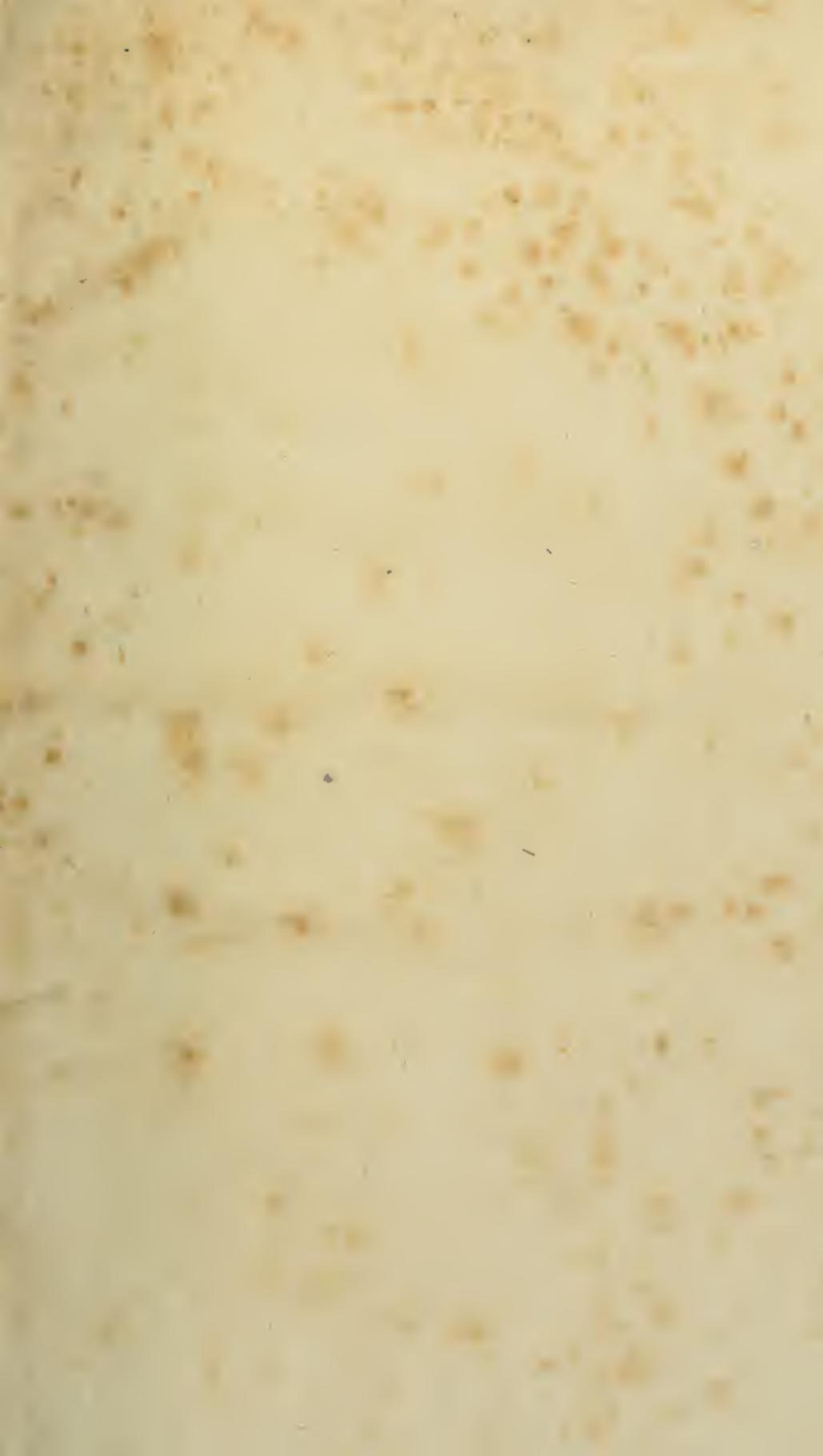
BV  
811  
.F7

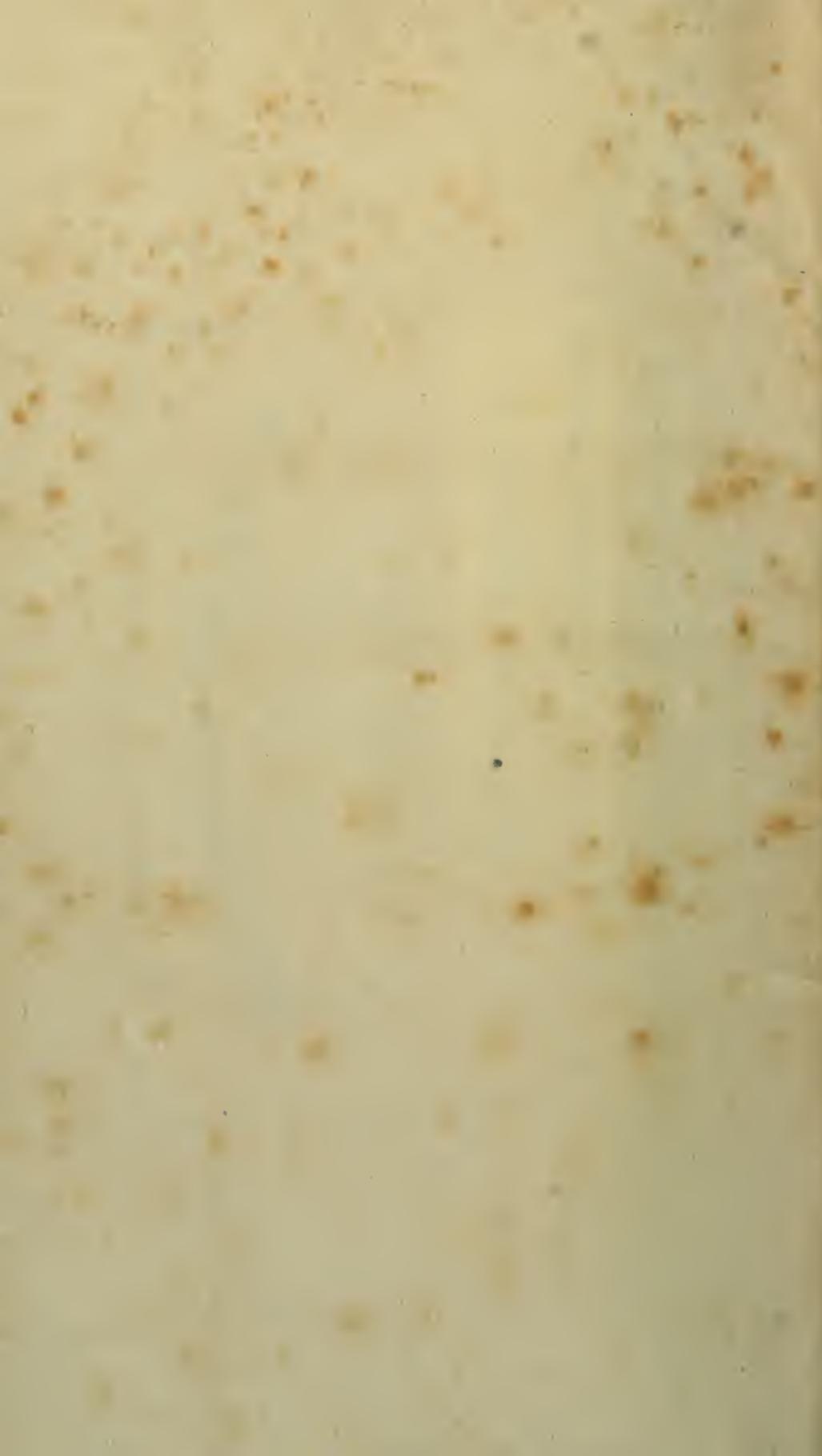
*Library of the Theological Seminary,*

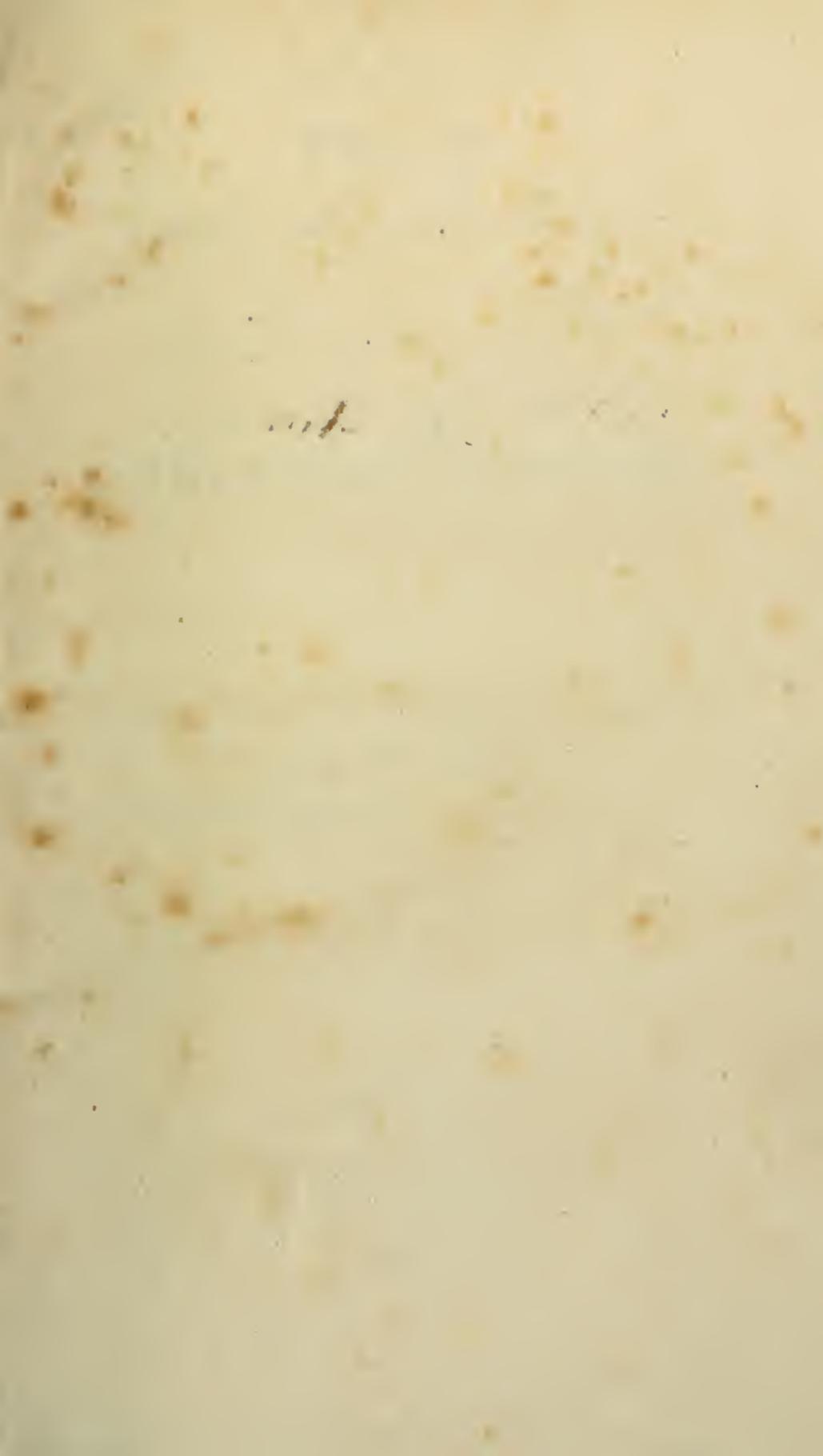
PRINCETON, N. J.

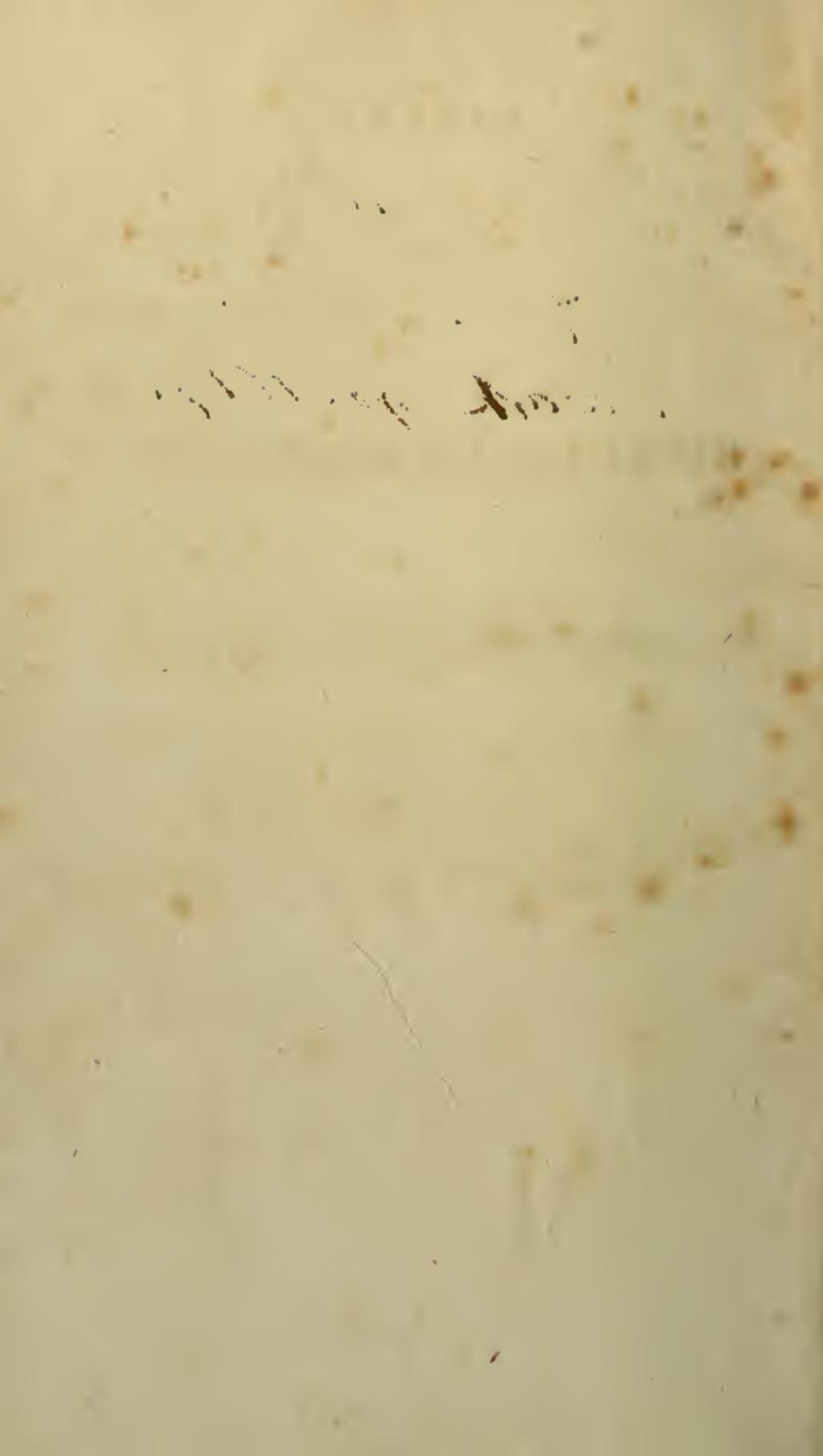
Presented by Mrs. Sanford H. Smith.

BV 811 .F7  
Frey, Joseph Samuel C. F.  
1771-1850.  
Essays on Christian baptism









*Jr. Smith*

**ESSAYS**

*with the Author's*

*best <sup>ON</sup> sermons.*

*Newark N. J. 1829.*

**CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.**

---

**BY J. S. C. F. FREY,**

PASTOR OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH AT NEWARK, N. J.

---

**BOSTON:**

**PUBLISHED BY LINCOLN & EDMANDS,**

**59 WASHINGTON STREET.**

**1829.**

DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS....to wit.

*District Clerk's Office.*

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the nineteenth day of February, A. D. 1829, in the Fifty Third year of the Independence of the United States of America, LINCOLN & EDMANDS, of the said district, have deposited in this office the Title of a Book, the Right whereof they claim as Proprietors, in the Words following, to wit :

“ Essays on Christian Baptism. By J. S. C. F. Frey, Pastor of the Baptist Church at Newark, N. J.”

In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled “ An Act for the Encouragement of Learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned :” and also to an Act entitled “ An Act supplementary to an Act, entitled An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned ; and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints.”

JOHN W. DAVIS,

*Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.*

## INTRODUCTION.

---

The cause of the BIBLE is the cause of God, and the only noble and worthy cause of men.

The individual who contributes *any thing* to the more wide diffusion of the light which is from heaven, among the inhabitants of the earth, promotes that cause, elevates the human character, and brings the world under obligation to him as a benefactor; at the same time, he adds a note to the anthem once sung by angels: "*Glory to God in the highest!—On earth peace—good will toward men.*" In order to this, it is not indispensable that *new* truth be discovered. The *Bible* contains an entire and perfect theology; and to take of the things of Christ and shew them to men, is enough. This the christian may do, as the instrument of the Holy Spirit.

It is a no less noble or useful work to help a christian brother to clearer and brighter light, than to reflect the light on the darkness of unregenerated minds. The main design of this book is to communicate important truth to scholars already in the school of Christ.

The title of the work seems to limit the expectation of the reader to the single subject of *Baptism*; which, though it claims the serious regard of every christian, borrows its principal value from the connexion in which it stands with all the doctrines of our religion, and the prosperity of the church; it being a part of the revealed will of our great Lawgiver, and intended by Him, like every other part of his religion, for the helping of all the rest. No man acquainted with the history of the church, can consider the subject of baptism an indifferent subject. It is not treated as such, *in practice*, by christians of any denomination; and it claims its due share of attention among the important things of the kingdom of Christ.

But it is due to the author of this book to remark, that he has done much in elucidating the great principle of *all* reformation, viz: "*The Bible is the only and the sufficient rule of faith and of practice.*" There have always been those who would either entirely discard this principle, or so modify it that *reason* might be

exalted to a pre-eminence over scripture. The same disposition is plainly discernable in our own times and country.

While the lovers of Bible truth are faithfully striving to give it diffusion, there are men of high literary attainments, and some who stand up in the public view as preachers of christianity, who do *not* regard the scriptures as a *perfect* and the *only* standard of religious opinions and moral practices. These hold the scriptures loosely; and sometimes warn their hearers of a certain danger in submitting their opinions *too implicitly* to the Bible. The following language has recently been employed: "It is plain that his (Milton's) *error* was founded on his *reverence for scripture.*"\* If there is any meaning in this language, it is that "*reverence for scripture*" is dangerous. It will be seen that these Essays are written on a different principle; and we blush not to say, that they uniformly exhibit the highest "*reverence for scripture.*" Such, at least, is their claim. They claim to be tried by the scripture before they are condemned; and if they endure not this test, they "*refuse not to die.*" We believe that the time approaches, when the protestant maxim will universally prevail; when it will be admitted that "*all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable.*" "*I love thy commandments above gold; yea above fine gold. Therefore, I esteem ALL thy precepts concerning ALL things to be right; and I hate EVERY false way.*"

The *first* of the following Essays will be read with interest by every christian, whether his opinions on the subject of baptism accord with those of the author or not; for it applies with equal propriety and force to every requirement of God.

C. P. G.

BOSTON, FEB. 1829.

\* Dr. Channing.

## PREFACE.

---

DEAR READER :—The substance of the following Essays was originally delivered in three sermons, which were occasioned by the change of my views on the subject of Baptism. No sooner was the change publicly known, than two questions were naturally and frequently asked, viz: What argument produced this change? and what circumstances led to it *now*, rather than formerly? The following Essays answer the first query; and the circumstances which led me to investigate the subject *now*, rather than formerly, are briefly these:

The reader is probably already informed, that I was brought up in the Jewish faith, until I was twenty-five years of age. Some time after I had made a public profession of the Christian religion, I was received a student in the Missionary Seminary at Berlin, in Prussia. In 1801 I went to England, at the request of the London Missionary Society. A few months after my arrival in London, the directors resolved that I should preach to the Jews. To prepare myself for that work, I was sent to their Seminary at Gosport, under the care of the late venerable Doctor Bogue. Here I spent the four happiest years in my life.

During this period, my time was taken up with the investigation of the general doctrines of christianity, and particularly the subjects of controversy between Jews and Christians. Baptism was considered a subject of comparatively little importance. In the Doctor's MS. Theological Lectures the arguments in favor of sprinkling and infant baptism are represented in a strong light, whilst those of the opposite party are but slightly mentioned. The view given of the subject as analogous to circumcision, and to the sprinkling of water and of blood, was peculiarly pleasing to my natural attachment to Judaism, and prevented any further inquiry into the truth of the statement.

The fact of my being a convert of the Jewish nation, together with my situation as a Missionary or Agent to promote the conversion of the Jews, has called me so often to travel and to preach, as to leave me but little or no time for the study of any subjects besides those connected with my immediate labors.

The subject of baptism might still have remained unexamined by

me, had it not been for the following occurrence: At the christening of one of my children, together with others, the minister exhorted us to bring up our "children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." This scriptural, solemn and affectionate exhortation was enforced by observing, "*These children are now members of the church, adopted into the family of God,*" &c. &c. These declarations were forcibly impressed upon my mind, as if I had never heard them before. They appeared to me, at that moment, inconsistent with the doctrine of Perseverance; I resolved, therefore, not to present another child of my own, nor to baptize the children of any others, before I had thoroughly investigated the subject.

Ever since, for more than two years, I have introduced the subject in conversation with the ministers in my travels, almost in every place where I have preached, for the purpose of obtaining information. The general notion that the christian church is a continuation of the Jewish church, illustrated by the olive tree and the parable of the tares and the wheat, formed peculiar difficulties in my mind, and I expressed them freely to my brethren, as some will doubtless remember. In June, 1827, the Lord blessed me with another child. Immediately my resolution to investigate the subject of baptism, before I could present another child, came to my recollection. Accordingly, I gave myself to reading, meditation and prayer. After carefully comparing the best books, on both sides of the question, with the word of God, I came to the full conviction, that *believers are the only subjects of baptism, and that immersion is the only scriptural mode.* I now felt it my duty to obey the command of my Lord and Saviour to be baptized, i. e. *immersed.* Therefore, without conferring with flesh and blood, or fearing the consequences, I proposed myself as a candidate to the Baptist church, in New York, under the pastoral care of the Rev. A. Macclay, by whom I was baptized on Lord's day, August 28, 1827.

I was aware that the subject would excite much attention; that many of my best friends would be displeased, and others would not hesitate to ascribe my conduct to improper motives, especially to that of "filthy lucre." But surely, if such had been my motives, I not only acted most basely, but also most foolishly, in leaving the large, rich and respectable body of Presbyterians, among whom I have every where met with the greatest hospitality and friendship, to join a Denomination, who are said "to be only the poor and despised among the people," and who have been every where spoken against, hated and persecuted, often, even unto death.

To whatever motives, however, my change may be ascribed by others, it is an unspeakable comfort to my own mind, that I have done it as a solemn religious duty, and can cheerfully leave the consequences to my covenant God, whom I have the honor and privilege to serve in the gospel of Christ, who is over all God blessed for ever.

I cannot omit mentioning in this place a circumstance, which, considered by itself, might appear trifling, but, in its connexion, has become an important link in the chain. Amongst the books which I read, alluded to above, was the original work of the Rev. and venerable Abraham Booth, "*Pedobaptism examined.*" These two volumes he himself presented to me in 1805, when I resided in London a near neighbor [to him, saying, "Accept these books as a token of respect, and read them at your leisure." I thankfully accepted the gift, and kept it carefully, in memory of the "man of God," whom I highly esteemed and venerated; but I was totally ignorant on this subject, and, therefore, could not value the rich treasure contained in these volumes; which lay on my shelf covered with dust, for the space of twenty-two years. Now, whilst searching for truth, I began to examine this "Examination of Pedobaptism." Here I found the scripture mode of baptism by immersion, and believers the only subjects, demonstrated and proved, and all objections answered, in such a masterly manner, that, I am firmly persuaded, these books never can be refuted. It is with peculiar pleasure I take this opportunity of acknowledging myself a debtor to these volumes for much aid in my investigations, and for many of the testimonies, from the writings of the most pious and learned Pedobaptists, contained in the following pages. Soon after I had preached on the subject of baptism, the sermons were repeatedly requested for publication. Whilst preparing them for the press, I received several books in favor of Pedobaptism, from some of my Presbyterian friends, for which I now publicly thank them. These treatises I have read carefully, and I do most sincerely declare, that they have served only to establish me more firmly in my new views on the subject of baptism. This circumstance will account for the enlargement of the work, and for the delay of its publication, and has occasioned its present form. By almost every author I read, the ground, on which infant baptism had been placed by a former author, was overturned, or declared untenable, and a *new* foundation laid. Every new opinion I met with on this side of the question, I weighed in the balance of the sanctuary, and found it wanting.

The perusal of Dr. L. Woods' Lectures, in particular, convinced me of the importance of adding the *first* Essay to the original matter. Dr. W. in the beginning of his work, page 11, declares, "It is a plain case that there is no express precept respecting infant baptism in our sacred writings. The proof, then, that infant baptism is a divine institution, must be made out in another way." A want of attention to the nature and obligation of a positive institution of God, has left many to take unwarranted liberties in altering the mode of administering the ordinance, and the qualifications of its subjects; and others to neglect it altogether, as a matter perfectly indifferent.

The solemn charge brought against the pious and venerable Mr. Booth, that "in his quotations he had misrepresented the sense of the authors," has led me to examine and compare every quotation with the original work, as far as it was in my power; and I am happy to say, his faithfulness in quoting them is equal to his good judgment and unparalleled industry in selecting and collecting them. This of course required some time, and is another cause of the delay of this book. Although these Essays may afford but little *new* information to those, who have already examined the subject thoroughly, yet they are considered by competent judges as calculated to remove prejudices, to diffuse the truth as it is in Jesus, and to put away human inventions from God's holy worship. Notwithstanding the variety of excellent and useful treatises already before the public, yet some are too short to meet every objection, and others are too large and expensive for general usefulness. In the present work, a proper medium has been aimed at, and the public will be able to judge how far the author has been successful.

To avoid every expression in the least calculated to give offence, has been my desire and care; but as perfection cannot be expected in this life, I hope, the reader will ascribe every failure in this particular, to inattention rather than intention. The reader, and especially the reviewer, will please to remember, that the author is a foreigner, and does not profess to be a master of the English language. A sense of his deficiencies in this respect, would certainly have prevented him from thus appearing before the public; but the persuasion of his friends, a conviction of duty "to give a reason" for his conduct, and a desire to be useful to others, have prevailed with him to publish these Essays. Should this humble attempt prove a blessing to the reader, the glory shall be given to Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen.

# ESSAYS ON BAPTISM.

---

## ESSAY I.

### *General Observations on Positive Laws or Institutions.*

1. THE nature of a Positive Law essentially differs from that of a Moral Law. The *Matter* of a Moral law, whether it be of the nature of a requirement or of a prohibition, commends itself as holy, just and good, and must therefore, be unchangeable, and of perpetual obligation; but a positive law, whether to do or to omit, has nothing either of good or evil in itself, and is binding only by virtue of its being enacted; and, therefore, may be changed at the will and pleasure of the lawgiver. Thus the Moral law contained in the ten commandments, written by the finger of Jehovah on two tables of stone, and comprised by our Lord and Saviour in two commandments or constitutional principles, viz. love to God, and love to men, is so reasonable and so necessary, that heathen philosophers, who had never been favored with the light of Divine Revelation, taught and enforced the observance of many of the duties enjoined in it. Rom. i. 19—32.\*

Positive laws are such as the prohibition from eating

\* The fourth commandment, so far as it relates to the particular day of the week, and the part of time to be devoted to the worship of God, is of the nature of a positive institution, and was, therefore, liable to be changed by the Institutor; but the keeping of some time holy, or the duty of worshipping the Creator, is of a moral nature, and is, therefore, unchangeable and perpetually obligatory. The *first* day of the week, or the Lord's day, has been substituted by him for the *seventh* day.

of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; or the command to sprinkle the blood of the Passover lamb on the door posts. It is obvious, that Adam's eating, or not eating of that tree, might have been a thing as indifferent to good or evil, as the eating or not eating of any other tree in the Garden; but because God had positively forbidden it, the eating of it became a crime, the awful consequences of which are felt to the present day. In like manner, the mere sprinkling of blood on the door posts or the omission of it, had nothing good or bad *in itself*; but, if the Israelites had neglected the doing of it in that night, in which Jehovah had positively required it, their omission would have been criminal, and their "First-born" would have been exposed to the sword of the destroying angel. The same distinction is evident in the two Laws given to Moses on Mount Sinai; the moral law and the ceremonial law. The former is of perpetual obligation upon all rational beings. Men were as much bound to love God and their neighbor, before that law was engraven upon the tables of stone, as afterward. But the ceremonial law was binding on the children of Israel exclusively, and that only during a certain period; for there was no *intrinsic* value in it. Hence, God himself testifies that "these statutes were not good," i. e. there was no good in themselves, only as they were to answer a certain end; and, when that end was accomplished, their observance was no more needed than before their appointment. This brief statement we think sufficient to justify our next observation, viz.

2. That the obligation to obey a Positive law arises *solely* from the authority of the Lawgiver.

Our obligation to obedience arises not from the nature of the law, but from the *authority* and *will* of the Legislator. If God commands a thing, which was before indifferent, it is as much a law as if it were ever so good in its own nature. As soon as we are satisfied that an institution is divine, it is our duty to observe it, although we may not see its necessity or utility. The command to Abraham, to sacrifice his son, was a positive order, and a very strange one too; seemingly opposite to some moral orders given out before; and yet his disposition to obey, when he was sure of a divine warrant in the case, has

placed him at the head of all the believing world; as hero of faith, the father of the faithful and the friend of God.

“Moral precepts,” says the learned *Bishop Butler*, “are precepts, the reason of which we see; positive precepts are precepts, the reason of which we do not see. Moral duties arise out of the nature of the case itself, prior to external command; *positive* duties do not arise out of the nature of the case, but from external command; nor would they be duties at all, were it not for such command, received from Him, whose creatures and subjects we are.”—*Analogy of Religion*, Part 2, ch. 1.

The pious Jonathan Edwards, whose praise is in all the churches, justly observes; “Positive precepts are the greatest and most proper trial of obedience; because in them the mere authority and will of the Legislator is the sole ground of the obligation, and nothing in the nature of the things themselves; and, therefore, they are the greatest trial of any person’s respect to that authority and will.” *Sermons*, page 232. *Sermons on Imp. Sub.* p. 79.

The words of *Dr. Sherlock* shall close this observation: “What is matter of institution depends wholly upon the divine will and pleasure; and though all men will grant, that God and Christ have always great reason for their institutions, yet it is not the reason, but the authority, which makes the institution. Though we do not understand the reasons of the institution, if we see the command, we must obey; and though we could fancy a great many reasons why there should be such an institution, if no such institution appear, we are free, and ought not to believe there is such an institution because we think there are reasons assigned why it should be.” *Preserv. against Pop.* Title 9, p. 419.

3. The *law* of the institution is the *only rule* of obedience. From the preceding observations it is evident, that positive institutions in religion derive their whole being from the *sovereign pleasure* of God, and that his pleasure can be known only from his *revealed will*. It follows, therefore, that we cannot know any thing about the precise *nature*, the true *design*, the proper *objects* of them, or the right *mode* of their administration, farther than the Scriptures teach, either in plain, positive precepts or by clear example. For as *Dr. Goodwin* observes: “There is this difference between doctrinal truths and institu-

tions, that one truth may be, by reason, better fetched out of another, and more safely and easily, than institutions. For one truth begets another, and truth is infinite in *the consequences of it*; but so institutions are not." *Works*, vol. 4. *Government of the Church of Christ*, ch. 4, page 21.

Moral duty may be proved by illation; for a genuine inference from a moral principle, relating to things of a moral nature, has all the certainty of the principle itself; and it is a just observation of Dr. Bellamy, that "the inspired writings of the Old Testament consider these two maxims, *that we must love God with all our hearts, and our neighbor as ourselves*, as first and fundamental principles: and all the various duties which they urge, respecting God or our fellow men, are but so many inferences and deductions from them." *True Religion Delineated*, p. 143. But, when *positive* duties are under our notice; when either the manner of performing those duties, or the proper subject of them is before us, the case is greatly altered. For, the inquiry being entirely into the sovereign pleasure of God, concerning an article of human duty, which absolutely depends on a manifestation of the divine will, the nature of the case forbids our expecting any intelligence relating to it, except that which arises from divine precept, or scriptural precedent.

How strong and just is the language of Dr. Sherlock to the present purpose: "I would not be thought wholly to reject a plain and evident consequence from Scripture; but yet I will *never admit* of a mere consequence to prove an institution, which must be delivered in *plain terms*, as all laws ought to be; and, where I have no other proof, but some scripture consequences, I shall not think it equivalent to a Scripture proof. If the consequence be plain and obvious, and such as every man sees, I shall not question it: but remote, and dubious, and disputed consequences, if we have no better evidence, to be sure, are a very ill foundation for articles of faith, or ordinances of worship. Let a Protestant, then, tell such disputants; that for the institution of Sacraments, and for articles of faith, he expects *plain positive proofs*: that, as much as the Protestant faith is charged with uncertainty, we desire a little more certainty for our faith, than mere inferences from Scripture, and those none of the plainest neither." *Preser. against Pop.* vol. 2. Appendix, p. 23.

On this principle all Protestants proceed, when contending with Roman Catholics about their claims of prerogatives and their numerous rites, viz. that nothing short of an explicit grant, a *positive* command, or a *plain* example in the New Testament, can prove their divine origin. Instances might be multiplied; a few shall be given hereafter. In like manner do Non-conformists demand of Episcopalians, saying—“*Produce your warrant for this, that, and the other, from our only rule of faith and practice, a divine precept, or an apostolic example, relating to the point in dispute.*” So, when Moses was directed to make the Tabernacle, nothing was left to his wisdom, prudence or judgment; but “see, saith the Lord, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.” Heb. viii. 5. Nor does it appear from the records of the Old Testament, that, when Jehovah appointed any branch of ritual worship, he left either the subjects of it, or the mode of administration, to be inferred by the people, from the *relation*, in which they stood to himself, or from general *moral* precepts, or from any branch of his *moral* worship, nor yet from any other well known *positive* rite; but he gave them *special* directions relating to the very case; and those directions they were bound to regard, whether they appeared in a pleasing or a painful light. I shall close this observation in the words of the pious and learned Bishop Taylor: “All positive precepts, that depend on the mere will of the lawgiver, admit no degrees, nor suppletory and commutation; because in such laws we see nothing beyond the words of the law, and the first meaning, and the named instance; and therefore it is that *in individuo*, which God points at; it is that in which he will make the trial of our obedience: it is that in which he will so perfectly be obeyed, that he will not be disputed with, or inquired of, *why*, and *how*, but just according to the measures there set down: *So, and no more, and no less, and no otherwise.* For, when the will of the lawgiver be *all the reason*, the first instance of the law is *all the measures*, and there can be no product but what is just set down. No parity of reason can infer any thing else; because there is no reason but the will of God, to which nothing can be equal, because his will can be but one.” *Ductor Dub.* B. 2. ch. 3. § 18.

4. The law of a positive institution must be so plain

and explicit, as to stand in no need of any other assistance to understand it, but the mere letter of the law. As a rule must be straight, not bent or crooked, if we would draw direct lines by it, so must laws be plain, and expressed in words, whose signification is well understood, for they are for the direction of the common people as well as for the learned. They must be as the words of a father to his family. Hence, our Pedobaptist brethren, in their arguments against popish traditions and superstitions, consider it not only necessary that a positive law should be *plain*, but nothing less than blasphemy to suppose, that either Christ, or his Apostles, delivered their mind in words or expressions that are ambiguous, or cannot easily be understood. I will not multiply quotations, but select only a few.

“The term *Institution*,” says Dr. Goodman, “implies a setting up *de novo*, or the appointing that to become a duty, which was not knowable; or, at least, not known to be so, before it became so appointed. For this word, *Institution*, is that, which we use to express a *positive* command by, in opposition to that, which is moral in the strictest sense, and of natural obligation. Now, it is very evident, that all things of this nature ought to be appointed *very plainly* and expressly, or else they can carry no obligation with them: for, seeing the whole reason of their becoming matter of law, or duty, lies in the will of the legislator; if that be not *plainly* discovered, they cannot be said to be instituted, and so there can be no obligation to observe them; because *where there is no law, there can be no transgression*; and a law is no law, in effect, which is not sufficiently promulgated.” *Preser. against Popery*. Title 8. p. 7.

*Baron Montesquieu* observes: “The style (of laws) should be *plain* and *simple*; a direct expression being always better understood than an indirect one—it is an essential article, that the words of the laws should (be adapted to) excite in every body the same ideas. The laws ought not be subtle; they are designed for people of common understanding, not as an art of logic, but as the plain reason of a father to a family.” *Spirit of Laws*, B. 29. ch. 16.

*Mr. Benjamin Bennet*: “’Tis a *reproach* to the Law-giver, *blasphemy* against him, to suppose that any of his

upright sincere subjects cannot find out the meaning of his laws, with all their care and diligence, even in the necessary essential points of their faith and obedience." *Irenicum*, p. 60.

*Mr. Bradbury*: "The words (of our Lord, Matt. xxviii. 19.) ought to be taken in their plain and natural sense, because they are a lasting form to the end of time. For Christ to give us expressions, that people cannot understand, would be only to *abuse* them. 'Tis unworthy of Him, who is the light of the world, in whose mouth there was no guile. (Such) is the plain and natural sense of the words; and, therefore, to twine and torture them with conjectures and *maybe's*, is making Christ, not a teacher, but a *barbarian*, by not uttering words, that are easy to be understood." *Duty and Doct. of Bapt.* pp. 150. 173.

*Bishop Taylor* remarks: "It is certain God put no disguises upon his own commandments, and the words are meant plainly and heartily; and the further you remove from their *first* sense, the more you have lost the purpose of your rule." *Ductor Dubitant*, B. 1. ch. 1. p. 26.

From the preceding observations we make the following remark.

5. None but the Lawgiver himself has a right to alter a positive institution. Nothing is more common than for *Protestant* Pedobaptists to urge the *necessity* of adhering, strictly adhering, to the original institution, in administering the holy Supper; and, which is common to every positive institution of true religion, the *absurdity* and *iniquity* of departing from it, on account of any supposed inconvenience. Thus Dr. Clarke: "In things of external appointment, and mere positive institutions, where we cannot, as in matters of natural and moral duty, argue concerning the natural reason and ground of the obligation, and the original necessity of the thing itself; we have nothing to do but to obey the positive command. God is infinitely better able than we, to judge of the propriety and usefulness of the things he institutes; and it becomes us to obey with humility and reverence." *Expos. Church Cat.* p. 305.

"The command of Christ," says the judicious *Turretin*, "ought not to be violated under any pretence whatever; and in what way soever the thing signified may be

received, the *sign*, appointed by Christ, is always to be retained." *Institut. Loc. 19. Quest. 25. § 22.*

The learned Mr. *Meidigger* observes: "There is in the church no more power of changing the rites of the Sacraments appointed by Christ, than there is power of changing his word or law. For as his word contains a sign audible, so those rites contain a visible sign of his divine will." See Dr. *De Veil* on Acts, viii. 38.

"All reasoning upon this head," says Bishop *Burnet*, "is an arguing against the institution; as if Christ and his Apostles had not well enough considered it, but that twelve hundred years after them, a consequence should be observed, that till then had not been thought of, which made it reasonable to alter the manner of it. He, who instituted it, knew best what was most fitting and most reasonable; and we must choose rather to acquiesce in his commands, than in our own reasonings." *Expos. 39 Art. p. 436.*

*Buddens* declares: "God had the wisest reasons, why he would have an appointment administered in this or the other manner. It is not lawful, therefore, for men to alter any thing, or to mutilate the appointment. Thus the Sacraments are to be used, not according to our own pleasure, but in the manner appointed by God." *Institut. Theol. Moral. p. 1. c. 5. § 18. p. 2. c. 2. § 50.* Gerhardus says: "Seeing that a Sacrament depends entirely on the appointment of God, when we do not what God has appointed, it certainly will not be a Sacrament." *Loc. Theol. tom. 4. de Sacram. § 52.*

6. Nothing must be added to, or taken from, a positive institution. This remark is abundantly confirmed by our Pedobaptist brethren. We are repeatedly told, that no man, nor council of men, has a right to add any thing to the appointed worship of God; for the Lord Jesus Christ is very jealous of his honor. Thus the great and pious Dr. *Owen*: "That principle, that the Church hath power to institute and appoint any thing, or ceremony belonging to the worship of God, either as to matter or to manner, beyond the orderly observance of such circumstances as necessarily attend such ordinances as Christ himself has instituted, lies at the bottom of all the horrible superstition and wars, that have for so long a season spread themselves over the face of the christian world; and it is

the design of a great part of the Revelation (of John) to make a discovery of this truth." *Commun. with God*, P. 2. ch. 5. p. 169. Memorable are the words of *Arch. Hall*: "God will bless nothing but his own Institutions. The inventions of men, in serving God, are as unprofitable, as they are wicked and presumptuous. Deut. xii. 31, 32. We cannot think God will honor the inventions of men, however they may be dignified with the specious names of *useful, decent, agreeable, or prudent contrivances*; yet if they are an *addition* to his system, will he not say, who has required these things at your hands?" *View of Gospel Church*, pp. 33. 82. Another learned Pedobaptist, writing against popery, justly observes: "We deny that there are any accidental parts of instituted worship: for, if instituted, (*i. e.* commanded by Christ) it cannot be accidental; (*i. e.* left to our liberty, as what may or may not be done without sin,) if accidental, it may be a part of something else, but of the instituted worship of Christ it cannot be.—Circumstances of worship (as such) undetermined by the Lord, to be appointed by men, we deny.—These circumstances are such as, without which the worship is perfect, or it is not. If the *first*, we need them not; they are vain, fruitless, we having without them a perfect worship. If the *second*, the worship God has commanded, as it comes out of his hands, without human additaments, is imperfect, but this is little less than blasphemy. To assert, it is lawful to conform to any part of instituted worship, without warrant from the Scripture, reflects sadly upon the wisdom and faithfulness of Christ. For, either he was not wise enough to foresee that such a part of worship was, or would be requisite; or, had not faithfulness enough to reveal it: though the Scripture compares him to Moses, for faithfulness, who revealed the whole will of God, to the making of a pin in the Tabernacle." *Jerubbaal*, ch. 2. p. 154. Our next remark, arising from the preceding observations, is,

7. That it is highly criminal to neglect or slight a positive institution.

This is strenuously maintained by our pedobaptist brethren. Thus the pious *Bishop Taylor*: "The positive laws of Jesus Christ cannot be dispensed with by any human power: all laws given by Christ are now made for ever to be obligatory. Ductor Dub. B. 2, ch. 3, p. 334. *Doc-*

*tor Waterland*, the great champion for truth, saith: "Positive duties stand upon moral foot: to obey God in whatsoever he commands, is the first moral law, and the fundamental principle of all morality. The reason of things, and the relation we bear to God, require that God should be obeyed in matters otherwise *indifferent*: and such obedience is *moral*, and the opposite disobedience *immoral*; *positives*, therefore, while under precept, cannot be slighted without slighting *morals* also. In short, positive laws, as soon as enacted, become part of moral law; because, as I said, universal obedience to God's commands is the first moral law into which all laws resolve. Whenever positive duties are so performed as to become true obedience, they are as valuable in God's sight as any moral performances whatever, because obeying God's voice is all in all. Obedience was the thing insisted upon with Adam, with Abraham, with Saul, and with many others, in positive instances; and God laid as great a stress upon obedience there as in any moral instances whatever. To conclude, then, moral performances, without the obedience of the heart, are nothing; and positive performances without the like obedience, are nothing, but the sincere obeying of God's voice in both, is *true religion and true morality*." *Scripture Vindicated*, part 3, pp. 37. 71.

The just reasoning of Mr. Wadsworth on the Lord's Supper, applies with equal force to any other positive institution. "Some may say," he observes, "*sure God will not be so much concerned with a failure in so small a punctilio as a ceremony*. True it (the Lord's Supper) is a ceremony, but it is such a one that beareth the stamp of the authority of the Lord Jesus. If he appoints it, will you slight it, and say, *it is but a ceremony*? It is but a *ceremony*; but you are greatly mistaken, if you think that, therefore, there is no danger to neglect it. What was the tree of knowledge of good and evil but a ceremony? Yet for disobedience in eating thereof, do you not know and feel what wrath it hath brought on the whole race of mankind? And tell me, was circumcision any more than a ceremony? Yet it had almost cost Moses his life for neglecting to circumcise his son; for the angel stood ready with his sword to slay him, if he had not prevented it by his obedience. Exod. iv. 24, 26. So for the Lord's Supper, as much a ceremony as it is, yet, for the abuse of it,

some of the church (at Corinth) were sick and weak, others fell asleep, *i. e.* died: and if God did so severely punish the abuse, how think ye to escape, that *presumptuously neglect* the use thereof? *But I am regenerate and become a new creature; I do not fear that God will cast me away for the disuse of a ceremony.*

“Is this the reasoning of one *regenerate*? Surely thou dost not understand what regeneration meaneth. Is it not the same with being *born of God*? And what is it to be obedient to the Father, but to do as he commandeth? And has he not commanded you, by his Son, to remember your Saviour in this Supper? When you have considered this, then tell me what you think of this kind of reasoning. *I am a child of God, therefore I will presume to disobey him. He bids me remember Jesus in this Supper, and I will not.* Methinks thou blushest at the very mentioning of it. And what if he should not cast thee quite off for this neglect? yet thou hast no reason to think, but that either outwardly or inwardly, or both, he will scourge thee for this sin before thou diest.” *Supplem. to Morn. Exerc. Cripplegate*, p. 243. I will add but one testimony more.

*Dr. Gerard* reasons thus: “A total disregard to the positive and external duties of religion, or a very great neglect of them, is justly reckoned more blameable, and a stronger evidence of an unprincipled character, than even some transgressions of moral obligation. Even particular positive precepts, as soon as they are given by God, have something *moral* in their nature. Suppose the rites which are enjoined by them perfectly indifferent before they were enjoined; yet, from that moment, they cease to be indifferent. The divine authority is interposed for the observance of them. To neglect them is no longer to forbear an indifferent action; or to do a thing in one way rather than another, which has naturally no greater propriety: it is very different; it is to disobey God; it is to despise his authority; it is to resist his will. Can any man believe a God, and not acknowledge that disobedience to him and contempt of his authority is *immoral*, and far from the least heinous species of immorality?” *Sermons*, vol. I, page 312.

8. Nor will a wilful or voluntary ignorance in the least diminish the crime of neglecting a positive institution. “The criminal cause,” says the eloquent and pro-

found Dr. Grosvenor, “of not seeing the evidence of such appointments, are, in this case, as in many other cases, non-inquiry, laziness, prejudice, lust, pride and passion. That an ignorance owing to these causes, cannot be pleaded for a neglect of any of God’s appointments, is so much the general sense of all casuists, that I shall only add here *that it is at every man’s peril, how he comes not to know the will of God, as well as not to do it.* We must look to it *how we came not to see the appointment, and must answer that to God and our own conscience.* It is not enough to say, *Lord, I did not know it was appointed;* when the answer may justly be, *you never inquired into the matter; you never allowed yourself to think of it; or if you did, you resolved in your mind that you would not be convinced. You made the most of every cavil, but never minded the solution to any of your objections.*” *Moral obligation to the positive appointments in religion.*

9. Dear Reader, I have now, in as brief a manner as possible, and rather in the very words of our Pedobaptist brethren than in any other way, stated the difference between the nature of a positive and a moral law; and shown that the *authority* of the lawgiver is the sole ground, and the *words* of the institution the *only* rule, of our obedience; and that from thence it follows, that the rule or words of the institution must be plain, clear and explicit. I have interspersed a few remarks, and shall now sum up the whole in the few propositions of that dispassionate and powerful reasoner, Bishop Hoadly, a zealous Pedobaptist.

“I. The partaking of the Lord’s Supper” (and which is equally applicable to the ordinance of baptism) “is not a duty of itself, or a duty apparent to us from the nature of things; but a duty made such to christians by the positive institution of Jesus Christ.

“II. *All* positive duties, or duties made such by institution alone, depend entirely on the will and declaration of the person who institutes or ordains them, with respect to the real design and end of them, and, consequently, to the due manner of performing them. For, there being no other foundation for them with regard to *us*, but the will of the institutor, this will must, of necessity, be our sole direction, both as to our understanding their true intent, and practising them accordingly; because we can have no other direction in this sort of duties, unless we will have

recourse to mere invention, which makes them *our own* institutions, and not the institutions of those who first appointed them.

“ III. It is plain, therefore, that the nature, the design and the due manner of the Lord’s Supper, must, of necessity, depend upon what Jesus Christ, who instituted it, hath declared about it.

“ IV. It cannot be doubted, that he himself sufficiently declared to his first and immediate followers, the whole of what he designed should be understood by it, or implied in it. For, this being a positive institution, depending entirely upon his will, and not designed to contain any thing in it, but what he himself should please to affix to it, it must follow that he declared his mind about it *fully and plainly*; because, otherwise, he must be supposed to institute a duty, of which no one could have any notion, without his institution; and, at the same time, not to instruct his followers sufficiently what that duty was to be.

“ V. It is of small importance, therefore, to christians to know what the many writers upon this subject, since the time of the Evangelists and Apostles, have affirmed; much less can it be the duty of christians to be guided by what any persons, by their own authority, or from their own imaginations, may teach concerning this duty. The reason is plain; because in the matter of an instituted duty, (or a duty made so by the positive will of any person,) no one can be a judge, but the institutor himself, of what he designed should be contained in it; and because, supposing him not to have spoken his mind plainly about it, it is impossible that any other person (to whom the institutor himself never revealed his design) should make up that defect. All that is added, therefore, to Christ’s institution, as a necessary part of it, ought to be esteemed only as the invention of those who add to it: and the more there is added, (let it be done with never so much solemnity, and never so great pretences to authority,) the less there is remaining of the simplicity of the institution as Christ himself left it.

“ VI. The passages in the New Testament, which relate to this duty, and they *alone*, are the original accounts of the nature and end of this institution; and the only authentic declarations upon which we of later ages can safely depend.” *Works*, vol. 3, p. 845, &c.

10. I have now finished the first Essay on Baptism. The reader will probably say, and what has it to do with baptism? The subject is scarcely mentioned in it. True: Neither may the building be seen as yet, although the foundation may have been laid with much care, labor and expense. Still it is the foundation which supports the whole structure. The principles contained in this Essay are the foundation of the following Essays. And as these principles are recognized by the most eminent protestant authors as legitimate, and *used* by them as the most successful weapons in exploding the superstitions of popery, they will be revered by their successors. I shall, therefore, frequently refer to the observations and remarks of this Essay, and the reader is affectionately desired to *keep them in mind*; and may the Great Head of the church write them upon our hearts, and make them the rule in all our religious exercises, until we shall worship him in the heavenly Jerusalem in the beauty of holiness.



## ESSAY II.

### *Believers the only Subjects of Baptism.*

DEAR READER: The object of this second Essay is to shew, that Infants are not proper subjects of Baptism.

This, I believe, will appear evident from the following considerations: Every religious observance, not sanctioned by divine precept, or Scripture example, is unlawful and displeasing to God; sacred Scripture affords neither precept nor example, for Infant Baptism; therefore, Infant Baptism is unlawful, and displeasing to God.

1. With respect to the first proposition, viz. that every religious observance not sanctioned by divine precept, or Scripture example, is unlawful, and displeasing to God, few of my readers, I suppose, will have any objection. That the sacred Scriptures are the only rule of doctrine and worship, was the grand principle of the reformation; and Protestants of all denominations have, in theory, adopted the just and excellent maxim, "*The Bible only is the religion of Protestants.*" In addition to what

has already been stated in the preceding Essay, (6.) I will quote from a few more of our learned and pious Pedobaptist divines. Dr. *Owen* has assured us: "That divine Revelation is the only foundation, the only rule, and the only law, of all religious worship that is pleasing to God, or accepted by him;" and that, "when once a person maintains it allowable to pass over the limits of the divine command, there is nothing to hinder him from running the most extravagant length." *Theol. L. 4. Dig. 3. § 8. L. 5. C. 15. § 2. Exp. Heb. Vol. 2. pp. 68, 133.*

*Bishop Hopkin* says: "We ought not to worship God with any other external worship, than what himself has commanded and appointed us in His Holy Word. The Scripture has set us our bounds for worship, to which we must not add, and from which we ought not to diminish; for, whosoever does either the one or the other, must needs accuse the rule, either of defect in things necessary, or of superfluity in things unnecessary; which is an high affront to the wisdom of God, who, as He is the object, so is the prescriber, of all that worship, which he will accept and reward." *Works, p. 107.*

Another learned Pedobaptist informs us: "That nothing is lawful in the worship of God, but what we have *precept* or precedent for; which whoso denies, opens a door for all idolatry and superstition, and will-worship in the world." Mr. *Collins*, in *Jerubbaal*, p. 487.

Again we are told, that "Will-worship was always condemned of God; and that it is profane to present to God what he does not require, or to perform worship, which he did not appoint." *Christ. Schotanus*, apud *Lomeierum*, de vet. Gent. Lust. Cap. 14.

Mr. *Marshall* expresses his "astonishment, that ever mortal man should dare, in God's worship, to meddle any farther than the Lord himself has commanded." In *Jerubbaal*, p. 484.

The words of the eminently pious Mr. *Baxter* shall close this particular. "What man," says he, "dare go in a way, which has neither *precept* nor *example* to warrant it, from a way, that has a full current of both?—Who knows what will please God but himself? and has he not *told* us what he expects from us? Can that be *obedience*, which has *no command* for it? Is not this to supererogate, and to be righteous overmuch? Is not this also to accuse God's ordinances of insufficiency, as well as his word; as

if they were not sufficient either to please him or help our own graces? Oh, the pride of man's heart, that instead of being a law-obeyer, will be a law-maker! For my part, I will not fear that God will be angry with me for doing no more than He has *commanded* me, and for sticking close to the rule of His word, in matter of worship, but I should *tremble to add or diminish.*" *Plain Scrip. Proof*, p. 24, 303.

Thus, you perceive, dear Reader, from these testimonies, and many more might have been quoted, all from eminently learned and pious Pedobaptists, that every religious practice, without divine precept, or Scripture example, is unlawful, and displeasing to God.

I proceed to shew next,

2. That sacred Scripture contains neither precept for, nor example of, Infant Baptism.

Our authority for baptizing is the *Command* of our blessed Lord and Saviour, in his commission to his Apostles, which the Evangelist, Matt. ch. xxviii. 19, 20. thus recorded: "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."\* The Evangelist Mark, being much shorter in all his narrations, has thus related it, ch. xvi. 15, 16. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned."

Hence it is very evident, that all those to be baptized must *first* be instructed, believe, and become disciples; and to baptize any other into the name of God, would be unwarrantable presumption; and we might expect a reproof similar to that which God gave to the children of Israel,

\* I use the word *into*, instead of the word *in* as in the English version, both because it is a better translation of the Greek word *eis* (*eis*), and better suits the meaning of the baptismal formula, which signifies the *adoption* of the baptized believer into the family of God, by the appropriation of the holy name of the Head to the members. Dr. Dwight and other learned men have done the same.

Disciples are said to be baptized into Jesus Christ, and into the name of Jesus Christ, to signify their recognition as disciples. In Rom. vi. 3, the word *eis* is translated *into*. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized *into* Jesus Christ, were baptized, &c."

saying, "When ye come to appear before me, who has required this at your hand, to tread my courts? bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me." Isa. i. 12, 13. Neither does the New Testament furnish us with the example of any others but believers. Among the vast multitude that came to John, he would baptize none but those, that brought forth fruits meet for repentance.

No mention is made of any infants or children being brought to him, or baptized by him. Nor do we hear of a child being baptized by the disciples of Christ, though they baptized more people than John; and among the three thousand baptized on the day of Pentecost, we find none but those that were "pricked in the heart, and said men and brethren, what shall we do?" "Peter said unto them, repent, and be baptized." Surely, this is not the exercise of infants or children. Nor is there a single instance of the Baptism of an Infant, in all the accounts of the Baptisms administered by the Apostles. *One such example* of the inspired Apostles, would be regarded as much as the command of our Lord and Saviour; but in vain do we search the New Testament for it. They invariably required faith in Christ, before they administered this sacred ordinance. Those baptized on the day of Pentecost (as we have just mentioned) were such as were convinced of sin, and "gladly received the Word." Acts ii. 41. The Samaritans were *men and women*, who *believed*. Acts viii. 12. The eunuch professed his faith, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Acts viii. 36—38. Saul was baptized by Ananias, not only as an adult, but by the express command of Christ, who assured him, that Saul was a chosen vessel and a praying soul. Acts ix. 11. 15.

Dear Reader, I most affectionately entreat you seriously and candidly to examine the account of every baptism mentioned in the New Testament; and, I am confident, you will clearly perceive, that the subjects are characterized as adults and believers. They are either called disciples, or such as have believed, or had received the Holy Ghost, or spake with tongues and prophesied, or were men and women, &c. &c. Yea, many of our most eminent Pedobaptist brethren have confessed, that neither precept nor example of Infant Baptism, is to be found in the New Testament. Let us hear a few of them.

*Mr. Cawdrey*: "The Scriptures are not clear, that Infant Baptism was an apostolical practice. We have not in Scripture, either precept or example of children baptized." *Mr. Tombes*'s, *Antipaedo Baptism*, Part 2, p. 84.

*Stapferus*: "There is not any express command in the Holy Scriptures, concerning the Baptism of Infants."—*Theolog. Polem.* cap. 3. § 1647.

*Dr. Wall*: "Among all the persons, that are recorded as baptized by the Apostles, there is no express mention of any infant—there is no express mention, indeed, of any children baptized by him, *i. e.* John the Baptist." *Hist. Inf. Bap.* Introduction, p. 1. 55.

*Mr. T. Boston*: "There is no example of Baptism recorded in the Scriptures, where any were baptized, but such as appeared to have a saving interest in Christ." *Works*, 384.

*Luther*: "It cannot be proved by the Sacred Scriptures, that Infant Baptism was instituted by Christ, or begun by the first Christians, after the Apostles." *Inst. R's. Vanity of Inf. Bap.* Part 2. p. 8.

*Fuller*, an Episcopalian Minister: "We do freely confess, that there is neither express precept, nor precedent, in the New Testament for the baptizing of Infants." *Inf. Bap. Advocated*, p. 71.

*Cellarius*: "Infant Baptism is neither commanded in the Sacred Scripture, nor is it confirmed by Apostolic examples." *Apud Schyn. Hist. Mennonit.* p. 168.

*Samuel Palmer*: "There is nothing in the words of the Institution, nor in any after accounts of the administration of this rite, respecting the Baptism of Infants; there is not a single precept for, nor example of this practice, through the whole of the New Testament." *Answer to Dr. Priestley's Address on the Lord's Sup.* p. 7.

*Limborch*: "There is no instance that can be produced, from whence it may indisputably be inferred, that any child was baptized by the Apostles. The necessity of Infant Baptism was never asserted by any Council before that of Carthage, held in the year 418." *Comp. Syst. Div. B. 5. C. 22. Sec. 2.*

*Dr. Towerson*: "That which seems to stick much with the adversaries of Infant Baptism, and is accordingly urged at all times against the friends or asserters of it, is, the want of an express command, or direction, for the ad-

ministering of Baptism to them. Which objection seems to be the more reasonable, because Baptism, as well as other Sacraments, receiving all its force from Institution, they may seem to have no right to, or benefit by it, who appear not by the Institution of that Sacrament to be entitled to it; but rather, by the qualifications it requires, to be excluded from it." *Of the Sacram. of Bap.* Part II. p. 349, 350.

I will close this particular also with the words of that eminent divine, *Mr. Baxter*: "If there can be no example given in Scripture, of any one that was baptized without the profession of a saving faith, nor any precept given for so doing; then must we not baptize any without it. But the antecedent is true; therefore, so is the consequent. —In a word, I know of *no one word* in Scripture, that gives us the least intimation that ever man was baptized without the profession of a saving faith, *or that gives the least encouragement to baptize any upon another's faith.*" *Disp. of Right to Sacr.* p. 149, 151.

Seeing, then, from Scripture and from the testimony of so many Pedobaptists, that there is neither precept for, nor example of Infant Baptism to be found in the New Testament, let me ask, dear Reader, whether it be not strange, yea, absolutely unaccountable, that, if our Lord intended Infants should be baptized, and if they were actually baptized by the Apostles, it should not be so much as once recorded. And the entire silence of the inspired writers on this head, is the more surprising, because they were far from being backward, expressly to mention children on *other* occasions of much less importance to the purity of christian worship, the conduct of believing parents, and the edification of our Lord's disciples. See *Matt.* ii. 16. xiv. 21. xv. 38. xix. 13. *Mark* x. 13. *Luke* xviii. 15. *Acts* vii. 19. xxi. 5.

3. It having thus been proved, that every religious practice, unsanctioned by divine precept, or Scripture example, is unlawful and displeasing to God; and that the sacred Scriptures contain neither precept nor example for Infant Baptism, the candid reader will not be surprised that I came to the conclusion, that Infant Baptism is without a warrant from Scripture, and cannot be but displeasing to God.

Although the absence of Scripture authority is argument entire and satisfactory, against the practice of Infant

Baptism, I think it proper to take some notice of the history of Baptism, in the early ages of the Christian dispensation; since certain erroneous statements have been made by some modern writers, respecting the practice of those times. The reader's attention is, therefore, invited to the following facts.

4. *First*. History records numerous instances of persons, children of pious parents, who were baptized when *adults*, which would certainly not have been the case, had infant baptism been in use. Mr. *Lawson* informs us, "that *Augustine*, the son of the virtuous *Monica*, being instructed in the faith, was *not baptized* till about the *thirtieth* year of his age. *Ambrose*, born of christian parents, was instructed in christian principles, but remained unbaptized till he was chosen Bishop of Milan. *Jerome*, born of christian parents, was baptized when about *thirty* years old. *Nectarius* was made Bishop of Constantinople before he was baptized." Mr. *Lawson* proceeds to remark: "It seems the doctrine of *Fidus* concerning dipping or sprinkling *children*, was new, and seemed strange to *Cyprian*; seeing he could not ratify nor confirm the same, without the sentence and advice of sixty-six bishops. Had it been commanded by Christ, practised by the Apostles, and continued in matter and manner to *Cyprian's* days, there had not been a necessity for the concurrence of so many bishops concerning the same." *Baptismalogia*, pp. 75, 87.

Bishop *Taylor* says, "St. *Ambrose*, St. *Hierom*, and St. *Austin*, were born of christian parents, and yet not baptized until the full age of a man and more." In *Doctor Wall's Hist. Inf. Bap.* p. 2, ch. 2, § 10.

The famous *Austin*, in his confessions, having said, "I was then signed with the sign of his (Christ's) cross, and was seasoned with his salt, so soon as I came out of my mother's womb, who greatly trusted in thee," his translator, *Doctor W. Wats*, has the following note upon it: "this was the practice of the primitive times, by which religious parents devoted their children unto Christ, long before their baptism, which, in those days, was deferred till they were able to answer for themselves," *Austin's Confes. B. 1*, ch. 11, p. 17.

"*Gregory Nazianzen*, born in the year three hundred and eighteen, whose parents were christians, and his

father a bishop, was not baptized till near *twenty-one* years of age." *Du Pin*, Cent. 4, p. 159.

*Chrysostom*, also born of christian parents, in the year three hundred and forty-seven, was not baptized till near *twenty-one* years of age." *Grotius* apud *Poli Synop.* ad Mat. xix. 14.

5. *Secondly*. Not a few of the most eminent Pedobaptists have acknowledged it. Let the following suffice. *Danverse*: "Infant baptism was not practised until the *third* century; nor enjoined as necessary till 400 years after Christ." *On Bap.* p. 105. *Mr. Chambers*: "It appears, that in the primitive times none were baptized but ADULTS." *Cyclopædia, Article Baptism.* *Venema*: "It is, indeed, certain, that Pedobaptism was practised in the second century; yet so, that it was not the custom of the church, nor the general practice; much less, was it generally esteemed necessary that infants should be baptized." *Hist. Eccles.* tom. 3, secul 2, § 108. *Dr. Holland*: "In the first plantation of christianity amongst the Gentiles, such only as were of full age, after they were instructed in the principles of the christian religion, were admitted to baptism." In *Dr. Wall's Hist Inf. Bap.* Part 2, ch. 2, p. 281. *M. De la Roque*: "The primitive church did not baptize infants; and the learned *Grotius* proves it in his Annotations on the Gospel." In *Mr. Stennett's answer to Mr. Russen*, p. 188. *Curcellæus*: "The baptism of infants, in the two first centuries after Christ, was altogether unknown." *Inst. Relig. Christ*, Lib. 1, c. 12, Diss. Secund. de Pecc. Orig. § 56.

One observation more shall close this part of the subject. Our Pedobaptist brethren further inform us, that none but believers have a right to the ordinance of baptism, or can derive any benefit from it; for as infants cannot believe, it follows that they have neither a title to baptism, nor can derive any benefit from it.

The celebrated *Cocceius* informs us, "that Sacraments, properly speaking, were instituted for believers, and given to them, Rom. iv. 11; that is, for those who hunger and thirst after righteousness." *Sum. Doct. De Fœd.* c. 6, § 209. *Limborch*: "The subject of baptism, to whom it is to be administered, is a believer; one who is endued with a true faith in Jesus Christ, and touched with a serious repentance for his past offences.

*Syst. Bio. B. 5, chap. 22, § 2. Meicrus*: "None have a title to baptism but such as profess faith and the true religion." *Bib. Brem. class. 4, p. 169. Turretin*: "Faith, devotion, and an internal exercise of the mind, are required to the efficacy of a sacrament; because the scripture expressly asserts it, Mark xvi. 16, 1 Cor. xi. 27, Acts ii. 37, 38, because without faith it is impossible to please God; Heb. xi. 6; and because the promise, as contained in the sacraments, and faith are correlates. *Insti. Loc. 19, Q. 8, § 12. Calvin*: "From the sacrament of baptism, as from all others, we obtain nothing, except so far as we receive it in faith." *Inst. L. 4, c. 15, § 15. Jonathan Edwards*: "There are some duties of worship that imply a profession of God's covenant, whose very nature and design is an exhibition of those vital, active principles and inward exercises, wherein the condition of the covenant of grace consists—such are the christian sacraments; whose very design is to make and confirm a profession of and compliance with that covenant, and whose very nature is to exhibit or express those uniting acts of the soul." *Hoornbeekius*: "Without faith, water baptism cannot by any means be lawful; for the command is, believe first, then, also, and not otherwise, be baptized. Mark xvi. 16, he that believeth and is baptized, &c. Then, they that gladly received his word were baptized. Acts ii. 41. If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest be baptized. Acts viii. 37. Acts xvi. 31, 33." *Socin. confut. tom. 3, p. 389. Dr. Watts*: "Faith and repentance were the great things required of those that were admitted to baptism. This was the practice of John, this the practice of the Apostles, in the history of their ministry. Mat. iii. Acts ii. 38, xix. 4, viii. 37." *Berry St. Serm. vol. 2. pp. 177, 178.*

In closing this Essay, I cannot but express my hope, that the candid and conscientious reader will see the impropriety of admitting infants to the sacred ordinance of baptism; seeing, that the law of a positive institution is the *only* rule of our obedience, Pedobaptists, eminent for learning and piety, being judges; (Essay I, 3) and that in the institution of baptism, the subjects are characterized as having been first taught, and consequently become disciples and believers in Christ, which is not applicable to infants or children. They further declare,

that every part of religious worship requires a divine precept or scripture example, but that the New Testament affords neither precept nor example for infant baptism; it follows, therefore, that infants have no right to this sacred ordinance.

I am perfectly aware that our brethren endeavor to prove the right of infant baptism by scripture inferences; by analogy of dispensations, &c. &c.; but how is this consistent with their declarations already cited, (Essay I. 2, 3,) that in positive institutions *we have nothing to do with reasoning, inferences, analogy, &c. &c.* but that the revealed will of the Legislator is the sole authority, and the words of the law the only rule, of our obedience? This subject reminds me of the fact that Hebrew grammarians give rules for the pronunciation of words in one chapter, while in the very next their rules are contradicted and violated by their own pronunciation. Besides, I have diligently examined the arguments in favor of infant baptism, and may shew in the next Essay, that, when weighed in the balance of the sanctuary, they are found wanting.



### ESSAY III.

*Arguments in favor of Infant Baptism, stated and refuted.*

WE are told by our Pedobaptist brethren, that their practice of infant baptism is sanctioned by *express Scriptures; by the example of the Apostles; by our Lord's conduct towards children; and by analogy.*

1. Express declarations of Scripture are appealed to for sanction.

Our Lord's commission to baptize *all nations.* Matt. xxviii. 19. "*Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them,*" &c.

Here our Pedobaptist brethren reason thus: "All nations are to be baptized; but children are a part of all nations; therefore, children have a right to baptism." This might be good logic, if our Lord had said no more than

“baptize all nations;” but he has characterized *those* in all nations who should be baptized; namely, disciples and believers. Those, therefore, who are not capable of learning and believing, are excluded; and such are infants. (See Essay II. 2.) Besides, it is acknowledged by many learned Pedobaptists, that those to be baptized, agreeably to our Lord’s commission, must first be taught, or disciplined; *i. e.* be instructed in the first principles of the christian religion. I shall select only a few of their declarations.

*Maccovius*: “We assert, that our Lord enjoins two different things upon his disciples, to *teach* and to *baptize*.” *Loci Com.* p. 823.

*Saurin*: “In the primitive church, instruction *preceded* baptism, agreeably to the order of Jesus Christ: *go teach* all nations, baptizing them.” *Ser. tom.* 1, p. 301, *Le Haye, Edit.* 3.

Mr. *Samuel Palmer*: “There is nothing in the words of the institution respecting the baptism of infants.” *Answer to Dr. Priestley’s address on the Lord’s Supper*, p. 7.

*Gomarus*: “In Matt. xxviii. 19, our Lord speaks not concerning infants, but adults, who are capable of instruction.” *Opera. Theolog.* p. 148.

*Limborch*: “They could not make disciples, unless by teaching. By that instruction were disciples brought to the faith before they were baptized.” Mark xvi. 15, 16. *Inst. L.* 5. c. 67, § 7.

*Calvin*: “Because Christ requires teaching before baptizing, and will have believers only admitted to baptism; baptism does not seem to be rightly administered, *except faith precede*.” *In Harm. Evang. Comment.* ad loc.

*Dr. Barrow*: “What the action itself enjoined is, and what the manner and form thereof, is apparent by the words of our Lord’s institution: *going forth*, saith he, *teach* or *disciple all nations, baptizing them*. The action is baptizing or immersing in water: the object thereof, those persons of any nation whom his ministers can, by their instruction or persuasion, render disciples; that is, such as do sincerely believe the truth of his doctrine, and seriously resolve to obey his commandments.” *Works*, vol. 1, p. 518.

That men are made disciples of Christ by *teaching*, and not by *baptizing*, (as Mr. Henry would have us believe,

*Treatise on Baptism*, p. 114,) is acknowledged by numerous Pedobaptists.

*Dr. Owen*: "By the disciples of Christ, I intend them, and them only, who profess faith in his person and doctrine, and to hear him, or to be guided by him alone, in all things that appertain unto the worship of God, and their living unto him." *Inquiry into the Orig. Nature of Churches*, p. 120.

*Mr. Wilson*: "A disciple is a learner, a scholar, who submitteth himself to another to be taught any learning. Acts xx. 30, Matt. xi. 2. One who learneth the doctrine of Christ, that he may believe and practise it." Acts xi. 16. Luke xiv. 16. *Christ. Dict. Article, Disciple*.

*Mr. Baxter*: "*Objection*: Any one is a disciple that is willing to learn of Christ. *Answer*. No such matter. In an improper sense you may so call them, but not in Scripture sense, where a *disciple* and a *christian* are all one. Acts xi. 26. But not every one that is willing to learn of Christ, is a christian; therefore, not a disciple. A disciple of Christ is one that will take him for the great prophet of the church, and will learn of him as of the Christ. None are disciples but upon the account of either saving faith, or the profession of it." *Disput. of Right to Sac.* pp. 95, 183.

"Were there occasion for it," says the venerable *Mr. Booth*, "quotations of this kind might be greatly multiplied: but I forbear, and shall only observe, that I do not recollect a single author, who, upon any occasion, explains the term *disciple* in such a manner as to exclude the idea of being taught, except with a view to Pedobaptism. Now must not that be a bad cause, which impels wise and learned men to seek a refuge for it, in such an acceptation of a capital term of divine law as has no parallel, either in Scripture or in common authors; and for which nothing can be pleaded but by mere hypothesis?" *Pedobap. Exam.* II. p. 288.

Is it not astonishing, that men, eminent for piety and learning, should be so blinded as to reason as follows?

*Dr. Worcester*, arguing in favor of infant baptism, says: "In his commission to his Apostles, his direction was, that *all* nations should be *baptized*, and children constitute a part of every nation." *Letters*, p. 115.

*Mr. Henry*: "If it be the will and command of the

Lord Jesus, that all nations should be disciplined by baptism, and children, though a part of all nations, are not excepted, then children are to be disciplined by baptism." *Treatise on Bapt.* p. 114.

*Dr. John Edwards*: "This general commission takes in all particulars. *Go baptize all nations*, is as much and as full as if Christ had said, *Go baptize all men, women, and children.*" *Theol. Refer.* vol. 1, p. 568.

*Calorius* argues thus: "He who commands all men to be baptized, so that none are exempted, of any age, or sex, or condition, would have infants baptized, no less than adults, therefore." *Socin. Profl. Disp.* 24, Contr. 8, p. 878, Wittenberg, 1652.

The reader will agree, that if this mode of reasoning proves any thing, it proves a great deal more than these authors would be willing to practise. If *all* that belong to a nation are to be made disciples by baptism, "without exception of *age, or sex, or condition,*" by what authority can they refuse baptism to the unbelieving Jew, the deluded Mahomedan, the idolatrous heathen, or any other infidel? Nor ought they to wait till the ordinance is requested; but, as zealous and faithful ministers of Christ, they ought to baptize every one they meet with, without asking any question; for *their* commission is, "Go ye, therefore, and disciple all nations; *i. e.* baptizing them," *without exception of age, or sex, or condition!*" Further, to harmonize the account of our Lord's commission given by Mark, with that by Matthew, they must paraphrase it thus: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized," that is, *he that, by baptism, is put into the way of becoming a believer*, without exception of age, sex, or condition, "and *without regard* to the future, whether he will really believe or not," shall be saved; "but he that believes not," that is, he that is not put into the way of becoming a believer, not being baptized, "shall be damned." Whether this reasoning does not make baptism the only condition of salvation, the reader is able to judge.

The promise to children mentioned Acts ii. 38, 39, is produced as authority for infant baptism. When, on the day of Pentecost, those that were "pricked in their heart," asked what they must do, Peter answered, "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, into the name

of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. 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." In support of infant baptism, a *part* of Peter's answer is generally quoted, but not the whole, viz: "the promise is unto you and to your children;" and, instead of explaining the nature of the promise, as the Apostle did by referring to the prediction in Joel, it is generally referred to the promise made to Abraham and his seed. But a little consideration of the connexion of this passage will lead to the discovery, that it has nothing to do with infant baptism.

On the day of Pentecost, *i. e.* the fiftieth day after the resurrection of Christ, the Holy Ghost descended from heaven. The disciples "were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."\* This remarkable and unparalleled event being witnessed by the multitude who had come up to the solemn feast, they were amazed, marvelled, and were confounded, and doubted, saying one to another, "what meaneth this?" Others mocking said, "These men are full of new wine." Peter, filled with holy zeal, stood up, and proved to the one party, that "these men were not drunken;" and the other party he informed, that this event had taken place as a fulfillment of a prophecy, delivered by the Prophet Joel, saying, "It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daugh-

\* The feast of Pentecost was on the fiftieth day after the second of the feast of unleavened bread, which time being a week of weeks, or forty-nine days, the feast of Pentecost was called the *feast of weeks*. No servile labor was done on this occasion, but the day was mainly devoted to various sacrificings, and observed in commemoration of the fiftieth day after the deliverance of Israel from Egyptian slavery, when the Law was given on Mount Sinai. It is worthy of notice that, on the day of Pentecost, the Law was given to Israel, amidst the awful sublimities of Sinai; and that, on the day of Pentecost, was experienced this first and glorious display of divine grace, after the Saviour's resurrection from the dead. In the first instance, the Israelites received the written law; in the last, the Christian Church was gathered, and recognized under the rules of the Gospel. From this time, the disciples of Christ "continued stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and *fellowship*, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

ters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; and on my servants, and on my handmaidens, I will pour out in those days of my Spirit, and they shall prophesy." Joel ii. chap. 28, 29. This prophecy being referred by the Jews to the days of the MESSIAH, the Apostle, in a most affectionate manner, proved to them, that Jesus of Nazareth was the promised *Messiah*, inasmuch as he, according to ancient predictions, suffered and died, and rose again, and ascended to the right hand of God. He concluded with a personal address, saying, "Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." On being thus charged with crucifying the Lord of Glory, they were pricked in their heart, and asked what they must do; to which the Apostle gave the answer mentioned in the beginning of this particular. Hence it is evident—

1. That the blessing contained in "the promise," verse 39, is the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost.

2. That to remove their doubts and fears, produced by their conviction of having committed the awful crime of crucifying their Messiah, and of having imprecated his blood on themselves and on their children, the Apostle reminds them of the promise contained in the prophecy of Joel, which he had just rehearsed, and which relates both to them and to their children, or *posterity*. To give them additional encouragement to hope for pardon, he assures them, that even the Gentiles, who "were afar off, and as many as the Lord should call," should obtain the same blessing on the same terms of repentance, and faith, and obedience.

3. It is further evident that the word *children* does not relate to such as were in a state of childhood or infancy, but to adults, or persons old enough to engage in religious exercises. That such is frequently the meaning of the word in Scripture, as well as in common conversation, needs no proof. How often is the whole congregation of the Jews called the *children* of Israel? And, that such is the import of the word children in this passage, is evident from the prophecy from which it is quoted, where the subjects are specified as sons and daughters, &c.; but no infants are mentioned. Besides, these persons were

“to prophesy, see visions, dream dreams, &c.” which could not be said of such as are in a state of infancy.

4. It appears, also, that repentance and faith in Christ are necessary to the enjoyment of the blessings promised, and, therefore, this promise cannot refer to infants. “Even as many as the Lord our God shall call.”

Such, dear reader, I conceive to be the true meaning of this passage; and in this I am supported by not a few Pedobaptist theologians.

*Witsius*: “And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh.” Joel ii. 28. “Concerning which promise Peter speaks, Acts ii. 39. “For the promise is unto you, and to your children,” &c. *Exercit. in Symb. Exc.* 11, § 19.

*Dr. Doddridge*: “Considering that the gift of the Spirit had been mentioned just before, it seems most natural to interpret this as a reference to that passage in Joel, which had been so largely cited above, (verse 17, et seq.) where God promises the effusion of the Spirit on his sons and daughters.” Note on the place.

*Dr. Owen*: “This promise of the Spirit is sometimes called the promise of the covenant, Acts ii. 39. *The promise is to you*; which promise is that which Christ receiveth from his Father, ver. 33, even *the promise of the Holy Ghost*.” *Perseverance*, p. 116.

*Dr. Hammond*: “If any have made use of that very unconcludent argument, (Acts ii. 39,) I have nothing to say in defence of them. I think that the word children there, is really the *posterity* of the Jews, and not peculiarly their *infant* children.” *Works*, vol. 1, p. 490.

*Dr. Whitby*: “These words will not prove a right of infants to receive baptism. The promise here being that only of the Holy Ghost, mentioned ver. 16—18; and so relating to the times of the miraculous effusion of the Holy Ghost, and to those persons who by age were made capable of these extraordinary gifts.” *Annot.* on the place.

*Limborch*: “By *Tekna*, the Apostle understands, not infants, but children or posterity; in which signification the word *Tekna* occurs in many places of the New Testament. See, among others, John viii. 39. And here Peter also comprehends in that expression their unborn posterity, whence it appears that the argument, which is very commonly taken from this passage for the baptism of infants, is of *no force*, and *good for nothing*; because it

entirely departs from the design of Peter." *Comment in loc.*

Another Scripture sanction for infant baptism is supposed to be, that children are spoken of as holy.

Pedobaptists reason thus: "They that are holy are proper subjects for baptism; but children are said to be holy: therefore, they are to be baptized;" and for proof that they are holy, we are referred to the following passages. Rom. xi. 16. "For if the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches." 1 Cor. vii. 14. "The *unbelieving* husband is sanctified by *the wife*, and the *unbelieving* wife is sanctified by *the husband*, else were your children unclean; but now are they holy."

Dr. *Addington*, speaking of the first of these passages, says: "The christian is to his or her family as the root of these branches, and upon the principles here laid down, he or she being holy, so are they." *Christian Minister's Reasons*, p. 80.

"This proves that the seed of believers, as such," says *Mr. Henry*, "are within the pale of the visible church, and within the verge of the covenant, till they do, by their unbelief, throw themselves out; *for if the root be holy, so are the branches.*" *Expos.* on the place. To build on such a foundation, indicates a bad cause.

A person must really have clearer eyes than natural and spiritual ones, to see or find any thing like baptism in this chapter. Nor is there any allusion to infants or children, connected with the Apostle's reasoning. His design appears to have been to humble the believing Gentiles, and to prevent them from despising the unbelieving Jews; and to encourage their prayers and exertions for the future conversion of the Jews; "*for God is able to graff them in again.*"

In allusion to Jer. xi. 16, 17, the Apostle calls the whole Jewish nation an olive tree, which the Lord had planted, when he brought them out of Egypt; and the means of grace and other privileges with which they had been favored, he styles the "sap and fatness of the tree."\*

\* In my letter explanatory of the objects of the American Society for ameliorating the condition of the Jews, I expressed my views on this subject more particularly than I think it necessary to do in this place.

From these unspeakable advantages, the greatest part of the nation has been cut off, and is still destitute of them; whilst the Gentiles, who, for ages together, had been without the knowledge of the true God, and all the means of grace, were made partakers of them.

I do not conceive that this passage, or *olive tree*, has any thing to do with the *church* of Christ, or with *Christ*, the *head* of the church, or with the *covenant* of grace; the whole *Jewish nation*, as the *congregation* of the Lord, are the olive tree, as I shall have occasion to show more fully hereafter.

Should I, however, be mistaken with respect to the *root and trunk* of the tree, there can be no mistake as it respects the branches; and with these only have we to do at present. "These evidently represent such persons, and such only, who were moral agents, capable of believing and of being guilty of unbelief." They are divided into three classes: the *unbelieving* Jews, that were cut off from the olive tree, or deprived of the means of grace and other privileges; the *believing* Jews, who remained in the tree, *i. e.* in the possession of the means of grace; and the *believing Gentiles*, who, by faith, became united with the believing Jews. Now, dear reader, you perceive that, as infants are not capable, either of believing or of being guilty of unbelief, the passage can have no reference whatever to them, but respects the conversion of Jews, from the days of the Apostles till all Israel shall be saved with an everlasting salvation. The figurative expression in the text, is evidently in allusion to the law in Levit. xxiii. 14, 17; that whereas, by the offering of the first fruits, and waving two loaves, the whole lump was sanctified, *i. e.* all the other produce of the year was made *lawful food*, and might be eaten with the approbation of God; so, in like manner, the first Jewish converts were a *sample* and *pledge* of those that should believe hereafter.

That this is the proper sense of the passage, is acknowledged by many of our Pedobaptist brethren. Take a few

*Toletus* and *Menochius*: "Paul here denominates the first Jews that were converted to the faith, namely, the Apostles and disciples of our Lord, *first fruits*." Apud *Poli. Synop.* in loc.

*Dr. Doddridge*: "For if the first fruits be holy, so is the lump. The consecration of them was looked upon

as in effect the consecration of all. And so would I look upon the conversion of some few of the Jewish nation, as an earnest of the conversion of all the rest." *Paraphrase* on the place.

The next passage referred to, where children are said to be holy, has as little to do with baptism as the former.

The children are said to be holy, not because one of the parents is a believer, but because of the lawful marriage of the parents; who, though married, while *both* were *unbelievers*, were sacredly set apart to each other, according to the matrimonial ordinance of God.

You will observe, that the Apostle speaks of *both* partners as unbelievers, when united in marriage. He takes a single pair, and says, "the *unbelieving husband* is sanctified by or to the wife, and the *unbelieving wife* is sanctified by or to the husband." And to show his readers that they already admitted this truth, he merely reminds them, that they consider their offspring holy, or lawful children; for admitting this, the parents must admit that their marriage is lawful, though entered into in a state of unbelief, and cannot, therefore, be annulled by the conversion of one of the parties.

The occasion of this part of the Apostle's letter to the Corinthians, was their scruple of conscience, whether a converted partner may continue to live with the unbelieving partner, or whether, on the conversion of one of the parties, they must separate. This tender and painful question was very natural. For, by the Mosaic law, Jews were prohibited from marrying a heathen, or idolater; (Ex. xxxiv. 16,) and, on their return from the Babylonish captivity, those who had broken this law, were obliged to dismiss their wives and their children. The Apostle, therefore, informs them, that under the gospel dispensation, the case is different. The *believing* partner not only *may* continue with his *unbelieving* partner, for "the *unbelieving husband* is sanctified," *i. e.* set apart, devoted and made lawful, "by" or rather *to* "the wife; and the *unbelieving wife* is sanctified," *i. e.* set apart, devoted and made lawful, "by" or "to the husband;" but they *ought not* to separate, for the sake of the reputation and honor of their children. For, if you separate, you thereby declare your marriage contract to have been unlawful, and your children of course would be "unclean," or illegitimate; but by continuing to live together, you still recognize your marriage

relation, by which ye were sanctified or made lawful to each other, according to God's institution, and, therefore, your children are holy, *i. e.* made lawful to you, to be enjoyed as the gift of God.\*

That this is the proper sense of the passage, I might confirm by very many testimonies from the most pious and learned Pedobaptist divines; but two or three must suffice.

*Mr. Poole's Continuator*: "The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife. I rather think it signifies, brought into such a state, that the believer, without offence to the law of God, may continue in a married state with such a yoke fellow; and the estate of marriage is an *holy* state, notwithstanding the disparity with reference to religion." *Annot. on the place.*

"Paul here treats concerning a mutual participation of such holiness as depends upon conjugal custom, as Chrysostom teaches; a holiness which the believing and the unbelieving partner have in common between themselves. Whence it follows that these things have been *rashly* and *violently* applied by *Calvin, Beza, Paraeus*, and others, to a natural and original holiness of children born of believers." *Biblia illustrata*, in loc. vid. Grotium in loc.

That the sanctification or holiness in *this passage* does not refer to internal holiness of heart and nature, is further evident, from the well known use and meaning of the word, when used in relation to marriage amongst the Jews. It is the common form of speech used at the ceremony of espousal and marriage. The man, putting a present into the hand of the woman, says; "with this thou art *meka-*

\* The Apostle seizes on the powerful principle of parental love, and appeals to the fact that the children of a lawful marriage are lawful or holy children, which fact both the parents would gladly admit as a good argument to dissuade them from a separation. It will be observed by the reader, that the marriage spoken of by the Apostle, took place when both partners were "unbelieving;" and that the *sanctification* of these persons took place in the same state of unbelief, that is, *in their marriage in unbelief*. It is important to understand this truth, because some persons have spoken of the sanctification here mentioned, as though it were the conversion or sanctification of the soul by the Holy Spirit; whereas it can be nothing else than that ceremonial sanctification, which always takes place in the marriage of unbelievers, as well as of believers.

*dashti*, i. e. *sanctified* to me;" thou art now set apart as my wife, according to God's institution. The change thus effected is with respect to her relation, but not to her nature. Hence, I suppose, originated the custom in the episcopal church, that at the marriage ceremony, the man puts a ring on the finger of the woman, and says: "With this ring I thee wed," i. e. *espouse, unite and join.*

Here it is evident, that the holiness of the children must be of the same nature as the sanctification or holiness of unbelieving parents. If the holiness of the children were *real holiness of heart*, then the *unbelieving parent* must be holy in heart too, notwithstanding he or she still continues an unbeliever. Do our brethren believe this? Again, if the holiness of the children derived from the unbelieving but sanctified parent, qualifies and entitles them to baptism, then the *unbelieving but sanctified parent* cannot be less qualified and entitled to the same sacred ordinance. That our opponents would think it proper to baptize *such a sanctified unbeliever*, is at least improbable.

The idea of real holiness being communicated from parents to children, is in direct contradiction of Scripture and fact.

It is further argued by some, that in Acts xv. 10, children are called *disciples*, and, therefore, have a title to baptism. But it is very evident, that the disciples in this passage were believing gentiles, and not infants or children. For, the same persons whom some desired to have circumcised, are *personally* addressed as brethren, ver. 1, and were also to be commanded to keep the law of Moses, verse 5.

II. The second supposed sanction for infant baptism, is the practice of the Apostles in baptizing households.

This argument is much insisted on. But, as only a few instances are mentioned in the whole New Testament, we may easily examine them, and I am persuaded the reader will clearly perceive, that all the persons in each household are described as moral agents, capable of exercising their faculties on religious subjects. Thus the household of Stephanas, mentioned 1 Cor. i. 13, are said by the Apostle, 1 Cor. xvi. 15, to be his "*first fruits* in Achaia, and that they *addicted themselves* to the ministry of the saints."

“This seems to imply,” says *Dr. Doddridge*, “that it was the generous care of the *whole* family to assist their fellow christians; so that there was *not a member* of it which did not do its part.” *Paraph.* in loc. And *Dr. Hammond*, another Pedobaptist, says, “I think it *unreasonable*, that the Apostle’s bare mention of baptizing this household, should be thought competent to conclude, that infants were baptized by him.” *Works*, vol. 1, p. 494.

We notice next *Cornelius* and his household, and those that were with them, mentioned, Acts x. It is evident, that those baptized on that occasion were not infants, for, before their baptism, *they all heard* the word, and the Holy Ghost fell on them, and they spake with tongues, and magnified God; and, after they had been baptized, *they* prayed the Apostle to tarry with them.

*Lydia* and her household invite some attention. Acts xvi. 13–15, 40. The more judicious Pedobaptist divines have honestly acknowledged, that no certain argument can be drawn from this transaction in favor of infant baptism. For, as it has been observed, none has ever proved that *Lydia* was a married woman, or had a husband then living. The contrary is more probable, because she had come from *Thyatira*, a distance of about 300 miles, to sell purple at *Philippi*. And if she was a married woman, it cannot be proved that she had any children; and if she had any, it cannot be proved that any of them were in a state of childhood, or infancy; and if she had any infants, it is not at all likely she would have brought them with her all that distance. Besides, it is evident from ver. 40, that her household consisted of persons who are called “*brethren*,” and stood in need of consolation. In confirmation of these ideas, the reader will please to attend to the opinion of some of our Pedobaptist brethren.

*Assembly of Divines*: “*And entered into the house of Lydia*; doubtless to confirm them in the faith, which they had preached to them—*Lydia* and *hers*, hearing of their miraculous deliverance, could not but be *comforted* and confirmed in the truth.” *Annot.* on Acts xvi. 40.

*Dr. Whitby*: “*And when she and those of her household* were instructed in the christian faith, and in the nature of baptism required by it, she was baptized, and her household.” *Paraphrase* of the place.

*Limborch*: “An undoubted argument, therefore, can-

not be drawn from this instance, by which it may be demonstrated, that infants were baptized by the Apostles. It might be, that all in her house were of a mature age; who, as in the exercise of a right understanding, they believed, so they were able to make a public profession of that faith, when they received baptism." *Com. in loc.*

We notice in the last place, the baptism of the Philippian jailor and *his household*, Acts xvi. 29-34. Had I not been *myself* blinded by prejudice, I should think it almost incredible, that any one could read these verses and suppose that an infant was included in the number baptized in this family; since it is expressly declared, that the Apostles spake the word of the Lord not only to him, but also *to all that were in his house*; and that the jailor rejoiced, *believing in God with all his house*.

I have been credibly informed, that a Pedobaptist brother, in a sermon lately delivered, attempted to prove that the faith of a parent entitled his infants to baptism; for, said he, "the jailor *only* was directed to believe, and yet *all his* were baptized." Is my brother aware how far this mode of reasoning would lead him? Suppose that a member of his church should request him to baptize his unbelieving wife, several children, and some unbelieving servants, could he refuse? Might not the man justly plead, "Sir, you have taught me to reason thus: the Apostolic example must be followed. By this example we are informed, that, the master of a family professing faith, his *entire household* were baptized with him. But his adult offspring and his domestics, whether converted or not, were part of the household; and, consequently, were baptized. Therefore, as I, the master of my family, have been baptized, and made a profession, my wife, my *children and my servants*, also, are entitled to baptism, whether they be converted or not. I leave my brother to answer, whether he would comply with such a request. To build infant baptism on such proofs, is exceedingly dangerous and pernicious. For, upon the same principle, and from the self same passage, it would follow, that the eternal happiness of all that were in the jailor's house, was secured because of his faith only. For, the Apostle said *to him only*, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and *thy house*:" yet, as fallacious and erroneous as this argument

is, still it is not *new*, for Bishop *Horsey* and others have reasoned in the same manner. For instance, Mr. *Blake*, a noted advocate for infant baptism, speaks thus: "We have examples not to be contemned, of the baptizing whole households; and, whether infants were there or no, as it is not certain, though probable, so it is not material. The precedent is *an household*. He that followeth the precedent, must baptize households. It appears not that any *wife* was there; yet, he that followeth the precept, must baptize wives; and so I may say *servants*, if they be of the household." *In Tombes's Examin.* p. 141.

The most eminent of our Pedobaptist divines, however, have acknowledged that the *jailor's* household was composed of *believers* only.

*Calvin*: "Luke commends the pious zeal of the jailor, because he dedicated his whole house to the Lord; in which, also, the grace of God illustriously appeared, because it suddenly brought the whole family to a *pious consent*." *Comment.* in loc.

*Mr. Henry*: "*He rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.* There was none in his (the jailor's) house, that refused to be baptized, and so made a jar in the harmony; but they were *unanimous* in embracing the Gospel, which added much to the joy." *Expos.* Acts xvi. 34. Thus, dear reader, we have examined *all* the instances of household baptism mentioned in the New Testament; and we close with the words of the judicious *Mr. Limborch*, himself a Pedobaptist: "*The argument is of no force, and good for nothing.*" See above Essay III, p. 6. We will, therefore, proceed to the

III. *Third* sanction pleaded for infant baptism, derived from our Lord's conduct to children, recorded Mark x. 14. "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God."

The reader will please to notice, that not a word is said in the whole of this transaction, respecting baptism; nor could these children have been brought to Christ for that purpose; for *he* baptized no persons whatever, John iv. 2; and, if the disciples had been in the habit of baptizing infants, they would no more have rebuked those that brought them, than our Pedobaptists would do. Besides, we are expressly informed, that they were brought *that Christ might touch them*. This was done, not in obe-

dience to a religious institution, but in conformity with the usual custom of the Jews; who, whenever a person of renown for learning, piety, &c. arrives in a place, even at the present day, parents and guardians bring their children to him, to receive a blessing from his hands. This argument, therefore, like the former, has long been abandoned by the most learned and pious of our opponents. Thus *Poole's Continuator*: "We must take heed we do not found infant baptism upon the example of Christ in this text; for, it is certain that he did not baptize these children." *Annot. on Matt. xix. 14.*

*Dr. Doddridge*: "I acknowledge these words of themselves will not prove infant baptism to be an institution of Christ." *In loc.*

*Mr. Burkitt*: "They were brought unto Jesus Christ: but for what end? Not to baptize them, but to bless them." *Expos. Notes on the place.*

IV. Having examined the arguments *generally* adduced in favor of infant baptism, I will now, in the *fourth* place, invite your attention to that particular argument, more frequently and more confidently relied upon, as a divine sanction for their practice, viz: *analogy between the Old and New Testament dispensations.*

But allow me to assure the reader, that it is the most difficult part of the whole subject; not because of the strength of the argument, but because such is the variety and opposite nature of the opinions by which it is illustrated and supported, that it leads into a labyrinth without a ray of light from the volume of divine revelation.

I have, however, endeavored, in the most conscientious and faithful manner, to unite and comprise the substance of what has been advanced, and will express it thus:

"Religion is the same in all ages, and differs only in the *outward* mode or dispensation; the privileges of the christian dispensation, it is allowed on all sides, are superior to those of the Old Testament; but, under the Old Testament dispensation, children were interested in those privileges, and circumcision was the sign and seal thereof; therefore, the children of believers, under the New Testament dispensation, must be interested in the same, and baptism is the sign and seal thereof; and if it were not so, we should expect to find an express law excluding them."

As this proposition consists of many members, it will

be necessary to dissect it for the better examination of them, to see how far we agree or differ. To the first two particulars we can have no objection; but, before we can decide on the third, viz: that, "under the Old Testament, children were interested in those privileges, and circumcision was the sign and seal thereof;" we ought to know the nature and extent of those privileges. We are told by Pedobaptists, "that the children were members of the *covenant* and of the Jewish *church*, and were, consequently, entitled to the blessings promised in the former, and the privileges enjoyed in the latter; and that, as baptism has come in the place of circumcision, and the christian church being only a continuation of the Jewish church, therefore, children of believers are entitled to the blessings of the covenant and the privileges of the church." The reader will easily perceive, that this answer, instead of explaining the nature and extent of the blessings and privileges, rather obscures the subject, and leaves it in still greater uncertainty and confusion. For, as the Scripture speaks of *two* covenants made with Abraham, we must inquire into the nature of each, to see how far children were interested; and whether the children of Christians and of Jews are entitled to the *same* privileges. We must, also, inquire whether there ever was such a thing as a *Jewish* church, and if there were, how far the *Christian* church is connected with it.

I will, therefore, endeavor to give a scriptural statement of these subjects; and then shew, that the sentiments of our Pedobaptist brethren are inconsistent with such statement.

It appears from the sacred volume, that Abraham was peculiarly favored with the knowledge of, and interest in, *two* covenants. The former is generally styled the "Covenant of Grace," *i. e.* the way of salvation by grace, to distinguish it from the covenant made with *Adam*, commonly called "the covenant of works." This covenant of grace was revealed to our first parents immediately after the fall, in the promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent; and its nature was explained by the immediate institution of sacrifices. Gen. iii. 15, 21.

When Jehovah was pleased to call Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees, from the worship of idols, to serve the

true God, he made an additional revelation concerning this covenant, viz.: that the Mediator of the covenant, or the Messiah, should descend from him. And Abraham "believed in the Lord, and He counted it unto him for righteousness." Gen. xv. 6. Hence, he became the "father of all them that believe," whether Jews or Gentiles. Rom. iv. 4—12. To make it impossible for any of my Presbyterian brethren even to suspect a misrepresentation of the nature of this covenant, I will describe it in the language of their own confession of faith. "The covenant of grace was made with Christ as the second *Adam*, and with him all the *elect* as his seed. Gal. iii. 16, Isa. lix. 21, Zech. vi. 13, Luke xxii. 29, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5, Rom. v. 15, &c." "The grace of God is manifested in the second covenant; in that he freely provideth and offereth to sinners a Mediator, and life and salvation by him, and requiring faith as the condition to interest them in him, promiseth and giveth his Holy Spirit to all his elect, to work in them that faith with all other saving graces." Gen. iii. 15, Isa. xlii. 6, John vi. 27, 1 Tim. ii. 5, 1 John v. 11, 12, John iii. 16, Prov. i. 23, 2 Cor. iv. 13, Gal. v. 22, 23. *Larger Catechism*, Questions 31, 32.

Here the reader will please to observe, that the *subjects* of this covenant are the *elect*; that they become interested in this covenant by *faith*; that this faith is wrought in them by the *Holy Ghost*; and that the Holy Ghost is *promised* and *given* to them: hence, the salvation of the elect is secured by the *promise* of God; and it is, therefore, impossible, that one of them, interested in this covenant, shall ever perish. Again, it is also secured by the *intercession* of Christ. For, we are informed, "Christ maketh intercession by his appearing in our nature continually before the Father in heaven, in the merit of his obedience and sacrifice on earth; declaring his will to have it applied to all believers. Heb. ix. 24, i. 3, John xvii. 9, 20, 24." Ibid. quest. 55. Now as the Father heareth him always, the *merit* of his obedience and sacrifice must be applied to them. The *blessings* procured by the merit of Christ, are "redemption and all other benefits of the covenant of grace. Heb. ix. 12, 2 Cor. i. 30." Ibid. quest. 57. Another benefit belonging to the subjects of this covenant is, that "they are spiritually and mystically, yet *really* and *inseparably*, joined to Christ as

their head and husband." Eph. ii. 6, 7, 8, 1 Cor. vi. 17, John x. 28, Eph. v. 23, 30.

Once more, we are told that "the subjects of *this* covenant cannot fall away from the state of grace." "True believers, by reason of the unchangeable love of God, and his decree and covenant to give them perseverance, their inseparable union with Christ, his continual intercession for them, and the spirit and seed of God abiding in them, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation." Ibid. quest. 79. Thus it appears, that all the subjects of *this* covenant will be saved with an everlasting salvation.

When Abraham, was *seventy-five* years old, he received the covenant of *grace*. Twenty-four years after, the Lord was pleased to *make* a covenant with him, called the *Covenant of Circumcision*, the charter of which reads thus: "*And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee; and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram; but thy name shall be Abraham: for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee; and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant; to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee, in their generations. This is my covenant which ye shall keep between me and you, and thy seed after thee: Every man-child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations; he that is*

born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. And the uncircumcised man-child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, THAT SOUL SHALL BE CUT OFF FROM HIS PEOPLE; HE HATH BROKEN MY COVENANT."

Gen. xvii. 1—14. From the tenor of this covenant it is obvious, that its subjects were Abraham and his natural seed in all their generations. The blessings promised them were all of a temporal nature, viz: that God would increase and multiply them exceedingly; and be their God in a peculiar sense, affording special protection, provision, direction, &c. and giving them a certain described territory for an inheritance. To this covenant was annexed the rite of circumcision as a sign of carnal descent, a mark of national distinction, and a token of interest in those temporal blessings which were promised to Abraham. A neglect of this rite was punished with *excommunication*. And, although the inheritance was restricted to the posterity of Abraham, yet all males that belonged to his domestic establishment, must be circumcised, without any regard to personal character, conduct, or faith.

This statement of the covenant of circumcision, might be confirmed by many testimonies from the writings of some of the most eminent Pedobaptist divines. I will appeal to a few only.

*Witsius*: "Circumcision was the sign of a covenant with God, undoubtedly made with Abraham and his family only, exclusive of other nations, and a seal of those benefits which he intended to be peculiar to Abraham's posterity: and, therefore, according to divine appointment, it was used to distinguish the seed of Abraham from the nations of the world. Whence the sons of Jacob thought it unworthy the dignity of their family, that their sister should be given in marriage to one that was uncircumcised." *Egyptiaca*, L. 3, c. 6, § 5.

*Carpzovius*: "The covenant of circumcision is very closely connected with the promise of multiplying Abraham's posterity; of bestowing on them a large country and very great honors; and *it was a mark of difference, by which they might be distinguished from other nations*. Whence it followed, that the Jewish republic being abol-

ished, and the land of Canaan lost, *this covenant expired* at the same time. Nay, it by no means agreed to the times of the Messiah, in which, according to the predictions of the prophets, the distinction between the natural descendants of Abraham and other nations being removed, both became one people under the Messiah, and afterwards were to have all things common." *Apparat. Hist. Crit. Antiq. Sac. Annotat.* p. 605.

From this plain statement, the candid reader will easily perceive, that Abraham was interested in *two* covenants, viz. the *covenant of grace* and the covenant of circumcision; and that these covenants were entirely distinct in their *nature, privileges, duration, and Subjects*. The want of keeping in view the distinction of these covenants, has been the cause of much confusion. It has been justly observed by Dr. Cox: "That neither he nor they (*i. e.* Dr. Wardlaw and his Pedobaptist brethren) can ever find the passage, in which the covenant of circumcision is called the covenant of grace—nor can they point out the text, wherein the temporal blessings given to Abraham are mentioned in the covenant of grace—nor can they shew, if the terms were identical, how Melchizedek, Lot, and others, should be included in the covenant of grace, which none will deny, yet were not in the covenant of circumcision; or how Ishmael and Esau should be in the covenant of circumcision, yet had no portion of the covenant of grace—nor is it possible for them to obviate the difficulty, that, if Abraham were the federal head of his natural and spiritual seed, or of the covenant of grace, and Christ is confessedly the head of the same covenant, there must be two heads of that covenant, having, in fact, as such, a conflicting title of superiority. It is the first and great mistake, respecting the covenant itself, that perplexes the whole subject, pollutes all the subsequent reasonings, and confounds together, things which essentially differ." *On Baptism*, p. 134. We, therefore, repeat the inquiry, viz. What do our brethren mean, when they say, that children were interested in the covenant made with Abraham, and that circumcision was the sign and seal thereof? They certainly cannot mean, that all that were circumcised, were interested in the covenant of grace; for, their own confession of faith, as we have shewn, informs us, that all interested in that covenant, will *certainly* be called, adopt-

ed, justified, sanctified and glorified; but multitudes, who were circumcised, proved by their life and conduct, that they had neither part nor lot in these matters, and, therefore, were not interested in the covenant of grace. They must then mean the covenant of circumcision—be it so. But this covenant was made with Abraham and his natural posterity *exclusively*; and, whether it be abrogated or not, it certainly can afford no argument in favor of their opinion, that the infants of believers are entitled to baptism, and that baptism seals to them the blessings of the covenant of grace, because the Jewish children were interested in the covenant of circumcision. If there were any propriety in such a mode of reasoning, surely the descendants of Abraham might have argued with greater propriety, that, “as Jehovah was pleased to favor them with the blessings of a *peculiar* covenant, in which no others had any share, he would certainly not exclude them from the covenant of grace, which was for all nations.” Such, indeed, dear reader, seems to have been the foundation, on which the carnal Jews rested their hope for salvation, *that they had Abraham to their father.*

Perhaps it will be said, that the Jewish children must have been interested in spiritual blessings sealed to them by circumcision, because the Apostle calls it “a sign and seal of righteousness.” In this garbled manner the passage is, indeed, frequently quoted; but the whole verse reads thus: “And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of *the righteousness* of the faith, which *he* had yet being *uncircumcised*: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though *they* be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also.” Rom. iv. 11.

If the reader will have the goodness to refer to his Bible, he will find, that this first verse is a part of the conclusion of a chain of arguments, which commences at the beginning of the second chapter. The Apostle, having in the first chapter shewn, that the Gentiles were without a justifying righteousness, proceeds to shew, that the Jews, though circumcised, had no advantage in this respect; viz. that they could no more be justified by the deeds of the law than the gentiles, but that the only way of any sinner’s justification at the bar of Jehovah, was faith in the Messiah; and this he proves from the example of Abra-

ham, who himself was justified by faith, *before* he had received the law of circumcision. Circumcision, therefore, instead of being the procuring cause of gospel justification, was only a sign and seal to Abraham, that *he had already* been justified by faith; for his *implicit* obedience to that *positive* law, which had nothing but the authority of the lawgiver for its recommendation, was a convincing evidence of the *purity* and strength of his faith. And the reader will please to notice, that this is the only place in the bible, where circumcision is called a sign or seal of righteousness, and that it was so to *Abraham and no other*. Besides, facts shew that multitudes, who were circumcised in the flesh, have never been justified by faith. It is evident, therefore, that circumcision, though “a *token*” of temporal blessing, yet was neither a sign nor a seal of spiritual benefit to *Jewish children*. The inference, therefore, that baptism is a sign and seal of spiritual blessings to the children of believing gentiles, is without foundation, and must fall of itself.

12. Besides, the Scriptures no where teach us, that either circumcision or baptism is the seal of *any covenant*. The *children of God* are, indeed, sealed, not with Baptism, but with the Holy Ghost; not in infancy, or before they believed, but afterwards. Eph. i. 13.

On the supposition that baptism is a seal of the covenant of grace, what is the consequence? Why, instead of being an argument in favor of Infant Baptism, it would absolutely excludè infants from the solemn ordinance. With entire confidence we submit the case to a jury selected from their own most eminent divines. But, instead of a foreman, let us hear several of the jurors express their sentiments.

The great *Mr. Charnock*: “God seals no more than he promises, nor in any other manner than as he promises. He promises only to faith, and, therefore, only seals to faith. Covenant graces, therefore, must be possessed and acted, before covenant blessings can be ratified to us.” *Works*, Vol. II. p. 781.

The pious *Mr. Bradbury*: “We call these two institutions of the New Testament, the seals of the covenant; but they never seal what you have not, nor can they seal any thing you did not.” *Duty and Doct. of Bap.* 13.

*Mr. Hebden*: “Was circumcision a seal of justification,

or remission of sins, to *such* as Abraham was, or sincere believers? So is baptism now." *Baptismal Regenerat. disproved*, p. 50.

*Calvin*: "Baptism is, as it were, the appendix of faith, and, therefore, posterior in order; and then, if it be administered without faith, of which it is a seal, it is both an injurious and a gross profanation." *Com. in Act. viii.* 36.

Hence, it appears, that the jury is perfectly agreed, that infants are not proper subjects for baptism, and that it would be "an injurious and gross profanation" to administer it to them. And who can disapprove their principles and arguments? God seals only what he promises, he promises only to faith, and that personally, not by proxy, such as parents and other sponsors, (see *Bradbury*;) but infants cannot believe, therefore, they have no right to the seal.

13. But it is high time to proceed to the consideration of the next part stated in the reply, viz. That baptism has come in the place of circumcision; and that, as this rite was performed on all the *male* posterity of Abraham, so baptism is to be administered to *all* the children of believers. Notwithstanding the frequency of this assertion and the great confidence placed in it, yet I cannot believe it for want of evidence. "If *Dr. Wardlaw*," says *Dr. Cox*, "will point out any individual passage in the Scriptures, in *Genesis*, or in *Romans*—in *Moses*, or in *Paul*—where baptism is represented as substituted for circumcision, 'we will believe it.'" *On Baptism*, p. 149.

I am aware, that Col. ii. 11, 12, is generally quoted as a proof. But let us read it: "In whom (Christ) also, ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; buried with him in baptism, wherein ye also are risen with him, through the *faith* of the operation of God." Does not the reader perceive, that the persons here spoken of are adults, who *believed, mortified the deeds of the flesh, &c.*; and that this passage has, therefore, nothing to do with Infant Baptism?

14. Besides, does it follow, that, because there seems to be in these words a comparison between baptism and circumcision, therefore, the one is come in the place of the other? We know, that there was some similarity be-

tween Noah's Ark and the ordinance of baptism, 1 Pet. iii. 21. Do any of our brethren, therefore, believe, *that the latter is come in the place of the former?*

The eminently learned *Venema*, though a Pedobaptist, acknowledges, "that the scriptures no where affirm, that baptism holds the place of circumcision. Nor from that place of Paul, Col. ii. 11, 12, can any thing else be inferred, than that the two sacraments answer one another; for it is not there asserted in express words. The Apostle simply asserts in those words, that baptism answers to *spiritual* circumcision." *Diss. Sacrae*. L. 2, C. 15, § 6, 7.

15. Besides, wherein does the striking similarity or analogy consist? There are, no doubt, a few particulars, in which baptism may be compared to circumcision, but there is a striking dissimilarity in very many of the most important parts. As we have shewn before, that the covenant of grace and the covenant of circumcision differed essentially, in nature, subjects, promises, and duration; so, likewise, do the ordinances of baptism and circumcision differ. Circumcision was a bloody and painful ceremony; baptism is the immersion of a person in water, as a solemn religious ordinance, administered to such as believe, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The subjects of the one are only *male* children, eight days old; the subjects of baptism are not infants, but "both *Men* and *Women*," capable of making a credible profession. The design of circumcision was chiefly to keep the descendants of Abraham a distinct people from all other nations; baptism is to be administered to believers of every nation, without exception. The duration of circumcision was during the existence of the Jewish polity; the duration of baptism is to the end of the world.

The defect of this analogy has been acknowledged by not a few Pedobaptist divines. *Cattenburgh*: "Though, apparently, there is a great similitude between circumcision and baptism, yet it does not thence follow, that this comes in the place of that; because, on the same principle, a person might argue, that bread and wine in the sacred supper, succeeded in the place of manna, and of water from the rock. Is it to be believed, on supposition of this assertion concerning baptism being admitted, that John the Baptist, in his preaching, would not have sig-

nified something of this kind; and that our Lord himself would not have taught his disciples concerning such an appointment? We may add, when so sharp a controversy was agitated about circumcision, (Acts xv.) not so much as a tittle occurs relating to such a succession; which, nevertheless, on that occasion, ought principally to have been mentioned. Further, besides the difference of circumstances mentioned by the learned *Limborch*, and that most evident argument, *none but male children were circumcised, therefore, they only are to be baptized*; others add, circumcision was performed by a knife, but baptism is administered in water. The circumcision of infants was urged by the Lord with such great rigor, that Moses himself was threatened with destruction for its neglect, Exod. iv. 24; and fathers neglecting that rite, it was lawful for mothers to circumcise their sons, Ex. iv. 25, which the reformed prohibit to women, or do not permit, in regard to baptism. Circumcision was not performed in the name of any one, as baptism is, *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*. Circumcision was performed upon one member only; whereas, in baptism, the whole body is ordered to be immersed. Principally, circumcision was a *discriminating* mark of the Jews from other nations; whereas baptism tends to *unite* all nations in one body." *Spicileg. Theolog.* L. 4, c. 64 sect. 2, § 22. See large extracts to the same purpose from *Vencma*, *Limborch* and others. *Booth Ped. Bap. Exam.* vol. II. ch. 4, sect. 3.

I hope the reader will pardon my dwelling so long on this argument of our brethren; but, as this doctrine of analogy is so frequently, and so confidently appealed to, I considered it due to truth, to shew its fallacy. I will add only one or two particulars more, and then proceed.

16. It has already been shewn (Essay I. 3) that, in the observance of a positive institution, we are to be guided by the express law of the institution. Baptism is a positive institution; therefore, its own law is to be the rule of our conduct, and not analogy. Such is the acknowledged sentiment of many Pedobaptist divines. In addition to those already cited in the first Essay, I will quote one more. *Mr. Ball*: "In whatever they (circumcision and baptism) agree, or differ, we must look to the institution, and neither stretch it wider, nor draw it narrower than the Lord

has made it. For he is the institutor of the sacraments, according to his own good pleasure; and it is our part to learn of him, both *to whom, how, and for what end* the sacraments are to be administered; how they agree, and wherein they differ. In all which, we must affirm nothing but what God hath taught us, and as he has taught us." In *Mr. Tombes's Exam.* p. 23. Besides, to argue from analogy our brethren tell us, is of very doubtful and uncertain authority. *Dr. Clarke*, speaking of the analogy of baptism and circumcision, says: "Whether this analogy be rightly drawn or no, and be a sufficient and adequate foundation for what has been built upon it, is a controversy." *Ser.* vol. I. *Ser.* 38. p. 241. fol.

*Lord Brooke*: "The analogy which Baptism now has with circumcision in the old law, is a fine rhetorical argument to *illustrate* a point *well proved before*; but I somewhat doubt, whether it be proof enough for that, which some would prove by it; since, besides the vast difference in the ordinances, the persons to be circumcised by the positive law, are so express, that it leaves no place for scruple. But it is far otherwise in baptism; where all the designation of persons fit to be partakers, for aught I know, is only *SUCH AS BELIEVE*. For this is the qualification that, with exactest search, I find the scripture requires in persons to be baptized; and this it seems to require in all such persons. Now, how infants can be properly said to believe, I am not yet fully resolved." *Discourse on Episcopacy*, sec. 2, ch. 7, p. 97.

17. Nay; let our brethren but for a moment lose sight of Infant Baptism, and they will most loudly exclaim against the doctrine of analogy, and show with the greatest facility how it has opened a floodgate to errors and superstitions.

"If it be once granted to the Doctors of the Romish Communion," says *Vitringa*, "that the order and worship of the gospel church are conformable to those of the Jewish economy, (*to which the Papists always look for the chief support of their numerous errors,*) they will plausibly defend the whole of their ecclesiastical polity." *De Synog. Vet.* pp. 15, 16.

*Mr. Tombes* has observed: "It is the common complaint of Protestants and antiprelatists, that in imitation of the Jews, under pretence of *analogy*, a new-named Juda-

ism has been brought into the christian church." *Antipodobap.* Part 2, p. 17. It is from this very fruitful source, *analogy*, that the *Papists* endeavor to prove the lawfulness of *women* baptizing, in cases of approved necessity, because the wife of Moses performed the rite of circumcision on her son; that the church of Christ should have a *visible Head*, because the Jewish church had a High Priest; that the true church must be *infallible*, because the ancient High Priest, by consulting *Urim* on certain occasions, delivered oracles; and that there must be *seven* sacraments, because the number seven makes a conspicuous figure in the Hebrew ritual, &c. &c. The English Episcopalians have tenaciously retained this Doctrine of analogy to sanction the establishment of a national church—the strict alliance between the church and the state—the divine right of tithes for the support of christian ministers—Canonical habits—their holy days, &c. &c.

“Whence is it,” says the venerable *Mr. Booth*, “except on the same foundation, that christian Ministers assume the character of *Priests*, call the Lord’s table an altar, and the holy Supper a *sacrifice*? On what principles, but those of Judaism, do people plead for sumptuous places of worship, and the consecration of them; for alternate singing, and various amusing ceremonies in public devotion? Whence is it, except on principles peculiar to the ancient theocracy, that any plead for the interference of *civil magistrates*, in affairs that are purely religious, and for the *persecution* of real or of suspected heretics? These and other particulars are defended, if defended at all, by scripture, on the appointments, privileges, and laws of Judaism; for the kingdom of Christ not being *of this world*, the New Testament knows nothing of them. Thus the constitution and government, the order and worship of the gospel church are degraded and corrupted, to make them agree with the Mosaic economy. As if the christian church were in a state of minority, like that of the Jews—as if the disciples of Christ were to be amused with ceremonious pomp and *carnal ordinances*, with *beggarly clements* and puerilities, as were the descendants of Abraham before the time of reformation. Gal. iv. 1–11, 21–31. Heb. viii. 6–13, ix. 9, 10. Few mistakes in theology have, indeed, either so extensive or so pernicious an influence upon the church and worship

of the New Testament, as those which tend to confound the christian church with the Jewish synagogue." *Pedob. Ex. 2*, p. 263.

Dear reader, I have now, at considerable length, shewn that the assertion, that baptism has come in the place of circumcision, is without any proof, and therefore, we cannot believe it. But there are other reasons which might be stated at large. I will only name them. If baptism had come in the place of circumcision, why were they both in practice at the same time? Why did Paul circumcise Timothy, after he had been baptized? Why did they not settle the sharp controversy about circumcision by telling them that baptism came in its place; and that, when the substance has come, the shadow is no more needed? Since our brethren are so certain that baptism came in the place of circumcision by divine appointment, we can scarcely suppose, that the Apostles and the apostolic churches were ignorant of this change; their silence, therefore, on such important occasions, would be unaccountable. We conclude, therefore, that infant baptism was not known in the days of the Apostles, nor the succession of baptism in the place of circumcision.

18. We now proceed to the examination of the next assertion, viz: that the christian church is a continuation of the Jewish church; and, therefore, the children of pious parents are members of it as the Jewish children were under the Old Testament.

To shew the fallacy of this proposition, I shall endeavor to describe the nature and character of the church of Christ, or the New Testament church, and the reader will be able to judge whether there was such a church under the Old Testament or not.

Our first inquiry is into the meaning of the term *church*. The Greek noun *ecclesia*, in the New Testament, rendered by our translators *church*, is derived from the verb *eccaleo*, which signifies "to call out, to call forth, to summon." Hence, the simple and plain meaning of the noun is, "an assembly of people called together," without any reference to the *qualifications* of the persons assembled, the *design* for which they are collected, or the *means* by which the meeting has been effected. Hence, the word is applied to a riotous mob, collected without authority, Acts xix. 32, 41, to an assembly convened by the authority of a civil magistrate, Acts xix. 39; for a

congregation *i. e.* a number of persons meeting together for the purpose of worshipping God, similar to our congregations, consisting partly of such as have made a public profession of religion, and others who have not. Heb. ii. 12. This passage is a quotation from Ps. xxii. 22, where it is, "in the midst of the *congregation* will I praise thee;" and in ver. 25, it is the *great* congregation, *i. e.* in the great assembly of the Jews in the temple at Jerusalem, where there was a mixture of good and bad. Acts xiii. 1, I Cor. iv. 17, xiv. 4, 19, 28, 35. But in the New Testament it is used in a religious sense; for the invisible church, *i. e.* the elect of God, "the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in Heaven." Heb. xii. 24, Acts xx. 28, Eph. i. 22, v. 24, 25, 27, Col. i. 18, 24, &c. This is the church which Christ has purchased with his own blood; this is the bride which he loved, and gave himself for her. It is called the *invisible* church, because its members are invisible *to us*; seeing it includes all that have already gone to glory, or are now scattered over the earth, or shall yet be born. This church commenced with the first believer, and has continued hitherto, and will do so till the last of the elect shall be brought to glory.

It is used for the *visible* church, *i. e.* an assembly of persons who had united with each other as a society, after giving satisfactory evidence of possessing those qualifications required by the great head of the church. Acts ii. 47, xiv. 23, 27; and because the admission and reception of each individual member into the society, was in an open and public manner, it is called the *visible* church. The reader will now perceive, that the mere term *ecclesia* in the original, and the word *church*, by which it is often translated in the New Testament, leave it undetermined whether we mean a congregation, or the church invisible, or the visible church. Our present business is neither with the first nor the second, but with the last. I shall, therefore, proceed to describe the *nature* and *constitution* of the *visible church*. From the description already given of the visible church, it is evident, that certain qualifications were required in each individual before he could be admitted a member.

These, I conceive, may be comprised in the following particulars, including all others:

1. Regeneration, or to be born of God.
2. A general knowledge and firm belief of the leading doctrines of revealed religion.
3. A determination, in dependence on the grace of God, to live a life of obedience to all the commandments of Christ.
4. Submission to the ordinance of baptism.

That such qualifications are required of a person before he is admitted a member of a christian church, or is permitted to partake of the Lord's supper, is abundantly acknowledged by our Pedobaptist brethren. Let the following extracts suffice:

*The confession of Helvetia:* "A church, *i. e.* a company of the faithful, called and gathered out of the world; a communion, I say, of all saints, that is, of them who do truly know and rightly worship and serve the true God in Jesus Christ the Saviour."

*Confession of Basil:* "We believe a holy christian church, that is, a communion of saints, a gathering together of the faithful in spirit, which is holy and the spouse of Christ, wherein all they be citizens which do truly confess that Jesus is the Christ, the Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world, and do shew forth that faith by the works of love."

*Dr. Cotton Mather:* "A church, as the Greek name for it allows us to think, is to consist of a people *called out* from the ways of sin, by the powerful and effectual work of God upon their souls. Regeneration is the thing, without which a title to the sacraments is not to be pretended. Real regeneration is the thing, which, before God, renders men capable of claiming sacraments; and visible and expressed regeneration is that which, before men, enables us to make such a claim." In *Mr. Backus' Church History* of N. Eng. vol. 2, pp. 1, 2.

*Dr. Chauncy:* "The foundation part of a visible church is the credible profession of faith and holiness. It is men and women, not doctrine, that are the matter of a church; and these, professing the faith and practising holiness. The members of churches are always called, in the New Testament, *saints, faithful, believers*; they were such that were added to the churches." *Preface to Dr. Owen's true nature of a Gospel Church.*

*Mastricht:* "A church is no other than a congregation

of men, efficaciously called or converted to Jesus Christ." *Theol. L. 7, c. 1, § 5.*

*Anonymous*: "Every true, visible, particular church of Christ, is a select company of people, called and separated from the world and the false worship thereof, by the Spirit and word of God, and joined together in the fellowship of the Gospel by their own free and voluntary consent, giving up themselves to Christ and to one another, according to the will of God." *Jerubbaal*, p. 422.

*Mr. John Cotton*: "The church is a mystical body, whereof Christ is the head; the members are saints called out of the world, and united together into one congregation by an holy covenant, to worship the Lord, and to edify one another in all his holy ordinances." *True constitution of a particular church*, p. 1.

That eminently learned divine, *Dr. Ridgley*, in defining the visible church, says, "A church is a number of visible professors, called to be saints, united together by consent, and testifying their subjection to Christ. It is necessary that all the members thereof embrace the true religion, and, in particular, that they deny none of those fundamental articles of faith which are necessary to salvation. A mind rightly informed in the great doctrines of the gospel, with a conduct of life answerable thereunto, is to be insisted on as a term of church communion." Speaking of the bond of church union, he saith, "It is neither the profession of faith, nor a conversation agreeable thereunto, that constitutes a person a member of a particular church; for, according to the laws of society, there must be a mutual consent to walk together, or have communion one with another in *all* the ordinances which Christ has established. As the materials of which a building consists, do not constitute that building, unless they are cemented and joined together; so the union of professing christians, whereby they are joined together, and become one body, by mutual consent, is necessary to constitute them a church, as much as their professed subjection to Christ to denominate them a church of Christ."

*B. D. Quest. 52.* I shall add only one quotation more, from the pious *Mr. Brown*: "The visible church on earth is a society of *believing* and *holy* persons, whom God, by the Gospel, has called from among mankind to fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ. They are *spiritual*,

formed by the Holy Ghost, through and for ordinances and services of a spiritual nature, and of men made spiritual—blessed with spiritual blessings—living on spiritual provision, and built up a spiritual house for God. In order *to be received* into church fellowship, it is necessary that men *profess* their faith in Christ and obedience to him, and be apparently holy. 1. They must manifest no prevailing inclination to any kind of wickedness. 2. They must have escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust, and manifest a readiness to receive christian reproof from neighbors or church rulers. 3. Having received the knowledge of the truths of God, revealed in his word, they must profess to esteem and love them. 4. In consistency with the habitual tenor of their practice, they must make an open and judicious profession of the subjection of their conscience *to the authority of Christ in the Gospel*, and of their readiness to yield obedience to all his institutions. The *end* of such persons uniting in church fellowship, ought to be, 1. The maintaining and exhibiting a system of sound principles. 2. The maintaining the ordinances of Gospel worship in their purity and simplicity. 3. The impartial exercise of church government and discipline. 4. The maintaining and promoting holiness in all manner of conversation. The embracement or profession of nothing but what is really divine truth, and tends to promote peace, and holiness, and order, ought ever to be made a *term* of admission to church fellowship. The forming church connexions upon this ground consists in mutual, *judicious* and *candid covenanting*, express or implicit, with or without an oath, to make a joined profession of the faith of the Gospel, and to walk together, each in his station, in the order of the Gospel, as becomes saints." *Nat. and Revealed Religion*, 526, 527.

From these few quotations, which might have been greatly multiplied, the candid reader will easily perceive, that it is the opinion of our most eminent Pedobaptist divines, that the members of the visible church must, 1, *possess* certain qualifications to fit and entitle them to become members; such as a *new nature, spiritual knowledge, faith in Jesus Christ, holiness in heart, lip, and life; obedience to all Christ's commandments, and devotedness to his cause, &c. &c.* 2. That they must actually join

the church, by giving satisfactory evidence of their being possessed of the necessary qualifications, before they are considered members, and permitted to partake of the privileges of the visible church. 3. That the end of this union is altogether spiritual, viz. the honor of Christ, the extension of his kingdom, and the mutual edification of the saints.

Such being the nature and constitution of the *visible* church, let us now search the scriptures for its origin. In the history of the first period of the world, *i. e.* from Adam to Abraham, we read, indeed, of several individuals, such as Abel, Enoch, Noah, &c. who, doubtless, were interested in the covenant of grace, and members of the *invisible* church; but there is not a shadow of a *visible church* to be seen. Nor is there any more evidence of the existence of such a church in the second period, *i. e.* from the call of Abraham to the giving of the law on Mount Sinai. True, we are certain, that Abraham, the father of the faithful, and many of his spiritual seed, belonged to the *invisible* church; but where and when was the origin of a *society* composed of spiritual members, admitting to their number none but such as possessed the qualifications described above. We are, indeed, told, by almost every Pedobaptist writer, that the *visible* church began in Abraham's family, when God gave him the covenant of circumcision; and that every one who had the token of God's covenant in his flesh, whether *re-generated or not*, was reputed a member of this church.

That Jehovah made such a covenant with Abraham for wise and holy purposes, has already been stated, (6;) and none does deny; but who can believe that it was the beginning of the *visible* church, seeing it essentially differed from it in nature, privileges, design, duration, and subjects. All that can be granted is, that it was the first appearance of a *typical* representation of the *visible* church.

I proceed now to search for the *visible* church in the third period of the world, *i. e.* during the Mosaic dispensation. Here, indeed, we meet with something *like* a *visible* church, but it is not the *thing itself*. It is a *shadow*, but not the *substance*. Soon after the children of Israel had come out of Egypt, Jehovah was pleased to enter with them into a covenant, generally called the Sinaitic

covenant, which, in its nature, subjects, privileges, extent, design, and duration, differed but little from the covenant of circumcision, except that the one was made with Abraham and his natural seed as a *family*, but the other as a *nation*, with the addition of laws and ceremonies suited to that dispensation, in which Jehovah was their political King, as well as the object of their national worship; and both relations were typical of the New Testament dispensation, in which the *Lord Christ* is both the King of his church and the object of spiritual worship. In him, indeed, "church and state" are united, but they are both *spiritual*, and not of this world. His church and state are one spiritual kingdom. I am persuaded, that the more a person examines the history of the Jews, the more he will be convinced that there was no such thing as a *visible church* among them; either during their journeying in the wilderness, or after their settlement in the Land of Promise. Hence, the word *church* is never used by our translators in the Old Testament. The whole nation is invariably called "the *congregation*." And, as the Martyr *Stephen*, Acts vii. 38, spake of the same assembly, our translators ought not to have used the word *church*, but *congregation*. This is he that was in the *congregation* in the *wilderness*. This congregation was composed of all the descendants of Abraham, that came out of Egypt, both adults and infants, without any regard to their moral or spiritual state, and Jehovah acknowledged all those for his people, and himself as their God, who performed an external obedience to his commandments; even though in their hearts, alienated from him. This congregation was perpetuated by a regular succession of their natural offspring, for every child was born a member of it, and entitled to all its privileges; and circumcision was a public *token* thereof. Hence, we never read of such a thing as a *church meeting* to examine a son of Abraham for membership, nor of an examination by a *Session* for the purpose of "putting himself under their care." And when a Gentile became a proselyte, nothing more was required of him, than submission to circumcision, and to walk in external obedience as required of the Israelites. Not a word is said about the necessity of *regeneration*, or the other *qualifications* required of a candidate for the church of Christ. No doubt, there were many true believers mixed with this congregation. - These

belonged to the *invisible* church; but a *visible church* was not known in Israel. Hence, it is very evident, that there is as great a difference between the christian church and the Jewish congregation, or national establishment, as there is between the covenant made with Noah and the covenant of grace. In the Jewish congregation all was *carnal*; in the christian church all is *spiritual*. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." John i. 17. "My kingdom," saith the Redeemer, "is not of this world." Now, if Christ's kingdom, or *church*, be spiritual, *such* must necessarily be its subjects. Hence, they are members of the Body of Christ, of which he is the Head; and the members of the church which he has purchased with his blood, and are characterized as regenerated and holy; born of God, born of the Spirit; believers, disciples. Nothing, therefore, can be more clear than that to become a member of this kingdom or church, must be a *personal* act, and not by descent or proxy. No one can profess faith, put on Christ, obey God, or perform a duty which is enjoined as a public expression and avowal of any christian principle, for another.

This statement of the *national covenant*, made with the whole house of Israel, is abundantly confirmed by our Pedobaptist writers. They clearly distinguish it from the visible church, by calling it a *carnal* institution, composed of *carnal* worshipers in a *worldly* sanctuary, &c.; but they perplex the subject by calling it a *Jewish church*, instead of *congregation*. The reader will attentively peruse the memorable words of the great and learned *Dr. Owen*: "The institutions of the law were, in their nature, *carnal*, as our Apostle declares, Heb. vii. 16, ix. 10. The subject of them all, the means of their celebration, were *carnal things*, beneath those pure, spiritual acts of the mind and soul, which are of a more noble nature. And as *they* were carnal, so they might be exactly performed *by men of carnal minds*, and were so for the most part. *Regeneration* is expressly required in the Gospel to give a right and privilege unto an entrance into the church or kingdom of Christ; whereby that kingdom of his is distinguished from all other kingdoms in and of the world, unto an interest, wherein never any such thing was required; neither the church nor its privileges

(being) continued and preserved, as of old, by *carnal generation*." *On Heb. vii. 11. Nature of Gospel church*, pp. 3, 17. The judicious *Dr. Jennings* informs us, that "the Jewish church was a divine establishment; and all persons born in the land of Israel, and of Jewish parents, being considered as members of it, were, therefore, bound to conform to its rites and worship:—but is there a divine establishment of any *national church* under the gospel dispensation? If the New Testament gives us no other idea of the churches of Christ, but their being *voluntary societies*, uniting under the laws of Christ for public worship and other purposes of religion; then is no man *born* a member of a church." *Jewish Antiq.* vol. 2, pp. 62, 63.

*Mr. Arch. Hall*: "The church is a *spiritual* society. Her ordinances and services are spiritual. This constitutes a grand and lasting distinction between the New Testament church, and the church state of the Jews, whose ordinances were *beggarly*, and their worship *carnal* and *shadowy*." *Gospel church*, p. 18. *Dr. Whitby*: "No man is, indeed, a member of Christ's kingdom, who is not truly regenerate." *Note on John iii. 3.* *Dr. Watts's* sentiment shall close this part of our subject: "The bulk and multitude of the visible nation of Israel, which was the visible church, were generally great sinners, and with all their glorious titles of external and typical holiness, and divine favor, they were inwardly wicked, and belonged really to the kingdom of Satan, and not to the invisible church of God." *Jewish and Christian churches, Discourse 5.*

Having shown at length, that the visible church had no real existence under the Old Testament, either in the Patriarchal, Abrahamic, or Mosaic dispensation, I might now point out the exact period of its commencement under the Gospel dispensation. This, however, is not necessary at *present*. I perfectly agree with the learned *Dr. Pierson*, who fixes the day of Pentecost for its commencement. "Our Saviour," saith he, "first speaking of it, mentions it as that which then *was not*; but afterwards was to be; as when he spake to the great Apostle, 'thou art Peter, and upon this rock *I will build* my church;' but when he ascended into heaven, and the Holy Ghost came down, when Peter was made an instrument of the conversion of 3,000 souls, which were

added to the former disciples, *then* was there a church; for, after that we read, 'the Lord added to the *church* daily such as should be saved.'" *On the Creed.* Matt. xvi. 18, Acts i. 15, ii. 41, 47, iv. 4, viii. 1.

The reader, I trust, will now perceive, that the christian church is not a continuation of a Jewish church, seeing there never was a Jewish church, but a mere congregation, composed of a mixture of hearers, all professing to be Israelites, *i. e.* not Gentiles, as our congregations profess to be *christians*, and not Jews or Mahomedans. Our brethren would be much nearer the truth, if they should argue thus: all christian congregations are but a continuation of the congregation of Israel; but the Jewish children were members of the congregation of Israel, and entitled to all its privileges; therefore, the christian children are also members of the congregation, and entitled to its privileges. But this would not entitle infants to the sacred ordinance of baptism. For it is acknowledged on all hands, that baptism is only to be administered to persons *spiritually qualified* for membership in the visible church; but from the description we have given of it, it is evident, that infants do not possess the requisite qualifications for membership.

It is further argued, that infant baptism is an apostolical *tradition*; and though the scriptures are silent in the case, the uninterrupted tradition and usage of the church make up that defect. This argument of all others has the least weight with me. I dread it as a burned child dreads the fire. It was by the vain *traditions* received of the fathers, that I was so long kept in ignorance of the truth as it is in Jesus. These traditions are considered by the Rabbins of greater authority and utility than the word of God itself. The former they compare to wine, the latter to water; and who knows not that the same principle has been adopted by the *Roman hierarchs*, as the sanction and authority of the innumerable errors in doctrine and practice so prevalent and so firmly believed in that denomination. Besides, it is abundantly acknowledged by all protestants, some episcopalians excepted, and was the ground of the reformation and nonconformity, that mere tradition, without divine precept or scripture example, is no sufficient warrant, either for doctrine or practice.

Again, the ground of this argument is as fallacious as

the argument is weak. Tradition concerning infant baptism has never been traced as far back as the apostolic age. It has been proved, and, I believe, beyond the power of contradiction, that Origen, who flourished in the beginning of the third century, was the first who asserted infant baptism to be an apostolical tradition; and it is equally acknowledged, that Origen embraced several dangerous errors, and that his writings, translated by Ruffinus, were so corrupted, that the reader is very uncertain which is Origen's or Ruffinus'. See this subject fully discussed by *Danverse on Baptism*, pp. 133-150. *Booth, Pedob. Exam.* vol. 2, pp. 97, 421.

Dear reader, we have now examined all the arguments of our Pedobaptist brethren in favor of infant baptism: and I most sincerely confess that the more I examine this subject, the more I am convinced that there is no sanction for it in the scriptures; and that, therefore, it must be displeasing in the sight of God. The objections against this Essay will be answered hereafter.



## ESSAY IV.

### *Immersion, the only Scriptural Mode of Baptism.*

HAVING in the preceding Essays pointed out the proper subjects of baptism, I proceed now to show that immersion is the only scriptural mode.

My first argument is drawn from the signification of the word used by the sacred writers to express the act of this ordinance.

1. In the Greek, as well as in other languages, there are distinct words to express the variety of uses, to which water may be applied. *Rhantizo*, (from *Rhaino*) to sprinkle; *Ekcheo*, to pour out; *Louo*, to wash; *Baptizo*, (from *Bapto*) to immerse or cover in water or any other fluid. The latter of these, with its derivatives, is invariably used through the New Testament, in relation to this ordinance. If washing, pouring, or sprinkling had been sufficient, it is certainly worth our inquiry—why

did the inspired writers *always* use one and the same word, acknowledged by all to signify *primarily* and constantly, to immerse? Now, as we never mean to *sprinkle*, when we say to *immerse*, so when our blessed Lord said *Baptizontes, immersing them*, he did not mean *Rhantizontes, sprinkling them*.

As it is by the meaning of words we judge of the nature and design of a law, the *primary* meaning of the words used in that law, must be taken in interpreting it: This is a universal maxim. Hence, we are told by the learned Mr. *Ferguson*, "If men may be permitted to forsake the natural and genuine sense of words, where the matter is capable of it; they may, notwithstanding their declaring themselves to believe the Gospel, yet believe nothing at all of the christian faith." *We are not to forsake the genuine and natural signification of words, unless there be the highest evidence, that the author did otherwise intend them*, saith the civil law. And, as *Austin* says, '*the proper signification of words is always to be retained, unless necessity enforces us to expound them otherwise.*' Every scripture expression, word and phrase, is to be taken properly, and according to its original and immediate meaning, if nothing of absurdity, nothing repugnant to faith, or disagreeable to the common notions of mankind, arise or ensue upon such an acceptation. There is no bounding of a roving fancy, which loves to sport itself with the ideas and phantasms itself has raised, without confining ourselves within the aforesaid limits. What better evidence can we have of the sense of a place, than that, had an author intended such a meaning, he could have used no plainer expression to declare it." *Interest of Reason in Religion*; pp. 328, 333, 462.

Now, as the Evangelists, in recording the commission of our Lord, (Matt. xxviii. 19, and Mark xvi. 16) doubtless have used the words of Christ, and as the language is not a mere allusion to baptism, nor an incidental use of terms, in which cases words are often applied in a laxer sense; but it is the *institution* of that ordinance; it is divine law; therefore, the expressions contained in it, must be understood in their natural and obvious meaning.

2. That the word *baptizein* (rendered, to baptize) signifies, primarily, to *immerse*, and that it is never used in the New Testament to signify *pouring* or *sprinkling*, will

not easily be denied, and is confessed by many Pedobaptists, men most eminent for learning as well as piety. Mr. Booth has collected from their writings, more than *eighty* testimonies, from which I have selected but a few, which are affectionately recommended to the serious consideration of the candid reader.

*Witsius*: "It cannot be denied, that the *native* signification of the word *baptein* and *baptizein*, is to *plunge*, to *dip*." *Oecon. Foed.* L. 4, c. 16, § 13.

*Buddeus*: "The words *baptizein* and *baptismos*, are not to be interpreted of aspersion, but always, of immersion." *Theol. Dogmat.* L. 5, c. 1, § 5.

*Calvin*: "The very word *baptize*, however, signifies to immerse; and it is *certain*, that immersion was the practice of the ancient church." L. 4, c. 15, § 19.

*Vitringa*: "The act of baptizing, is the *immersion* of *believers* in water. This expresses the force of the word. Thus also it was performed by *Christ* and his *Apostles*." *Aphorismi Sanct. Theol. Aphoris.* 884.

*Zanchius*: "Baptism is a Greek word, and signifies two things; *first*, and *properly*, immersion in water. For the proper signification of the word *baptizo*, is to immerse, to plunge under, to *overwhelm* in water—and this signification properly agrees with our baptism, and has a resemblance of the thing signified." *Opera.* Tom. 6, p. 217.

N. B. Mr. *De Courcy* tells us, "that the opinion of *Zanchius* is worth a thousand others." *Rejoinder*, p. 261.

*Venema*: "The word *baptizein*, to baptize, is *no where* used in the Scripture for sprinkling; no, not in Mark vii. 4." *Inst. Hist. Eccl. Vet. et Nov. Test.* Tom. 3, *Secul.* 1, § 138.

*Alstedius*: "*Baptizein*, to baptize, signifies *only*, to immerse; not, to wash, except by consequence." *Lex. Theol.* c. 12, p. 221.

Dear reader, consider these plain and explicit testimonies of these and a thousand other Pedobaptists, that the primary meaning of the word *baptizein* is, to immerse, and you will, I trust, no longer believe that mere sprinkling is enough.

You are requested, however, to look at the following admission of a learned Pedobaptist writer of the 17th century.

“The *native* and *proper* signification of it (baptizein) is, to *dip into* water, or, to *plunge under* water.

John iii. 22, 23. After these things came *Jesus* and his disciples into the land of Judea; and there *he* tarried with them and *baptized*. And John also was baptizing in *Ænon*, near to *Salim*, because there was much water there; and they came and were baptized. Also, Matt. iii. 16, and Acts viii. 38.” *Critica Sacra*, by *Edward Leigh*.

The reader will observe, that this writer admits, that “the *native* and *proper* signification of it, (baptizein) is to dip into water, or, to plunge under water;” and to show this “*native* and *proper* signification,” he adduces the practice of “*Jesus*,” and “*John*,” and “*Philip*.” And yet, this man was so much a Pedobaptist as to say; “Christ no where requireth dipping, but only baptizing.” That is, if I understand the meaning of words, “Christ no where requireth *dipping*, but only *dipping*.”

3. I am perfectly aware, that in opposition to all these authorities, we are told, “that the word baptism is an equivocal, open, general term; that nothing is determined by it further than this, that water should be applied to the subject *in some form or other*.” Could this assertion be proved, it would seem greatly to impeach the legislative character of our Saviour. For, as *Baron Montesquieu* observes, “The style (of laws) should be plain and simple; a direct expression being always better understood than an indirect one. It is an essential article, that the words of the laws should (be adapted to) excite in every body *the same* ideas. The laws ought not to be subtle; they are designed for *common* understanding, not as an art of logic, but as the plain reason of a father to a family.” *Spirit of Laws*, B. 29, c. 16.

“Now can it be supposed,” says Mr. *Booth*, “that our Lord would give a positive law of divine worship; a law, that is obligatory on the most illiterate of his real disciples, in the *very first stage* of their christian profession; and yet, express it in such ambiguous language, that the most wise and eminent of all his followers cannot now understand it? Love to his character and zeal for his cause, forbid the thought! That ambiguity, of which our brethren speak, must, if real, have arisen in our great Legislator’s conduct, either from *incapacity*, from *inad-*

*vertency*, or from *design*. Not the *first*; for he was undoubtedly able, clearly to have expressed his own meaning. Not the *second*; for no incogitancy could befall Him, in whom are *all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*. Not the *last*; for it would ill become one, who declared himself possessed of *all authority in heaven and in earth*, to give a law of perpetual obligation, with an intention, that no body now should understand it." *Pedob. Exam.* I. 105.

In addition to what has already been said on the necessity of a positive law being plain, clear and explicit, &c. the reader will please seriously to consider the following declarations of some of our learned Pedobaptist writers.

*Mr. Bradbury*: "The words (of our Lord, Matt. xxviii. 19) ought to be taken in their plain and natural sense, because they are a lasting form to the end of time. For Christ to give us expressions that people cannot understand, would be only to *abuse* them. 'Tis unworthy of him, who is the *light* of the world, in whose mouth there was no guile—(such) is the plain and natural sense of the words; and, therefore, to twine and torture them with conjectures and *maybe's*, is making Christ, not a teacher, but a *barbarian*, by not uttering words that are easy to be understood." *Duty and Doct. of Bap.* pp. 150, 173.

*Mr. Benj. Bennet*: 'Tis a *reproach* to the lawgiver, *blasphemy* against him, to suppose that any of his upright, sincere subjects cannot find out the meaning of his laws, with all their care and diligence, even in the necessary, essential points of their faith and obedience. *Irenicum*, p. 60.

*Turretinus*: "It is not lawful to suppose, that Christ, in a very important affair of christianity, would so express himself, that he could not be understood by any mortal." *Instit. Loc. 19, Quaest. 18, § 4.*

*Dr. Ridgely*: "In order to our yielding obedience, it is necessary, that God should signify to us in *what* instances he will be obeyed, and the *manner how* it is to be performed; otherwise, it would rather be fulfilling of our own will than his." *Body of Divin. Quest. 91, 92.*

4. It further appears, that the word constantly used for the act of baptism, signifies immersion; that in all the

translations of the New Testament into different languages, which I have seen, the word, which signifies or answers to the word immersion, has been adopted. For example. German, *Tupfen*; Dutch, *Doop*; Danish, *Dobe*, &c. Notwithstanding my admiration of the general correctness of the translation of our English Bible; yet I cannot but deeply regret, that the translators adopted the Greek word with a mere English *termination*, rather than give us the proper English word. Had they acted as faithfully in this instance as they did in general, we should have the word *immerse*, instead of *baptize*, and no other. For they were men too learned to be ignorant of its true signification, and too pious, intentionally to lead the people into an error. Had this been the case, much confusion, controversy and ill will would have been prevented; for the commission of our blessed Saviour would have read thus: "Go—teach all nations, *immersing* them"—"He, that believeth and is *immersed*;" and who would have dreamed or dared to say, that sprinkling is enough? But, now, the common English reader finds it difficult himself to determine the proper meaning of the word *baptize*; and is, therefore, liable to be misguided by the instructions or information he receives from others.

Convinced of the excellent character of our translators, I was utterly unable to account for the reasons, which led them to adopt the Greek word rather than translate it, until of late I have learned, that these holy men of God were shackled by certain laws, rules and regulations, drawn up by the Bench of Bishops, and sanctioned by King *James*, which actually prohibited the translation of the word, in every instance relating to the ordinance of baptism.\*

A similar transaction took place a few years ago. When the London Society for promoting christianity amongst the Jews, commenced the translation of the New Testament into pure Hebrew, they soon met with the word under consideration, and which occasioned not a little dif-

\* I would not be understood to mean, that the restriction of king *James* was confined to the word *baptize*, for it extended to several other important words, as the reader may learn, if he have the curiosity.

ficulty. Not with respect to the primary meaning of the word, nor to find a proper corresponding Hebrew word, but the difficulty was, how to avoid giving offence. Had they adopted the word  $\text{טָבַל}$  *Tāvāl*, or *Tābāl*, to immerse, or  $\text{רָחַץ}$  *Rāchätz*, to wash, (which words are nearly synonymous, for washing implies dipping or immersion, as nothing can be washed, unless it be covered first with water,) whilst they would have done justice to the original, they would have given offence to the mass or bulk of Pedobaptists; on the other hand, had they used the word  $\text{שָׁפַךְ}$  *Shāphāch*, to pour, or  $\text{זָרַק}$  *Zārāk*, to sprinkle, besides doing violence to the original, they would not only have given just offence to the whole large and respectable body of Baptists, but even many pious and conscientious Pedobaptists, would have condemned their conduct. *Polity*, therefore, led them not to translate the word at all, but to metamorphose the Greek word into Hebrew for the use of the text, and in the margin they put the words *Taval*, to immerse, and *Rachatz*, to wash; but no where did they use the word *Shaphach*, to pour, or *Zarak*, to sprinkle. Different has been their conduct in their late translation of the New Testament into the Polish-Hebrew dialect. Here the word *Taval*, to immerse, is invariably used in the text. At this I am much pleased; for as soon as the Jew sees the word *taval*, he knows that the ordinance is to be administered by *immersion*, and *in no other way*. The reason why, in this translation, the proper word is inserted, I suppose, is, that it being designed for the Jews in Germany, and particularly in Poland, or Russia, no danger is to be apprehended of giving offence. For we have already shewn, that in the German bible the word, which signifies immersion, is used, and in Russia baptism has never been administered in any other way.

5. The metaphorical use of the word furnishes another proof that it signifies immersion.

Our Lord, speaking of his approaching *sufferings*, calls them a *Baptism*. “Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?” Matt. xx. 22. “I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!” Luke xii. 50. Not a few of the most emi-

ment of our Pedobaptist brethren acknowledge, that our Lord made use of this metaphor to shew the greatness and abundance of his sufferings. For, as in baptism the person is plunged into water, is covered with it, and continues awhile under it, and then is raised out of it, and which being once done, is done no more; so the sufferings of Christ were so many and so great, that he was, as it were, overwhelmed with them, and he continued under them, and under the power of death and the grave for a time; and being raised from the dead, he dies no more; death has no more dominion over him. Thus baptism, if administered by immersion, is full of instruction. It reminds us that our blessed Saviour was immersed in an ocean of sufferings. But how trifling would the sufferings of Christ appear, if baptism meant mere *sprinkling*. We all know the great difference between being immersed in and overwhelmed with water, and being merely sprinkled with a few drops. The reader will please to notice the sentiment of the following Pedobaptists.

*D. Martin*: "Jesus has here (Mark x. 38) used this expression in the same sense as the prophets have mentioned gulfs and great waters, metaphorically to represent great afflictions." *Notes Sur Marc* x. 38.

*A. H. Frankius*: "The baptism of Christ represented his sufferings, Matt. xx. 22, and his coming up out of the water, his resurrection from the dead." *Programmata, Progr.* 14, p. 343.

*Bp. Reynold*: "There are two words—which signify suffering of afflictions, and they are both applied unto Christ. Matt. xx. 22. 'Are ye able to drink of the cup, that I shall drink of, or be baptized with that baptism that I am baptized with?' He that drinketh, has the water *in* him; he that is dipped or plunged, has the water *about* him; so it notes the *universality* of the wrath, which Christ suffered." *Works*, pp. 226, 407.

Thus the Israelites are said, metaphorically, to be "baptized in the sea and in the cloud," 1 Cor. x. 2, because of the waters, which stood on each side of them, like high walls, and the cloud, which covered them all over, like one immersed in water. Worthy of notice are the words of two very eminent Pedobaptists, viz :

*Turretin*: "The passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea, wonderfully agrees with our baptism, and repre-

sents the grace it was designed to express. For as, in baptism, when performed in the *primitive* manner, by *immersion* and *emersion*, *descending* into the water, and again *going out* of it, of which descent and ascent we have an example in the eunuch, Acts viii. 38, 9: yea, and what is more, as by this rite, when persons are immersed in water, they are overwhelmed, and, as it were, buried, and in a manner '*buried together with Christ*;' and again, when they emerge, seem to be raised out of the grave, and are said 'to rise again with Christ;' Rom. vi. 4, 5. Col. ii. 12; so, in the Mosaic baptism, we have an immersion and an emersion; *that* when they descended into the depth of the sea, *this* when they went out, and came to the opposite shore. The former was an image of death; the latter of a resurrection. For, passing through the bottom of the sea, were they not near to death? and escaping to the opposite shore, were they not as if revived from the dead? As in *former* times, the persons to be baptized were immersed in the water, continued under the water, and emerged out of it. Matt. iii. 16, Acts viii. 38; so the old man died in them and was buried, and the new man arose. Rom. vi. 4. Col. ii. 12." *Disp. de Bap. Nubis & Maris*, § 24. *Inst. Theol.* Tom. 3, Loc. 19, Quaes. 11, § 14.

*Witsius*: "How were the Israelites baptized in the cloud and in the sea, seeing they were neither immersed in the sea, nor wetted by the cloud? It is to be considered, that the Apostle here uses the term baptism in a figurative sense. The cloud hung over their heads; and so the water is over those that are baptized. The sea surrounded them on each side; and so the water in regard of those that are baptized." *Oecon. Foed.* L. 4, c. 10, § 11.

The supposition, "that the Israelites were sprinkled with spray from the sea, and rain from the cloud," is altogether destitute of evidence, and too fanciful to deserve attention. It is refuted by the very scripture on which it is built, viz: Ps. lxxviii. 9, "Thou, O God, didst send a *plentiful* rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance when it was weary." If to be baptized in the cloud, means to be wetted by a *plentiful* rain, it would prove immersion rather than sprinkling; nor is it easy to conceive in what sense "God's *weary* inheritance was

*confirmed*" when baptized in a *plentiful* rain! We should suppose this was more calculated to enfeeble and discourage the strong, than to confirm and encourage the weary. How true it is that "a drowning man will grasp at a straw!" Further, believers also are said to have *put on* Christ in baptism. Gal. iii. 27. In allusion to the long robe or garment worn in the east, with which the *whole* body is covered, so in baptism the whole body is covered or immersed in water.

Thus *Beza*: "'*Ye have put on Christ;*'" this phrase seems to proceed from the *ancient* custom of *plunging* the adult in baptism." *Annot. ad Gal.* iii. 27.

Again, to shew the necessity of a holy life and conversation, the Apostle puts the believing Romans in mind of their baptism, the profession they made in it, and the obligation they took upon themselves to live according to the truth, which the ordinance did plainly signify. Now, if baptism means immersion, the writer's reasoning is beautiful and cogent; but exceedingly feeble, and very unlike the strong reasonings of this Apostle, if sprinkling or pouring were the mode of baptism.

*Burmannus*: "Immersion was used by the *Jews*, the *Apostles*, and the *primitive church*, especially in warm countries. To this, various forms of speaking used by the Apostles refer. Rom. vi. 3, 4, Col. ii. 12, Gal. iii. 27. *Synop. Theolog.* Tom. 2, Loc. 43, c. 6, § 9.

6. My next argument is derived from the places selected for the administration of the ordinance and the phraseology used on the occasion.

The first place in which, we read, baptism was administered, was *the river Jordan*. To this place all Judea flocked; and our Lord and Saviour himself went from Galilee to *Jordan* to be baptized of John; and when "he was baptized, he went *up* straightway *out of the water*." Matt. iii. 16. Now, if sprinkling or pouring could have answered the end of the institution, what need would there have been for going to a distance, or down into a river? The next place where John baptized was *Ænon*; and the reason why he selected this place was, because there was *much water* there." John iii. 23. But if sprinkling or pouring had been equally right and good, what necessity would there have been for *much* water? Was it ever known, that any of our Pedobaptist brethren

“went down to a river” to sprinkle or pour water in the administration of the ordinance of baptism? Surely not! Nor should we have heard of going down into the water, and coming out of the water, if the Apostles had administered the sacred ordinance by pouring or sprinkling. How strange it would sound to say, Jesus was *poured* in Jordan! or Jesus went down into Jordan, and was *sprinkled* of John. But nothing could be more intelligible and natural, than to say, Jesus went down into the water, and was *immersed* by John in Jordan. Nor ought we to overlook the baptism of the eunuch. Acts viii. 26–40. Directed by the Lord, Philip met the eunuch, and preached Jesus to him. When they came to a *certain water*, the eunuch desired to be baptized, and having declared his belief “that Jesus Christ is the Son of God,” “he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him; and when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more, and he went on his way rejoicing.” Had sprinkling been sufficient, they needed not to have gone down into the water, for a little water would have sufficed.

That this is a convincing argument to prove that John and the Apostles baptized by immersion, is acknowledged by a cloud of witnesses from our Pedobaptist brethren themselves. I have selected but a few out of many.

*Le Clerc*: “John has been called the *Baptizer*, rather than *Baptist*, because the latter word is a *proper* name in the modern languages; whereas, in this place, (Matt. iii. 1,) it is an appellation to signify a man that *plunged* in water those who testified an acknowledgment of his divine mission, and were desirous of leading a new life.” *Remarks sur Nouv. Test. à Matt. iii. 1.*

*Piscator*: “*Hudata polla* signifies many rivers; as *Hudor*, in the singular number, denoted the river Jordan. This is mentioned to signify the ceremony of baptism, which John used; *i. e.* *immersing* the whole body of a person standing in the river. Whence Christ, being baptized of John in Jordan, is said to *ascend out of the water* Matt. iii. The same manner was observed by Philip, Acts viii. 38.” *ad Joh. iii. 23.*

*Calvin*: “From these words, John iii. 23, it may be

inferred, that baptism was administered by *John and Christ*, by plunging the whole body under water. Here we perceive how baptism was administered among the *ancients*; for they immersed the *whole body* in water." Com. in Joan. iii. 23. Acts viii. 38.

*Marloratus*: "From these words (John iii. 23) it may be gathered, that baptism was performed by John and Christ, by plunging of the whole body." Com. ad Joan. iii. 23.

7. Observe, in the third place, the practice of the primitive churches as another argument in favor of immersion. As the Apostles of Jesus Christ were to form and organize his visible church, our blessed Lord continued with them after his resurrection forty days, "speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." Among other subjects, baptism, the door of entrance to that kingdom or his church, was doubtless fully explained to them; and when they entered on their commission to preach, teach, or disciple, and to baptize, a part of their teaching would certainly consist in pointing out the nature, design, the mode and subjects of baptism. And, as it has already been proved in the preceding pages from the sacred scriptures, as well as from the concessions of Pedobaptists, that the word *baptism*, throughout the whole of the New Testament, signifies immersion *only*; and that John and Philip administered by immersion; and that the Lord Jesus Christ himself *went down into the water*, and being immersed by John *in the river Jordan*, he straightway came again *up out of the water*; and as the Saviour, the great Head of the church, in his commission, used the word *baptism*, to immerse, in preference to those words which signify to wash, pour or sprinkle; and as the Apostles themselves, when speaking of his ordinance, invariably used the same word, *to immerse*; we may certainly conclude that immersion is the only mode used in the churches they planted; and that it continued unchanged for some time.

Nor are we at a loss to produce unimpeached testimonies on this subject. Not a few Pedobaptists, whose praise is in all the churches, have honorably confessed, that immersion was the constant mode in the primitive church. The reader will have observed in the preceding paragraphs, that this was the opinion of Calvin, Vitringa,

Frankius, Turrentin, Beza, Burmannus, Le Clerc, Pic-tetus, Piscator, and Maloratus, (see § 2, 5, 6.) I will add only a few more.

*Salmanius*: "The ancients did not baptize otherwise than by immersion, either once or thrice." See *Witsius Oecon. Foed. L. 4, c. 16, § 13.*

*Heidanus*: "That John the Baptist and the Apostles immersed, there is no doubt, (Matt. iii. 6, 16, John iii. 23, Acts viii. 38,) whose example the ancient church followed, as is most evident from the testimonies of the *Fathers. Corp. Theol. Christ. Loc. 14, Tom. 2, p. 475.*

*Zanchius*: "The ancient church used to immerse those that were baptized. Thus Christ went down into Jordan, and was baptized; as also others that were baptized by John. *Opera. Tom. 6, p. 217.*

Dear reader, seriously attend to the just remark of the studious and pious Mr. Booth, who, having made many quotations from Pedobaptist writers, closes with the following words: "Is it not strange, strange to astonishment, that so many eminent men should thus agree in bearing testimony to immersion, as the apostolic example, when it is notorious that their *own* practice was very different? Yes, is it not a wonderful phenomenon in the religious world, that such a number of the most learned Lutherans, Calvinists, and Arminians, Presbyterians and Independents, should all unite in one attestation respecting the primitive mode of administering this ordinance, even while they opposed the Baptists for considering immersion as absolutely necessary to a compliance with the divine command; and while they greatly differ among themselves in respect of several particulars relating to the subjects and design of baptism? To what can this remarkable agreement with us, as to the primitive mode of proceeding, be ascribed? And what is the reason of their differing so much among themselves? The true reason I take to be this: when they unite in declaring their views of the apostolic pattern, they have clear, strong, indubitable evidence, arising from the meaning of the name which the ordinance bears, and the inspired narrative of the first christian churches. Each of them feels the ground on which he treads. Hence their union; and here they agree with us. On the other hand, when they differ among themselves about the foundation of an

infant's claim on the ordinance; concerning the degree of necessity and the utility of Pedobaptism; about sponsors, the sign of the cross, and so on; they argue on general principles and moral considerations. This kind of argumentation is quite foreign to the nature of *positive rites*, as has been shewn, (Essay I. ;) and yet, by a long train of deductions from such principles, they infer their various rules of proceeding in the administration of baptism. Hence, they differ among themselves. Nor need we wonder; for, whenever ideas of moral fitness, of expediency, or of necessity, usurp the place of divine precepts and apostolic examples, relating to positive institutions of the christian church; the most learned and the best of men will always differ in their conclusions, and that in proportion as their notions of what is fitness, expediency or necessity, vary. For it is notorious, that, while one esteems this or the other thing extremely proper and highly useful to the cause of religion; another despises it as absurd, or detests it as injurious. But, when our divine Lord, addressing his disciples in a positive command, says, 'it *shall* be so;' or when, speaking by an apostolic example, he declares, 'it is thus,' all our own reasonings about fitness, expediency, or utility, must hide their impertinent heads. The finest powers of reason have nothing to do in this case, but only to consider the natural, the obvious import of his language, and then submit. To reason any further here, is only to seek a plausible excuse for rebellion against the sovereign majesty of him who is King in Zion." *Pedob. Exam. I. 226.*

8. That immersion is the proper mode of baptism, appears fourthly, from the constant and uninterrupted practice of it in the Greek church. The Greeks certainly understand their own native tongue, in which the New Testament was originally written, better than any foreigners; therefore, their administering the ordinance by immersion, evidently shows the correct signification of the Greek word *baptizo*. Hence, the learned *Dr. Campbell*, speaking of terms which rarely occur in the Greek Testament, remarks: "This is one of those cases, wherein the interpretation given by the earliest Greek fathers, deserves particular notice. There are so many advantages, which people have for discovering the import of a term or phrase in their mother-tongue, unusual, perhaps, in wri-

ting, but correct in conversation, above those, who study a dead language, solely by the means of books extant in it, that no reasonable person can question, that some deference is in such cases due to their authority." *Trans. of Four Gospels*, Pref. Diss. 4, § 8. The sensible remarks of *Mr. Robinson* also deserve a place here: "Whether John the Baptist and the Apostles of our blessed Lord baptized by pouring on water, or by bathing in water, is to be determined chiefly, though not wholly, by ascertaining the precise meaning of the word baptize. A Linguist determines himself by his own knowledge of the Greek Language, and an illiterate man, by the best evidence he can obtain from the testimony of others. To the latter it is sufficient to observe, that the word is confessedly Greek; that native Greeks must understand their own language better than foreigners, and that they have always understood the word baptism to signify *dipping*; and therefore, *from their first embracing of christianity to this day, they have always baptized by immersion*. This is an authority for the meaning of the word baptize, infinitely preferable to that of European lexicographers; so that a man, who is obliged to trust human testimony, and who baptizes by immersion because the Greeks do, understands a Greek word exactly as the Greeks themselves understand it; and, in this case, the Greeks are unexceptionable guides, and their practice is, in this instance, safe ground of action." *Hist. of Baptism*, p. 5.

That the whole Greek church, from the southern provinces of Greece to the northern extremity of the Russian empire, a church, which, in point of territory and population, embraces nearly one half of Christendom, that this church has, from the first introduction of the Gospel to the present time, invariably practised immersion, is confessed by all and denied by none.

*Deylingius*: "The Greeks retain the rite of immersion to this day." *De Prudent. Pastoral*, Pars. 3, c. 3, § 26.

*Buddeus*: "That the Greeks defend immersion, is manifest, and has been frequently observed by learned men: which *Ludolphus* informs us, is the practice of the Ethiopians." *Theolog. Dogmat.* L. 5, c. 1, § 5.

*Venema*: "The Greeks immerse the whole man in water." *Hist. Eccles.* Tom. 6, p. 660.

*Dr. Wall*: "All the christians in Asia, all in Africa,

and about *one third* part of *Europe*, are of the last sort, (*i. e.* practice immersion), in which third part of Europe, are comprehended the christians of Graecia, Thracia, Servia, Bulgaria, Rascia, Walachia, Moldavia, Russia, and so on; and even the Moscovites, who, if *coldness of country* will excuse, might plead for a dispensation with the most reason of any." *Hist. Inf. Bap.* P. II. c. 9, p. 477.

9. *Fifthly, lastly.*—*The principal design* of the ordinance, to represent the *death, burial, and resurrection* of Christ; the *communion* his people have with him in these momentous facts; and *their interest* in the *blessings* thence resulting, is accomplished much clearer, and fuller, and more impressively, by immersion, than could be done in any other mode whatever. This, also, is abundantly confessed by Pedobaptists.

*Buddcus*: Immersion, which was used in former times, as we have before declared, was a symbol and an *image* of the *death* and burial of Christ: by which we are taught, that the remains of sin, which are called the *old man*, should also be put to death; that is, as Paul elsewhere speaks, our *flesh, with its affections and lusts*, should be *crucified*. For in that way, we, as it were, die and are buried with Christ, which Paul expressly shews, Rom. vi. 4. An emersion out of the water follows, (Matt. iii. 16), which exhibits a most beautiful image of the resurrection of Christ; and, at the same time, it affords matter of instruction concerning that spiritual resurrection, which is effected by daily renovation." Rom. vi. 4. *Theolog. Dogmat.* L. 5, c. 1, §§ 5, 8.

*Witsius*: "Our Lord would be baptized, that he might conciliate authority to the baptism of John; that he might manifest himself to be equally the head of those, who are baptized, as of those, who are circumcised; that he has communion with both, and came, that of both he might make one: that by his own example, he might commend and sanctify our baptism, equally as other sacraments, to which he submitted; that men might not be loath to come to the baptism of the Lord, *seeing the Lord was not backward to come to the baptism of a servant*: that by his baptism, he might represent the future condition, both of himself and of his followers; first *humble*, then *glorious*; now mean and low, then glorious and exalted; that represent-

ed, by *immersion*, *this*, by *emersion*: that, by the use of this sacrament, the promises of the covenant which was between himself and the Father, might be confirmed to him, concerning the entire expiation of those offences, which he took on himself, the justification of those persons whom he represented, and concerning a glorious resurrection, by which he should soon emerge out of the waters of tribulation, Ps. cx. 7: and, finally, to declare, by his voluntary submission to baptism, that he would not delay the delivering up of himself to be immersed in the torments of hell, yet with a certain faith and hope of emerging.

Immersion into the water is to be considered by us, as exhibiting that dreadful abyss of divine justice, in which Christ for our sins, which he took on himself, was for a time, as it were, absorbed; as in David, his type, he complains, Ps. lxxix. 3. More particularly, seeing such an immersion deprives a person of light, and of other things pertaining to this world, it excellently represents the death of Christ, while his continuance under water, however short, denotes the burial of Christ, and the lowest degree of humiliation; when, being laid in a sepulchre, that was sealed and guarded by the Roman soldiers, he was considered as entirely cut off. Emersion out of the water, exhibits an image of his resurrection, or of the victory which, being dead, he obtained over death in his own dark domains, that is, the grave. All these things the Apostle intimates, Rom. vi. 3, 4.

Baptism also represents those *benefits*, both present and future, which believers obtain in Christ. Among the present benefits, the principal is, communion with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, and, which is consequent upon it, the mortification and burial of our old, and resurrection of our new man, in virtue of the blood and spirit of Christ. For, immersion into the water, represents the death of the old man, in such a manner as shows, that he can neither stand in judgment to our condemnation, nor exercise dominion in our bodies, that we should obey his lusts. In respect to the former, the death of the old man pertains to our justification; in regard to the latter, it belongs to our sanctification. The continuance under the water, represents the burial of the body of sin, by which all hope of its revival is cut off; so that

it shall never be able afterwards, either to condemn the elect, or to reign over them." *Miscel. Sac.* Tom. 2, Exer. 15, § 63. *Oec. Foed.* L. 4, c. 16, §§ 25—29.

*Estius*: "The ceremony of immersion was anciently more common, as appears from the unanimous language of the *Fathers*, as often as they speak about baptism; and in a more expressive manner represents the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord, and of us." *Apud Knatchbul. Animad. in lib. Nov. Test.* p. 181.

*Pictetus*: "It was usual in ancient times for the whole body to be immersed in water—and it must be confessed, that such a rite most happily represented that grace, by which our sins are, as it were, drowned, and we raised again from the abyss of sin." *Theol. Christ.* L. 14, c. 4, § 17.

*Vossius*: "All the particulars, that we have mentioned, concerning the signification of baptism, will appear with sufficient perspicuity in the rite of *immersion*: but not equally so, if mere sprinkling be used." *Disp. De Bap.* Disp. 3, § 10.

I shall close this Essay with the testimony of the great Reformer, *M. Luther*: "The term baptism, is a Greek word. It may be rendered, a *dipping*, as when we dip something in water, that it may be *entirely* covered with water. And though that custom be quite abolished among the generality, (for neither do they entirely dip children, but only sprinkle them with a little water,) nevertheless, they *ought to be wholly immersed*, and presently to be drawn out again. For, the etymology of the word seems to require it. The Germans call baptism *tauffe*, from *depth*, which they call *tieff*, in their language; as if it were proper those should be *deeply immersed*, who are baptized. And truly, if you consider what baptism signifies, you shall see the same thing required: for it signifies that the old man of our nativity, that is full of sins, which is entirely of flesh and blood, may be *overwhelmed by divine grace*. The *manner* of baptism, therefore, should correspond to the *signification* of baptism, that it may show a certain and plain sign of it." *In Dr. Du Veil on Acts viii.* 38.

Dear reader, I have now endeavored to show, that the Scripture mode of Baptism is by *immersion only*, from the *signification of the word used to express the act of the or-*

*dinance ; from the places selected for the administration of it, and the phrases used on the occasion ; from the practice of the Primitive Church ; from the constant and uninterrupted mode of the Greek Church ; and from the principal design of the institution.* The objections against these arguments will be answered in the proper place ; and in the mean time, I pray, that the Spirit of truth may guide you in the right way, for his name's sake. Amen.

---

## ESSAY V.

### *Objections Answered.*

WHY do Baptists require a divine precept, or scripture example, for infant baptism, since they admit *females to communion*, and observe the *first day of the week* as the christian sabbath, when there is neither a divine precept nor scripture example for either.

*Answer.* With respect to *female communion*, we have authority from the law of the institution, and from the practice of the church. In the positive command of our Lord to commemorate his death in the ordinance of the Supper, the subjects are characterized as *disciples*, without any regard to *sex*. It is true, when the Apostle directs the Corinthian church to a proper celebration of the Supper, he says, "Let a *man* examine himself." 1 Cor. xi. 28. But it will not be denied, that the word *anthropos*, *man*, includes females, as well as males. Thus, (John iii. 3, 4,) "Except a *man* be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." 2 Cor. v. 17. "If any *man* (*τις any one*) be in Christ, he is a new creature." 1 Tim. ii. 5, "One Mediator between God and *men*." Besides, the Lord's Supper was celebrated by the whole church, which was composed of males and *females*. For we read that the *females* as well as males, men and women, on their profession of faith, were *baptized*, were together with the disciples, and continued stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine, and in fellowship, and *in breaking of bread*, and in prayers. See Acts i. 13, 14. ii. 42, 44. viii. 12, 1 Cor. x. 17. Wo-

men are spoken of as *disciples*, baptized, *in the church*; all the disciples were in fellowship or *communion*; all were together "in breaking of bread," &c.; but the New Testament is *silent on infant baptism*.

With respect to the change of the sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week, I would observe, that this change was alluded to by the prophet Isaiah lxx. 17, 18. "Behold I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind; but be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy." "This passage," says *Dr. Dwight*, a zealous Pedobaptist, "appears to me to place the fact in the clearest light, that a particular, superior, and extraordinary commemoration of the work of redemption by the christian church, in all its various ages, was a part of the good pleasure of God; and was designed by him to be accomplished in the course of his providence. But there neither is, nor ever was, any public, solemn commemoration of this work by the christian church, except *that* which is holden on the *first day* of the week, or the day in which Christ completed this great work by his resurrection from the dead. This prophecy has, therefore, been unfulfilled, so far as I see, unless it has been fulfilled in this very manner." *Theol. Serm. CVI.* Further, it was predicted, that the day of the resurrection of the Messiah was to be a peculiar day. Ps. cxviii. 22-24. "The stone which the builders refused, is become the headstone of the corner; this is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." This prediction is applied to the Messiah in the New Testament oftener than any other. Matt. xxi. 42; Mark xii. 10, Luke xx. 17, Acts iv. 11, Eph. ii. 20, and 1 Pet. ii. 4. The Jewish writers also applied it to the Messiah. It is evident, therefore, that Jesus Christ is the *Stone* here mentioned; that he was rejected and set at nought by the chief priests and Pharisees; but, being chosen of God and precious to him, this most valuable stone, thus despised and rejected of men, thus thrown among the rubbish, and buried in it, was, at length, from such a state, exalted to be the chief corner stone in the building, the main support of the edifice, and a centre of union for Jew

and Gentile, the two parts of which it consisted. "Of the day on which Christ arose from the dead," says the pious *Bishop Horne*, "it may with more propriety than of any other day, be affirmed, 'this is the day which Jehovah hath made.' Then it was that the 'rejected stone' became the 'head of the corner.' A morning then dawned, which is to be followed by no evening; a brighter sun arose upon the world, which is to set no more; a day began, which will never end; and night and darkness departed to return not again." Isa. lx. 20. Hence it is called, in the New Testament, "*the Lord's day*," Rev. i. 10, *i. e.* a day consecrated and devoted to God. Numb. vi. 27. 1 Kings viii. 43. Hence the Apostles observed the first day of the week as a day sacred to God. Acts xx. 7. 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2. So in the New Testament, we have "*the Lord's day*," or "*the first day of the week*," spoken of as a day observed by the disciples for religious purposes; but *no mention* is made of *infant baptism*. These facts put the two subjects on a very different footing.

It is very frequently objected that, though we have no law in the New Testament for infant baptism, yet there is no law against it. Or, to state the objection in all its parts, it is said, "The Jewish children were circumcised as a token of their interest in the covenant made with Abraham, and were members of the Jewish church; it was, therefore, reasonable to expect that they would continue to be members of the christian church, unless that privilege was abrogated by an express law; but, as there is no such law in the New Testament, therefore, it is *unjust* and *cruel* to deprive the dear children of these privileges."

I answer *first*, that no argument can be drawn from circumcision in favor of infant baptism, as has already been stated, (Essay 3,) nor from the state of the Jewish children under the Mosaic dispensation, and of those under the christian dispensation. For, as there was no visible church under the Old Testament, but a mere congregation, (see Essay 3,) the Jewish children were members of the congregation only, and so are the children of christians, but not members of the christian church.

To that part of the objection, "that it is reasonable and desirable that children should be baptized," I reply, that in positive institutions, we have nothing to do with

reasonings or conjectures about the propriety and impropriety, expediency or utility. A "*Thus saith the Lord*" is a sufficient and binding authority for our obedience, and the only rule for our direction. In addition to what has already been said on this subject, (Essay 1,) the observation of *Dr. Claggett* deserves our notice. In arguing against Popish ceremonies, that they had neither scripture precept, nor example, he says, "their congruity to our *reason* is not the proof of their divine institution; since there are very many things, which, to our finite understandings, would appear as useful and as reasonable, but which yet God has not instituted. When it once appears what God has instituted in order to our salvation, and no more, we are to conclude that this is enough in its kind, because it is all that God has done. But, for that other kind of arguing, that God has been *wanting* to us in his institutions, if he has not instituted (this or that) and, therefore, he *has* instituted it, I leave to those whose conclusions *need* it; very much desiring them to consider *what a cause that must be*, which drives them to such bold reasonings as these are." *Preserv. against Pop.* Title 7, p. 93. The objection further states, "that if children had no right to baptism, we should expect to meet with an express law excluding them." My answer is, that every affirmative command of Christ includes a negative. When Christ commands the baptizing of believers, he prohibits all others not so *qualified*. *Nadab* and *Abihu* had no prohibition from using strange fire, yet they were destroyed for using that fire which the Lord had "*not commanded*." If this objection be valid, why do we condemn the Pope and his followers for using the sign of the cross, the holy unction, and a thousand other superstitions? For, though they are not commanded, yet they are *not prohibited*. The proper rule is to worship God in what he *has* commanded, and in no other way; else it is will-worship, and displeasing to God.

Christ, the great Head of the church, requires certain qualifications of the candidate for baptism or church-membership; such as illumination, conviction, repentance, and confession of sin, faith in him, becoming a disciple, &c. Matt. iii. 6. xxviii. 19. Mark xvi. 16. John i. 29. iv. 1. Acts ii. 37, 38, 41. viii. 36. ix. 18. (See Essay 3.)

Hence it is evident, that none who are ignorant of divine

things, impenitent and unbelieving, and who are not disciples and followers of Christ, and who are destitute of the Spirit, are proper subjects of baptism. Neither birth, rank, nor talent gives a title or fitness for this holy ordinance. John i. 12, 13.

Further, in this objection, the Baptists are accused of "unjustly and cruelly depriving the dear children of their privileges." Such is my attachment to children, that I should be exceedingly sorry, if there were even a shadow of truth in this accusation. Nor can I find any evidence to substantiate the charge. None can be said to be deprived of a thing which he never possessed, and to which he never had either title or fitness; and it has been shewn that infants have neither title to the sacred ordinance of baptism, nor fitness for it.

3. It is objected, in the next place, that it appears from scripture that the christian church is but a continuation of the Jewish church.

In addition to what has already been said on this subject, (E. 3,) let us examine the ground of this assertion.

The venerable *Dr. Mason* reasoned thus: "We know by experience that the church of God was in the world before us. So did our fathers: so did the previous generation: and in this manner the historical fact may be deduced from the days of the Apostles. The "church," therefore, has not been created since their days. Was it created then? No. The Apostles found it as we found it, older than themselves. Their writings are full of its privileges, its ordinances, and other peculiarities; but contain not a single hint of its originating with them. They uniformly *suppose* its prior establishment, and speak of it as having been long and familiarly understood. Guided by the clew which they have put into our hands, we go back to the books of the prophets, and meet the same supposition there. We proceed with similar success through the Levitical law, and the Sinai-covenant; we pass the age of Moses, and arrive at the *father of the faithful*. Here the clew runs out." *Essays on the church*, p. 36. Notwithstanding the acknowledged talents of the Doctor, in his reasoning on this subject he was certainly mistaken. Is it, indeed, true that the Apostles found it (i. e. *the visible church*) as we found it, older than themselves?" This is taking for granted the very

thing in dispute. We have found the visible church composed of particular churches, each of which might give a historical account of its origin, when certain individuals, having satisfied each other that they possessed the requisite qualifications of church members, formed themselves into a church, and chose their officers, and received new members in the same way. But the Apostles found no such visible church or particular churches. For such had no existence under the Mosaic, Abrahamic, or Patriarchal dispensation, as has been shewn above. On the day of Pentecost, the "one hundred and twenty disciples were the church to which the Lord added about three thousand souls; and this numerous body of christians were the church, to which, afterward, "the Lord added daily such as should be saved."

Their acquaintance with the "privileges," &c. &c. no more proves the real existence of a visible church under the Old Testament, than the acquaintance of patriarchs and prophets, and other holy men of old, with the blessings and privileges of redemption, proves the real existence of an *incarnate* Messiah and the finished work of redemption before their days. As they obtained their knowledge of things to come, by types, promises, &c. so did the Apostles. Moreover, the LORD JESUS was with them for forty days after his resurrection, "*speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God,*" or *visible church.* Acts i. 3. It is not denied, that the Jewish nation was a *type* of the christian church; but the *anti-type* is not an identical *continuation of the type.* It is separate and distinct. The portrait of a man is not the living man, however good a resemblance it may bear to him. The shadow is not the substance. This answer will equally overturn the second ground of the assertion, viz: "the christian church must be a continuation of the Jewish church, because the names, privileges, and promises of the latter are given likewise to the former." Is this conclusion correct? Does it follow that the anti-type is a continuation of the type, because *some* of the things said of the one, are also said of the other? Is Christ a continuation of the *manna* which our fathers did eat in the wilderness, because he calls himself the bread that came down from heaven? Is the son of man a *continuation of the brazen serpent*, because he was lifted up that whosoever believes in him

shall not perish, but have everlasting life? The benefits connected with the types were temporal, those of the anti-type are spiritual and eternal. All the promises and threatenings connected with the Jews, *as they were the natural posterity of Abraham, and afterwards formed into a national community*, were *temporal* in their nature and duration, and depend on certain conditions of obedience; but the *very same* promises applied to the christian church, are spiritual in their nature, and eternal in their duration. The reader will please to attend to the language of the Doctor himself. "The Jews," says he, "could *nationally* call God 'their God.' They often did so, and with right, *when they were gross hypocrites* in the articles of their *personal* religion. The Sinai-covenant constituted them the people of Jehovah, and him their God, as really, but in a *widely different* sense, as he was the covenant God of Abraham, or of Paul, for *personal* salvation." *Essays on the church*, p. 44, Note.

The language of the apostle, describing the Jews under the metaphor of an olive tree, &c. is brought as another argument, to prove that the christian church is but a continuation of the Jewish church. Such is the reasoning of Dr. Mason. "The Apostle tells the Gentiles," says he, "that they were 'a *wild* olive tree,' and that the Jews were 'the *good* olive tree,'—this cannot refer to their natural state, as sinners before God; for in this respect there was 'no difference'—nor to their state as sinners saved by grace; for from this state there is *no excision*. It can refer to nothing but their visible *church state*, *i. e.* to their public relation to God as a covenanted society." Agreed; let only the Doctor change the word "church" to national or *congregational* "state." The Doctor proceeds to inquire, "What, then, was this 'good olive tree,' from which the Jewish branches were 'broken off,' while the Gentiles were 'grafted in?' *Evidently*, the visible church, organized under the covenant made with Abraham. There was no other from which the Jews could be cast off." *Essays on the Church*, p. 55. It appears very *evident* to me, that it was not the "visible church," for this had then no existence; but the visible state of the Jews, formed into a peculiar *Nation* at the foot of Mount Sinai, entrusted with the oracles of God, with public means of grace and regular religious in-

struction. Thus they were planted by Jehovah himself, a good olive tree, in good soil. Jer. xi. 16, 17. In a similar manner, the Jewish nation and its peculiar privileges are described under the metaphor of a vineyard, planted by the Lord from this "good olive tree:" *i. e.* from this visible state of the Jews, as a nation, worshipping the true and living God, in the enjoyment of the means of grace, which may well be styled the "root and the fatness," many of the Jews were cut off, and have continued for ages, destitute both of public and private means of religious instruction, whilst multitudes of the Gentiles were united with those *Jews* who embraced the christian religion. The olive tree, or congregation of Israel, was neither plucked up by the root, nor cut off, but only underwent a change in some of its branches. Since this change took place, the olive tree is no longer called the "congregation of Israel," or of the Lord, but the *christian world*; for, it includes all that are born of christian parents, or become proselytes, without respect to their moral character, just as it was with the Jewish nation. But here is the difference. Since the change has taken place in the olive tree, the King of Sion has given instructions to his disciples to *separate* themselves from the *congregation*, and to form themselves into a distinct society, called *the church*, and thus, openly and visibly, profess their devotedness to Christ.

4. Another objection has been often stated, and as often shewn to be absurd. It is very seriously and gravely said, that, "to deny that the visible church *commenced* in Abraham's family, is as much as to say that God had been for more than two thousand years without a visible church." But does not the very assertion of our brethren deny the existence of a church *before* Abraham? If, then, it was consistent with God to be without a church, from Adam to Abraham, why may it not be equally consistent with him to be without a church till after the resurrection of Christ? Dr. Mason's description of the state of the world *before* the call of Abraham, is equally true *after* his call. "People of God," says the Doctor, "there were; promises of God there were; gracious revelations, and acceptable worship of God, there were: but a *church of God*, organized upon the principle of *visible unity*—there was not." *Essays on the Church*, p. 37.

How could the Dr. "deny," that God had any Church on the earth for nearly "two thousand years"—*i. e.* from the fall to Abraham?

5. We proceed to the next objection, which is stated thus: "Unbelieving and unconverted persons have been received as members of the church; why may we not, also, receive unbelieving and unconverted children?" If our brethren mean, that unbelieving and unconverted persons have *crept* into the church *without* being known, we should acknowledge the fact. But they tell us, 1st, that "the Jewish church, though constituted by the omniscient God, consisted of hypocrites, as well as of true worshipers; that it embraced multitudes who never were made partakers of saving grace;" 2d. "that our Lord told us in several parables, that hypocrites and wicked persons must be left, until the judgment day; and 3d. we are informed, "that our Lord Jesus Christ, who fell into no mistakes, actually did admit an unconverted man, a hypocrite, a traitor, a devil, into the number, not only of his disciples, but even of his apostles: thereby instructing his church, that the secret state of the soul before God, is not to be her rule of Judgment." See *Buck's Theolog. Dict.* under the word church. *Brown's Compend. Nat. and Rev. Religion*, B. 7. *Dr. Mason's Essays on the Church*, pp. 27, 67.

We answer. With respect to the first, it is not disputed that under the Mosaic dispensation, the righteous and the wicked were equally members, and that by descent; but they were only of the congregation of Israel, as nominal and real christians are now mixed in our congregations; but they were not members of the visible church, which had then no existence, as we have before proved.

With respect to the second, three parables are referred to. The first is that of the tares and the wheat. Our Lord's design in this parable, is to guard his disciples against persecuting those who would not believe their preaching; to warn them not to make use of destructive weapons to compel men to become their disciples, the way in which false religion has always been propagated. Their duty was to preach the gospel in the *world*, as we do in our respective *congregations*, and leave the result of men's believing or not believing, with God. This Parable has nothing to do with church discipline. For, in the first

place, our blessed Lord himself has told us that "*the field is the world.*" It is strange indeed, that any should dare to contradict the Saviour and say, the "*field is the church.*" Secondly; if the "*field*" were the church, an end would then be put to all church discipline; for, of what benefit would it be to ascertain whether a member has acted right or wrong, when we are told that the *wicked* must *remain* with the good? Thirdly; this parable of our Lord would be in plain contradiction to his directions, given in Matt. xviii. 15—17, that the church is to treat an impenitent member as a heathen man and a publican. To this it is objected, that the disciples knew that our Lord's kingdom is spiritual; that they had no idea of interfering with civil society; that to cut off unbelievers, they knew, would destroy the world; and that the reason assigned for letting the tares grow up together with the wheat, is our liability of considering a person to be a *tare*, when he is a *wheat*. To this we answer, first; it is very evident, that the disciples had no clear ideas of a spiritual kingdom, till after the resurrection of Christ. Luke xxiv. 21, Acts i. 6. Secondly; the caution of our Lord was very necessary, for the disciples manifested a spirit of persecution, saying, "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them?" Luke ix. 54. Thirdly; it is true, that in all proceedings of church discipline, we ought to lean on the side of mercy, and never to cut off a member, till satisfactory evidence have proved him to be unworthy of membership; but, in the parable, there is no doubt in the matter; the servants declared positively, that there were tares among the wheat, and expressed their surprise how they came there; nor did the Lord say, be careful, ye may be mistaken; on the contrary, he confirmed their declaration, that there were tares, and that the wicked one was the author of them; still he directed his disciples not to cut off these wicked men out of the world, lest they should cut off the wheat also. "Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it." Isa. lxxv. 8.

The next parables referred to, are the "*net*" and the "*ten virgins.*" I have no objection to apply these parables to the church; and they teach us, that the church visible is not perfect; for there may be hypocrites in it, and *we* may not know the fact; as the fisherman does not

know what kinds of fish are in his net, till it is brought to shore ; nor were the five foolish virgins known, till after the bridegroom had arrived. But as soon as the fisherman finds out the bad fish, he throws them away ; and as soon as a hypocrite is found out and proved to be such, he is to be put out of the church by the brethren. And hypocritical professors, if their hypocrisy be not discovered in the present life, when Christ shall appear in judgment, will be excluded from the kingdom of heaven.

We proceed to the third objection, viz : That “our Lord Jesus Christ admitted Judas—a devil, &c.”

It is true, that our blessed Lord, for wise reasons, employed Judas as well as the other disciples and apostles ; but what has that to do with the church ? The visible church had no existence at that time ; Judas could not, therefore, have been a member of it. Further, if our Lord and Saviour had really received Judas as a member of the church, instead of thereby teaching his church that the real state of the soul before God is not to be her rule of judgment, and that this state is not to be judged of by men according to the best existing evidence ; but that *every* applicant is to be admitted, irrespective of his character, he would have taught her to admit an unconverted man, a hypocrite, a traitor, a devil, under a full knowledge of his character. I cannot refrain myself from expressing my mind fully on this subject, viz : that whoever asserts that our Lord and Saviour, who could not fall into mistakes, actually admitted Judas as an example for the conduct of the church, “betrays something very different from modesty, by setting up a term of religious fellowship, which would convict the master himself of corrupting his own church.”

6. Another objection is, that the covenant made with Abraham is still in force ; that it has never been abrogated ; that it is called an everlasting covenant ; and that he is the father of the believing Gentiles, as well as of the believing Jews.

We have already stated that the covenant made with Abraham, must be, either the covenant of grace, or the covenant of circumcision. That the covenant of grace is still in force, and that with respect to this covenant, Abraham is the father of believing Gentiles as well as believing Jews, none does deny. Neither do I deny that the

covenant of circumcision is still in force. But with whom? Not with the believing or unbelieving Gentiles, but with the natural descendents of Abraham. God is still the God of Abraham and of his natural seed, in a peculiar sense; to them the land of Canaan still belongs, as much as it did while they were slaves in Egypt or captives in Babylon; and he who has been their deliverer in times past, will deliver them again and bring them as an unconverted nation to the land of promise; and, till then, they will circumcise their children, as a token of the existence of that covenant. But all this has no more to do with the baptism, either of adults or infants, than the *rainbow*, a token of the covenant made with *Noah*.

Having answered the objections generally brought against the Baptist view of the Subjects of baptism, we proceed to consider those against Immersion.

7. It is objected that John's baptism is a mere imitation or continuation of *Proselyte or Jewish baptism*.

To this objection we answer, as it respects Jewish washing or purification, it is evident that John's baptism was entirely different, both in nature and design. The unclean among the Jews, whether male or female, *immersed or bathed themselves*; but John's hearers were baptized, or immersed by *him*. John required fruits of repentance, and directed to faith in Christ, before he baptized, but none of these were required in the purifications of legal impurity. As for proselyte baptism, we have no account of such a ceremony, either in the Old or New Testament, nor in the Apocrypha, nor by Josephus, or Philo, nor even in the Mishnah. John's baptism was a perfectly *new* institution. He was the first administrator of it, and was, therefore, by way of emphasis, called "*John the Baptist*;" and his baptism "*the baptism of John*." Had this ceremony been in use before, why should this name have been given to *him* more than to any other? Again, why should it have excited such attention among the people, if not a new custom? Or why should they ask him, "why baptizest thou?" And when Christ asked, whether John's baptism was from heaven or of men," why did they not answer, that it was *an old custom*, received of men? Besides, John's baptism is called "the counsel of God;" Luke vii. 29, 30; but, if it had been a mere imitation of proselyte baptism, it could not have been thus

denominated ; but should have been styled “ the counsel or device of men.” Further, John was so far from imitating the Jews, we are expressly told, that he baptized by a special command of God. John i. 6, 33, “ There was a man *sent from God*, whose name was John—*he that sent me to baptize with water, &c.*”

There was also a striking similarity between John’s baptism and that of the Apostles. Did he require repentance and faith, so did they. Matt. iii. 6–8, Mark i. 4, Acts ii. 38, Mark xvi. 16, Acts viii. 36, 37. Did he baptize by *immersion*, so did they. Matt. iii. 6, 16, John iii. 23, Acts viii. 38, 39. Did he baptize by divine authority, so did they. John i. 6, 33, Matt. xxviii. 19, Mark xvi. 15. Did he baptize for the remission of sins, so did they. Mark i. 4, Acts ii. 38.

Dear reader, attend to the testimony of some eminent Pedobaptists.

The learned *Venema* says: “ Part of John’s office consisted in baptizing—an external rite, then in a particular manner appointed of God, and *not used before*. John i. Matt. xxii.” Hist. Eccl. Tom. 3, Secul. 1, § 5.

The judicious *Mr. Jennings*, after stating the arguments pro and con, says: “ Upon the whole, it is more likely, the Jews took the hint of proselyte baptism, *after our Saviour’s time*, than that he borrowed baptism from theirs ; which, whenever it came into practice, was one of those additions to the law of God, which he severely censures. There wants more evidence of its being as ancient as our Saviour’s time, than I apprehend can be produced, to ground any argument upon it in relation to christian baptism.” *Jewish Ant.* B. 1, ch. 3, vol. 1, pp. 135; 138.

*Deylingius*: “ The baptism of proselytes, in our opinion, seems to have been received by the Jews after the time of John the Baptist ; (the Jews) being very much influenced by his authority, and greatly admiring him. Certainly, it cannot be proved by any substantial testimony, that it was in use among the Jews before the time of John. There is also a great difference between the baptism of John and that of proselytes, as the latter is described in the monuments of the ancient Hebrews. For the Jewish baptism was a rite of human institution ; but John the Baptist introduced his by the command of God. The baptism of proselytes was a civil rite, pertaining only

to the *political court*, as *Campegius Vitringa* shows in his *Archi-Synagogus*, p. 400. But the baptism of John and Christ is peculiar to the christian church, and is the mean of conferring spiritual benefits." *Obser. Sacra.* Pars 3, obser. 26, pp. 197, 198.

*J. G. Carpzovius*: "We cannot be persuaded that the baptism of proselytes was prior to the baptism of John and of Christ: partly because of the reasons produced by that very great man, *Wernsdorfius*; but, principally, because there is a want of sufficient witnesses that the rite was used among the Jews of that time. For the testimonies produced are either from a following age, or of doubtful interpretation, and applied contrary to the design of their authors, as a bare inspection of them will shew. The subject being examined with accuracy, it will appear that for an article of such weight, a rite of such great necessity, to have been involved in silence for so many ages, without any urgent reason, exceeds all probability. But supposing, though we do not admit, that the bathing of the proselytes was in use when the new dispensation commenced, yet it remains firm and certain, that the sacrament of baptism has nothing answerable to the baptism of proselytes: nor was it derived from that rite, but was immediately appointed of God. For as John was immediately sent of God to baptize, (John i. 33, Luke iii. 2,) so Christ introduced the ordinance of baptism, not from that of the Rabbies for the admission of proselytes; but from the most wise counsel of God, from the bosom of the Father." John i. 18, Matt. xxviii. 19." *Apparat. Hist. Crit. Anti. Sac. Annotat.* pp. 49, 50.

I cannot omit the sentiment of the pious

*Dr. Owens*: "The celebrated *Selden* has endeavored to prove, that Christ borrowed the rite of baptism from that which was then in use among the Jews. Others do the same. Learned men teach and confidently affirm that a proselyte of righteousness was never made, though circumcised, without being baptized. But, that any one should be made a partaker of all the privileges of that church, there was need only of circumcision, as express testimonies of the holy scriptures teach; for so the law runs, Ex. xii. 48, concerning the Rabbinical baptism not a tittle. The institution of the rite of baptism is no where mentioned in the Old Testament. There is no example

of it in those ancient records; nor was it ever used in the admission of proselytes while the Jewish church continued. No mention of it occurs in *Philo*, in *Josephus*, in *Jesus*, the son of *Sirach*, nor in the *Evangelical* history. This Rabbinical opinion, therefore, owes its rise to the *Tanneræ*, or Anti-Mishnical doctors, after the destruction of their city. The opinion of some learned men, therefore, about the transferring of a Jewish baptismal rite (which, in reality, did not exist) by the Lord Jesus for the use of his disciples, *is destitute of all probability.*" Theolog. L. 5, Digr. 4, p. 425. Heb. vol. 1, Exercit. 19, p. 272. Orig. Nat. of churches, pp. 36, 39. Such is the testimony of Pedobaptists that John's baptism is from heaven, and not from the Jews; and is, therefore, a proper pattern for our imitation.

8. The next objection is, that the word *Baptizo* signifies to *wash*, as well as to *immerse*; and for proof, an appeal is made to Mark vii. 2-8, where the washing of *hands*, *cups*, &c. &c. is mentioned. But no argument can be taken from this passage in favor of any other mode than immersion. Every Jew knows, that whatever is to be purified by water, whether cups, tables, beds, &c. it must be by immersion. "And upon whatsoever any of them, when they are dead, doth fall, it shall be unclean; whether it be any vessel of wood, or raiment, or skin, or sack, whatsoever vessel it be, wherein any work is done, *it must be put into water*, and it shall be unclean until the even; so it shall be cleansed." Levit. xi. 32.

*Maimonides*: "Whenever, in the law, washing of the flesh, or of the clothes, is mentioned, it means nothing else than the dipping of the whole body in a laver; for, if any man dips himself all over, except the tip of his little finger, he is still in his uncleanness." Hilchoth Mikva. c. 1, § 2. Again: "A bed that is wholly defiled, if he dips it part by part, it is pure." Hilchoth Cailim, c. 26, § 14. *Scaliger*, speaking of the Jews' customs, says: "the more superstitious part of them, every day before they sat down to meat, dipped the whole body. Hence the Pharisee's admiration of Christ, Luke xi. 38." De Emend. Temp. L. 6, p. 771. As strange as such a custom may appear in Europe and America, yet it may be seen daily in the East. Nor does the original word *baptisontai* signify to wash, except by immersion; for it is from *baptizo*, not

from *louo*. Moreover, it is not to be overlooked, that the word *baptizo* is *never* used in the New Testament to signify *the washing* of hands. A very different word is always used for this purpose, viz: the word *nipto*. In the case under review, this word is employed in the 2d and 3d verses, as follows: "And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled (that is to say, with *unwashed*, *aniplois*,) hands, they found fault. For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash (*nipsontai*) their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. The historian then proceeds, in the 4th verse, to state another and very different fact: "And *when they come from the market*, except they wash, (*baptisontai*, *immerse themselves*,) they eat not."

The historian relates two distinct customs of the Jews. 1. That they *never* ate until they had washed (*nipto*) their hands. 2. That on one special occasion, viz: "*when they had been to the market*," where they mingled with *Gentiles*, whose touch they considered *polluting*, they always *immersed themselves* (*baptisontai*) before they took food. Not knowing *what part* of the body had come in contact with a polluting Gentile, the Jew thought it necessary to *baptize* or *immerse* himself, that he might be *certain* of being cleansed. Every family, that could afford it, was furnished with a bath. I appeal to the learned reader for the correctness of this statement.

It deserves our notice, that in the Prophet's direction to Naaman, (2 Kings v.) the Hebrew word *rachatz*, to wash, is used, and, accordingly, the Septuagint translators used the corresponding word *louo*, to wash; but when Naaman complied with the direction, the Hebrew word *Taval*, to immerse, is used, and the seventy translators used the Greek word *baptizo*, to immerse, or, as in the *English* version, "*to dip*." Now, as in the passage under consideration, the 4th verse, the Greek word *baptisontai* is used, *our* translators should have given us the English word *immerse*, *plunge*, or *dip*, as they did 2 Kings v. 14, John xiii, 26, &c. and not *wash*.

Nor is there any more force in the other passage, on which the objection is raised, namely: Heb. ix. 10. "*Diverse washings, immersions*." Our translators should have used the word *immersions*, or *dippings*, which would have expressed both the true meaning of the *origi-*

nal word *Baptismois*, and the design of the Apostle, who alluded to the purifications by water, which were all by immersion, as we have seen. That the washing of cups, &c. means nothing less than immersion, or dipping, is confessed by many of our most learned Pedobaptist friends.

*Eras. Schmidius*: “*Baptein* is to dye, to *immerse* in water; also to wash, or to *immerse for the sake of washing* or cleansing.” Annot. in Matt. iii. 6.

*Minter*: “*Baptizo*, to baptize; properly, indeed, it signifies to plunge, to immerse, to dip into water: but because it is common to plunge or dip a thing, that it may be washed, hence, also, it signifies to wash, to wash away—*Baptismos*, baptism, immersion, dipping into, washing, washing away. Properly, and according to its etymology, it denotes *that* washing which is performed by immersion.”

*Dr. Hammond*: “The word here used, *Baptizesthai* (as it differs from *Niptesthai*, verse 3,) signifies not only the washing of the whole body, (as, when it is said of *Eupolis*, that being taken and thrown into the sea, *baptizeto*, he was *immersed all over*, and so the baptisms of cups, &c. in the end of this verse, is putting *into water all over*, rinsing them,) but washing any part, as that is *opposed to affusion*, or pouring water on them.” Annot. on *Mark* vii. 4.

9. It is further objected, that the word *Baptizein* cannot always mean immersion, “for it is incredible that the 3000 converted on the day of Pentecost could have been baptized on the same day by immersion.” In answer to this objection, I would observe, that if there be any difficulty, it is as much (if not more) against the theory and practice of our opponents as against immersion.

Our brethren have repeatedly told us, that the children of converts were baptized, together with their parents. This must have greatly increased the number to be sprinkled, and consequently makes the account more incredible. But let us suppose that there appears really something incredible, that so large a number should be baptized in one day; yet, if it be once proved, that to baptize means to *immerse*, will this apparent difficulty justify us in charging the Apostles with changing the mode, pointed out to them by their Lord and Master, from immersion to sprinkling? Surely not. Moses informs us concerning

our father Abraham, "that he took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in *the self same day*, as God had said unto him." Gen. xvii. 23. Now is there nothing incredible in this account of the inspired historian? The mere act of circumcising and carefully binding up the wound of *one* individual, (without the ceremonies used at present by the descendants of Abraham,) would require more time than the immersion of *ten* persons. Yet Abraham had to circumcise more than 400 of his household, (see Gen. xiv. 14, his *trained* servants, born in his own house, were 318,) which would require at least as much time as the immersion of *four thousand*; especially, when we call to remembrance that Abraham was now at the advanced age of ninety-nine years. Notwithstanding all these difficulties, and others that might be conjectured, what son of Abraham did ever question the truth of the statement, or ever suggest the idea, that "it is a thing incredible that Abraham could have circumcised so many in one day, and, therefore, circumcision could not mean circumcision, but must signify a mere incision in the flesh, no matter on what part of the body it be performed." Amongst all the absurdities of the Rabbins, this absurdity has never been thought of. To this day the same ceremony is performed in exact imitation of the venerable patriarch. Why, then, my dear reader, should we contradict or pervert the statement given by the inspired Apostle and historian? He tells us in words the most explicit, that 3000 were baptized or immersed: our friends say no; this is incredible; immersion cannot mean immersion, it must signify sprinkling; a few drops of water applied to the body, no matter where, on the face, the forehead, or poured on the top of the head, means the same as if the whole body had been plunged in the water.

But to be serious. The subject is solemn. The ordinance is divine. I can perceive nothing incredible in the matter. Even granting that the three thousand had been baptized in one and the self-same day of their conversion, where is the difficulty? It must arise either from the want of water, or from the shortness of time. The former could not be the case; for it was at Jerusalem

where, besides the public conveniences for immersion, such as the pools of Bethesda and Siloam, there were many *Mikwaoth*, or collections of water in the form of *bathing houses*, for the purification of unclean persons and vessels, &c. *required by the law of Moses*, and which was always by immersion. (See Lev. xv. 16, Numb. xix. 7, 8.) Nor is there any difficulty with respect to the latter, viz: the want of time. These three thousand persons might have been immersed, not only in one day, but even in less than three hours. For the twelve Apostles, together with the *seventy* disciples, were all qualified for the sacred office. On the supposition that they all took part in the solemn transaction, which is more than probable, each individual would not have more than thirty-seven candidates, and such a number could be immersed with the greatest ease in less than *two* hours. There is, therefore, no weight in this objection. Yea, it is truly astonishing that the account given by the inspired historian of three thousand converts being immersed in one day, when it is very probable that the act was performed by the mutual assistance of eighty-two persons, should be thought incredible. Nor is there any weight in the objection, "that it is not likely that the jailor and his family would, in the dead of the night, have gone out of the city to be immersed in the river." We conceive there is no necessity for it. He had sufficient water on his own premises. For all who have travelled in the East, know that few large buildings are without *tanks* of water or *bathing houses*, and this is particularly necessary to preserve health in prisons, barracks, &c. &c.

10. Again it is objected, that the word *baptizein* must mean to sprinkle and pour, "because the Lord Jesus Christ promised his disciples that they should be baptized with the Holy Ghost; but the Holy Ghost was promised under the Old Testament by sprinkling and pouring; and on the day of Pentecost, when the promise was fulfilled, it was by pouring, and not by immersion; and, therefore, to baptize means to pour." In answer to this I would observe, that the promise of the Spirit's influences was never expressed by sprinkling. When we read of "*sprinkling clean water*," it was in allusion to the sprinkling of blood, under the Old Testament, and the sprinkling of the blood of Christ, under the New Testament. But, when the

Spirit was promised by pouring, it was used metaphorically to signify the *abundance* of it to be enjoyed under the New Testament. John vii. 39. Hence the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost is neither expressed by sprinkling nor pouring, but by being “shed forth,” “a rushing, mighty wind,” which “filled all the house,” and all the disciples “were *filled* with the Holy Ghost.”

In this sense the promise of the baptism with the Holy Ghost has been understood by many of the most learned of Pedobaptists.

*Gurtlems*: “Baptism in the Holy Ghost is *immersion into the pure waters of the Holy Spirit*; or a rich and abundant communication of his gifts: for, he, on whom the Holy Spirit is poured out, is, as it were, *immersed into him*.” *Inst. Theol.* c. 33, § 108, 109, 110, 115.

*Reynolds*: “The Spirit under the Gospel, is compared to water; and that *not* a little measure, to sprinkle, or bedew, but to *baptize* the faithful in. Matt. iii. 11, Acts i. 5.” *Works*, pp. 226, 407.

*Tillotson*: “*It filled all the house*. This is that which our Saviour calls, *baptizing with the Holy Ghost*. So that they, who sat in the house, were, as it were, *immersed* in the Holy Ghost, as they, who were buried with water, were overwhelmed, or covered all over with water, *which is the proper notion of baptism*.” *Serm.* 197.

11. It is objected, that immersion is dangerous to health.

To avoid the inconsistency of sprinkling, whilst they acknowledge that immersion was the Apostolic mode, our Pedobaptist brethren say, that in the Eastern countries, immersion might be used, but in these parts of the world, immersion would be dangerous; and God loves mercy rather than sacrifice. Thus *Mr. Walacus*: “In warm countries, the ancients practised an immersion for the whole body;—but in colder climates they generally use aspersion: because a ceremony that is free, ought always to give way to charity.” *Enchiridium de Bapt.* p. 425.

*Mr. W. Perkins* says: “The ancient custom of baptizing was to *dip*, and, as it were, to dive all the body of the baptized in the water, as may appear in Paul, Rom. vi. and the counsels of Laodicea and Neo-Caesarea; but now, especially in cold countries, the church uses only

to sprinkle the baptized, by reason of children's weakness: for very few of ripe years are now-a-days baptized. We need not much to marvel at this alteration, seeing charity and necessity may dispense with ceremonies, and mitigate in equity the sharpness of them." *Works*, vol. 1. p. 74. Edit. 1698.

*Keekermannus*: "Though the term baptism properly signifies immersion, and though also in the ancient church, through the eastern countries, when baptism was administered, it was not by sprinkling, but by immersion; yet in the colder parts of christendom aspersion is used instead of immersion, *on account of infants*: because charity and necessity may *dispense* with ceremonies, and temper them with gentleness, so far as may be done without injuring the analogy." *System Theolog.* L. 3, c. 8.

A late writer on the subject of Pedobaptists *immersing* those who had been *sprinkled in infancy*, not only justifies the church and councils in administering the ordinance in whatever mode they may think most convenient, but he gives the same liberty to individuals. "Let every person," says he, "be gratified in the practice which his own conscience may dictate. Nor is it to be supposed that in an enlightened community, or under the ministrations of an *intelligent* preacher, people would become either irregular or extravagant." *New York Obs.* April 26, 1828.

In answer to this objection we observe *first*, that it has never been proved that immersion is dangerous to the health of either adults or infants. But suppose that even in some cases immersion might be hazardous to health, we should have no authority to alter the mode of a positive institution. In cases of sickness, &c. it might be necessary to *delay* the administration of the ordinance, no time being specified, but we have no authority to *alter* the mode of a positive institution. (See Essay I.) But we have already shown that the Greek church has invariably administered the ordinance of baptism by immersion, although the climate, inhabited by a great part of that numerous church, is as cold as in any parts of christendom; and we have never heard of any ill effects. Nay, so far is immersion from being dangerous or injurious to health, that some of the wisest physicians have considered the cold bath, in general, a great promoter of health. Thus *Dr. Wall* ob-

serves, "that *John Floyer*, an eminent physician, endeavored to show, by reasons taken from the nature of our bodies, from the rules of medicine, from modern experience, and from ancient history, that washing or dipping infants in cold water, is, generally speaking, not only safe, but very useful: and that, though no such rite as baptism had been instituted, yet reason and experience would have directed people to use cold bathing, both of themselves and children; and that it has in all former ages so directed them—and he prognosticates that *old modes* of physic and religion will in time prevail, when people have had more experience in cold baths; and that the approbation of physicians would bring in the old use of immersion in baptism." *Hist. Inf. Bap.* P. 2, c. 9, p. 476.

*Dr. Franklin*: "Damp, but not wet linen, may possibly give colds; but *no one catches cold by bathing*, and no clothes can be wetter than water itself." *Letters and Papers on Serious Subj.* p. 460.

The *Rev. John Wesley* has informed us: "that *Mary Welch*, aged eleven years, was baptized according to the custom of the first church, and the rule of the church of England, by immersion. The child was ill then, but recovered from that hour." *Ext. of Mr. J. Wesley's Journal, from his embarking for Georgia*, p. 11, Ed. 2d, Note on Rom. vi. 4.

But let us suppose for a moment that immersion was attended with as much pain and danger as circumcision was, would our Pedobaptist brethren allow us to omit or alter our Lord's positive institution? Surely not.

*Dr. Sherlock*: "If an express law may be disobeyed, as often as men fancy they see reason to do what the law forbids, *this overthrows the whole authority of making laws*, and makes every subject a judge whether the laws of a sovereign prince should be obeyed or not." *Preserv. against Popery*, Title 7, p. 21.

*Mr. A. Hall*: "All that concerns the glory of God (and the honour of his church) is *unerringly and unalterably* settled in the word of God, which is not *yea and nay*. It does not accommodate its doctrines to succeeding periods of time; nor to the changing tempers, humours, or fashions of the place; like its divine author, it is the

same yesterday and to day and for ever." *Gospel Church*, p. 52.

*Abp. Seeker*: "Surely, it is enough that He is Lord and King of the whole earth, and that all his dealings with the works of his hands are just and reasonable. *Our business is to obey, and trust him with the consequences.*" *Lectures on the Cat.* Lect. 2.

The great *Dr. Owen*: "That divine revelation is the only foundation, the only law, and the only rule of all religious worship, that is pleasing to God or accepted by him, is a maxim of the last importance in divinity. This maxim teaches, that every thing appointed by God in his worship, however absurd, or difficult, or unprofitable it may seem to reason, is to be regarded and performed with the deepest reverence and submission, on account of that supreme authority which appointed and required it." *Theolog.* L. 4, c. 3, Dig. 3, p. 326.

The pious *Dr. Hunter*: "No circumstances of prudence or conveniency can ever be with propriety urged as a dispensation with a clearly commanded duty. Observe the delicacy and the danger of admitting a latitude and a liberty in sacred things. In what concerns the conduct of human life, in our intercourse one with another, as the citizens of the world, many things must be left to be governed by occasions and discretion; but in what relates to the immediate worship of God, and where the mind of the Lord has been clearly made known, to assume and exercise a dispensing power, is criminal and hazardous. The Tabernacle must be constructed, *to the minutest pin and loop*, according to the *pattern* delivered in the mount. If *Uzzah* presume to put forth his hand to support the tottering ark, it is at his peril. A holy and a jealous God will be served only by the persons, and in the manner, which he himself has appointed. "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified." Lev. x. 3. When the great Jehovah condescends to become a Legislator, the utmost extent of possibility lying open to his view, *provision is made from the beginning for every case that can happen.*" *Sac. Biog.* vol. 3, pp. 93, 362, 435.

I shall close this particular with the judicious remark of the eminently pious *Mr. Booth*: "How lamentable and how shameful, to think of eminent Protestants adopting

the principle and arguing upon it, in favour of pouring and sprinkling! For I am persuaded that none of them ever considered the Jewish church as authorized by these words, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice," to alter any divine appointment. Shall christians, then, make more free with divine authority than Jews, because they live under a better dispensation? far be it! That would represent the holy one of God as the minister of sin—would be contrary to scripture and reason, to conscience and common sense. The disciples of Christ are as much obliged to regard the positive laws of the New Testament with strict punctuality, as the Jews were to observe their divine ritual contained in the books of Moses. Nay, our superior privileges are so many additional motives to perpetual obedience.

Whenever any one, therefore, is inclined to substitute aspersion for plunging, on a supposition of the latter being burdensome, or indelicate, upon the foundation of those condescending words, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice;" he should recollect that command of God to Abraham; "ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin;" and see how far the gracious declaration would have applied there, before he ventures to *alter* a positive appointment of Christ on that ground.—Again, were it allowable to prosecute the hint which some of these learned authors give, (see page 24) that is, for charity and necessity to erect a court of chancery, to sit in judgment on the equity of God's commands, and either mitigate their severity, or dispense with them, as we think proper, something indeed might then be done, that would effectually obviate all shivering apprehensions and every painful modest feeling, which the word *baptize* would otherwise excite in the breasts of any. Nor would the relief afforded by such a court, be confined to the frightful idea of plunging, for it would extend its benign influence to every other case, in which our sovereign wills happen to clash with positive laws: because the uniform language of its decrees would be that of Peter to Christ, SPARE THYSELF. While, however, the validity of such a court remains doubtful, it will be our wisdom when the Most High speaks, not to reason and object, but to *adore* and *obey*." *Pedob. Exam.* I. 326.

12. *Indecency* has been pleaded as another ground for changing immersion to sprinkling. But "who is this that replieth against God?" For, said the Lord Jesus, as an argument for his own immersion, "thus it becometh us, or *is becoming* in us, to fulfill all righteousness." Objections like this are themselves indecorous; especially, when they come from those who raise no such objection against *circumcision*.

13. Having already exceeded my intended limits, I hasten to close this part of the subject by noticing, as the last objection against the mode, a very common opinion, viz: that the *mode* is of no importance, so long as water is applied; the quantity of water being but a *circumstance* not essential to the ordinance. Perhaps few persons living have had better opportunities of becoming acquainted with christians of different denominations than I have been favored with, both in Europe and in this country. And as the subject of baptism has been frequently introduced, I have observed that many who expressed their conviction that *immersion* is the *scriptural mode*, "still said, that as sprinkling was much more convenient, it would answer the same end; that the quantity could be of no importance; and that as long as water is applied, the command is complied with." I acknowledge with deep regret and much sorrow, that I have myself used expressions like these; but I hope the Lord has graciously pardoned this sin also; and I most affectionately entreat the reader to pause and consider the subject seriously and prayerfully. When Naaman, the leper, was directed to wash in Jordan, he was angry, imagining that the waters in the rivers of Damascus were equally good, if not better. True, had the Prophet said *only*, go and wash in *water*, it could have made no difference in which river he had dipped himself; but, since *Jordan* was named, it became the leper's duty to dip in Jordan; even so, had the Lord Jesus Christ commanded *merely* to apply water, the quantity could have made *no* difference, whether it were done by immersion, pouring, or sprinkling; but, as he expressly used *the word* which signifies to *immerse*, after having demonstrated its meaning by his own example, it is daring presumption to pervert the meaning of this law. We have no right to alter God's commandments. It has already been shewn in our first essay, that

our obedience is to be grounded on the majesty and authority of the commander, and not on the judgment of the subject. If an Israelite had circumcised his child on the *seventh* or on the *ninth* day, instead of the *eighth*, although he performed the act of circumcision, yet, having altered the mode in not performing it at the time specified in the commandment, he would have been guilty as a transgressor; and the male child, which was not circumcised on the eighth day, was to be cut off from God's people. Hence, though no work was to be done on the sabbath, yet the child must be circumcised, because the time, as well as the act, was commanded. "Under the Mosaical law," says the learned *Vincent Alsop*, "God commanded that they should offer to him the daily burnt-offering; and, in this case, the *color* of the beast (provided it was otherwise rightly qualified) was a mere *circumstance*, such as God laid no stress upon; and that man had proved himself a superstitious busy-body, who should curiously adhere to any one color. But, for the *heifer* whose ashes were to make the *water of separation*, there the color was no circumstance; but made by God's command a *substantial* part of the service. To be *red* was as much as to be a *heifer*: for, when circumstances have once passed the royal assent, and are stamped with a *divine* seal, they become substantials in instituted worship. As we must not think that God appreciates whatever men set a high value upon, so neither are we to judge that he disesteems any thing because it is grown out of fashion, and thereby exposed to contempt by the atheistical wits of mercenary writers. It is a practice too common, that, if any of Christ's institutions seem necessary to be broken, it will be first necessary to *decry* them as *poor, low, inconsiderable circumstances*; and then to fill the people's heads with a noise and din, that Christ lays little stress on them; and, in order hereto, call them the *circumstantials*, the *accidentals*, the *minutia*, the *punctilios*, and, if need be, the Petty-Johns of religion, that conscience may not kick at the contemning of them." *Sober Inquiry*, p. 289.

Having now answered the objections brought against immersion, we will consider those brought against the Baptists themselves.

14. It is very commonly objected, that baptism is a

subject of no importance, a *non-essential*; and that Baptists lay far too much stress on it.

As common as it is for people to talk about non-essentials in religion, there is reason to fear that many "neither understand what they say, nor whereof they affirm." It is a just remark of the learned *Dr. Grosvenor*, that "the diminutive things that have been said by some, of the positive appointments in religion, and the extravagant things that have been said by others, are two extremes, which true reasonings lead no body into on either hand. It is as contrary to the nature of things to make *nothing* of them, as to make them *the whole* of religion. To know exactly the regard that is due to them, is to find out the rank and order they are placed in by Him who has appointed them." "Some things," says the same author, "are absolutely necessary to salvation, and in their own nature. We call those things absolutely necessary, without which there can be no salvation at all. Thus, a mind suited to the happiness intended by the word *salvation*, is absolutely necessary; or holiness, *without which no man shall see the Lord*. All the *titles* in the world to heaven, can never give the pleasure of heaven, without a suitableness to its enjoyments. Fitness, here, is as the eye to the delights of colors and prospects; the ears to the pleasures of harmony; and as the palate to those of taste and relish; that is, a capacity of enjoyments. As there must be an animal nature for animal pleasures, a rational nature for the rational ones; so there must be the divine and heavenly nature for those that are divine and heavenly. No man would care to live even with God whom he did not love. A disposition to obey divine orders, wherever they are discerned, either positive or moral, is part of that *holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord*. I may be saved without a sacrament; but I cannot be saved without a disposition to obey God's authority, wherever I see it. A sacrament is a positive rite, and not to be compared with moral virtue; but is not a disposition to obey God's order, moral virtue, and christian grace? Or can there be any moral virtue, or christian grace, without a disposition to obey the authority of Christ, wherever I discern it? Surely, obedience to God's commands is moral excellence, though the instances of that obedience may lie in positive rites. The sincerity

and truth of such a disposition, are best known by its being uniform and universal. Ps. cxix. 6. The author of our religion has told us, and added his *example* to his *word*, that *thus it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness*, and so ordered himself to be baptized. Baptism was a positive rite, an external thing; and yet he calls it *righteousness*. Such righteousness as *became* him, who was the Holy one of God; became *Him*, who had intrinsically no need of any outward ceremony; whose inward purity was perfectly divine: and, if it became *Him* to fulfill such sort of righteousness, it can hardly become any who pretend to be his followers, to neglect it." *Moral obligation to the positive appointments in religion.*

Although our dependence for salvation is on Christ, and *Him* alone, yet that should not hinder, but rather further our obedience. To neglect a positive law we have already shewn, Essay 1, is criminal. Although circumcision was no saving ordinance, yet, whoever was not circumcised, was cut off from among the people. Gen. xvii. 14, Ex. iv. 24. Even so baptism. It is a standing ordinance, and those who neglect it or use it in an improper manner offend God, and every transgression exposes them to punishment, as those were punished who *ate and drank unworthily*. 1 Cor. xi. 29, 30.

Now this is all the stress and importance Baptists attach to the sacred ordinance of baptism. But it is very evident, that our Pedobaptist brethren lay a great deal more stress on it. Multitudes of *them* have openly declared it absolutely necessary to salvation; others, who do not go all that length, yet go a great way too far. History informs us that, in the beginning of the fourth century, it was believed by some that baptism was necessary to salvation.\* This is acknowledged by many of

\* Alas! how true it is that "error never goes alone." It is like the small rivulet which, in its progress, unites various streams, and thus becomes a large and powerful river, which carries every thing before it. Believing that baptism was necessary to salvation, *naturally* led first to aspersion or sprinkling, and then to infant baptism. When a person was sick and supposed to be dying, to secure his salvation they were anxious to baptize him; and as he could not go to the water, they conceived that water might be brought to *him*; and as immersing a *sick* person in cold water was thought dangerous, they affirmed that *pouring* water upon him was sufficient. Thus, the change of immersion to pouring, in cases of necessity, was, at first, thought to be lawful; but the Council at Ra-

the most learned Pedobaptist divines. Such is the testimony of *Vitringa*, *Venema*, *Salmasius*, *Hospinianus*, *Suicerus*, *Episcopi*, *Dr. Owen*, *Dr. Wall*, &c. &c. Long quotations from their writings on this subject, may be seen in *Booth's Pedob. Exam.* vol. 2, ch. 3. Nor have all our modern Pedobaptist brethren rejected this opinion. To this day it is believed that infants are to be baptized, because it is necessary to salvation; that in the act of baptism they are regenerated, cleansed and justified, and their sins forgiven; that they are delivered from the greatest of evils, and enriched with the best and most excellent endowments; filled with divine grace; made the children of God and heirs of eternal salvation; that they are joined and knit to Christ, as members to the head; that they are signed with a character which can never be blotted out of their souls. Such was the doctrine of the *Council of Trent*, and of the *Greek church*, who immersed their infants, and is taught in the confessions of *Helvetia*, *Bohemia*, *Augsburg*, *Saxony*, *Wittenburg*, *Sueveland*, and by the *church of England*, by the *Westminster assembly*.† Innumerable testimonies might

venna, in the thirteenth century, improved upon this, and declared *sprinkling and dipping indifferent*. The belief, that baptism was necessary to salvation, led also to infant baptism, which till then had not been known. *Justin Martyr*, who, in the middle of the second century, addressed a letter to the Emperor *Antonius Pius*, describing the nature of conversion, and of forming christian societies, never mentions the baptism of infants. *Tertullian*, who lived in the beginning of the third century, is the *first* who mentions infant baptism, and he opposes it as an error. About fifty years after this, *Cyprian*, bishop or minister of Carthage, (who justified the consecration of baptismal water, the exorcising of the devil, the necessary use of chrism, or anointing in baptism, with other superstitious practices, and who was the first that vindicated the change of immersion into aspersion or sprinkling,) this man not only himself approved of baptizing infants, but also recommended it to others, in the name of a Council of sixty-six bishops or pastors. Through the influence of *Augustine*, in a Council of fifteen bishops, met at *Mela* in *Numidia*, Ann. 416, it was decreed and enforced by Anathema, that "It is the pleasure of all the bishops present in the holy Synod to order, that whosoever denieth that infants newly born of mothers are to be baptized, shall be accursed." More than 400 churches in Africa refused submission to this decree, and consequently became the subjects of cruel and extensive persecution.

† As the reader may not be acquainted with the Episcopal form as used in England, I insert this note. At *baptism* the minister

be adduced from the writings of individuals, but two or three must suffice. *John Calvin* says: "Baptism is a sign of initiation by which we are admitted into the society of the church, in order that being incorporated into Christ, we may be numbered among the children of God. In baptism God assures us that all our sins are canceled, effaced and obliterated, so that they will never appear in his sight, or come into his remembrance, or be imputed to us. Baptism is also attended with another advantage: it shews us our mortification in Christ, and our new life in him. Rom. vi. 3, 4." *Institute B. 4, ch. 15.* *Mr. Henry*, whose commentary on the Bible displays so much piety, learning, and judgment, yet had his mind so much prejudiced by education, that he advances the following sentiment. "Such are the privileges which attend this ordinance, that if our Master had bid us do some great thing, would we not have done it, rather than come short of them? Much more, when he only saith unto us, *wash and be clean*; wash and be CHRISTIANS. The gospel contains not only a doctrine but a covenant, and by baptism we are brought into that covenant. Baptism wrests the keys of the heart out of the hands of the strong man armed, that the possession may be surrendered to him whose right it is. The water of baptism is *designed* for our cleansing from the spots and defilements of the flesh.

says: "This child is regenerated and grafted into the body of Christ's church." At *confirmation*, the bishop having asked the children individually, "Who gave you this name?" They, agreeably to instruction given them, reply, "My god-fathers and god-mothers, in my baptism, *wherein* I was made a member of Christ, *a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.*" After the children have repeated, in their mother tongue, the creed, the Lord's prayer, the ten commandments, and answered some questions, the Bishop lays his hands upon their heads, and prays thus: "Almighty and everlasting God, who hast vouchsafed to *regenerate* these thy servants by *water* and the Holy Ghost, and hast given unto them forgiveness of all their sins, &c.;" and in a following collect he says, "These thy servants, upon whom (after the example of thy holy Apostles) we have now laid our hands to *certify* them, (by this sign) of thy favor and gracious goodness towards them." Thus, as infants they have been *regenerated in baptism*, of which, in riper years, they were *confirmed and certified*; and at their burial, no matter how wicked their lives may have been, (except self-murderers or excommunicated) their bodies are committed to the dust in "*sure and certain hope of a resurrection to eternal life,*" and thanks are given for "God's taking the soul of this dear brother (or sister) to himself."

In baptism our names are engraved upon the breast-plate of this great High Priest. This, then, is the efficacy of baptism; it is putting the child's name into the gospel grant. We are baptized into Christ's death; *i. e.* God does, in that ordinance, seal, confirm and make over to us ALL the benefits of the death of Christ. Infant baptism speaks *an hereditary relation to God*, that comes to us by descent. Baptism seals the promise of God's being to ME a God, and that is greatly encouraging; but infant baptism increases the encouragement, as it assures me of God being the God of my fathers, and the God of my infancy." *Treatise on Baptism*. Passim. Another Protestant divine has informed us, "that Christ has nothing to do with any man, nor any man with Christ, till he is baptized with water. All power in heaven and on earth is in baptism. He that is not baptized has no interest in Father, Son, nor Holy Spirit. By this ordinance he is united unto the true God, and becomes one with him in all things. Baptism is our righteousness and holiness—it is remission and cleansing from sin, and though our sins are red as scarlet, baptism makes white, and whiter than snow. He who is baptized, is as white and clean from sin as God can make him." *Lewelyn's Treatise on Baptism*, pp. 5-23.

Dear reader, allow me now to ask you the following questions: First. Who do you think lay the greatest stress on baptism, the Baptists or the Pedobaptists? Secondly. If the preceding statement be true, if grace be given the child in baptism, if God has truly regenerated it, and has actually made it a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven, I ask, how comes it to pass, that persons baptized in infancy are not uniformly pious in their after lives? How is it that so many of them turn out such profligates? Are these the *fruits* or *evidences* of their regeneration? Are these the persons that may call God their Father, Christ their Head, and heaven their home? I ask once more, how are these things consistent with the doctrine of perseverance? Justice, however, requires the admission that all Pedobaptists do not attach so much importance to infant baptism. *Mr. Bradbury* says: "That your children shall be sanctified from their mother's womb upon their being received in this ordinance, is making the blessing of the new covenant come

by the will of men, and of the will of the flesh, and not of God. But *be not deceived*; God is not mocked. Do not think so idly of those favors that come by his Spirit." *Duty and doctrine of Baptism*, p. 19.

The late Pedobaptist writer in the New York Observer, mentioned above, states that infant baptism is wholly the act of the parents, and that the child derives no other benefit from it but a dedication to God;—and in the close of his paper he observes; "If the Pedobaptist churches would take this ground, and relinquish the idea that baptized children are in any *such sense* members of the church as to entitle *them*, by reason of their baptism, to a seat at the Lord's table, and to subject them to the *discipline of the church*, they would find their system, I think, more consistent with scripture, and more accordant with what, in fact, is practicable."

It is gratifying to see the rapid progress of the Baptist sentiment. Nor can it be otherwise. In proportion as the *bible* is circulated and read without note and comment, in the same proportion we may hope God will be worshiped without human inventions. Hasten it, O Lord, for thy name's sake. Amen.

15. Close Communion is another objection against the Baptist sentiments and practice.

Not a few pious and conscientious christians, convinced of the truth of the Baptist sentiments, have been kept back by the erroneous and slanderous report, that the Baptists are a bigoted, narrow minded sect, because they allow none to come to the Lord's table, except the members of their own denomination, as if they were the only people fit for heaven.

Certainly our Pedobaptist brethren cannot mean by this objection, that we ought to admit a person who is a heretic in sentiment or immoral in practice; for, to such some of them refuse admittance, as well as we. Their objection, therefore, we conceive, is that we do not admit such as are church members in good standing in every other respect, except that they have not been *immersed* after a *personal* profession of faith. I confess with deep regret, that this objection had once great weight upon my mind, and excited not a little prejudice against the Baptist denomination. I remember that once, after having preached in a Baptist church, immediately before the administration of the Lord's Supper, on leaving the pulpit, I ex-

postulated with the minister for refusing me a crumb of bread from the *Lord's Table*, after I had dispensed the bread of life to the whole congregation. But, as hard as I *then* thought of this conduct, I cannot *now* but approve of it, as a thing absolutely necessary to make their practice consistent with their principles.

A moment's reflection will, I trust, convince the reader of the propriety of close communion. No man, I believe, if considered by our Pedobaptist brethren as not baptized, would be admitted to break bread at the Lord's table, in any of their churches; however amiable his character, or how much soever they might esteem him in other respects. During my examination of the subject of Baptism, I found that it is a universally received opinion, that the ordinance of baptism must precede the Lord's supper, and that whoever refuses to submit to the former, or is unqualified for it, is to be refused admission to the latter. This might be confirmed by innumerable testimonies from public catechisms and confessions of faith, as well as from the writings of pious and learned Pedobaptists. I select but a few.

*Justin Martyr*, speaking of the Lord's supper, says, "This food is called by us, the *Eucharist*; of which it is *not lawful* for any to partake, but such as believe the things that are taught by us to be true, and have been baptized." *Apolog.* II. p. 162.

*Lord Chancellor King* says: "Baptism was *always precedent* to the Lord's supper; and *none* were admitted to receive the Eucharist, till they were baptized. This is so obvious to every man, that it needs no proof." *Inquiry*, Part 2, p. 44.

*Dr. Wall* informs us: that "*No church* ever gave the Communion to *any persons*, before they were baptized. Among all the absurdities that ever were held, none ever maintained *that*, that any person should partake of the communion, *before* he was baptized." *Hist. Inf. Bap.* P. 2, ch. 9.

The very learned *Benedict Pictet* says: "The supper of our Lord ought not to be administered to persons that are *unbaptized*: for, before baptism, men are not considered as members of the visible church." *Theolog. Christ.* 959.

*Dr. Doddridge* tells us: "It is certain, that as far as our knowledge of primitive antiquity reaches, *no unbap-*

tized person received the Lord's supper." Again he says, "How excellent soever any man's character is, he must be baptized before he can be looked upon as completely a member of the church of Christ." *Lectures*, pp. 508—512.

*Bede* informs us, "that three young princes among the eastern Saxons, seeing a Bishop administer the sacred supper, desired to partake of it, as their deceased and royal father had done. To whom the Bishop answered; 'If ye will be washed, or baptized, in the salutary fountain, as your father was, ye may also partake of the Lord's supper, as he did: but, if ye despise the former, ye cannot in any wise receive the latter.' They replied, 'We will not enter into the fountain, or be baptized; nor have we any need of it; but yet we desire to be refreshed with that bread.' After which, the Historian tells us, that they importunately requesting, and the Bishop resolutely refusing them admission to the holy table, they were so exasperated as to banish both him and his out of their kingdom." *Hist. Eccles. L. 2, ch. 5, p. 63.*

Besides, it is strange indeed, that those, who believe that children sprinkled in infancy are properly baptized, become members of the church, are put under its watch and government, &c. &c. &c. and yet forbid *them* to approach the communion table, should find fault with Baptists for refusing those whom they consider as not baptized at all. The reader will be able to judge who is chargeable with *improper* close communion.

16. It is not unfrequently objected, that the poor and illiterate only embrace the Baptist sentiments, and that the learned and rich are for infant baptism.

Perhaps, there is too much reason to fear that this objection *has* stifled many a conviction and prevented both ministers and people from obeying the positive command of our blessed Lord and Saviour. Thus, "when the publicans justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John, the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel—of God against themselves, being not baptized of him." Luke vii. 29—30. In like manner, the Jewish builders justified themselves in rejecting the Messiah, the chief corner stone, saying, "have any of the *rulers* or of the *Pharisees* believed on him? but this people, who knoweth not the law, are cursed." John vii. 47—48. Must the Gospel be a cunningly devised fable, because "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many

noble," have believed? No! verily not! Let God be true and every man a liar. The Lord is jealous of his glory; and, therefore, he despises the great, the wise, and the noble, and chooses the poor of this world, and makes them rich in grace. Yes, dear reader, with the deepest humility I would adopt the language of the blessed Jesus and say; "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." Matt. xi. 25, 26.

Further, is it not a true maxim, "*Humanum est errare*," it is human to err? Have not many learned and pious men erred and done wrong? Are there not many learned, rich men in the community, full of errors and superstitions? Are we to do evil, because the multitude do so? "*The Bible is the religion of Protestants*," and not the opinions and traditions of men, if ever so learned or opulent. Even a Paul must not be followed farther than he followed Christ.

But the objection is not founded in fact. It is not the poor and illiterate *only*, who are Baptists. Not a few in all ages of christianity might be mentioned, that were eminent for piety, learning and respectability; and who knows not that John, who was greater than all the prophets, was a Baptist? and we have already shown, that the Apostles, who were still greater than John, were also Baptists; and let it be remembered that the Lord Jesus Christ himself, the greatest of all, was a Baptist, both in sentiment and in practice.

Since the days of the Apostles too, there has been a bright cloud of witnesses in favor of the Baptist sentiments. Such were the *Donatists*, *Novatians*, *Waldenses*, *Albigenses*, ancient *Britons*, &c. &c. And is it not evident from the quotations contained in the preceding pages, (and which might have been greatly multiplied) that, however our Pedobaptist brethren differ from us, with respect to the Subjects and Mode of Baptism, in *practice*, very many of them seem to be perfectly agreed with us in *opinion*?

A remark of the pious and excellent *Mr. Booth* is too applicable to be omitted in this place, and most suitable as the close of this work.

"It is very observable," says he, "that so many Pedo-

baptists themselves have admitted the facts on which we reason, and that they have either expressly rejected the texts, usually pleaded against us, as having nothing to do in the controversy; or so explained them, as renders their application in support of infant baptism quite impertinent. Do we maintain, for instance, that baptism is a positive institution, and that positive rites depend entirely on the revealed will of God, in regard of the manner of performing them, the persons to whom they belong, and the signification of them? All this they readily grant. Do we insist, that the obvious and native sense of the term baptism is *immersion*? They expressly allow it. Do we maintain that immersion was the Apostolic practice, and that, except in extraordinary cases, it was the general custom of thirteen hundred years? They confirm our sentiment. Do we affirm that immersion is the present practice of the Greek and Oriental churches, and that those churches include one half of the christian world? Their own pens bear testimony for us. Do we insist, that plunging is more expressive of the great things intended by the ordinance, than pouring or sprinkling? They accede to our opinion. Do we assert, that the first instance of pouring or sprinkling, instead of immersion, which is expressly recorded, was about the middle of the third century, and *then condemned*; that the apostate church of Rome, all sovereign as her church claims are, introduced pouring to common practice; and that Protestant churches received it from her polluted hands? These being stubborn facts, are all acknowledged. Do we maintain that, in ordinary cases, immersion is not prejudicial to health? Pedobaptist physicians without a fee, and medical practice without hesitation, confirm our opinion. Do we assert that no power on earth has authority to alter the law of Christ, or to depart from Apostolic example, in regard to immersion? So do they, in effect, when disputing with Papists concerning the sacred supper. Do we contend that there is *no express command* nor *plain example* in the New Testament, relating to infant baptism? It is granted *by them*. Do we plead that there is no evidence of Pedobaptism being practised before the conclusion of the second, or the beginning of the third century? This also is readily granted, even by some of those who were the greatest adepts in christian antiquities. Do we treat with contempt the plea of pretended

apostolic tradition, unsupported by scripture? So do all Protestants, except Pedobaptism, Episcopacy, or something similar, solicit their patronage. We have the honor, therefore, to agree with many of them, as to a great part of our premises; and with some of them respecting the whole. Yes, amazing as it may seem, we are honored with having some of them for our associates in every thing, *except the conclusion*. Here, indeed, we are utterly deserted by them. Nor can it be otherwise, while they are PEDO, and we ANTI-PEDO-BAPTISTS." Mr. Booth having quoted a declaration of Bishop Taylor, viz: "that there is much more *truth* than *evidence* on the side of Pedobaptism," observes, "This being the case, I am *discouraged* in respect to an issue to the present controversy. For as truth and evidence do not depend on the pleasure of man, they are stubborn things; and we justly presume they will not easily quit their stations, out of complaisance to either side. While, therefore, each abides by her party, the Baptists, it is likely, will plead preponderating evidence, and firmly insist upon it as a maxim of logical prudence, that our assent should always be proportioned to the degree of evidence; on the other hand, we need not wonder, if Pedobaptists exult in the possession of truth, because it is a precious jewel; and such truth especially, as is obtained *without evidence*, must be precious, indeed, it being so extremely scarce. Despairing, therefore, of putting an end to the controversy, where truth and evidence take different sides, I must here lay down my pen." *Pedob. Exam.* 2, pp. 450, 483.

And now, dear reader, I must also lay down my pen; not in despair, however; but with prayer, that my humble attempt to render you such assistance as was in my power, may prove to you a blessing, and in the hope that you will not suffer your mind to be kept back from searching the holy scriptures for BOTH *evidence and truth*.

And may He, whose gracious Spirit has led me, as I trust, out of the darkness of Judaism and sin, into the glorious light and liberty of the gospel, and constrained me to be *baptized into his most holy name*, and given me great peace in believing, and joy in obeying his word—may He lead *you* into all truth and obedience; and glorify himself in the united and harmonious, sanctified influence of all his beloved people, through JESUS CHRIST his Son. Amen,

# INDEX.

---

## ESSAY I.

	Page.
General Observations on Positive laws, shewing the difference between a Positive Law and a Moral Law - - - - -	9

## ESSAY II.

Believers the only subjects of Baptism - - -	22
--	----

## ESSAY III.

Arguments in favor of Infant Baptism stated and refuted - - - - -	31
---	----

## ESSAY IV.

Immersion the only Mode of Baptism - - -	69
--	----

## ESSAY V.

Objections answered - - - - -	87
-------------------------------	----

---

NOTE.—The sectional numbers, on pages 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, and 59, ought to have been omitted.











Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library



1 1012 01021 3249