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[Humphreys, Daniel ], 1740-1827.

A Letter to Mr. Elias Smith.

Portsmouth, [N.H. ], Treadwells, 1804. 23 pp.

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# LETTER

TO

Mr. Elias Smith,

BAPTIST TEACHER,

ON HIS LATE PERFORMANCE

ENTITLED

“A Reply to this Congregational, Methodistical  
Question—

*Why cannot you commune with us, seeing we  
are willing to commune with you?”*

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— Prove all things —  
— Ask for the old paths —  
*Holy Scriptures.*

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PORTSMOUTH.

PRINTED BY WILLIAM & DANIEL TRENOWELL;

1804.

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*To Mr. Elias Smith.*

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SIR,

**O**N reading your Reply, several reflections occurred to my mind. I put my sentiments on paper, while the subject was fresh, and now communicate them by the same medium which conveyed yours to me.

The question you speak of as put to you and your associates by congregationalists, &c. either answers itself, or admits of an easy answer. The amount of it seems to be this, "We are not agreed with you our opposers, but we are willing (as we hold our own tenets but loosely) to play the hypocrite, and commune with you, provided you will adopt a like conduct towards us!"—

But altho' the question favours of hypocrisy, and holding nothing too sacred to be trifled with, to make up a worldly union, yet they may have more reasons for making advances for a coalition, or outside peace, than would immediately occur. They might perceive that your doctrine and theirs are not very dissimilar, on the great question, What is the ground of hope towards God for a sinner?— I could easily shew that on this grand question you and they, and most of the modern denominations, are agreed at bottom, and only dispute about different modes of expression, tossing to and fro questions about words: while the glorious work of the Son of God, washing in his own blood, sinners from their sins, and finishing a spotless divine righteous-



ness to clothe them, is undermined and set aside, and forms no part of your modern creeds, on any side of the contention.

Your zeal for a favorite point respecting baptism, leads you to pronounce these your opponents, and the common churches around us, antichristian. I have no doubt of the justice of the charge; the word of God warrants it, as might be easily shewn. You have written what makes it evident, but I think you see little of the depths of the mystery of iniquity. Your agreement in their self-righteous doctrine shews this. Had you fairly come out of Babylon, you would attend to the direction, Make bright and spare not the arrows—and they would be such as could not be returned against you.

After you had justly called these churches antichristian, what but ——— could lead you to speak of believers among those who are, as you yourself say “building exactly opposite to the New Testament.” Believers “living in the neglect of the first duty Christ requires of them.” What a strange sort of believers are these, who bring forth thorns for grapes? Christ’s people in Babylon appear to be his by hearing the awful voice, Come out of her, be not partakers of her sins lest ye share in her plagues, for her sins have reached to Heaven and God hath remembered her iniquities. In vain do you attempt to heal Babylon by partial reformations. The experiment has been tried. “We would have healed Babylon,” said the captives there; “but she is not healed—let us leave her.” If we look at the New Testament we find the voice to those in an impure religious connexion is; “come out from among them and be ye separate,

touch not the unclean thing. And the grand encouragement to do it, and be cast off and hated is, “I will receive you and be a father to you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters saith the Lord Almighty”—Surely it is time enough for a christian to receive a fellow sinner as a believer when he sees him with his back towards Babylon, and his face towards Zion.

By this time you will perceive that I am none of those who put the question, Why cannot you commune with us?—No—we may commune as fellow citizens and neighbors, but present sentiments continuing, religious connexion is quite out of the question.

So far however, as you speak according to the scripture, I ought cordially to approve of your sayings. You speak against modern Jewish builders, who are engaged in erecting worldly churches on the foundation of the power and countenance of human rulers, on state laws and ordinances—while they reject the chief corner stone, as too weak to support the church. You profess also to reject the traditions of these scribes and elders, and refer to the New Testament to shew how churches should be built. You quote passages to shew how the churches in Judea and among the Gentiles were built. All this is just and striking. Thus far you do well. Here are the steps of beautiful flocks, following the poor shepherds, whose feet were beautiful upon the mountains. But my complaint against you is, that you refer to these footsteps but do not walk in them. You refer to the pattern but do not measure it, and take it as it is, but cut and carve upon it, taking part and leaving part. The doctrine and ways of the clergy, your

opponents, are so gross that many see them; your errors, being more covered by zeal against many of their corruptions, and by your appeal to the scriptures, are more seductive—On this ground I oppose, and labour to take off the covering veil.

While you justly in many respects, oppose their corruptions, I find among the sentiments you express, many things spoken defectively, wherein important connected truths are wholly left out— Things spoken erroneously contrary to the word— and things spoken unsoberly without fear.

I fully agree in the reference you make to the church at Jerusalem as a pattern for a church that is to assemble to break bread. In quoting Acts ii. 41, 42, you observe this part in your division or analysis of the words,

*“ They continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine.”*—

Now you well know that the most monstrous and corrupt doctrines have risen, and still rise up, and with an impudent front claim to be apostolic. You yourself have in one of your pieces named near half a score sects, and refused to be called by the name of either. Yet all these sects will look you in the face, and affirm that they are continuing steadfastly in the apostle’s doctrine. It is easy to see the absurdity of these claims which contradict and destroy each other. Still it is a truth of the utmost importance, that a church of Christ is built upon the doctrine of the Apostles, and is continuing steadfastly in it. A lover of that doctrine, pointing out a true church by that distinguishing mark, would seem constrained to shew what that characteristic doctrine was, in opposition

to base counterfeits and vile corruptions of it. In the history of the church at Jerusalem, this doctrine would often meet his eye. In the discourses of the apostles [how unlike modern sermons!] this doctrine glows. In the 4th chapter of the Acts, we have a summary of their preaching, expressed thus; “with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus”—and the effect was this, “great grace was upon them all—neither was there any among that lacked,” &c. It appears then that the resurrection of Jesus was the grand subject of preaching in that church.— And it equally served the two fold purpose, of convincing unbelievers, and edifying the disciples, who appear never to have wearied of the comforting, copious theme. They continued steadfast in hearing the apostles preach that God had raised up the crucified Jesus, having loosed the pains of death. They could and did prove from the old Testament that it must be so. They ceased not—they preached Jesus raised, glorified, made Lord and Christ—in the temple and in private houses, until their potent adversaries, and that had filled the city with their doctrine. Thus they edified their brethren—And thus they made converts!— Modern teachers ply their hearers with directions how to become good, to obtain some pious requisite or other in feelings or character, in order to get hope and the favour of God, according to the doctrine of the sect they happen to be of. Such preaching is set up and admired, in place of the preaching of Christ crucified. Men dwell upon the tenets of their own sect, thro’ long sermons and great books. Thus they make converts. But converts to truth are made in the good old way still,



by the foolishness of apostolic preaching. The testimony of God that he raised up Jesus, is powerful to make converts still. God has not forsaken the apostles. Christ is with them still, and will be—And the faith and patience of the saints will be seen in the last days. For the whole election will obtain. They cannot be finally deceived, or lost. And it may be added that converts made by the apostolic doctrine will soon come to be of one mind concerning baptism, and all Christ's laws—They will be of one heart and one soul as at the beginning.

The doctrine that Jesus of Nazareth arose from the dead, is considered as little suited to what is now called a Christian congregation. A discourse on this subject might be thought a proper one in an assembly of Jews, or infidels, but modern religious people would be piqued at hearing a suggestion of their unbelief. They are ready to thank God that they are not like Thomas Paine, but have from their childhood believed the New Testament concerning Christ. And look with a kind of horror on professed Infidels. This spirit is cherished by the teachers, who taking it for granted, that their people believe the truth of the gospel, harden them, in pride and unbelief. And indeed they would soon preach to thin audiences or bare walls, were they to speak out the *very truth*, that the lives of most of their hearers proclaim aloud that they no more believe the Gospel than Mr. Thomas Paine does. And it would complete the affront if they should add, this awful truth "He that believeth not shall be damned." But however salutary it is to have our hypocrisy laid open, and to be stripped of the garments of deceit, both

we and these people have a very strong natural aversion to it. And as the people come together to hear smooth things prophesied, the preachers finding it their interest to please, do not choose to frighten them away. They complaisantly consider their hearers as firmly persuaded of the truth of the Gospel. Thus far they are complimented as believers. But now comes in a distinction which they, not finding it in the scripture, have learned from the schools. This faith, say they, is only a historical or speculative faith, you must labour to get a faith of another and higher kind, consisting in some pious act or acts of the will towards Christ, or some holy exercises of heart, quite beyond giving credit to God's testimony. And it is added that all this comes by conversion, which men must earnestly seek and pray for. All this time, the teachers disregard the apostolic distinction, & teaching, that (faith being the belief of testimony) when we believe the Gospel, we hear, and give credit, not to man's but to *God's Testimony*. That God's truth is known only by his teaching: by the power that raises the dead; and that men are born again of the incorruptible seed, when they are made to know the truth. All this is set aside; the bare gospel is despised, as though it was not the power of God to salvation. The apostle is flatly contradicted; who declares that the believer of Christ's resurrection *shall be saved*—and all this in order to sooth human pride, to lead men to establish their own righteousness, to build their hope on some change, good dispositions, desires and affections in their hearts. *A believer's hope is Christ*, whose work he knows to be all-sufficient to save him; the hope of these unbelievers is in themselves; they hold his

work insufficient. But however men have and will pervert and deny the Gospel, it remains an unshaken rock for perishing, ship-wrecked sinners. And this grand, though despised truth, that the crucified Jesus arose to glory, is the sum of the glorious Gospel of the blessed God. And he who believeth shall be saved.—Believeth what? why, the Gospel preached to every creature. Look at the text—You will not say the command was, go, “preach the Gospel”—and that it was added, he who believes something else, shall be saved; no, the Gospel is as plainly set before us to be believed for salvation, as to be preached for salvation. How shall they believe except they hear, and how shall they hear without a preacher?

He who credits the Gospel, believeth unto righteousness; he has the joy of the perfect righteousness of the risen Jesus, by whose obedience the many are made righteous. Paul says, that the righteousness of God by faith is revealed in the Gospel; therefore it is contained in that sum of it, the resurrection of Jesus. Whosoever credits this, the righteousness is imputed to him. “It shall be imputed to us,” says the Apostle of the Gentiles, “if we believe on him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.” The same Apostle lays the whole weight of the christian hope on the resurrection of Christ, as on a broad and deep foundation. And lightly as this truth is now esteemed, so as to be banished from modern systems of justification; Peter says, men are begotten again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Christ. He speaks afterwards of Christians being born again of the incorruptible seed the word of God.

And Paul speaks of them as begotten by the Gospel. In these sayings, relating all to one thing, we have the scripture doctrine of regeneration. And comparing Peter's words, we have that of justification also; as it appears that a belief of Christ's resurrection, is the same as faith in the righteousness of Christ, the God and Saviour of his people. The doctrine of his resurrection which men believe unto righteousness, includes in it, that he has finished the justifying righteousness for the many sons given him to be brought to glory, and with whom he took part in flesh and blood. That this righteousness is approved and gloriously rewarded—that it is imputed to the ungodly, not working, but hearing and giving credit to the glad report—that it is unto all, and upon all who believe without difference.

Again we find this among the many sentences which comprise the gospel in few words, “Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures—was buried and rose again the third day according to the scriptures”—The finishing transgression, &c. and bringing in of the everlasting righteousness is proved by the resurrection, wherein the doing of the Just One is gloriously rewarded!

If these things are so, and I appeal to the scripture for their truth; what shall we think of your book, undertaking to distinguish a christian church, by its steadfast continuance in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and never touching on this discriminating doctrine, assuredly believed in every church of God, and believed in no other society? A church indeed is like a pillar set up, on which this truth is inscribed, to be known and read of all men—It is a house into which no man is to be received unless he bring this doctrine. But I find



no mention in your book, of the atonement and justifying righteousness of Christ the son of God, without the belief of which a christian church can no more exist than a building can without a foundation.

Without knowing this atonement and righteousness, no man can know and confess Christ the end of the law for righteousness; the prophet, priest, and king of his church. This doctrine is the foundation of Christ's church, and of his people's hope. What then must we think your printed articles of faith and church building, wherein this grand article so dwelt upon by the first christians and first reformers, is never mentioned? A christian church gladly receives a forlorn guilty wretch confessing his sins, and his hope in the blood and righteousness of the Son of God; finding no tokens of any thing, but of God's wrath, about himself, but believing the all-sufficiency of Christ's work; a sinner calling Jesus Lord by the Holy Ghost. Instead of this your articles speak of a church hearing a man tell his experiences in order to reception, amounting no doubt to this— that grace has changed him, and made him better than his neighbors, and better than he was formerly. What a contrast is here! One man confesses Christ, and the work he did, the other tells of a work on his own heart, which he has experienced, making him a new and good man, and his consequent good feelings and holy exercises. Which of these spirits speaks of himself; which glorifies Christ not speaking of himself? What experiences of inward goodness did the dying thief relate? Or the murderous Jews, or the eunuch of Ethiopia?—But your converts must not only relate

their experiences, but they must also agree to your printed articles, (with this proviso, however,) unless any of them can be proved to be contrary to the word of God. You being fully persuaded, would probably think the proof that might be offered quite insufficient, so the candidate for admission must agree unconditionally, or agree with a salvo; or be rejected. After this how can you condemn subscriptions to creeds whether of thirty nine or forty articles, with the salvo, so far as they agree with the word of God?—In these things you very nearly agree with the churches you condemn.

Referring to the accounts of the gathering of the first churches, you say all agree that those churches were composed of persons who first believed and then were baptized. What then?—Why then you doubtless mean to draw this inference: Therefore no infants were baptized among them. And you might just as well infer that no infants among them were saved. For in the history no mention is made of either. Take the church at Philippi for an example. Households were baptized there. But say you no infants were in those households, or baptized there. How do you learn this? Why, say you, the adults who composed the church there, first believed, and then were baptized, therefore there were no infants baptized. Now the inference should have been exactly the contrary. No one was ever baptized into the church at Philippi, but persons there were baptized into the one body of Christ, on their appearing to belong to that body. The infants of believers are expressly declared to belong to that body; therefore the infants of believers were baptized into that body with the other members of it; be-



ing joined to a visible church comes after, and is upon a profession, which infants cannot make.

All the wisdom of all the baptists on earth, can never justify their refusal to receive the infants of believers as members of Christ's body the church. Such refusal can never be reconciled to his words; "of such is the kingdom of Heaven."—"Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein."—You say nothing of that grand doctrine of the salvation of infants. They are as capable of the imputation of righteousness, as the greatest man on earth is. They are as capable of justification and life by Christ's obedience, as they are of condemnation and death by Adam's disobedience.

But it is no wonder that you say nothing of a divine righteousness imputed to old or young, as you hold that men, receive, and stand in the kingdom, not as a little child by this righteousness, but by acts of faith, of which a little child is incapable.

Having shewn that your view of a christian church sets aside the foundation, the faith once delivered to the saints, I proceed to shew that it is no less defective as to the apostolic practices, which characterise a church of Christ. You say, commenting on Acts ii, *They were in fellowship*—By this you understand no more than intimate connection and union. You say this fellowship was very extensive. And yet you do not include in your extensive view, the great and leading thing held forth. They continued—in the fellowship, or strictly and literally,

"in the communion."

So the word signifies. This communion is an apostolic ordinance, joined with those others; "the

breaking of bread," and, "the prayers"—every church is to continue steadfastly in these. Communion is having things in common, or having a common use. The verse next but one shews how this was—"And all who believed were together, & had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, as every man had need." Two things are here mentioned, and these shewed and constituted the community or commonness of all things among them. 1st, They sold in order to give to the needy; thus obeying Christ's word, "sell that ye have and give alms." 2d, They parted their goods to the poor; thus obeying another of his commands, "give alms of such things as ye have." This giving of their food and raiment to the needy, agreed also to those words of John the Baptist, who said the axe was laid to the root of the tree, "He that hath two coats let him impart to him that hath none, and he that hath meat let him do likewise." It appears by chapter iv. v. 32, that the community stood thus among them; "Neither said any man that ought of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things common. And there appears to have been a community of goods also in the Gentile churches. There too they possessed, but did not consider anything they possessed as their own, but had all in common. All they had was as open to the wants of the church and of the poor, as to the wants of the possessor. Thus they had all things common. Great grace or liberality was on them, even as it was on the saints at Jerusalem. Paul mentions this grace bestowed on the churches of Macedonia. And exhorts another church to abound in it. And speaks of the members as knowing the grace of the

Lord Jesus, how poor he became for their sakes, to enrich them through his poverty. And exhorts as he would exhort men willing (by imitating Christ's grace,) to become poor for his sake. And his comparing the case of christians ministering to each other to that of the Israelites partaking of the manna, gives a view of the community—All shared—all had a sufficiency—None had more. And whatever men may think, who in all their religion have this reserve; "provided always, that covetousness must not suffer in its claims," there cannot be a church walking in the footsteps of the first or apostolic churches, without this. The community of goods we speak of is very different from the monkish community. In the orders of monks the individual gives up all he possesses—Retaining nothing as his own, as some of their rules express it, "no kind of thing, neither book nor writing, nor ink-horn, nor any thing at all." The member gives up all to enrich the society. But each shares in the good things, the rank and high honors of the fraternity. Yea each has been in former times, personally loaded with honor, as it is said, beyond what we can well conceive.

The christian community is also very unlike that among certain modern quakers. In their societies each member gives all he has to the company to form a fund or common stock. This is managed with strict economy and prudence, with industry and ingenuity so as to produce a large increase. They are liberal, but the society looks forth with a worldly appearance, it looks more like a great manufacturing company turning a large joint stock to advantage, than like a primitive church. The first churches were not rich. And had so much to do

in alms, that they never thought of making stocks for profit by joint trade. Finally the christian is nothing like the Spartan community, which consisted in an equal division of property. This may please levellers, who covet the wealth of the rich, and would willingly parcel it out as common. But with such a christian would have no fellowship.—But to return to the ordinance of the communion, in which the church at Jerusalem continued steadfast. In this that liberality which called nothing its own appeared. It was practised when they came together to pray and to break bread. And this was done on every Lord's day, and oftener.—And in that large church at Jerusalem, there was a daily distribution to the poor saints. In the Gentile churches there was also the communion, or collection for the poor on the first day of the week. Paul writing to one of them, enjoins that on that day every one should lay by him in store, as God had prospered him. Writing to another he expresses his joy at their constancy in this communion. See Philip, i. 5, where he uses the same word as that in Acts ii.—"Your communion in the gospel from the first day until now"—And the same communion is enjoined as a sacrifice well pleasing to God, Heb. xiii. 16; which passage according to the original is read literally thus; "of the well doing, and of the communion be not forgetful, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." Thus it appears that there was the community of goods, and the communion, or collection for the poor, among the churches of the Gentiles: Altho' they did not there lay the prices of things sold at the apostles' feet—yet they sold all they had, and themselves too, devoted to the Lord's service.---



They, no less than the disciples at Jerusalem, obeyed the command, to lay up no treasures on earth, but to lay up treasures in Heaven, by selling and giving alms; they too provided bags not waxing old: They trusted in the living God, not in uncertain riches, and shewed this by the poor being liberal, and the rich fading away, and being made low: making rich towards God, treasuring up a good fund for futurity, by a ready distribution, and willing communication of this world's goods. A strange way of laying up stock this must seem to those who hold the common notion of laying up! The practice of the fellowship, communion, or collection, continued in the christian assemblies, for a considerable time after the death of the Apostles. Those who have looked into history, speak of it to this effect. That the christians whenever they assembled for public worship, brought with them a quantity of bread and wine, and the first fruits of their corn and grapes. Of these offerings or oblations, as they were called, a part was reserved for the Lord's Supper, a part was eaten in common in what they called their agapee, or love feast, [which Paul calls their own supper and Jude calls their feast of charity,] and the remainder was appropriated to the maintenance of the ministers, and of the poor. Besides bread and wine, it was the custom to offer many other things of value, at the same time. At length, *all this was dropped*, except bringing the bread and wine—and thus it has fared too with other primitive practices. The new testament speaks of spiritual offerings and sacrifices, and calls the communications of our substance sacrifices, Phil. 4, 18, Heb. 13, 16. The communion is distinguished Acts 2, 42, from the break-

ing of bread, and was by the ancients called sacrifice as far down as Cyprian, who, as it is said, reprov'd some niggardly rich widows, to this effect; *do you think that you celebrate the Lord's Supper when you pay no regard at all to the offering yourselves, but take part of the sacrifice which is offered by the poor?*

It is, it seems, a practice of the corrupt Churches around us, to have a semi-annual collection for the poor, on Fast and Thanksgiving days of man's making. How nearly this comes up to the alms of ancient Pharisees may be a question—you are for reforming, and say it would be *well* to have a *quarterly collection* for a Church-Stock. It is probable they would not disagree with you in this; the word *flock*, has a pleasant sound to men. But I would not engage for these people or yours that they would agree to the doctrine of Christ requiring the laying up a treasure in Heaven by almsgiving, and forbidding that covetousness which lays up a stock on earth.—And should you preach up the pure and undefiled religion spoken of by James, you might probably preach away some of your people.—I have never heard of any remarkable attachment to *that religion* among them.—You may call me uncharitable if you please. But I think that the good works of the gospel, done as in God's sight, not in man's, cannot be altogether hid, from men who live where they are done. Where the light shines before men, good works are seen.—It is said that you have a Church of more than an hundred members.—A grand number for a christian church! rarely seen in these days.—A church of the living God in Portsmouth, of that number, would be a glorious sight! nothing on this side Heaven

imputed to us," says the Apostle of the Gentiles, "if we believe on him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification." The same Apostle lays the whole weight of the christian hope on the resurrection of Christ, as on a broad and deep foundation. And lightly as this truth is now esteemed, so as to be banished from modern systems of justification; Peter says, men are begotten again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Christ. He speaks afterwards of Christians being born again of the incorruptible seed of God.

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can well be conceived of, more beautiful! the good works of such a Church, however it might resemble in poverty, those of Macedonia, would amaze and provoke surrounding Pharisees and Hypocrites. It would practically and strongly condemn the world; and excite reproach. It would be like a city on a mountain seen afar, drawing the attention of the elect. Its obedience would come abroad, its light shine, and the Gospel found out from it. Men would see that distinguishing self-denied love, of which we read so much; something quite beyond forsaking open vices, and attending lectures & conferences.—The word of God is the pattern, to be measured. This cannot be done, nor can the Apostles be followed; by halves. If your opponents walk in none of the footsteps of the old stocks, and you and your people only in a few, both are departing, and the difference is only in the degree of obliquity. Neither would endure to hear of the damning sin of loving and seeking worldly riches. Having observed that in your "church-building" you do not measure and conform to the pattern; (and it might be shewn how far short of it you are in many other things,) it remains only that I should observe, as I proposed, some things spoken contrary to sound doctrine, and some things in your performance, spoken very daringly, or with little fear. Speaking of modern Preachers, some called Calvinists, some Arminians, and others Hopkinians, you say their discourses differ little from old heathen morality.—This I shall not dispute—you add, except it is in this, that some of them say, God has made one part of the human family for salvation and another for damnation—do you mean in opposing this, to intimate that God has done the same to

the Just One is gloriously rewarded!

If these things are so, and I appeal to the scripture for their truth; what shall we think of your book, undertaking to distinguish a christian church, by its steadfast continuance in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and never touching on this discriminating doctrine, assuredly believed in every church of God, and believed in no other society? A church indeed is like a pillar set up, on which this truth is inscribed, to be known and read of all men—It is a house into which no man is to be received unless he bring this doctrine. But I find

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save all of the family, as he has to save any?—If to your doctrine like that of modern Calvinists, Hopkinians and Arminians verges close upon theirs who assert the salvation of the whole human family, as they would like to call mankind. I could easily shew that the modern doctrines of the facts you mention, pursued to their consequences, would land in the deceitful, hardening, soul-destroying doctrine of universalism. But to pass this—I am not bound to understand, or defend their meaning. But I am bound to stand by the scripture. That teaches that God made all things, and for his pleasure they are and were created. And that the wicked part of mankind will be condemned by him acting as the righteous Judge of all the earth.—That "the Lord hath made all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil."—But I notice that you reckon it among the preached errors, "that God has decreed all things that come to pass." This which you call an error, I fully believe; yea, that God decreed your bold denial of his decrees; and I am no less persuaded, that the previous certainty of the event is perfectly consistent with human liberty. Neither Peter, nor the Jews, when led to repentance, thought of excusing themselves by the antecedent impossibility there was, that they should have done otherwise than they did. No man can believe the Gospel and yet disbelieve the determinate counsel and fore knowledge of God, by which the Lord Jesus was delivered, taken, and slain with wicked hands.—If the salvation of a chosen number were not made certain by an eternal decree of election, there could be no certainty that any would be saved. All would hang in doubt, suspense, and contingency, to be decided by blind

than his neighbors, and made him better. What a contrast is here! One man confesses Christ, and the work he did, the other tells of a work on his own heart, which he has experienced, making him a new and good man, and his consequent good feelings and holy exercises. Which of these spirits speaks of himself; which glorifies Christ not speaking of himself? What experiences of inward goodness did the dying thief relate? Or the murderous Jews, or the eunuch of Ethiopia?—But your converts must not only relate

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chance. If any were saved, it would be by miracle, or some willing or raising which no man could know would be fact, and which cannot be so.—I, a word, he who denies the doctrine of election, opposes the rich grace of God, and the revealed grace of the Holy Spirit—and a denial of election is a denial of the Gospel of the Kingdom.

I find considerable error in referring very briefly to the manner of speaking on the subject of Infant Baptism. It is taken as I think, from apprehension of our danger from the dreadful consequences of the human heart, and the natural love of error.—You sometimes admit that men may be disciples of Christ, and yet hold Infant Baptism. And yet you inconsistently declare that the baptizing infants is a *Pepysian tradition*.—This is a bold assertion in one who may be easily convicted of error, respecting a Church of Christ and the doctrine holden in such a Church. Surely He who has erred in this, may possibly from the same cause, err on the important subject of baptism.—But this is not the worst.—The words of the Lord Jesus which he spake, shew that such infants as he blessed, belong to the one body of which he is the head and Lord. His words, by his Apostle make it manifest, that one Baptism belongs to this one body. Is it not then very daring in you, to represent Infant Baptism as a monster begotten by the Devil, on a Popish council? this you have done, saying that a Po-

\* Since writing the foregoing I have seen in a later publication on a Cardinal birth, an explanation of the word *discipulus*, which abundantly shews that I did not mistake in supposing that the scripture doctrine of election was rejected and opposed.



chance. If any were saved, it would be by mere accident, or some willing or running which no man could know would be successful, and which cannot be so.—In a word he who denies the doctrine of election, opposes the rich grace of God, and the revealed ground of hope—and a denial of deities is a denial of the doctrine of election.\*

I shall conclude this letter by observing very briefly on your manner of speaking on the subject of Infant-Baptism. It betokens, as I think, little apprehension of our danger from the dreadful deceitfulness of the human heart, and the natural love of error—You sometimes admit that men may be disciples of Christ, and yet hold Infant Baptism. And yet you inconsistently declare that the baptizing infants is a *Papish tradition*.—This is a bold assertion in one who may be easily convicted of error, respecting a Church of Christ and the doctrine holden in such a Church: Surely He who has erred in this, may possibly from the same cause, err on the important subject of baptism—But this is not the worst.—The words of the Lord Jesus which he spake, shew that such infants as he blessed, belong to the one body of which he is the head and Lord. His words, by his Apostle make it manifest, that one Baptism belongs to this one body. Is it not then very daring in you, to represent Infant Baptism as a monster begotten by the Devil, on a *Papish council*? this you have done, saying that a *Po-*

ish council was the mother of Infant Baptism, the Devil being the father of it! Is not this enough to shock any man who trembles at God's word?—But to him, not to man are you answerable—your high confidence of being in the right can never avail or excuse you, if he shall find and declare you in the wrong at last: if you be then found to have set aside his word in this as in other things—But the wish of a fellow sinner should be, that God would lead you to repentance, and graciously forgive you.

That you and I may be converted from pride and error, and become as little children, and receive the kingdom of God, as such do, is the wish of

*Your Friend and Servant,*

Daniel Humphreys.

\* Since writing the foregoing I have seen in a later publication on a spiritual birth, *an explanation of the word elect*, &c.; which abundantly shews that I did not mistake in supposing that the scripture doctrine of election was rejected and opposed.

S6518

[Humphreys, Daniel I., 1740-1827.]

Thoughts on the Warm Controversy Respecting Baptism.

Danbury, Nichols, 1804. 24 pp.

( Copy cannot be located. )

MB copy.



S6519

[Humphreys, David, 1752-1818.

An Essay on the Life of ... Gen. Putnam.

New York, 1804. pp. [241]-330.]

(An analytic of S6520.)