

A
DISSERTATION

ON

INFANT-BAPTISM.

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D I S S E R T A T I O N
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I N F A N T - B A P T I S M .

I N T R O D U C T I O N .

*Making an Observation on several Questions and
Disputes about Baptism.*

THE great Christian Truth, concerning Salvation by the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ the Son of God, in whom the Father is well pleased, and the Purification of Sinners by his Blood shed for the Remission of Sins, is so expressed in the Institution of Baptism, and so signified in it, that all the Differences about that Institution have arisen from different Persuasions as to that great Truth; and there is no remarkable Error about Baptism, but what has a Foundation in some great Error as to that Truth which is signified in Baptism.

Some even deny the Christian Institution of washing with Water, which they call *Water-Baptism*; and they would have all the Instances of it recorded in the New Testament, to be no other than those *divers Washings*, belonging to the first Covenant and world-ly

ly Sanctuary, which are set aside, *Heb. ix. 10.*; tho', after the setting aside of that first Covenant and Sanctuary, with the divers Washings proper to it, the *washing our bodies with pure water* be expressly enjoined as belonging to the new Covenant, and to our Access unto God in the heavenly Sanctuary, *Heb. x. 16.—22.* And because *Peter* declares, (*1 Pet. iii. 20. 21.*) that this Sign in Baptism does not save us, but the Thing signified therein, they have the Confidence to deny, that it belongs at all to Baptism; contrary to the plain Scope of *Peter's* Words, which set forth *the putting away of the filth of the flesh*, as the Sign in Baptism, in distinction from the Thing signified, wherein he says our Salvation only lies, even *the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.* For he says, speaking of *Noah's Ark*, *Wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water. The like figure whereunto, baptism, doth also now save us, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is gone into heaven.* But the true Reason of this Opposition to the Sign in Baptism, is a Disaffection to the Thing signified, even the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is gone into Heaven, affording the Answer of a good Conscience towards God, (*compare Rom. viii. 33. 34.*), and his Blood sprinkling our Hearts from an evil Conscience.

And some pretended zealous Contenders for the Glory of the Father, while they plainly shew they know him not, by their Opposition to the Glory of the Son, would have Baptism to be but a temporary Institution, for the Beginning of Christianity, or designed only for converted Infidels, as the Jews and Heathens, and not to be continued among Christian Nations.

Nations. But this is because, while it is continued, it is a standing Declaration of the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and a standing Sign of the Purification from Sin by the Blood of the Son; and because what is commonly called the *Trinity*, and the *Satisfaction*, is so manifestly signified in Baptism, that Men cannot be brought to think of denying this Doctrine, without thinking of renouncing their Baptism.

But, on the other hand, the Doctrine of the Necessity of Baptism to Salvation, and of *making Christians by Baptism*, is an old Error, that has prevailed much in the Christian World: Though the making of Christians by Baptism must be later than the ancient *Delay of Baptism*, that was pleaded for as the safest Way, upon this Principle, That *entire Faith is secure of Salvation*. However, when this Deviation from the Scripture-way once prevailed, a Foundation was sought for it in the Scriptures: And so they would prove the Necessity of the putting away of the Filth of the Flesh unto Salvation, from *John iii. 5. Except a man be born of water, and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God*: Though it be manifest, from the Words immediately following, that the Stress there is laid on the Spirit: *That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth; — so is every one that is born of the Spirit*. And they further plead these Words, *Mark xvi. 16. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved*; though it be as manifest, from the following Words, that the Stress there again is laid on Believing: *But he that believeth not, shall be damned*. And so both these Texts concur with *1 Pet. iii. 21. testifying against*

gainst this Necessity that is pleaded for : *Baptism doth also now save us, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.* No doubt Baptism is of the same Kind of Necessity with the Observation of the other Precepts of the Gospel, or of all Things whatsoever Christ commanded his Apostles to teach all Christians to observe ; but to place our Salvation in any thing beside Christ's Blood purifying us, is evidently contrary to the very Design of the Institution of Baptism, and is, in effect, denying the Faith of that great Truth signified in Baptism. To place Salvation thus in the Sign, is to set it so far instead of, and in opposition to the Thing signified, and to make the Dispensers of the Sign our Saviours.

And the denying of Infant-Baptism comes likewise of making the Salvation by Baptism to lie in something else than the Thing signified ; even that, whatever it be, which distinguishes the adult Christian from his Infant : Though our Lord expressly declares, that we must enter his Kingdom even as Infants enter it. The first Opposition that we hear of, to Infant-baptism, turned Salvation upon an entire Sort of Believing, whereof Infants are incapable : Whereas there is not any true Faith, or sincere Confession of the Faith, but that alone which acknowledges, that Salvation lies only and wholly in the Thing signified in Baptism. And, if we inquire how that Thing saves us ? our Lord answers us, Just as it saves our Infants. The Denial of Infant-Baptism behaved always to proceed from a Disbelief of this.

SECT. I. *Containing a Scheme of the Controversy and State of the Question about Scripture Precept and Example.*

THE whole Plea against baptizing the Infants of Christians comes to this, That there is neither particular express Precept nor indisputable Example for it in the New Testament, where Baptism is inseparably connected with a Profession of the Faith, which Infants are not capable to make.

All this may be owned at the same time that the Inference from it is denied. For, as the Question is not about the Institution of Baptism, but only about those to whom it should be applied or dispensed, we must not say, that a Thing of this Nature is not warranted in the New Testament, merely because there is not such a Precept or Example as some require for applying the Institution of Baptism to Christian Infants. For Instance: We cannot deny a Warrant in the New Testament for Womens partaking of the Lord's Supper, though there be no such Precept or Example there for it, as is sought for Infants partaking of Baptism. We can no more shew, by express particular Precept or indisputable Example, that Christian Women are included in the Precept, *Do this in remembrance of me, and, Drink ye all of it,* than we can prove, by such Precept or Example, that Christian Infants are comprehended in the Precept, *Baptizing them.* We may indeed go about to prove, that Christian Women must eat of that Bread and drink of that Cup in the Lord's Supper, by shewing them to be Members of that Body, the Church, which all partakes of that one Bread, and so is one Bread, and which has Communion in that Cup of Blessing, whereof

whereof all the Members drink. But in the very same Manner it is shewed, that Christian Infants must partake of the one Baptism, by proving them to be Members of that same Body, the holy Catholick Church, into which all are baptized; even that one Body to which that Baptism belongs, as the Lord's Supper belongs only to a visible Church coming together in one Place to eat it. Now, as soon as we begin to seek a Warrant for any such Thing in this Manner, we must depart from the Principle that every Opposer of Infant-Baptism sets out upon, *viz.* That such an exprefs Precept and such a plain Example is necessary to shew the Warrant for it.

As to the Connexion betwixt the Confession of the Faith, and Baptism, it may be owned, that Baptism cannot be administred to any but upon a Confession by which the Baptized can be called Disciples according to the Scripture: For it can well be said, that Infants are to be baptized upon a Profession of the Faith by which the Scripture warrants us to account them Disciples with their Parents, as well as to look on them, with their believing Parent, as holy, and of the Kingdom of Heaven, or the true Church, into which all Christians are baptized. Disciples are made by Teaching. And when a Parent is taught to profess the Faith, according to that which is spoken, *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house*; this makes his Infant a Disciple with him in the Scripture Stile and Way of Speaking. For, when the Judaisers sought to have the Gentile Christians circumcised, to keep the Law, as necessary to their Salvation by Christ, *Peter* said to them, *Acts xv. 10. Why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the DISCIPLES?* But the Judaisers were seeking to have this Yoke laid on the Infants of
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the believing Gentiles, who behoved to be circumcised with their Parents : And therefore *Peter*, who received the Command to baptize Disciples, took that Designation to comprehend Infants, and called them Disciples with their Parents. So that they must go more nicely and precisely to Work with the Name *Disciple*, than *Peter* did, who would deny that the Precept to baptize Disciples, is a Precept to baptize Infants.

According to the Commission, in *Mark's* Gospel, to preach and baptize, Infants must either be reckoned with the Believing or the Damned. For, as to the Believing there connected with Baptism, it is expressly said, *He that believeth not, shall be damned*: And therefore, if we cannot look on the Infants of the Faithful, dying in Infancy, as damned; we must look on them, according to this Scripture, as believing; and so intitled to Baptism, here connected with the Believing that includes them, in distinction from the Damned. For it cannot be thought that Infants have no Share in that Salvation that comes by the Gospel, which the Lord ordered his Apostles, going into all the World, to preach to every Creature. For, like as the Lord said to *Noah*, *Come thou, and all thy house into the ark*, Gen. vii. 1. wherein he and his House were saved through Water, (*Heb. xi. 7. 1 Pet. iii. 20. 21.*); even so the Apostles, in executing their Commission, preached Salvation in Christ to a Man and his House, and baptized a Believer of this Preaching and his House. And, according to this Preaching, he that believed on Christ for his own Salvation, believed on him also for the Salvation of his House; for so his Belief answered to that which was preached: And so Baptism, signifying and sealing that which was preached, and which

he believed, was applied to him and to his House; Now, it is undeniable that the Apostles preached thus. See *Acts xi. 14.*— *Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved; and Acts xvi. 31. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.* And it is no less manifest, that they baptized the Believer and his House. Thus *Paul* says, *1 Cor. i. 16. And I baptized also the house of Stephanas.* And it is said of *Lydia, Acts xvi. 15. And when she was baptized, and her house; and of the Jailor, vers. 33. He was baptized, he and all his.* Surely then we cannot say, according to the Preaching of the Apostles, that there is no more Connexion betwixt the Salvation of a Believer and the Salvation of his House, or betwixt his Believing and the Baptism of his House, than that of his Neighbour's House, or any other House. And if it cannot be said, that Salvation to a Man and his House excludes his Infants, neither can it be said, that Baptism to his House excludes his Infants. If we would deny Scripture-example for baptizing of Infants, we must first deny, that there were any Infants in these baptized Houses. And as we can plead no Foundation in Scripture for that, it is too bold to say, that there is no Scripture-example for baptizing Infants; as it is likewise to say, that there is no Connexion betwixt the Confession of the Faith, and their Baptism.

SECT. II. *Shewing that Infants must partake in Baptism, from their having Part in the Promise of the Holy Ghost, unto which Christians are baptized.*

AS soon as the Apostles began to execute their Commission, to make Disciples of all Nations, by teaching, baptizing them, they plainly took in
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the Children with their Parents, as partaking with them in that great Salvation which they preached, and which is signified in Baptism. For we see, in the very first Call to those in *Jerusalem*, to *repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins*, the Promise of the Holy Ghost, unto which they were baptized, was to them and to their Children; even them who had said, *His blood be on us and on our children*. Peter said to them, *Acts ii. 38. 39. Repent, and be baptized every one of you in 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, (to you who are presently called), and to your children, (who are connected with you in the Condemnation), and (in like manner as to you and your Children, so also) to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.* For as that Promise of the Holy Ghost was to as many as the Lord then called in *Jerusalem*, and to their Children; so it must be to as many as the Lord calls afar off from thence, and to their Children.

Now, if they who repent be baptized unto the Promise of the Holy Ghost, *Acts xix. 2. 3.*; and if that Promise unto which they are baptized, be to their Children as well as unto them; then certainly Baptism, as far as it is connected with that Promise, must belong to their Children as well as to them. For though their Children cannot yet be sensible of the Remission of Sins, whereof they are assured when they receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost, or are sealed with that Holy Spirit of Promise; yet that same Promise is expressly declared to belong to them. And if those who heard and obeyed the Call, were baptized unto that Promise which they should afterward receive; so might their Children. Though

the Children could not in themselves know any thing of Repentance or Remission at the Time of their Baptism, as did their Parents; yet they were, even then, as capable as they of the Renewing of the Holy Ghost, and saving Change from which Repentance flows, and as capable as they of Justification, by Remission, and by the Imputation of Righteousness without Works. And, just so, though they cannot answer in their own Persons, but in their Parents, at their Baptism; yet they are as capable as they of Justification by Christ's Resurrection, and of the Operation of God, who raised him, from which that Answer of a good Conscience proceeds: For they are as capable of being justified by Christ's Obedience, as of being condemned by *Adam's* Disobedience; and as capable to partake of Christ's Holiness, as of *Adam's* Corruption.

According to this View of Infant-Baptism, it serves to shew, that we contribute as little to our Salvation by Baptism, as do our Infants. They enter the Kingdom of God by the same Title as we do; and we contribute no more to our Entrance there than they. Whereas the contrary Opinion serves to lead us to lay the Stress of that Salvation upon something that we do in the Profession of the Faith, and some Holiness about us, whereof Infants are incapable. But our Lord staid the Pride of all this sort of Glorifying in his Disciples, by saying, concerning Infants whom they were forbidding to be brought to him, *Forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God, or of heaven;* and by assuring them, that none can enter that Kingdom any other Way but as Infants enter it, *Matth. xix. 13. 14. 15. and xviii. 1. 2. 3. 4. Mark x. 13. 14. 15. Luke xviii. 15. 16. 17.* And when *Peter* first opened that Kingdom, on the
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Day of *Pentecost*, to the Jews inquiring what they should do, he opened the same Door to them and to their Children; declaring, that the Entrance would be the very same to all whom the Lord should call; they should enter where the Children enter, who can do nothing. And how can one place any kind of Merit in his Holiness who believes that Infants are holy as well as he? He cannot entertain any Phari-
 faical Notion of Holiness, who believes Infants to be Fellow-members of Christ's holy Church, for which he *gave himself, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word*; even the Word whereby a Man and all his House is saved.

SECT. III. *Clearing the Argument from 1 Cor. vii. 14.*

THese Words of the Apostle (1 Cor. vii. 14.) *For 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,* serve to shew, That the Infants of one believing Parent are Members of Christ's Church, for which he *gave himself, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word*, which is the only Church whereof they can be Members; and that therefore they must partake in the *washing of water*, which belongs to that holy Church, and signifies Admission and Entrance into it.

But there is an Objection against this. For some alledge, That this Text makes the Children no otherwise *holy* than it makes the unbelieving Parent *holy*, and so no more Members of the Church than the unbelieving Parent, who is said to be *sanctified*: For, if it proves the Children to be Members of the Church, by calling them *holy*, it also proves the unbelieving
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Parent to be a Member of it, by calling that Parent *sanctified*.

This Objection arises from not looking well into the Text; which makes the Effect of the Sanctification of the Unbeliever to the Believer, to be the Holiness of the Child: For the Sanctification of the unbelieving Wife is not to herself, but to her believing Husband; to whom she is sanctified, even as the Creatures he eats are sanctified; or, according to the *Greek*, she is not sanctified *in* herself, but *in* her believing Husband. And this Sanctification in her believing Husband terminates in his Children: So that it is the Child, and not she, that is declared to be holy by that Sanctification; for whereas *sanctifying* is *making holy*, this Sanctification of the unbelieving Parent in the Believer, makes not the Unbeliever holy, but the Believer's Children. When this Text, therefore, is considered, we may easily see, it is very far from calling the unbelieving Parent holy, as it calls the Believer's Children holy.

• The Opposers of Infant-Baptism, who perceived the Force of this Argument for the Church-membership of Infants, could find no Evasion from it, and from the Consequence, for their partaking in that *washing of water*, but this ridiculous Gloss on the Text, *viz.* Else were your Children *Bastards*; but now are they *legitimate*! But let us put as grave a Face on this Gloss as we are able, and it will bring us back to the very same Thing that this Text always served to demonstrate.

Let us say, That the Apostle here declares it consistent with the Nature of the Separation of Christ's Church from the World, for its Members to be joined in Marriage with Aliens from it, and that it is not now lawful for those who are so married to be
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separate on that account. Which is far different from the Nature of the Separation of *Israel* after the Flesh, from the rest of the World, as the Church and peculiar People of God, whereby it was unlawful for an *Israelite* to marry a Stranger: And therefore, when they married strange Wives, these behoved to be put away; and likewise the Children begot upon them by *Israelites* were to be put away, as not being Members of the Commonwealth of *Israel*, or as not being a holy Seed, or *Seed of God*, but unclean, as other Gentiles then were. But, says the Apostle, it is not so in the New Testament Church: For its Members, being joined to Aliens in Marriage, are not to be separated from them, who are sanctified to their Use in that State; so that their Children begot with such Aliens are now to be accounted holy, as well as the Children begot by both believing Parents; and are to be acknowledged, as well as they, to be those little Children whom the Lord declares to belong to his Kingdom, in distinction from the World.

SECT. IV. *Shewing how Baptism comes in place of Circumcision.*

THE Argument for Infant-Baptism from Circumcision has a Foundation in these Words of the Apostle, *Col. ii. 11. 12. 13. In whom 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 also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you being dead in your sins, and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses.*

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Here the Thing signified in Baptism is called the *circumcision made without hands*, the same with the Circumcision of the Heart, whereof the Uncircumcised in their Flesh are now made Partakers; and, in place of the Circumcision made with Hands, they are buried with Christ in Baptism, and risen with him in Baptism, and so have the Circumcision of Christ. Now, if the Apostle gives us Baptism with the Thing signified in it; in place of the Circumcision of the Flesh, and calls it the Circumcision of Christ; then Baptism must be to the true *Israel*, who are born of the Spirit, as Circumcision was to the typical *Israel*, who were born of the Flesh. And, as *Peter* said to the *Jews*, who were first called to be baptized unto the Promise of the Holy Ghost, *The promise is unto you and to your Children*, Baptism belongs to the Children of the spiritual *Israel*, unto whom that Promise is; even as Circumcision belonged to the Children of the fleshly *Israel*, who had the Promise of Christ to come in the Flesh, and of the earthly Inheritance. For they are as capable of being born of the Spirit, as they were of being born of the Flesh: For who can deny the Operation of God on them, that raised Christ, and that begets the Adult to the Faith, to which they contribute as little as their Infants? Or who can say, that they are not capable of being made alive with Christ by the Spirit; through which he was conceived holy in the Virgin's Womb, and raised again from the Dead?

When it is asked, How can Infants appear to be of the spiritual *Israel*? it may then be asked, How does a Parent appear to be such an *Israelite*, upon the very first Profession of his Faith, by which he is admitted to Baptism? And when it shall be said, That the Word of God calls us to acknowledge him as such,

such, by that Profession; then it shall also be said, That the same Word calls us to acknowledge his Infants as such, by that same Profession: For it is by that we know them to be the Children of a believing Parent, and therefore to be holy. It is true, they may yet be really irregenerate, and when adult appear to be so; and even so the Parent, notwithstanding his baptismal Profession, may be really irregenerate, and become at last an Apostate. But, as the apostate Professor is not now in that State wherein the Word of God called us to account him holy; so, when the Baptized in Infancy prove irregenerate in the adult State, they are not then in the same State wherein the Word of God called us to account them holy: For they are not then the Infants of believing Parents. They are now in that State wherein they must be looked on according to their own Profession; and, according to that, be added or not added to a visible Church that comes together in one Place to eat the Lord's Supper.

There is no Ground in the Scripture for thinking, that any one is acknowledged in Baptism as a Member of any visible Church. It only declares the Baptized to be Members of the Body of Christ, the true Church, into which all Christians are baptized, tho' it be invisible; even as they are baptized into Christ, the Head of that Body, who is also invisible. So that they who are baptized according to the Scripture, may be called visible Members of the Body of Christ, and so far fit for becoming Members of a visible Church wherein that Body of Christ is represented, like as he himself is represented in the Bread and Cup whereof it partakes. But they cannot be called Members of that visible Church, till they be added to it upon the declared Purpose of their Heart to cleave to

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the Lord in it: For Baptism, in the Scripture, goes before *adding* to any such visible Church; being always immediately connected with the very first Appearance of Union with Christ, and with that one Body, the true Church, of which he is the Head; and to which we may see it belongs, from such Scriptures as these: 1 Cor. xii. 12. 13. *For as the body is one, and hath many members: — so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body.* Eph. iv. 4. 5. 6. *One body, and one Spirit, — one hope, — one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.* And Chap. v. 25. 26. 27. — *As Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it: that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, &c.* Accordingly we find the Eunuch was baptized without waiting for his becoming a Member of any visible Church coming together in one Place to eat the Lord's Supper. For the Lord's Supper belongs not, thus immediately, to this holy Catholick Church; it being from the Beginning delivered by the Apostles, who received it from the Lord, only to a visible Church continuing stedfastly in assembling together in one Place to eat it; as to the Church in *Jerusalem*, *Acts* ii. and the Church in *Corinth*, 1 Cor. xi. Adding unto such a Church, was from the Beginning the Consequent of Baptism, and of teaching the Baptized to observe all Things whatsoever Christ commanded the Apostles. And hence came the Practice of what is called confirming the Baptized, before their partaking of the Lord's Supper in any visible Church.

This being admitted, as it must be according to the Scripture, we shall never be able to infer the Communion of Infants in the Lord's Supper, from their
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their being Partakers of the one Baptism. Nor, if we consider what is now said, shall we be able to ascribe the Corruption of Christianity to the Baptism of Christian Infants, as it may be ascribed to the *making of Christians by Baptism*. The Corruption of the Christian Religion came by departing from the scriptural Profession of the Faith, upon which Baptism was administered from the Beginning to a Man and his House, and by substituting another Profession in the place of it; a Profession that cannot intitle the Professors to the scriptural brotherly Love as Saints and Faithful in Christ Jesus, or as the spiritual *Israel*. Whereas the true primitive Profession of the Faith gives the Professor and his House, his Children, the Character of *holy*, and admits them to Baptism. And we see unfeigned Faith descending from a Parent to her Child and Grandchild, *2 Tim. i. 5*. Yet, if the Parent apostatize, he forfeits that Character, as many did from the Beginning: And, if the Children become adult, not adhering to the baptismal Profession, they have no more the Character of *holy*; but then they are no more the Infants of a believing Parent; while, according to Scripture, we must look on the Children of believing Parents, dying in Infancy, as dying in the Lord.

SECT. V. *Shewing that the Apostles, minding the Lord's Admonition as to Infants, and primitive Christians long after them, did not scruple upon baptizing them; and that it was the Practice in the first Ages.*

IF we believe Christ faithful as the Son over his own House, we must take the Revelation of his Mind and Will as he is pleased to give it, without prescribing

bing to him the Manner in which he should make his Will known; like the Jews, who, being unwilling to believe him to be the Messiah, said to him, *How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.*

When the same Temper from which the Scruples at Infant-Baptism now proceed, shewed itself in his Disciples, he was much displeas'd at it. The Disciples rebuked those who brought Infants to him; and their Reasons for this could be no other but such as are still used by those who now forbid them Baptism. And, in the Foresight of their self-righteous and unmerciful Principle touching Infants, forbidding them the first Sign of Union with him and his Church, out of which there is no Salvation, and perverting the Scriptures that shew their Church-membership, he said, *Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily, I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands on them, and blessed them.* Thus he secured the Church-membership of Infants before his Institution of Baptism, and thus he prevented the Disputes that have arisen since about Infants; shewing himself as the first Patron of their Cause, against Disciples opposing their being brought to him.

The Apostles kept this in mind when they executed his Commission to them for setting up his Kingdom in the World: For they took in the Children with their Parents, as we have seen; they preached Salvation by Christ to Men and their Houses; and they baptized Believers and their Houses, them and all theirs. And they left Christian Infants (as holy) so in the Possession of this Privilege of Christ's Circumcision, that there was never any Scruple moved about

bout it, till the End of the second Century. And, when we consider the Opposition then made to it, we shall see how much it serves to confirm it. We shall see, that Christian Infants were then in possession of the Privilege of Baptism; and that the first Objection made to it arose out of a manifest Departure from what the Scripture teaches most plainly about Baptism, as well as from the Scripture-doctrine of the Grace of God.

Tertullian *, who wrote in the Conclusion of the second Century, is the first that moves an Objection against Infant-Baptism. And he does this when pleading for the Delay of Baptism even to the Adult: For he would have the unmarried Professors of Christianity to delay Baptism, whether they be Virgins or Widows, till they either marry, or be confirmed in their Continency. He pleads for this Delay of Baptism, from the Prohibitions to lay on Hands suddenly, and to give that which is holy to Swine; and this against the plain Scripture-instances of baptizing straightway upon the first Profession, which he sets all aside as extraordinary Cases: And therefore he would have Baptism delayed according to the Condition, Disposition, and Age of each Person. And he insists for the Delay, especially as to Infants, arguing for it in this Manner: “What Necessity is there
 “ (says he) for bringing the Sponsors into Danger,
 “ who, being themselves mortal, may fail of performing their Promises, or may be beguiled by
 “ the Growth of an ill Disposition? The Lord indeed says, *Forbid them not to come to me*. Let them
 “ *come* then when they grow up: Let them *come*
 “ when they learn; when they are taught to what
 “ they should *come*. Let them be Christians when
 “ they

* De Baptismo, quæst. 5.

“ they shall be capable to know Christ. Why does
 “ the innocent Age hasten to the Remission of Sins?
 “ We would act more cautiously in secular Affairs:
 “ That, to whom the earthly Substance is not given
 “ in trust, the divine should be intrusted! Let them
 “ know to seek Salvation, that you may appear to
 “ have given it to one that seeks.” And, for the
 Delay of Baptism in general, he further says, “ If a-
 “ ny understood the Weight of Baptism, they would
 “ rather fear the attaining of it, than the Delay.
 “ Entire Faith is secure of Salvation.”

Now, was not this Delay of Baptism as expressly
 contrary to the Scripture-example as any thing can
 be? and did, then, the first Opposition, that we
 hear of among Christians, to Infant-Baptism, arise
 out of the Scriptures, or out of a flat Contradiction
 to the plainest Scripture?

And did not the Objection of this Forefather of
 the Forbidders of Infants to come to Christ, proceed
 upon the Denial of original Sin, and the Need of
 Remission to Infants? And did it not plainly suppose,
 that our Salvation lies in that about us which distin-
 guishes us from our Infants? and that it hinges upon
 a Knowledge and a seeking of Salvation, and an En-
 tireness of Faith, whereof Infants are incapable? If
 it shall be alledged, that he was not in this a Forefa-
 ther to those few commonly called *Free Grace Anaba-*
ptists, who are only to be regarded in this Question;
 may we not then say, if these indeed believe that they
 cannot enter the Kingdom of God but as the Infants
 enter, he was far more consistent with himself than
 they?

But, passing this, does it not most plainly appear,
 from the Words of this first Opposer, that Chri-
 stian Infants were then in possession of the Privilege
 of

of Baptism? And do not his own Words also shew the Fact, that it was maintained at that Time by the Lord's saying to his Disciples, *Forbid them not to come to me?* Which Saying this Man had the Boldness to turn off in a Manner wherein the Disciples durst not, nor any one that trembles at the Word of God dares yet do.

Though the Delay of Baptism took place, contrary to the Scripture, and gained much Ground among Christians after the End of the second Century; yet it is manifest, from *Cyprian's* * Writings about the Middle of the third Century, that the Infants remained still in the Possession of this their Privilege. *Cyprian*, and a Council of sixty six Bishops with him, differed from one *Fidus*, who questioned if Infants ought to be baptized before the eighth Day, as it was in the Case of Circumcision: And he contended against this *Fidus*, that they may be baptized before the eighth Day; the Observation of which was a Type that had its End in the coming of Christ. On both Sides of this Question, the Fact is evidently supposed, that Infant-Baptism was the common Practice of that Time: For upon this Fact the whole Question goes. And from this it appears likewise to be Fact, that, in this Time, before they had any Notion of framing any national Church, like the Church of the Old Testament, they held Baptism as coming in place of Circumcision to the Church of Christ.

APPEN.

* Lib. 3. epist. 8.

A P P E N D I X.

Containing a Dissertation on the Manner of Baptism, and the Scripture-sense of the Word Baptism.

THE Opposers of Infant-Baptism contend likewise for a different Manner of baptizing from that which is commonly practised: Which, according to them, cannot be called Baptism: because it does not at all signify and represent Union or Communion with Christ in his Death and Burial, by Immersion, or plunging or dipping in Water; nor in his Resurrection, by emerging or rising up from under the Water: and because it does not at all answer to the very Sense and Use of the Word *Baptism*, which signifies Dipping, Immersion, or Plunging.

But, on the other hand, it is pleaded, that this cannot appear from the Scripture to be the very Sense and Use of the Word *Baptism* there. For the best Way to find the Sense of this Word, as applied to the Case of baptizing Christians, is to observe how the Scripture applies it to other Cases; and, by this way, the Scripture-sense of it is found to be washing, however that be done. For thus it is applied, *Mark vii. 2. 3. 4. 5. And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with common, that is to say, with unwashed hands, they found fault. For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except with the fist they wash hands, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And from the market, if they are not BAPTIZED*, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received*

* Compare *Luke xi. 38. in the Greek.*

ceived to hold, the BAPTISMS of cups and of pots, and of brazen vessels, and of tables, or Beds. Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands? Who sees not, that *Baptism* here has the very same Import with *Washing*, and that it is placed in this Passage as another Word for *Washing*? And how can it then be said, that *Washing* is not to be called *Baptism*, except it be done by Immersion? For were not the Prophet's Hands washed, by his Servant's pouring Water on them? and are not the *divers* Purifications of the first Sanctuary called *Baptisms*, Heb. ix. 10.? See the *Greek*.

In the Case of the Christian Baptism, *Washing* stands often in the New Testament as another Word for it, and as declaring the Import and Sense of it; which may be seen in these Instances: *Eph. v. 26. The washing of water.* Heb. x. 22. *Our bodies washed with pure water.* Tit. iii. 5. *The washing of regeneration.* 1 Pet. iii. 21. *The putting away of the filth of the flesh.* Acts xxii. 16. *Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins.* 1 Cor. vi. 11. *But ye are washed.* From these it may appear, that, according to the Scripture-use of the Word *Baptism*, Immersion cannot be called *Baptism* any otherwise than as it is a Mode of washing with Water.

The Ancients, who added several Ceremonies to the simple Institutions of Christ, and found out spiritual Meanings to them, amongst other Rites added to Baptism, used this of *dipping thrice*. But they did not proceed so far in this Way, as to deny, that *Washing with Water* in any other Way is *Baptism*: For they used *klinick* Baptism; and surely baptizing a sick Man in his Bed, was not burying him under
D
Water.

Water. Washing with Water, then, was from the Beginning the Sign in Baptism, in whatever Way, or after whatsoever Mode it was done.

The common Way of baptizing is not by sprinkling, as has been always falsely alledged in this Controversy; but by pouring Water from the Hand of the Baptizer upon the Baptized. And this answers exactly to a Scripture-sense of the Word *Baptism*: For, in the Scripture, pouring the Holy Ghost on Men is the same as baptizing them with the Holy Ghost; as, when the Disciples were *baptized*, on the Day of *Pentecost*, *with the Holy Ghost, and with fire*, according to the Prediction of *John Baptist*, and of the Lord, *Peter* said upon it, *This is that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel,—I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh:—and on my servants, and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my spirit.—And having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath poured out this, which ye now see and hear.* We may also perceive Baptism with Water, and with the Holy Ghost, both foretold by the Prophet *Isaiab*, (Chap. xliv. 3.), in these Words: *For I will pour water on him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring: and they shall spring up, &c.* For our Lord points to this Passage, when, speaking of that spiritual Seed springing up, *John* iii. 5. he says, *Except a man be born of water, and the Spirit.* Now, if the Scripture calls pouring forth the Holy Ghost on Men, baptizing them with the Holy Ghost; then pouring forth Water on Men, is baptizing them with Water in the Scripture-use of the Word *Baptism*. Again, the Scripture says, *Christ* was *baptized with a Baptism*, which was at his Death; but that Baptism was by
Water

Water and Blood, poured forth from his pierced Side upon his dead Body; and there was no dipping there. And our Communion with Christ, and Conformity to him in his Death and Burial, and in his Resurrection, is by the *renewing of the Holy Ghost*, which is *poured out* on us, as the Water in the *washing of regeneration*, Tit. iii. 5. 6.—*He saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he poured out on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.*

If it can be inferred from the Thing signified in Baptism, (as expressed, *Rom. vi. 3. 4. 5.* and *Col. ii. 11. 12. 13.*) that the Washing must be by burying under Water, and raising up again; then it can also, by the same Rule, be inferred from the Thing signified in Baptism, (as expressed, *Heb. x. 22.*) that the Washing must be by sprinkling; because the Thing signified, as expressed there, together with the Sign of washing with Water, is *sprinkling our hearts from an evil conscience*. But, if we look on the Will of the Institutor, expressed in his Word, as the sole Ground of the Relation betwixt the Signs in Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and that which is signified by them; we will not look for any such Similitude in these instituted Signs, as we do in Pictures or Images. The Similitude or Likeness that the Apostle speaks of, *Rom. vi.* is not at all said by him to lie in the Sign or Manner of Washing: For he tells us plainly wherein lies the Likeness of Christ's Resurrection, wherein we are planted by Baptism; he says, *That like as Christ was raised up from the dead,—even so we also should walk in newness of life.* And, just so, according to the Apostle, the Likeness of his Death must be our being dead with Christ to Sin, having *our old man crucified with him, that the*
body

body of sin might be destroyed. But let us suppose, that *being buried with him in baptism*, is an Allusion to the Mode of washing by Immersion; and what shall we then make of it? seeing we also find even the Way of purifying by sprinkling alluded to in the Case, and yet more frequently the Manner of washing by pouring on Water. Shall we say upon it, that the Scripture confines us so to any one Manner of washing, that another Way of it cannot at all be called Baptism? And when our Communion with Christ in his Death and Resurrection, whereby we are saved, is only by pouring out on us the renewing of the Holy Ghost; shall we say, that this cannot be signified in Baptism by pouring Water on us? and shall we deny that this is Baptism?

The Confidence of some in this Matter is the more unaccountable, that they cannot be ignorant, it is impossible to shew, from the particular Accounts of the Lord's Baptism, and the Eunuch's, that either of them were baptized otherwise than by pouring Water on them from the Hands of the Baptizers. For if it should be inferred, from the Eunuch's going down into the Water, and coming up out of it, (as it is also said our Lord did), that he was plunged; the same must also be said of *Philip the Baptizer*; for the Words are, *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.* If these Words say any thing of dipping the Baptized, they say full as much of dipping the Baptizer. But, to any Man that is capable to understand any Words, these Words plainly say, That being baptized with Water, is another Thing than going down into the Water, and coming up out of it.

The End.