



MICROFILMED-1975

SOME
Baptismal abuses
Briefly Discovered.

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OR
A Cordial endeavour to reduce the
Administration and Use of BAPTISM, to its
Primitive Purity; In two Parts.

The first Part,
Tending to disprove the Lawfulness of Infant Baptism.

The second Part,
Tending to prove it necessary for persons to be Baptized af-
ter they believe, their Infant Baptisms, or any pre-profession of
the Gospel notwithstanding.

AS ALSO
Discovering the disorder and irregularity that is in mixt
Communion of persons baptized, with such as are unbaptized, in
Church-fellowship.

By William Allen.

Rom. 14. 22, 23.
Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he al-
loweth. ———— Whatsoever is not of faith, is sin.
Luke 11. 6.
And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the Com-
mandments and ORDINANCES of the Lord, blameless.

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To His much Honoured
And
Dearly Beloved,
M^r JOHN GOODVVIN,
And the Brethren of his Society.



Here have now (Dearly Beloved) several yeares passed over our heads, since I first obtained that good opinion from you, as to be admitted into your Society. And sure I am, I shall not flatter you in acknowledging, that if I have not in all this time improved my Spiritual estate very much; it is not because I have not had opportunity so to doe, but because I have not had an heart fully to improve this opportunity. And how ever mine own dulnesse and indisposition, have obstructed much of that increase which was (as I beleve) intended me on your part, yet this I must acknowledge to the praise of that rich and abundant grace of God that hath uttered it selfe among you, and hath been declared by you, that your love, diligence, faithfulnessse, and zeale, and the grace of God in them, have made such impressions upon me, as by which you may well (as I doubt not but you will) stand much endeared to me all my days.

As for those Christian respects I have received from you, they have so much exceeded what I could well expect, as

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that I have not been under any temptation of neglect these wayes, whereby the bond of my union with you could be loosened.

And yet so it is (Beloved, as ye well know,) that some apprehensions and impressions of conscience in me, have caused me in some things to differ from the most of you, and have occasioned some alteration in my former practise and conversation with you; yet not without long consideration, and some consultation first had with many of you, in order to my satisfaction in that wherein I doe differ. But I trust that the consciences of those who know my compliant temper, will be ready to witness with me, that my differing from you does not proceed from a love in me to differ, but from my love to truth as apprehended by me; my inclination otherwise strongly carrying me to a compliance with all men, how much more with you, when it may be without a breach making upon the peace of my conscience.

But since I have taken the liberty to dissent from you, both in opinion and practise as to some things; I could not but hold my selfe obliged, to give you an account of some of the grounds upon which I have done it; which that I might doe upon better terms than otherwise I had convenient opportunity to doe, I have made this publick addressse to you as you see.

And in as much as my intention herein, next unto the service of the truth it selfe, is to serve you; my hope is, that you will as seriously and impartially intend and weigh the import of the matter presented to your view, as I have with sincere respect unto your benefit prepared it.

It is like the inconsiderableness of the author, and the great improbability, that one far inferior in parts, and gifts, should see further, and discern more in things of this nature, then those that much transcend him, will be a great temptation upon you, if not wholly to neglect and despise this piece of discourse, yet to think it unworthy your serious thoughts.

But I know, you know how to releve your selves against this temptation, considering that it is no new thing for God,

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out of the mouth of babes and sucklings to ordain strength, as well as out of the mouths of stronger men: nor for him to put of his treasure into earthen weak vessels, that the excellency of its power might be the better knowne to be of God: nor is it any thing more then ordinary, for him to subiect the stronger to supplies from the weaker in some things; so that the head shall have no cause to say unto the feet I have no need of you. Besides, hath not the undue admiring of the learning, parts, and abilities, even of good men themselves in their generations, as if they had been comprehensive of all truth coming under their consideration, when as they have been tainted with error and superstition in some things, I say hath not this been a snare by which many have been detained in error and superstitious vanities, much longer then otherwise they would have been? men of the greatest parts not being alwayes the forwardest nor foremost in all acts of reformation, they having more strength to hold out against the truth, and a greater dexterity to obscure it both from themselves and others, by pleas, objections and subtile distinctions or involutions rather, * then men of lower parts have.

The nature of the subject also (here tendered to consideration) being such, as tends to perswade men to embrace that despised way, which is generally every where spoken against, and which is apt to bring the assertors of it into dis-esteem and contempt among men, if not to expose them to sufferings of a worse nature, it may doubtlesse be a temptation to many, not to be too inquisitive after things of this nature, but to content themselves, onely with a cursorie and superficial survey of them, lest otherwise by a more intent and impartial consideration, and a more narrow scrutine into, and thorough examination of matters, they should discover so much light, as by which they must be necessitated, eyther to hazard much of their outward honour, peace, and prosperity in the world in following that light, or their inward peace and tranquility in not obeying it.

* For how ever they sometimes distinguish and divide in things which are of an intricate and collective interpretation, yet for the most part they err on the other hand, by involving and confounding things together, which are of different nature, and ought to be distinguished: and

this they do in nothing more, then in jumbling together the Legal and Evangelical administrations, which differ almost as much as night and day.

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But as concerning you my friends, who have despised this temptation in other cases, which otherwise would have deprived you of some other great truths of the gospel, with which you are now enriched; my hope is, that you will be the better prepared to resist it at this turn also. For know ye for a certainty, that the conscience never hath so rich a taste of the sweet and pleasant fruit of righteousness, as when a man in conscience to God, and love to truth, is willing to suffer, and doth suffer from the world in the practice of it: this hidden Manna is not tasted, save by those that overcome temptation. But why should not those that are Godly wise indeed, overshoot the devil in his owne bow? and rather be encouraged to, then discouraged from searching into those doctrines and waies, which are discountenanced by the world; since they are so much the likelier to be of God: for if they were of the world, the world would love her owne.

It is also a thing very ungrateful to the flesh, and hardly attained without much spiritual ingenuity, for men who have for a long time, and with great confidence, owned, asserted, and pleaded the cause of an erroneous way; afterwards to acknowledge their mistakes, and turn Advocates for that, which with a high hand they have sometimes opposed.

But he that knows not how to deny himself in such things as these, upon convictions of light; knows not how to approve himself a man worthy the name of a Disciple of Christ; who, as the Master saith, cannot be such, except he deny himself. And had not ye (Beloved) learned this spiritual art long before this in other cases, you had never made so happy an exchange of Error for Truth, as now I esteem you to have done.

We have hitherto been coming out of darkness, error, and superstition but by degrees, and not all at once, now discovering one error, and then another; and why then should not our former experience this wise, admonish us still of not being too confident of our having now discovered all Satanical, Papal, and anti-christian deceits, in doctrine and worship unto the bottome; but rather to be jealous over our own hearts
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and judgements, lest some of those old dregs should yet be left behinde? Solomon says, that the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day: and yet where would there be place and opportunity of growing in knowledge and understanding, if there were not occasion even for Christians themselves, ever and anon to be changing their dark and crooked thoughts, for more lightsons and well rectified apprehensions?

It is a thing doubtlesse too to incident also even to otherwise good men themselves, not onely to put much of that affection they bear to the erroneous things they practise, into the ballance with the reasons upon which they act; by which means that seems to them ponderous, which otherwise in it selfe is as light as vanity; but also to presume and hope, that those seeming grounds which they have, will excuse them before God in their way and practise, though their confidence concerning them, suffers many a rebuke from the truth when it is laid close to the conscience by the Spirit of God. But the Spirit of truth, which loves and desires truth in the inward parts; though he patiently bears and indures much dis-
ingenuitie of this kinde in the mindes of men for a time, yet if his applications for cure hereof be alwaies slighted and neglected, it many times provokes him at last to leave them under the power of their owne deceivings, and to say; But if any man be ignorant (viz. upon such terms) let him be ignorant, 1. Cor. 14 38.

The day is now hastening apace, wherein the mighty God will reckon with the Babilonish whore for corrupting the earth with her deceits; and then the eye of Jesus Christ will be upon those, who have thorowly pleaded his cause, wholly followed him, and faithfully borne witnesse to his truth against all her unsound and corrupt waies, to keep them from the hour of temptation, that shall come upon all the world to try them, whereas those that have been partakers with her in her corruptions, must then be partakers with her in her sufferings, though otherwise they be the people of God themselves, unlesse
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they have before that time, obeyed that voice which saith, come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. And therefore how exceedingly doth it concern all those who would be then found pure virgins indeed, and such as have not defiled their garments, no not with any the least of those whorish pollutions, narrowly to consider such their ways, which are shrewdly suspected for unclean, as they are whose nakedness I have hereby laboured to discover.

Thus having (though not without weakness, yet) with much uprightness and true affection to you, spread my thoughts and apprehensions before you, as touching those things wherein I cannot close with you, (being nevertheless not unwilling to retract any thing I have done, if ever the vanity of it shall be discovered to me, as loving no way in Religion further then I apprehend it countenanced by the truth), and having herein satisfied my self in discharge of my duty towards you, I shall now commend this poore endeavour of mine to the blessing of the blessed God, and you unto his direction in the perusal of it, and shall God inabling me still endeavour to approve my selfe.

Yours unfeignedly, to love, honour,
and serve you,

May 11. 1653.

WILLIAM ALLEN.



A Premonition to the Reader, touching the evill and dangerous effects of Infant Baptism.

R E A D E R,



Hou hast in the following discourse, together with some other things, some few of those many arguments that are and may be readily produced against the practise of Infant Baptism: and such they are for the most part as have not been insisted on by others; for I would not weary thee with the repetition of the same Arguments which are extant in other mens labours; for which cause their number is the lesse: but thou wilt do well to estimate the truth in this particular, rather by the weightinesse then number of the Arguments leaved for its service.

I would have thee take notice, that where ever thou meetest with any expressions tending to deny mens visible being in Christ, or their visible membership in his Church without Baptism, such deniall is still intended in respect of Gospell form and order, according to which men are not regularly visibly incorporated into Christ or his Church without Baptism. The which holy order of the Gospell, though I intend no more thereby, ought to be of sacred resentment to every Christian, in as much as every word of God is pure, and favours of divine wisdom, Pro. 30. 5.

But now as concerning the mischievous effects of Infant Baptism, (not so much as to touch here upon those which are discovered in the ensuing discourse) I shall here onely hint at two or three of them, which might also have been drawn up more amply argument-wise.

First, the untimely and undue administration of Baptism to Infants, hath doubtlesse proved a miserable snare to thou-

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sands and ten thousands in the world, to neglect that which should have rendred them worthy the name of Christians indeed, whilst they have fancied themselves to be such, upon account of their Christendome as they call it, *i. e.* that Baptism which they received in their Infancy. For whereas they are made to beleve that they have been Baptized into Christ, and thereby received into the number of Christs flock, and incorporated into his Church by that Baptism; they have hereupon presumed themselves good Christians, and in safe condition, and have taken it ill that any should make question to the contrary; though otherwise they have had little more then this upon which to build such a confidence. Whereas otherwise, if they could not have attained so much as the name and repute of Christians, much lesse the hope of that salvation which belongs to Christians indeed, without a manifestation of repentance and faith preceding their Baptism, and their reception of Baptism thereupon, which yet is the Gospell way; there is no doubt but that millions of men and women would have quit themselves upon far better terms then now they have done, in labouring after knowledge in the Gospell, and such other qualifications as would have rendred them meet for Baptism, and consequently for communion in other ordinances of the Gospell, rather then they would have fallen short of the confidence of being Christians, and the repute of such, and the hope of salvation which belongs to those that are such indeed. For mens extreme impatiencie of not being reputed Christians indeed upon account of their Infant Baptism, and that slender and contradictory profession which they make, argues the name and repute of such; and that hope they have thereby, to be a thing so dear and precious to them, as that they would do much more then now they do for the gaining of it, if they had it not upon such easie terms as now they have, as men have ordered the matter.

II. Secondly, From what else then the practise of Infant Baptism, hath proceeded the Churching of whole Nations and Kingdomes; whilst all Infants in a Nation (except such as have been prevented by death) have been Baptized, and thereby

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by received into the Church? and if so, why may we not say, that the national Church officers the Bilhops, yea the univerial Bishop himself the Pope, have grown out of the same root? For if there had been no nationall Baptism in this kind (as doubtlesse there would not, if Baptism had not been to be had but upon Scripture terms, *viz.* apparent repentance and faith preceding) then there would have been no nationall Churches, that being as to outward form the foundation upon which they are built, and door of entrance thereinto; and if there had been no nationall Churches, there could have been no nationall Church officers; and if no nationall Church officers, then surely no universall officer over all nationall both Churches and officers: So that Infant Baptism may well be conceived to be the cause *sine qua n n*, that without which neither the one nor the other of these would have been as now they are. And therefore how small a matter or innocent thing soever Infant Baptism seems to most, yet who may not see, if they will but seriously consider it, that the evils and mischiefs that have taken place in the world upon the taking place of nationall Churches and their Officers, and the head of them all the Pope, may in great part be charged upon that dangerous error Infant Baptism, of which we speake? And what a dishonour and reproach hath it been to Jesus Christ, that he should be looked upon as head of such Churches, and that such vile and unworthy persons should be esteemed members of his body, as those nationall Churches and the persons of whom they have mostly consisted have been; as if Christ and Belial had been well agreed? Besides, these Nationall, corrupt, indeed Antichristian Churches, have in great part thrust out the true Churches of Jesus Christ, and his discipline, and the purity of his administration of Ordinances, and have contempered themselves in constitution, discipline and worship unto the spirit of this world, by which they have for the most part been inspired and acted.

And therefore however this After Baptism (as it is called) is charged with rending and tearing of Churches (which in true construction is but a rending and dividing of persons

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from Churches of an undue and humane constitution, that they might be gathered into the fold of Christs own making; and such a division as this the Gospell hath always wrought in the world, in respect of some or other of its truths, *Luke 12. 51.*) yet indeed and in truth it is not fiduciall Baptism, *i. e.* the Baptizing of men after they beleeve, but infant Baptism that is truely guilty of rending and tearing, indeed of dissolving the true Churches of Jesus Christ in the world.

III. And therefore in the third place, though those Congregational, or Independent Churches as they are called, have conceived with themselves that they have provided well against that sin of corrupting and carnalizing Churches, of which the Nationall and Parochiall associations are guilty, by that separation which they have made from them; yet upon due consideration it will be found, that they have but only for the present lopt off some evill and corrupt branches, but have not at all taken away the root that bears them; for their practise of Baptizing their Infants, and thereupon embodying them with themselves, will within the space and compasse of lesse then an age (as is more then probable) render these Churches also, much-what as carnall as the Parochiall and Nationall are. For whatsoever children are whilst but Infants, (during which time I cannot but hold their condition good and safe God-wards, the Scriptures favourable aspect that wayes considered) yet when they come to years of discretion they so corrupt themselves with actuall sin, even the children of good men as well as bad, as that that saying of our Saviour must take place concerning them, *Jeb. 3. 3. Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdome of God.* And without controverlie, those who in reason cannot on this account be judged in a capacity to see the Kingdome of God, cannot in reason be judged in a capacity to have communion with God, and with his Saints in all the ordinances of God. And whether it be not very rare for persons to be as early in their repentance and faith, as in their actuall sinning, which yet hath no promise of pardon without an actuall turning unto God; I leave to themselves

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to consider, whose experience and observation I doubt not will incline them to conclude it so to be. And therefore it cannot be (in all probability) but that such Churches if they should continue for the space of an age in that way in which they now are, they must of necessity consist in great part of carnall and unregenerate persons, as the parochiall Churches do.

If any shall conceive this a convenient remedy against this evill, *viz.* to Excommunicate children, or youth, about the time in which they come to know the difference between good and evill, at which time they make themselves guilty of actuall transgression, and consequently put themselves under a necessity of conversion, to wit, repentance and faith for the obtaining remission of those actuall sins; and therefore in reason cannot be looked upon as regenerate, untill the fruites *worthy amendment of life* and of faith do appear: though this remedy I say should be thought on, (which is not likely) yet for them to retain them in the Church whilst Infants, and to cast them out when they come to years of understanding, is such a thing which as there is no rule prescribing it; so I beleeve (my own observation in some other cases prompting me hereunto) it will prove a thing of greater difficulty then indugent parentall members will know how to overcome.

If any shall think to prevent this more then inconvenience another way, *viz.* by Baptizing Infants into the universall Church, and not receiving them into any particular Church till they can give an account of their repentance from dead workes, and faith towards God; or else if they do receive them into a particular Church, shall think to prevent this by not admitting them unto communion with the Church in other ordinances, till they can give the aforesaid account; herein likewise (besides the evill of unregenerate persons permissive abode in the Church) they shall give a rule unto themselves, which God hath not given. For whoever are fit to be, and *de facto* are members of the universall visible Church, are fit also to be members of particular Churches; and whosoever are members of particu-

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ekular Churches, cannot according to any rule in Scripture, that I know, be excluded part and fellowship in any the Ordinances there administred. For during the time in which God would have Infants to be members of the nationall Church of the Jews, and partakers of one ordinance, to wit, Circumcision; he did neither order their excommunication out of the Church, upon account of their unregeneration when they became actuall sinners; nor yet debarre them communion with the Church in any other ordinance, till signes of their regeneration appeared; nor were they excluded communion in any the ordinances of that Church at any time from their very Infancy, otherwise, or longer then the terms of naturall necessity and debility did impose it upon them.

Nor does it at all follow, that Infants are to be admitted Church members under the Gospell, because they were so under the Law, as some vainly imagine; nor yet that persons of like disqualification may be admitted into, or continued in Churches under the Gospell, as might be both the one and the other under the Law; no more then it followes, that the Gospell ministrations is carnall, beggerly, weak and unprofitable, because that of the Law was such, Heb. 7. 18. & 9. 10. Gal. 4. 9. For under the Law, Church membership was vested in *Abrabams* naturall seed, in which capacity Infants were as well as men; but under the Gospell that priviledg is proper only to those that are, or appear to be his spirituall seed, to wit, beleevers, (Gal. 3. 7, 26--29. Rom. 9. 8.) in which capacity Infants are not. Under the Law spirituall defilements, such as were ignorance, unbelief; or morall pollutions, such as are extortion, railing, covetousnesse, &c. did not exclude persons from Church membership if they did but keep the ceremoniall Law, which according to the Apostle Heb. 9. 9, 10. stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances imposed on them untill the time of reformation; which could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience, which yet unregenerate men were in a capacity to perform: But now under the Gospell both spirituall and morall defilements, such as are ignorance of God and

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and his wayes, unbelief, covetousnesse, drunkennesse, railing, extortion, &c. doe de jure exclude persons from Church fellowship, 1 Cor. 5. 11. & 15. 34. Under the Law, as the service and administration of that Church did consist of elements of the world, beggerly rudiments, and carnall ordinances, (Gal. 4. 3. 9. Heb. 9. 10.) So the members of that Church that were permitted communion in those ordinances, were (at least sometimes) for the most part but carnall likewise; in which respect Infants and youths were not lesse capable of Church membership then they. But now under the Gospell, God requires such only to worship him in his Churches as can worship him in spirit and truth, and will have his Churches to be spirituall houses, built of living stones, to wit, such as are meet to be an holy priesthood, to offer up spirituall sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, (Joh. 4. 23, 24. 1 Pet. 1. 5.) in which capacity Infants are not.

So that notwithstanding all that can be pretended to the contrary (for other pretentions besides these I know none) Infant Baptism is in a little time like to prove a corrupter of the * Independent Churches themselves, as well as it hath been of the Nationall; which one would think were to them argument enough alone to cause them to lay aside the practise of it.

The premises therefore considered, Infant Baptism that hath proved so great a snare to men to think themselves secure in an unsafe condition; that hath been as it were the bottom means of erecting Churches contrary to the Gospell pattern, to the great dishonour of Jesus Christ, unto whom they pretend relation, and setting of Antichristian officers over them; yea and is likely also in a little time to leaven even those Churches themselves that have been looking after some reformation and purity: that Baptism I say, is questionable no doctrine according to Godlinesse as true Baptism is, but of ungodlinesse, of which to me it's more then probable, it hath been a great promotresse in the World.

And therefore to me it clearly appears to be the duty of all those that love the honour of Jesus Christ, and the prosperity of his affaires both in his Churches and in the World,

1 Cor. 5. 11. & 15. 34.
Gal. 4. 3. 9.
Heb. 9. 10.
Isa. 53. 1. & 8. 18. & 10. 22.
Heb. 4. 2.
Psal. 81. 11.
Isa. 65. 2.
Joh. 4. 23. 24. 1 Pet. 1. 5.
* And doubtlesse that is none of Christs Church wayes, wherein provision for Church purity is made but only for one age or half one rather; upon which account among others, the way of Independency seems to me to fall short of the mark and to misse of Gods way.

700 from Infants to Church members
Gal. 4. 9.
Gal. 3. 7, 26-29. Rom. 9. 8.
Heb. 9. 9, 10.
I Cor. 5. 11. & 15. 34.
Gal. 4. 3. 9.
Heb. 9. 10.
Isa. 53. 1. & 8. 18. & 10. 22.
Heb. 4. 2.
Psal. 81. 11.
Isa. 65. 2.
Joh. 4. 23. 24. 1 Pet. 1. 5.

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World, (both which have suffered so deeply by the springing up of this root of bitterness, as is in part before express) to endeavour with all their might in a Christian way, the extirpation of so evill a custome as this hath been, and the restitution of primitive Baptism as one of those Lawes of our Lord, which corrupt times have made void, as indeed they have done many other: Upon which account I shall further encounter the one, and plead the cause of the other in the ensuing arguments, to which I refer thee; with humble requests to God to give thee an upright heart and single eye in thy examination of them, and so much light as to discern that which is of him, from that which is but of men, and so much spirituall ingenuity and candor as to follow the truth in love when understood.

ARGUMENTS



Some Few

ARGUMENTS,

Clearly proving the Invalidity of the

Administration of Baptism to Infants.



That which both busies the minds, and takes up much time among the servants of God in debates, is that question about Baptism, viz. Which Administration is most agreeable to the mind of God? whether that which is made to Infants (especially such who are the children of believing Parents,) or whether that which is not made, but unto persons who either do indeed believe the Gospel, or which make such a profession of Faith, which cannot reasonably be deemed to proceed from ought else then that which is Faith indeed?

The best way (I conceive) to come to satisfaction hereabout, will be, to observe the footsteps of the flock of Christ in the first setting forth of this Ordinance of God into the World in the days of *John Baptist*, *Christ*, and the *Apostles* successively. For that now was the method of the *Apostle Paul*, when he found corruption crept into the administration of that other Ordinance, the Supper of the Lord; to reform the same, he brings those, to whom he writes hereabout, back to the consideration of the original maner and usage of that Ordinance, *1 Cor. 11. 23.* So did our Savior likewise, in reforming

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Sam. 1.*

1. Cor. 11. 23.

nat: 19. 9. 8.

ing some abuses about marriage, *Mat. 19. 4, 8.* And that light, which upon impartial tryal of matters in the holy History, shall appear the most clear and least dubious, that light doubtless will it be most safe for us to follow.

Now that Baptism was administered to believing and repentant persons in those times, is no mans doubt that believes the Scriptures: but that it was administered to Infants in those days, is that which the divine History no where reports, nor, as is humbly conceived, can be duly collected from any part, member, or circumstance thereof.

That therefore shall be the first Argument against Infant-Baptism, which is drawn from the matter of fact in the first Administration of it; and it is this:

Argum. I.
pa Baptism from
mat. 19. 4. 8.
not ad. x. 2. 28.
of the Bapt.
of the Apostles.
may
be proved
from
the
Scripture.

Argum. I. If Baptism were not administered to Infants in the days of John the Baptist, nor of Christ, nor of the Apostles; then ought it not to be administered to Infants now. The reason of this Consequence is this; Because that which was a reason to them then to forbear baptizing Infants, and upon which they did forbear it, is, or ought to be, a reason to all men now to forbear it likewise. For if they did indeed forbear to baptize Infants, it cannot reasonably be imagined that they did forbear it merely out of will and pleasure, but out of Reason and Judgment. And if there be any Reasons that may induce us to practice Infant-Baptism now, which were not obligatory to them then, they must arise, either, 1. From some new discovery of God to us in this behalf, of which they were then ignorant; Or, 2. From some greater necessity now lying upon Infants to be baptized, then Infants were under then: Or, 3. From some better capacity in which Infants now stand to receive benefit by Baptism, then was enjoyed by Infants then: Or, 4. From some change or alteration of the Ordinance it self, by which it is better fitted and accommodated to the condition of Infants now, then it was then: Or, 5. (and lastly) From some greater necessity and better capacity, which men and women are now in to receive benefit by the baptizing of Infants, then any they were then in formerly: for other then these cannot lightly be supposed or imagined ever to come up into the minds of men. But now there is no new discovery made to us touching the Will of God to have Infants baptized, of which *John Baptist, Christ,*
or

is argued in 3. pl. 2.

or the Apostles, were ignorant; nor are Infants themselves, or any others, in any greater necessity, or better capacity, to receive benefit by Infants Baptism now, then they were who lived in times before specified; nor is there any alteration or change indeed in the Ordinance it self, by which it's rendered more useful and beneficial to Infants now, then it could be then: And therefore, whatever the Reasons or Considerations were, upon which these primitive Baptists did forbear to baptize Infants, the same are obligatory and binding now, to all men in these days, so to forbear it likewise: Which might be backed (if needful) from *Phil. 3. 17.*

1 Cor. 11. 1, 2.

But Baptism was not administered to Infants, neither in the days of John the Baptist, nor of the Apostles. This I prove, first, by the total silence of the Scripture herein, it no where directly or consequentially affirming or hinting, that it was. And in things of such a religious and divine consideration, as this is of which we speak, that which is called a Rule in the Civil Law ought to take place, viz. *That which appears not, is not.* The denial or removal of which, what else would it be but an inlet to will-worship, and many innovations in the service of God, as indeed it hath proved in the case in hand touching Infant-Baptism? But the Scripture is express against any mans intruding himself into those things which he hath not seen, or of being wise above that which is written, *Col. 2. 18. 1 Cor. 4. 6.* If we had no other proof, yet this Minor Proposition remains good, until it be proved, that Infants were baptized in the primitive Times. But besides this, there are other considerations, of a proper and potent tendency, to carry the minds of men that are at liberty, and not under the bands of prejudice and partiality, to think and to conceive, that no Infants were baptized in the days and times before mentioned.

Phil. 3. 17.
1. 2. 2. 2. 2.

The Assumption from
Infants not baptized

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2. Therefore, secondly, When we find the Evangelist *Luke*, setting himself to express and set forth the power and great success of the Gospel in *Samaria*, by that effect it wrought, in causing multitudes to be baptized, he expresseth those great numbers by making mention of men and women, (*Acts 8. 12. They were baptized both men and women,*) whereas he should better have answered his own end in this behalf, if he had said, they were

from 2. Act. 8. 12.
1. 1. 1. 1. 1.

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baptized both men, women, and children, if children indeed had been baptized as well as men and women. For, 1. By how many the more persons it appears are benefited by the Gospel, by so much the more is the power and success of it discernable: and therefore if the Evangelist, whilst he had gone about to represent the glorious success of the Gospel in those great numbers of persons that were baptized upon its coming among them, should have made mention only of men and women, as he did, and have said nothing of the children, though they had been baptized also, which probably might be more in number than the men and women were, he should then scarcely have done that to the one half, which he should have done totally and entirely in relation to his proposed end. And, 2. By how much the more zeal of obedience the Gospel doth produce in those persons that are wrought upon by it, by so much the more will the operative influence and success of it be visible and observable: and therefore if whilst the Evangelist had been going about to declare how mightily the Gospel prevailed amongst those *Samaritans*, in procuring their obedience to it in point of Baptism, he should have made mention of the obedience of the men and women, as reaching onely to their own personal Baptism, when as indeed they were not onely baptized themselves, but in obedience to the Gospel had caused their children to be baptized likewise, he should have represented the zeal of these *Samaritans* raised by the Gospel, and so consequently the powerful influence and success of the Gospel in raising that zeal, upon terms of very great disadvantage, in comparison of what he might have done by making known the Childrens Baptism as well as the Parents. *Moses*, when he would set forth what good effect the Word and Command of God touching Circumcision had upon *Abrahams* heart, he doth not onely and barely declare *Abrahams* obedience by his own personal Circumcision, when there was a further and better account thereof to be given in his circumcising his son, and servants, together with himself: No; but, to make a true and clear representation of *Abrahams* obedience and zeal herein, he reports, first how he circumcised himself, after that his son, and then his servants; yea and that he did it the self-same day

which

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which God had said unto him; *Gen. 17. 23*. Yea it seems the Holy Ghost thought the noting of these circumstances so material in relation hereunto, that he repeats them over again, *vers. 26, 27*. And how this exactness should be so necessary in *Moses* his Narrative about Circumcision, and yet superfluous in *Lukes* Narrative about Baptism, especially considering that the thing is no where else reported, is, I confess, a thing, the reason whereof, as I do not understand, so I shall leave to them to make out, who do imagine any such thing. Therefore the only way to stand right in our thoughts towards these two *Annotations* of the Spirit, and not to charge *Moses* with superfluity, nor *Luke* with deficiency in their respective Narratives, is to conclude, that as they were alike directed by the same Spirit, so they did with like faithfulness directly and plainly report the matters of fact in both cases; and consequently, that in as much as the Baptism of Infants is not recorded, as well as is the Baptism both of men and women, that therefore there was no such thing acted and done in those times, as that is, which is called the baptizing of Infants.

And that the not mentioning of Childrens Baptism doth not proceed from any omission, neglect or deficiency of this Evangelist in his said Narrative, but from the non-being of the thing it self, we have the greater reason to believe; not onely because it would be absurd to suppose this Penman of the Holy Ghost to be so partial & untrue to his own intended and proposed end, as such an omission would argue him to have been; but also, because we do find him to have been careful to report even what Children themselves did by means of their Parents, in a business of far less consequence then this would have been, had it been at all; and that is their accompanying of *Paul* out of *Tyre*; for so it is said, *They all* (to wit, the Disciples) brought us on our way, with wives and children, till we were out of the City, *Acts 21. 5*. And why should we think that he should be faithful in the less, and not also in the greater? or that he would make himself in this, like unto those who tyed *Mint and Annise*,

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In the Old Testament, when children were brought by their Parents before the Lord in any solemn Assembly, the Penmen of the Scriptures were as careful to set down that, as to record the deportment of the Parents, *Deut. 29. 11*. *Josh. 8. 35*. *1 Chron. 20. 13*. *Ezra 10. 1*. And why should we think the Penmen of the New Testament less punctual in a thing of as great or greater concernment?

1 Cor. 2. 16

1. from the Bible

2. from the Bible

3. from the Bible

1. from the Bible

2. from the Bible

3. from the Bible

4. from the Bible

5. from the Bible

6. from the Bible

7. from the Bible

nise, and omitted the weightier matters of the Law?

If it should be doubted, whether it were the scope and intent of the Evangelist, in those words, *Acts 8. 12. They were baptized both men and women*, to set forth the great success of the Gospel in *Samaria*; satisfaction herein may be received, 1. From the import of the phrase or manner of speaking here used, being compared with other places of like form of words; as for example, that of this very Evangelist, *Acts 5. 14. Believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women*. Here the great numbers that were brought in unto the Lord by the Gospel, are noted by this form of words, *both of men and women*: and in *Acts 8. 12*, the great success of the same Gospel is noted by those great numbers that were prevailed withall by it to be baptized; which great numbers are likewise notified by the same manner of expression, used *Acts 5. 14*. men and women being mentioned in both their sexes: *But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the Name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized both men and women*. 2. From the scope of the place and Context: in the two precedent Verses *10. 11*. the generality of the people, before such time as *Philip* preached the Gospel to them, are said to have given heed from the least unto the greatest unto one *Simon* who was a Sorcerer, as if he had been the great power of God: But in *Verf. 12*. speaking of the same persons, and generality of the people, shews the wonderful success the Gospel had among them, when it came to be preached by *Philip*: for as before they all gave heed to *Simon* from the least to the greatest; even so now, they all believing the Gospel preached to *Philip*, were baptized both men and women.

3. That passage of Scripture, *Mark 10. 13, 14, 15, 16*. wherein some are said to have brought young Children (or Infants, as *Luke* hath it, *Luk. 18. 15*.) to Christ, that he might teach them; and wherein the Disciples are said to have rebuked those that brought them, and wherein also the carriage of Christ thereupon is reported, both towards the Disciples in reproving them, and towards the Infants themselves, in taking them in his arms and blessing them, argues there was no such thing

thing practised by Christ as the baptizing of Infants. For, 1. The end of those that brought them to Christ was, that he might touch them, or, as *Matthew* hath it, *put his hands on them, and pray, Matt. 19. 13*. And doubtless those who did desire this of Christ, would have desired much more that he should have baptized them (in such a sence as Christ is said to have baptized those that came to him for that purpose, *Job. 3. vers. 23, 26*. and *Chap. 4. vers. 1*.) if he practised any such thing as the Baptism of Infants is supposed to be: their non-desiring of it under such circumstances, argues the non-being of any such thing to be had. 2. In that the Disciples rebuked those that brought these Infants, it argues that it was an unusual thing for such Children to be brought to Christ, and that the Disciples thought it an impertinent thing to trouble him with them; which apprehension and carriage of theirs, could not lightly have taken place with them, if Children had been accustomed to have been brought to his Baptism. 3. In that Christ did so highly approve of this application of the Parents of these Children to him, as is declared he did; and in that he did also embrace the Children and bless them, and yet so left them, without proceeding to baptize them; it argues, with strength of probability, that he did not use to baptize any other Infants: for it cannot lightly be thought but that these Infants were as capable of Baptism as any others. 4. Since three of the Evangelists do so carefully, punctually, and largely set down the History of the bringing of these Infants to Christ, and of his carriage towards them, and yet not any one of them giving the least hint of any Infants being brought to his Baptism, nor of any being baptized by him or his Disciples; why should we think, but that if there had been any such matter of fact, as the baptizing of Infants, that had come under their cognizance and observation, but that they would have been as careful, if not more careful, to have recorded that, as well as those things they did record touching them, in as much as such a thing as the baptizing of Infants, if it had been an Ordinance of God, the knowledg thereof would have been of as great or greater use unto the world, then the knowledg of those other things are touching Christs embracing and blessing Infants

1. By way of note
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2. From the scope
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1. *Mark 10. 13, 16*
1. *Mark 10. 13, 16*

Infants, which yet they have left on record for our learning.

4. That description which the Scripture everywhere makes, of the persons and qualifications of such whose Baptism it records, argues them to be no Infants whose Baptism is so recorded, the qualifications of all such persons being incompetent to Infants. For either they were such as attended to the Word, and received it gladly, (*Acts* 2. 41. & 16. 14, 15.) or such as confessed their sins, (*Matth.* 3. 6. *Mark* 1. 5.) or such as believed, (*Acts* 18. 8. & chap. 8. vers. 37.) or else such as were Disciples, *Joh.* 4. 1. And as we cannot reasonably suppose, that Infants are by any of these or the like qualifications described; no more can we rationally suppose, that they were baptized in those times to which these descriptions relate.

5. Both the instructions given to those who were commissioned to baptize, and the practice of such persons who did baptize, argue the persons that were baptized by them to be no Infants. For, 1. The instruction which Christ gave those which he commissioned on this behalf, was, that they should first teach persons, or make them Disciples, and then baptize them, *Matth.* 28. 19. 2. The practice of them who did baptize, was answerable to this commission; they first instructed persons in the things of the Gospel, and then baptized them: *Joh.* 4. 1. *Mark* 1. 4. *Acts* 2. 41. & 8. 12. & 16. 33, 33. & 19. 4, 5. But now in as much as Infants, whilst such, are not capable of receiving instruction in the things of the Gospel, or of being taught, therefore it cannot reasonably be supposed, that Infants, whilst such, should be of that sort or number of persons, who were by Christ's commission to be baptized, or who were by any baptized in pursuance of that commission.

Object.

But against this first Argument, in which we assert no Infants to be baptized in the Apostles times, it is objected; That when the Scripture declareth, that whole households were baptized, it may well be presumed that Infants were baptized, because they, in what house soever they are, are part of that household: Now it is said expressly, that *Lydia was baptized, and her household*, *Acts* 16. 15, That the *Taylor was baptized, he and all his*, *Acts* 16. 33. and also, that *Paul baptized the household of Stephanus*, *1 Cor.* 1. 16.

To

To all which I answer, first, That it doth not at all appear, that there were any Infants in any of those households mentioned in the Objection, and that therefore it is but a meer presumption to assert it, in as much as Experience teacheth, that it is a common thing for households and families to consist of such persons, among whom are no Infants: and there are no circumstances in the Texts alledged, that give the least hint or intimation, that those households were any other then such. Nay, the circumstances of that Text about the Baptism of *Lydia* (which yet will be found the onely Text that can colourably be pretended, so much as in the least to countenance the thing objected) do much rather induce us to conceive, that there were no Infants in that family: Because she being described as the head of that family, it is very questionable whether she were a maid, or a widow, and consequently so much the more questionable whether she had any children at all; or if she had, and was a widow, it is yet so much the more doubtful whether her children were Infants, or of riper age.

2. I answer yet further, That though it should be granted for Arguments sake, that possibly there might be Infants in some or all those households which are said to be baptized, yet it no wise follows, that therefore those Infants are said to be baptized, when those households are said so to be. For it is an usual thing in Scripture, to attribute such things unto, or predicate such things of and concerning a house or whole household, which yet cannot reasonably be understood as meant of every individual person in such an house, and specially not of Infants. But such attributions and predications, in common sense and acceptation, must necessarily be understood to relate, 1. To such as are commonly and familiarly known to be capable of them, otherwise then Infants either are or can be, whilst such: Or, 2. To the major part for number in those families: Or else, 3. To so considerable a part thereof, which by a *Synecdoche* is frequently put for the whole. Instances of this nature that might be given are many, in which households are to be understood according to one or more of the three considerations now mentioned; as *Genes.* 35. 2. & 50. 4. *1 Sam.* 1. 21, 22. *2 Sam.* 3. 1. *Jerem.* 35. 3, 18. *Matth.* 10. 13. & 12. 25. In some of which foresaid respects it is, I suppose, that whole households are sometimes said to believe, as *Joh.* 4. 53. *Acts* 16. 34.

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16.34.

Acts 16. 15. 33.
1. 52. 1. 16.

16. 34. & 18. 8. sometimes to fear and serve the Lord, *Act. 10. 2.*
Job. 24. 15. and sometimes to be saluted as such, *2 Tim. 4. 19.*
Rom. 16. 10, 11. And as there is no reason to conceive, that Infants
 are intended in those things asserted concerning these households
 mentioned in these Scriptures, the things themselves being incom-
 petible to Infants; so likewise is there no more reason to imagine,
 that Infants are intended when households are said to be baptized,
 they being no more capable of that regularly, than they are of be-
 lieving. In *1 Sam. 1. 21.* it's said, That *the man Elkanah and*
all his house, went up to offer to the Lord the yearly sacrifice, and
his vow: and yet it is evident, *Verf. 22.* that *Hannah, Elka-*
nah's wife, and Samuel his son, which were part of his house-
 hold, did not then go up to the place of publique worship. And
 therefore when *Lydia* is said to be baptized, *she and her household,*
 it no more necessary hereby to understand her and her children, if
 she had any, then it is by *Elkanah, and all his house,* to understand
 both himself and his young son *Samuel.*

Answ. 3.

3. I yet further answer, That as concerning two of the three
 households mentioned in the Objection, it is evident that
 they did believe before they were baptized; for as it is said of the
 Jaylor, that *he was baptized, and all his, straightway, Act. 16. 33.*
 so also is it said, *Verf. 32.* that *they spake unto him the Word of*
the Lord, and to all that were in his house: and in *Verf. 34.* that
he rejoiced, believing in God with all his house. And whereas
Paul is said to have baptized the household of *Stephanus,* *1 Cor. 1.*
16. in *Chap. 16.* of the same Epistle, *Verf. 15.* this household of *Ste-*
phanus is said to consist of such persons as addicted themselves to
 the Ministry of the Saints: *To know the household of Stephanus, that*
it is the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted them-
selves to the ministry of the Saints. If then, it cannot reasonably be
 thought that Infants heard and understood the Word of the Lord,
 or believed in God, or addicted themselves to the Ministry of the
 Saints, as those of these households, which were baptized, did;
 no more can it, with any colour of reason, be supposed, that In-
 fants were baptized when those households were baptized. And
 though there be not the same particular account given of the like
 qualifications in those that were baptized of the family of *Lydia;*
 yet, according to that rule by which those Scriptures, that speak
 of

of things more generally and briefly, are to be interpreted, by or
 according to the tenor of those that treat of the same or like sub-
 ject more particularly and expressly, we are to reckon, that the
 same or like qualifications were found in the household of *Lydia,*
 which were in those of the households of the *Jaylor* and *Stepha-*
nus, and upon which they were alike baptized. And thus much
 for the answering of this first Objection.

Object. 2.

If it be further objected, That this first Argument, which as-
 serts Infant-Baptism unlawful, because it is no where said in the
 Scripture that Infants were baptized, is as well an Argument a-
 gainst womens having communion in the Supper of the Lord, as
 against Infant-Baptism, because it is no more said any where that
 women did participate of the Lords Supper, then it is that In-
 fants were baptized; To this likewise I answer briefly,

Answ.

Though it be no where expressly and in so many words said,
 that women did break bread, or were partakers of the Table of
 the Lord, &c. yet there is that said, by which it may be as safely
 collected that they did so do, as if it had been asserted in so many
 words. For it is said, That *those that were baptized, continued,*
as in the Apostles doctrine and fellowship, so in breaking of bread
and prayers, Act. 2. 41, 42. But now women were baptized as
 well as men, *Act. 8. 12.* therefore women, as well as men, con-
 tinued in breaking of bread and prayers. Again, *Act. 20. 7.* it's
 said, that *the Disciples came together to break bread:* but now
 women were Disciples as well as men, and therefore we have
 every whit as much reason to understand that saying of them, as of
 men, *Act. 9. 36.* Now then, if any thing were asserted in Scrip-
 ture concerning Infants, by which it might be as plainly collected
 and gathered, that they were baptized, as it may be inferred, that
 women did eat the Lords Supper, from what is asserted concern-
 ing them; then it might well be said indeed, that this first Argu-
 ment is as well against womens having communion with men in
 the Supper of the Lord, as it is against Infants Baptism; but till
 this appear, or something like it, this Objection is of no force to
 invalidate our Argument.

MY second Argument shall be taken from the nature of Baptism, and from the declared ends and uses of it; and it is this:

If that Administration of Baptism, which is made to professed Believers, do more conduce to, and better answer the ends of Baptism, then that which is made to Infants; then Baptism ought not to be administered to Infants, but to professed Believers. The reason hereof is clear; because it is the duty of men, to endeavor, as much as in them lies, to observe and keep the Laws of every Ordinance of God in the best manner they know how, and not to content themselves with a lower and meaner way of doing and performing the same, when there is an opportunity before them of rising up to that which is more excellent, and which doth more exactly answer the counsel and intendment of God in it. If this were any mans doubt, it might be confirmed from such Scriptures, which condemn such practices of men as most unworthy and accursed, who having an opportunity of presenting God with a better sacrifice or service, do yet present him with that which is worse: *Mal. 1. 14. Cursed be the deceiver, which bath in his flock a male, and voweth and sacrificeth to the Lord a corrupt thing.* Those Scriptures likewise vote the same thing, which require, That men seek to excel, to the edifying of the Church, *1 Cor. 14. 12.* That hold forth ways that are more excellent then others, as to be more desired and striven for then others, *1 Cor. 12. 31. Phil. 1. 10.*

The Assumption.

But that Administration of Baptism, which is made to professed Believers, does more conduce to, and better answer the ends of Baptism, then that which is made to Infants. The truth of this will appear, by comparing Baptism as administered to the one and to the other, in relation to the several ends and uses of Baptism.

1. One end of Baptism is, to declare Jesus Christ unto the World. *Joh. 1. 31. But that he (to wit Christ) should be made manifest unto Israel, therefore am I come, baptizing with water.* For he who is rightly baptized into Christ, or Faith in his Name, doth

doth thereby profess Jesus Christ to be a worthy person, meet to be believed in, and himself his servant and disciple. Besides, the Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Christ being represented in Baptism, (*Rom. 6. 3, 4, 5. Col. 2. 12.*) it administers an occasion unto men, to enquire what an one Christ is, for what end he came into the World, dyed, was buried, and rose again; and so knowledg of him and salvation by him is hereby propagated.

This manifestation of Christ is better made by the Baptism of Believers, then by the Baptism of Infants, whether it respects the party who is baptized, or others who behold it.

1. This is true in respect of him who is baptized, because he is in a capacity, by reason of the use and exercise of his understanding, to receive that information and knowledg concerning Christ, which is intended by God in that Ordinance, of which reception Infants, whilest such, are altogether incapable, in as much as they have no knowledg between good and evil, as the Scripture saith, *Deut. 1. 39.*

2. As this end of Baptism respects Spectators, it is more effectual unto them when administered unto Believers, then when administered to Infants; because the example of such who are voluntarily and actually obedient, from sound principles of knowledg, unto the Will of God, in submitting to the Ordinance of Baptism, and whole Faith in Christ is visible in their being willingly and desirously baptized into his Name; I say, their example is much more apt, both to quicken men unto a serious consideration of what is held out in that Ordinance, as likewise unto the imitation of their Faith and Repentance visible in it, then is the Baptism of Infants, who are meerly passive therein, and who neither are or can be moved thereunto by any inward principle, nor at all religiously affected therewith, nor exhibit any example of Faith or Repentance for others to imitate. As one Cock sets another on crowing, so the devout and religious carriage of one, in using an holy Ordinance, is apt to take upon the minds of others, and to kindle the same fire in them: *Your zeal, saith the Apostle, hath provoked very many, 2 Cor. 9. 2.*

That the Baptism of Believers hath such an excellent tendency

dency in it, appears from *Matth. 21. 32.* with *Luk. 7. 29.* For *John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not; but the Publicans and Harlots believed him: And ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe.* Here, 1. Our Saviour upbraids the Priests and Elders with their impenitency and unbelief. 2. That by which he aggravates their offence, is their neglect of that means and opportunity of Faith and Repentance which they had. 3. The means or motive inducing them to Repentance and Faith, which they did neglect, it was that practice of the Publicans and Harlots, whereby they gave account of their Faith: For their Faith was such, in the effects of it, as was visible to the Priests and Elders: (*And ye, when ye had seen it, viz. the Publicans and Harlots believing of John, repented not, &c.*) 4. That account which these Publicans and Harlots gave of their Faith, and that in which their Faith was visible to the Priests and Elders, and by which they ought to have been moved to Repentance and Faith, it was their being baptized upon their believing the Doctrine of John. For that which *Matthew* here calls their believing of John, *Luke* speaking of the same thing (as I conceive) calls it their justifying God, in being baptized of John, *Luke 7. 29.* In as much then, as the sight or beholding that expression or declaration of the Faith of the Publicans and Harlots, in their submitting to Baptism, was a great aggravation of the impenitency and unbelief of the Priests and Elders, in that they having such an example before them, and such a motive and provocation upon them to believe, and yet did not believe; evident it is, that there was in the deportment of the Publicans and Harlots, when they were baptized, something of the nature of a motive or means, that was apt to prevail with the Priests and Elders to follow their example; for otherwise it would never have been produced, against them by our Saviour as an aggravation of their sin in not doing likewise: For it therefore became an aggravation of their sin being committed, because it was a means of preserving them from it before it was committed. From the whole this is most evident, viz. That the Baptism of the Publicans and Harlots, and yet not so much that neither, as that Faith and Repentance of theirs which was

was

was visible in their Baptism, was in it self a potent means and strong incitement to the Priests and Elders, and consequently unto others; to repent and believe, and to express the same in like manner as the Publicans had done, their sin in opposition hereunto being their rejecting the counsel of God against themselves, in not being baptized, *Luk. 7. 30.*

But now, there is no such example of Faith or Repentance that is visible in the Baptism of Infants, and consequently no such incitement unto, or means of working Faith, in by-standers and spectators; and therefore Baptism administered unto Infants, is no such means of propagating the knowledg of Christ, and Faith in him, as when it is administered unto professed Believers.

2. Another end and use of Baptism, is, to serve the design of God touching the great business of Repentance for remission of sins; for it is called the *Baptism of Repentance for the remission of sins*, *Mark 1. 4. Luk. 3. 3.* There are several considerations in respect of which, or some of which, I conceive, it is so called; all which are better answered in that Administration of it which is made to men and women who are Believers, than in that which is made to Infants.

1. If it shall be conceived, that it is therefore called the Baptism of Repentance for remission of sins, because such who are at any time duly baptized, do take up that Ordinance out of a principle of Repentance, upon which they look for remission of sins according to the promise of God in that behalf, (which if it be, the saying contains a *metonymy* of the cause for the effect, a thing not unusual in Scripture,) yet this denomination and use of it, is better served in mens Baptism, than in childrens; because Infants have no such principle or act in them as Repentance is, and therefore their Baptism can neither proceed from, or be declarative of such a cause; whereas the Baptism of repentant persons, does both flow from, and is expressive of, such a cause.

2. If it be called the Baptism of Repentance, because men, by taking up that Ordinance, do engage themselves to the practice of repentance and mortification, (as the Apostle supposes the believing *Romans* to have done, *Rom. 6. 2-6.*) then this

this

this end is better provided for in the Baptism of men, than of Infants. The reason is, because an engagement to practise Repentance, supposes, 1. An end of Repentance, 2. A capacity of performing that to which they do engage; neither of which are to be found in Infants, and both which are to be found in men; therefore this end of Baptism cannot be attained in childrens Baptism, but in mens.

3. If it be called the Baptism of Repentance for remission of sins, because God thereby signifies and seals unto men the remission of their sins upon their Repentance; this end and use likewise is better answered in mens Baptism who do repent, then in Infants who do not. 1. Because men who have begun to repent, are in a good capacity to receive confirmation and establishment in their hope and confidence of receiving remission of sins from God upon their Repentance, and consolation thereby; whereas Infants, whilest such, are altogether incapable of any such thing, in respect whereof this end is made frustrate when Baptism is given to them. 2. Because there is a greater appearance both of the wisdom and goodness of God in vouchsafing and applying such a means as Baptism is, to strengthen mens Faith in his promise of remission of sins upon their Repentance, unto such who, 1. Have need of this confirmation, and, 2. Are capable of receiving it, then there is in that application of it which is made to Infants, who neither have need of it, nor yet are capable of receiving it.

4. If it be called the Baptism of Repentance for remission of sins, because the persons who are baptized do thereby profess and declare unto the world, that they look for remission of their sins from God upon their Repentance, yet this end also is better answered in mens Baptism, then in Infants: because men are capable of making such a profession and declaration of themselves to the world in and by their Baptism, when as Infants are altogether incapable of doing any such thing.

5. If it be called the Baptism of Repentance, &c. because it seals and confirms the Covenant or Promises of God made to men, touching the remission of their sins upon their Repentance, yet this end and use also is attained upon far better terms

in the Administration of Baptism to Believers, and to men of understanding, then it is or can be when administered to Infants who have neither. For if this end and use should be the reason of this denomination of Baptism, yet this must be supposed; That the intent of God, in making Baptism a Seal of his Covenant and Promise, is not to make his Covenant more sure in it self, but to give it thereby a more sure, stable, and unquestionable Being in the minds and apprehensions of men: and if so, this end cannot be attained in Infants by their Baptism, because they want the use and exercise of their reason, judgment, and understanding, without which the Articles and terms of Gods Covenant will never take place, or have a Being in the minds of any, by way of belief.

3. Another end of Baptism seems to be this, viz. That such who are baptized, might thereby signify their acceptance of, and consent unto the terms of the Gospel or Covenant of Grace. For the Covenant of God with men does consist of certain Articles to be observed and kept by each party covenanting, as Covenants amongst men generally do. And as amongst men the parties covenanting are wont to signify their mutual consent to their respective Articles, by some solemn act of theirs in the presence of witnesses; as by signing, sealing, delivering, &c. So God, in the Covenant between him and men, will have something like unto this done by men publicely, to signify their consent to the terms of it, as well as what is done by him to declare his readiness to do and perform what he hath undertaken on his part. Now Faith in Christ, and an obediential subjection to all his Laws and Precepts, being the condition of this Covenant on mans part; at what time soever he enters into Covenant with God, and undertakes the performance of the condition, he is to sign and seal the same in the presence of witnesses by that solemn act of his in being baptized. In this respect especially I conceive it is, that Baptism is called *the Baptism of Repentance for the remission of sins*, (*Mark 1. 4. Luk. 3. 3.*) because men are to take up that Ordinance upon their first beginning to repent, in order to the remission of their sins. For like reason I suppose it is called *the washing of regeneration*, *Tit. 3. 5.* because men, upon their being born

again, are to be baptized, according to what was practised in the Apostles times. Hence it is likewise, as may well be conceived, that mens being *born of Water, and of the Spirit*, (*Job. 3. 5.*) the *Washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost*, (*Tit. 3. 5.*) are joynd together; not because the Spirit works Regeneration in and by Baptism, if we respect the beginning of it; but because the work of Regeneration by the Spirit, and the Baptism of water, which is declarative thereof, are nearly conjoynd in respect of time, if he who is regenerate by the Spirit do but what becomes him: *And now why tarriest thou, arise and be baptized, Acts 22. 16.* — *And was baptized, he and all his, straightway, Acts 16. 33.* Finally, Believing, and being baptized, are conjoynd as relative to Salvation, (*Mark 16. 16.*) and Baptism hath its rank, place; or standing in Scripture next after Faith, (*Heb. 6. 1, 2. Eph. 4. 5. Mark 16. 16.*) because it was one of the first fruits of Faith, by which they gave account to the world, that they did believe indeed, and was doubtless esteemed a proof of Faith, and without which they were not reckoned Disciples of Christ, notwithstanding any other overtures that ways made.

That both Repentance, and the declaration of it by Baptism, is required on mans part, to interests him in remission of sins, and sanctification of the Spirit, the things covenanted or promised on Gods part; is too evident to be denied by any, but those that will not see, from *Acts 2. 38, 39. Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost: For the Promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.* And that God did not intend this way only for those to whom these words were then spoken, or for the men and women of that generation onely, but that it was to be his standing method through all generations, appears, in that the Apostle saith, that the Promise, to wit, of remission of sins, and gift of the Spirit, which was made on condition of Repentance and Baptism, was made, not onely to them then, and their children, but to those that were further remote, to those afar off, even to all whom the Lord our God shall call. And if this be one end and use of Baptism, as you see, for persons thereby

thereby to enter their publique assent and consent unto the terms of the Gospel upon their cordial embracing of it, then the Baptism of Infants is voyded as to this use also, in as much as they are uncapable of exerting any act of heart or mind by way of assent or consent to the terms of the Gospel, or to signify any such thing by a voluntary submission to Baptism.

4. Another excellent effect and use of Baptism, is, thereby to justify God in the sight of the world, as touching the truth of his sayings in the Gospel; for so it's said, *Luk. 7. 29. That all the people that heard him, and the Publicans justified God, being baptized with the Baptism of John.* When it's said, *they justified God*, the meaning is (I conceive) that they declared him, according to the tenor of their Faith, to be just and true in that Doctrine of Salvation which was preached to them by his appointment, and which they had embraced; for so to justify God, is to declare him just and true in his sayings; *Rom. 3. 4. Let God be true, and every man a liar, as it is written, that thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, &c.* They are said to justify God in being baptized, because by their voluntary submission to that Ordinance, they did declare, that they judged the Doctrine and Precepts of the Gospel, of which Baptism is a part, most worthy belief and obedience, as coming from God.

But in as much as Infants are onely passive in Baptism, and not at all active or voluntary, they cannot contribute any thing towards the Justification of God, in their approbation of, and obediential subjection to his Gospel in their Baptism; and therefore this end of Baptism also suffers disappointment as oft as it is administered to Infants.

5. Lastly, Another great end of Baptism, when taken up by persons under due qualifications, is, to distinguish and difference them from the world, and to characterize them as peculiarly relating to God; In which respect, amongst others, all those that are baptized into Christ, are said to put on Christ, *Gal. 3. 27.* they thereby declare themselves to belong to him, as the servants of great men are, known to belong to them, by their badg and livery which they put on, when they enter themselves servants to them. The Apostle from Vers. 23. of that *Gal. 3.* to Vers. 27. shews the use of, the Law during the time of that Administration, and

the use of Faith and Baptism now under the Gospel. He saith *vers. 23.* that they were *shut up under the Law until Faith came*; meaning, I conceive, that by the Ceremonies and Mosaical Observations, they were enclosed about, and distinguished from the rest of the Nations, as one mans ground is from anothers by an hedg or wall, or as a garden, by the wall that doth enclose it, is differenced from common ground, according to that *Cant. 4. 12.* *A garden enclosed is my sister, my Spouse, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.* Hereupon the Jewish Rites are called *a middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles*; *Eph. 2. 14.*

During the time therefore of this legal Dispensation, that which did denominate them to be the people of God, was their observation and keeping of the Law of *Moses*; and uncircumcision is frequently used to note such to be none of Gods people, but of the profane world, who were under that denomination.

But now this way of differencing men lasted but till such time as Faith came, as the Apostle notes; *But after Faith is come* (saith he) *we are no longer under a Schoolmaster*, *vers. 25.* *i. e.* no longer known to be Disciples or Schollars, as formerly we were by our keeping of the Law. The Mosaical Dispensation continued till Faith came, *i. e.* until the time of the Gospel Dispensation; and then Faith became of the same use to denominate and distinguish who were the children of God, and who not; which the Law and Ceremonies were of before: for so the Apostle saith, *Vers. 26.* *For ye are* (*i. e.* now ye are) *all the children of God by Faith in Christ Jesus.* By faith (which here is said to have come when the Schoolmastership of the Law ended) is meant, I conceive, the confessing or acknowledging Christ Jesus to be come in the flesh, and to be the Son of God and Saviour of the world. That this is the Faith here spoken of, and that this Faith was it by which men were to be distinguished as the children of God, from those which were not, who have the greater reason to believe, not onely because this best agrees with the Apostles scope here, but also because it exactly agrees with other Scriptures, where this very Faith, or acknowledgment, is made the distinguishing character between

tween those that are of God, and those that are not; as *1 Job. 4. 2, 3.* *Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God.* Where the Apostle then, in the 26 Verse of this third Chapter of the *Galatians*, saith, *Ye are all the children of God by Faith in Christ Jesus*, and this by way of distinction from that thing by which men were reckoned to be the children of God under the Law; I conceive he doth not onely, if so much, speak of this Faith, as constituting or making those, in whom it is, the children of God; for so men were the children of God by Faith under the Law, as well as in times of the Gospel; they being then justified by Faith in him that was to come, as we are now justified by Faith in him as being come; so that the Apostle, differencing Faith from the Law, does not difference Faith under the Gospel from Faith under the Law; but when he says, *Ye are all the children of God by Faith, &c.* he means, that they were declared and known so to be now, by their acknowledgment of Christ; whereas they were wont to be deemed such by the use the Law, to which they were then Schollars. And hereof he gives this reason or account, *vers. 27.* *For*, saith he, *as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ*: So that the Faith, what ever it is, by which they were said to be *the children of God*, in *Vers. 26.* must be the same in effect with that which he calls the putting on of Christ in Baptism, *Vers. 27.* because he asserts the former upon the taking place of the latter. And that this putting on of Christ by Baptism, is not to be understood strictly of the internal act of their Faith, but of their profession of this Faith, is evident, not only from the nature of the service by which men publicly list themselves the servants of Christ, but also from the import and signification of the phrase or expression here used, and that is the putting on of Christ, which is a Metaphor borrowed from the putting on of apparel, or something which men visibly wear. Besides, their putting on of Christ in Baptism, would be no reason why they were the children of God by Faith in Christ, if we should understand their being the children of God constitutively, and not declaratively, unless

less we will suppose, that man is the child of God in his account, notwithstanding his believing in Christ, until he be baptized into Christ. But if we understand the Apostle here to speak of Faith, that is, the profession of Faith, or the acknowledgment of Christ, as that which doth declare who are the children of God, then this saying of his, that because they had been baptized into Christ, that therefore they had put on Christ, was a good reason or proof of their being known to be the children of God, by their acknowledgment of Christ; because by their putting on of Christ in Baptism, and clothing themselves with his Name, they did declare whose children they were, and who it was they worshipped and resolved to serve, and from whom they expected remission of sin, and the Salvation of their Souls. For so to be baptized into Christ, what is it else, but to be baptized into the belief, profession, and service of Christ? and to resign up ones self to be his. *If ye be Christs*, says he, *Verf. 29.* (as he supposes them to be, upon that very account of their being baptized into him, as will appear, if you compare v. 27, 28, 29. together; *If ye be Christs*) then are ye Abrahams seed, and heirs according to promise. The upshot or result then of this piece of the Apostles discourse is, That persons by Baptism do make such a profession of Christ, as by which they are characterized to be his. If this then be the characteristical mark to distinguish the children of God from the world, then it will follow, that no other acknowledgment of Christ without this, or with neglect of this, is to be looked upon as any other than a partial owning of Christ, and not a compleat putting him on, so as to be esteemed thereby visibly the children of God.

Which thing may be yet further confirmed by that of the Apostle, *1 Cor. 12. 13.* *For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.* That it is the Baptism by water that is here spoken of, is the general sense of Interpreters, so far as their judgment herein is come to any knowledge and observation. The body into which we are said to be baptized, is the mystical Body of Christ, made up of Christ as head, and of the Saints as members. In that by one Spirit they are said to be baptized hereinto, we are to understand, I conceive, that it is by the work of the Spirit upon their hearts, by which

men

men are inclined to seek membership, or fellowship with Christ and his Saints, in this way of Baptism, as being the way of God to attain hereunto. But that which is principally for our purpose, is, that men and women are initiated and brought into this Body by Baptism: *They are baptized into one Body.* And if their entrance thereinto be made by Baptism, then it's evident, that they are not to be reckoned to be of this Body till they be baptized, and consequently that Baptism is the visible door by which men enter into this spiritual corporation, and a wall of partition between the world and the Saints.

Those Scriptures witness the same thing also, which speak of mens being *baptized into Christ*, and of their being *planted together with him*, *Rom. 6. 3, 5.* *Gal. 3. 27.* For can we conclude less hence, then that mens visible being in Christ is to be reckoned from the time of their Baptism? that being, as it were, the immediate instrument or means of their visible ingression into him. For otherwise, if they were to be looked upon as having a visible Being in Christ, by any act, endowment, or qualification preceding Baptism, why should their ingression, their entrance into Christ, be attributed unto their Baptism? If mens owning of Christ, which still did precede their Baptism, had been sufficient, as God accounts sufficient, to have asserted or declared their visible or cognisable standing in Christ, doubtless the Holy Ghost would not have ascribed, or rather appropriated, the same unto their Baptism, as now he hath done. For, as *Paul* speaks in another case, *Gal. 3. 21.* *If there had been a Law given which could have given life, verily Righteousness should have been by the Law:* If the Law had been sufficient to have given life, God would not have super-added the promise of the Gospel for the same end, for he makes nothing in vain: so we may say in this case, if any qualification, action or profession, preceding Baptism, could have rendered mens being in Christ knowable, upon terms agreeable to the wisdom of God, he would not have super-added Baptism for the same end.

But it should seem to be in this case, as it is amongst men; A Major or Sheriff receives that kind of Civil or Magistratical Being, by which he is distinguished from other men, from some solemn acts done at the time of his enstallment into his Office: and as a

Husband

Husband and Wife receive that conjugal relation and matrimonial Being, proper to them, from some solemn act done at the time of their marriage: or as a man receives a relative Being, as member of such a Corporation, by some solemn act done at the time of his enfranchisement: even so, according to the import of these Scriptures now insisted on, men and women receive that relative Being, which they have in Christ, and as visible members of that spiritual Corporation wherein Christ is head and chief, from that solemn act of their being baptized into him. And as a Major or Sheriff is not vested with his authority, or Husband and Wife with that power over the bodies of each other, of which the Apostle speaks, *1 Cor. 7. 4.* nor yet any member of a body corporate, with those immunities proper to him, by any prequalification or action preparatory thereunto, until first that be acted and done by way of solemnity, which appropriately and immediately does invest them with their several and respective capacities; in like manner, none are to be esteemed to be in Christ, or capable of those spiritual priviledges which visibly do belong to the body of Christ, the Church, upon the account of any precedaneous qualification, profession, or action whatsoever, until first they have passed through those spiritual solemnities in Baptism, by and upon which they are invested with the denomination and visible priviledges which do belong in common to the members of Christ mystical body.

By the way; I have insisted the more largely upon this particular, to detect the repugnancy of that Opinion, against the plain current of the Scripture, which holds Baptism needless, useless amongst those that have long made profession of the Gospel, though they as yet never were baptized. But it may be I shall deal further with this conceit in a place by it self, and therefore shall come to bring home what hath been discoursed on this head to our present purpose.

If then that publique owning of Christ in Baptism, by which men put him on, and by and upon which they are incorporated into Christ visibly, be another end and use of Baptism, as you see it is, most clear and evident it is, that this end and use is not to be found in the Baptism of Infants. And the reason

reason hereof is, because Infants neither do nor can put on Christ in their Baptism, *v. z.* make an actual declaration and profession unto the world, that they own and acknowledg Christ to be come in the flesh, to be the Son of God, and Saviour of the World; to be their Lord and Lawgiver, as they do who put him on in Baptism. If the Apostle had intended to have expressed the incorporation of Infants into Christ by Baptism, sure he would have said, that Christ had put them on, or had put himself upon them, and not that they had put him on; or else, that they were thereby put into Christ by their Parents that offered them to Baptism, or by him who did baptize them, and not that they themselves had put him on (as now the words carry it) seeing they are onely passive in their Baptism. But now the words of the Apostle are express, that *as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have (that is, you, even you your selves have) put on Christ.* And therefore in as much as Infants cannot, with any propriety or truth of speaking, be said to put on Christ in Baptism, neither can they any whit more properly or truly be said to be baptized into Christ; because the Apostle makes the one; to wit, the putting on of Christ as general and universal as the other, *viz.* the being baptized into Christ.

Against this whole Argument, which concludes Infants-Baptism unlawful, because the ends of Baptism are better attained in the Baptism of Believers, &c. it is objected; That this might have been an Argument as well against the circumcising of Infants under the Law, as against the Baptism of Infants under the Gospel; because there is the same reason to suppose, that Circumcision should have less answered the ends thereof when applied to Infants, as there is to conceive, that Baptism should less answer it's ends when it is applied to Infants; and yet we well know, that this was no bar to Infants-Circumcision then, and therefore why should it be any against their Baptism now?

To this I answer, by way of negation, or denial of that supposition upon which the Objection stands, and wherein the utmost strength of it lies, which is this; *viz.* That there is the same reason to suppose that Circumcision should less answer the

Object.

Answer. 1.

the ends thereof as administered to Infants, then it would have done in case it had been applied to men of riper years, as there is to conceive the like thing in the Administration of Baptism to Infants: I say, I do deny there is the like reason for the one as there is for the other; and that upon these grounds.

1. There is no such accommodation to, or correspondence between Baptism in the letter of it, and its spiritual ends, when applied to Infants, as there was between Circumcision in the letter of it, and its more spiritual ends; because the proper end of Circumcision being by Gods own appointment *for a token or sign of the Covenant between God and that people to whom it was enjoined*, this token or sign was not any transient thing (I mean, as touching the letter of it) that did pass away in the acting of it, but was permanent and lasting, so that the sign it self, and the Covenant to which it related, remained in the flesh of him who was circumcised, all the days of his life, as visible to him, and as capable of improvement to spiritual ends, many years after it was made, as if it had been but newly acted and done before his eyes. *My Covenant (saith God) shall be in your flesh (i.e. remain there) for an everlasting Covenant, Genes. 17. 13.* Whereas Baptism is a transient act, and leaves no such visible impression in the Infant, as matter of memorial, signification, or instruction to him when he comes to be a man, as that of Circumcision did: so that we see there is not the like reason, but an apparent difference in this respect.

Nor can it be truly said, That either the report of Parents or Neighbors, or any Parish, or other Register, is or can be equivalent unto the sign in the flesh before mentioned, as to the ascertaining of men and women of their being baptized in their Infancy: 1. Because there is not the like certainty nor satisfaction in reports and hear-says, as there is in seeing and beholding, which difference notwithstanding we have in these two cases in hand. 2. Because opportunity of such satisfaction, as these reports, &c. are capable of giving, may be cut off by the death or other removal of such from whom it is to be received, or else by the removal of such Infants themselves into places far remote, before ever they come to age; upon occasion whereof it may well fall out many times, that persons may be at a great loss as touching any knowledge they

they have, or enquire, whether they were ever baptized or no: which inconveniency was not incident to Infants Circumcision; And therefore in as much as the spiritual influences and operation of such an Ordinance upon the heart of a man when he comes to age, which he received in his minority (as touching his personal interest in it) does depend upon his knowledge of the thing done, as to matter of fact; therefore by how much more evident and indubitable satisfaction hereabout was exhibited in and by that durable sign in the flesh, which was made by Circumcision, above what is to be had by any means to assure persons at age of their being baptized in their Infancy; by so much the more did Infant-Circumcision answer the ends of that Ordinance, above what Infant-Baptism can be so much as supposed to answer the ends of this.

2. I answer yet further, That the end of Circumcision, though administered to Infants, was better attained, then the end of Baptism can be when it is so applied; because much of the benefit of Circumcision did accrue to the circumcised upon the work done, without respect to any inward qualification or endowment; whereas the benefit of Baptism does not accrue merely upon the work done, but is suspended upon the knowledg, faith, &c. of him who is baptized. The Righteousness of the Law (of which Circumcision was a principal part) speaketh on this wise, *The man that doth these things shall live by them*, saith the Apostle, by way of contradistinction from the voyce of the Gospel, or the Righteousness of Faith, *Rom. 10. 5.* And again, *The Law is not of Faith*, (i. e. the Promises, many of them at least, were not suspended on mens believing,) *but the man that doth them, shall live in them*, *Gal. 3. 12.* Hereupon that Ministration is called *the Ministration of the letter*, *2 Cor. 3. 6.* the Ordinances thereof *carnal Ordinances, and such as did not make perfect, as pertaining to the Conscience*, *Heb. 9. 9, 10.* The Apostle, to shew wherein the Gospel or new Covenant exceeds the Law or old one, saith, that according to this *God puts his Laws in the minds of men, and writes them in their hearts*, *Heb. 8. 10.* which implies, that he did not do so under the Old Testament; or, at least but very little comparatively. Again, *Job. 4. 23.* *But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit*

and truth: implying, that thither-unto, or until then, they had not so worshipped him; or at least, that there was but little of that found under the Legal Dispensation. And, according to the nature of this Ministration, children voyd of understanding and faith, were capable of holy things, as Circumcision and Passover, and the like, and consequently of the ends and benefits of them in part, upon a literal administration and reception of them, *Rom. 3. 1, 2. Exod. 12. 44, 48.*

But the case is far otherwise now under the Gospel, which is the Ministration of the Spirit, (*2 Cor. 3. 6.*) It is not the work done, but the manner of doing of it in knowledg, faith, and fear of the Lord, that entitles men unto the benefit and blessing of Gospel-Ordinances: for so the Apostle affirms concerning Baptism it self, *1 Pet. 3. 21.* when he says, *that it saves us now, as the Ark did some in the days of Noah: not (saith he) the putting away of the filth of the flesh, (i. e. not by the external letter of the Ordinance,) but the answer of a good Conscience towards God: i. e. when accompanied with such a frame of mind and conscience, as does answer God in his intendments of Grace in that Ordinance.* So again, *Col. 2. 12.* when the Apostle saith, that they were buried with Christ in Baptism, and that they were therein also risen with him, yet he says that thus they were by the faith of the operation of God, who raised Christ from the dead: meaning, such a faith, as was produced by the operation of God; or else such as had the operation of God in raising up Christ for its object: however, it was by the interveniency of this Faith, that they became both buried and risen with Christ in Baptism.

Now Infants, as they are not capable of acting this Faith, or making this answer of a good Conscience, so they are not capable of those blessings and benefits intended by God in Baptism; in as much as he hath suspended the donation thereof upon these, in conjunction with Baptism. And where any effect depends upon the taking place of more causes than one (as it does in the case in hand) it is not any one of those causes alone that will produce that effect.

3. How ever the ends of Circumcision were attainable, though administred to Infants in those respects before mentioned

oned. with their fellows, yet doubtless the Ordinance it self was so much the less spiritual, and so much the more weak, and favoring of the Legal Ministration, and suited to the then childish condition of the Church, because administration th. re- of was made to Infants. This, I conceive, might easily be made out from several of those rational principles consonant to the Scripture, upon and from which I have already evinced Baptism to be more spiritual, profitable, and edifying, when administred to men professing the Faith, then when appl. ed to children. Therefore doubtless, what the Apostle speaketh of the *Commandment* in general (meaning the *Law*, which, as he says, *mada nothing perfect*): how that *it is disannulled for the weakness and unprofitableness of it*, *Hebr. 7. 18, 19.* may well be understood to comprehend even this part of the Commandment also, which enjoyned an Ordinance, one or more, to be administred to little children. And how ever such a mean, low way and method of enjoying Ordinances, as was accommodated to the capacity of babes, was not uncomely whilest the Church was in the condition of children, as the Apostle speaks, (*Gal. 4. 3.*) no more then it is for a child, whilest he is a child, to speak and act as a child; yet to retain this poor, and low, and barren way of administring a Gospel-Ordinance to Infants, now the Church is raised, both in capacity and administration to its manly condition, is as incongruous and uncomely, as it is for one still to speak and act as a child, when he is become a man. By this time I hope it appears, that there is not the same reason why Baptism administred to Infants should reach the ends thereof, as there was why Circumcision, though applyed to Infants formerly, should attain its end. For the nature of the two Ordinances differ, the terms of their Administration differ, and the respective capacities of the Church then, and the Church now, differ: and according to that rule in Logick, *where the things themselves differ, there the reasons of those things differ also.*

3. **M**Y next Argument shall be taken from the different nature of the two Ministrations of the Old and New Testaments, as rendering Infant-Baptism, in that precise consideration of it as applied to Infants, disagreeable to the Ministration of the Gospel, but withall more correspondent with the Ministration of the Law: Therefore I thus further argue.

If Infant-Baptism be disagreeable to the Ministration of the New Testament, then Infants ought not to be baptized. The reason hereof is, because so far as either this or any other way or practice does comply with the Legal Ministration, and disagree with the Evangelical, so far it does cross or oppose the design of God, in changing the Ministration of the Law, for that of the Gospel; and consequently carries in it a spirit of antipathy against the very spirit of the Gospel Ministration. This, if it were not sufficiently evident of it self, might receive abundant confirmation from such Scriptures as these, and what might fairly and plainly be deduced from them: *Joh. 4. 23, 24. 2 Cor. 3. 6. Gal. 4. 9. Col. 2. 8, 17. Heb. 7. 18, 19. & 8. 6, 7. & 9. 9, 10, 11. & 10. 1.* But I presume of every mans plenary satisfaction as to this: Therefore I proceed.

Assumption.

But Infant-Baptism is disagreeable to the Ministration of the New Testament.

1. The truth hereof, in the first place, is conspicuous and perceptible by what hath been made good in our former Argument: For there we proved Baptism, as administered to Infants; less edifying, as to the several ends of it, then when administered unto Believers: and if less edifying, then the more suitable and conformable to the Ministration of the Law, which was a Ministration of less light and edification; and to the same proportion, disproportionate to the Ministration of the Gospel, which is a Ministration of a greater light, and a more rich edification.

2. I might, in the second place, well suppose Infant-Baptism to favor strongly of the Legal Ministration, because the principal Arguments, produced in defence thereof, are such as do arise out of, and are deduced from, the example of Infant-Circumcision, a prin-

principal part of the Legal Ministration, and from that analogy and proportion that is supposed to be between them: and not only so, but likewise because such Arguments and Pleas tend to draw down this part of the Gospel-Ministration, as applicable to Infants, unto the line and level of the Legal. For such Arguments, and the thing argued, what are they else but such which are *after the rudiments of the World, and not after Christ, i. e.* such as are according to the Ministration of the Law which was by *Moses*, and not according to that of the Gospel which is by *Christ*: of which the Apostle warns the *Colossians* to take heed, as such by which they were in danger of being deceived and spoyled: *Col. 2. 8. Beware lest any man spoyl you through Philosophy and vain deceit (i. e. through Philosophical and deceitful reasonings, which are) after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.* Now those reasonings may be said to be *after the rudiments of the world*, not only which tend to commend the observation and practise of those rudiments in all the particulars of the letter of them, but also when such Arguments and Pleas, for such or such a practice, be derived from, and grounded only upon those rudiments, and not on the Gospel: And, 2. When they tend to promote a way or practice which answers the nature of those rudiments in some one or more particulars proper to them, though otherwise not the same literally and in all respects. For so *Christ* is said to be a *Priest after the order of Melchisedec*, though he were not specifically such another Priest in all respects, but such which held some *similitude* with him, *Hebr. 7. 15.* Now that those Arguments for Infant-Baptism, which are as the *Axletree* upon which the Controversie on that side turns, and as the *warp* running all along that piece of discourse; that these Arguments may be said to be *after the rudiments of the world*, or one of the rudiments of the world, to wit, *Circumcision of Infants*, and that in both these respects before mentioned, is easie to conceive. For are not the principal Pleas for Infant-Baptism derived from, and founded on the *Circumcision of Infants under the Law*? And do they not tend to promote a way and practice now under the Gospel, of administering an holy Ordinance unto Infants? which for ought appears to the contrary, was proper and peculiar to that Administration of the Law?

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Object.

Nor does that dissolve the strength of what I have now said, which usually is objected in this case, viz. That both our Saviour and his Apostles vindicate and assert practices under the Gospel, from the examples of practices under the Law: as the Disciples gathering ears of corn on the Sabbath, from Davids eating the shewbread; and the Priests killing of Sacrifices in the Temple on the Sabbath, *Matth. 12. 3, 4, 5.* The ministering in carnal things to Ministers of the Gospel, from the *not muzzling the mouth of the Ox treading out the corn* under the Law, *1 Cor. 9. 9, 10.*

Answ. 1.

For, 1. It does not appear, that men of private spirits, wanting that infallible guidance of the Holy Ghost which Christ and his Apostles had, may use like liberty as they did in this behalf. Nay, hath not the presumption thus to do, been the sluice through which very many Popish Superstitions have first entered into the World? as supposing them to hold an analogical and equitable proportion with many the Jewish Customs?

2.

But, 2. I answer further, That things differ much in the cases produced and compared; For, 1. Though Christ and the Apostles did both back and illustrate their Doctrine and Precepts from instances and examples of things under the Law, yet they never made these examples the sole ground and foundation thereof, but these are still built upon that authority they had from God otherwise. As Christ, in that case now objected, over and above his allegation from the Law, interposes his own authority as more considerable; *Matth. 12. 6. But I say unto you, that in this place is one greater than the Temple:* and more plainly; *Vers. 8. For the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day.* And to Paul: in the other case, he first and principally pleads his Apostolical Authority, *1 Cor. 9. 1, 2. Am I not an Apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are you not my work in the Lord? If I be not an Apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you; for the seal of mine Apostleship are ye in the Lord:* but after he hath done this, he then proceeds to illustrate what he pleads, by that which he brings out of the Law, *Vers. 8, 9, 10.* and in fine, does bottom the business on the appointment or ordination of God, for so he says

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Vers. 14. Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel. 2. The things which both Christ and the Apostle, in the cases objected, plead from examples out of the Law, were not merely and barely institutive and positive, but of a moral consideration, and so of a more ready perception and deduction from those examples. The Disciples gathering of Corn on the Sabbath, could be supposed to be a breach but of a ceremonial precept, and yet it was in order to preserve their lives, health, and strength, a thing enjoined by a moral precept, which is superior to that which is but ceremonial: in which case the Pharisees might easily have satisfied themselves from the examples produced by Christ; as he says, *If ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless, Matth. 12. 7.* That there was also a moral equity in the nature of the thing, viz. *that they who preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel,* (another thing that was said to be pleaded from examples in the Law) appears plainly; because the Apostle supposes a like equity in this, as there is, *that he that goeth a warfare should have his charges born by them for whom he fights; or as there is that he who planteth a vineyard should eat of the fruit thereof, or that he who feedeth a flock, should eat of the milk thereof, or that the laborer should have his hire, 1 Cor. 9. 7. 1 Tim. 5. 18.*

But now Infant-Baptism hath not any express authority of Christ or his Apostles to back it, or any moral equity in and of it self discernable to commend it; in both which respects it differs from the instances and examples objected, and tails of that confirmation it caught at by them. And such a difference in the nature of things, cannot but make a like difference in those proper inferences that may be drawn from them. It's true indeed, it is ordinary to assert such things as are plain parts of the Gospel, from the prefigurations and predictions of the Law, (*Acts 26. 22. Rom. 3. 21. Epistle Heb. &c.*) but to assert any thing from the Ceremonies of the Law, which hath no footing in the Gospel, is doubtless that which is after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ; which I suppose verily to be the case of Infant-Baptism, when

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it is pleaded from Infants Circumcision.

3. Another thing, by which it may appear that Infant-Baptism is not agreeable to the Gospel-Ministration, is, in that it differs from it in this property of it, *viz.* as it is a *Ministration of the Spirit*: for so it's called, *2 Cor. 3. 6.* It's the Ministration of the Spirit in two respects: 1. Because in and by this Ministration the Spirit is given unto men, *Galat. 3. 2, 5.* 2. Because the worship and service which God receives from men under it, is, or ought to be more spiritual then that was under the Law; in both which respects Infant-Baptism will be found disagreeable to it.

1. That Baptism, as an Ordinance of the New Testament, and part of the Gospel-Ministration, when duly administred and received, does contribute towards their receiving of the Spirit, in respect of a greater presence and operation thereof, then till then ordinarily hath been enjoyed by them who are thus baptized, may appear from the promise of God made in that behalf, *Acts 2. 38.* *Then Peter said unto them, 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 &c.* And that this was not particular and peculiar to those persons unto whom Peter then spake these words, but that the same promise is made to all, in all ages, that shall repent and be baptized, is evident by that which follows in the next Verse, whereby the Apostle doth assure them of the remission of their sins, and their reception of the Holy Ghost, in case they did repent, and were baptized, upon this ground; because the promise of God, to wit, upon the terms before mentioned, was made to them, and to their children, and not to them only, but also to those afar off, *viz.* in respect of nation and generation, even as many of them or their children, or others afar off, as whom the Lord our God should so call, *viz.* by Repentance and Baptism. And it is very like, that it is because of that proximity or nearness of relation that is between this Ordinance of Baptism by water, and this Baptism of the Spirit, that mens being *born of water and of the Spirit,* (*Joh. 3. 5.*) and *the washing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost,* are coupled together in Scripture, *Tit. 3. 5. 1 Cor. 6. 11.* And it is not unlike neither, but that the Spirits descending

ing upon Christ immediately upon his being baptized (*Mat. 3. 16.*) might have this instruction in it, to teach all those that should regularly be baptized with water as he was, to expect a greater measure and presence of the Spirit, then before had been vouchsafed to them.

But now that it is not reasonable to expect, that any such effect should be produced by Infants being baptized, is evident upon this ground, because the gift of the Spirit is still made in Scripture to follow the act of mens believing the Gospel, (of which act Infants are incapable,) *Joh. 7. 39. Acts 15. 7, 8. & 19. 2. Gal. 3. 14. Ephes. 1. 13.* And therefore when I affirm, as before, That the gift of the Spirit, or some greater measure of the Spirit, is promised upon Baptism duly received, I would not be understood, as if I meant, that this promise is made to any merely and barely upon their being baptized, but to their Baptism in conjunction with their believing and repenting, for so it is in the fore-cited place, *Acts 2. 38. Repent, and be baptized, &c. and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost:* The promise of the Spirit is not made, either to Repentance or Baptism singly, but to both in conjunction. So that although Baptism be to be received with an eye to the promise of the Spirit, and under an expectation of a greater presence thereof, yet by such only who are under that qualification of believing; for where things are promised upon several conditions, or upon condition of several things in conjunction, it is not the performance of one of those conditions alone, that can put a man into a due and well-grounded expectation of the promise.

That Infants are in no present or actual capacity of believing whilst such, is evident upon this ground, because they have not the use and exercise of understanding, knowledg, or reason, without which none can actually believe. For faith supposes an actual knowledg in him who does believe, of these two things; 1. A notion or knowledg of the thing, matter, record, or testimony, to be believed; and, 2. A notion or knowledg of him who is to be believed, or who is the Author of that doctrine or saying which is the subject matter of Faith; as namely, That he is such an one as may be credited in what he says. These things are clear from these and the like Scriptures, *Romans 10. 14, 17. Joh. 9. 3, 6.*

Pfal. 9. 10. 2 Tim. 1. 12. That Infants have no such knowledg as to make any Judgment upon either person or thing to be believed, as touching either the goodness or badness of the one, or the probability or improbability of the other, appears *Dent. 1. 39.* *Your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, and your children which in that day had no knowledg between good and evil, they shall go in, &c. Isai. 7. 16. Jonah 4. 11.*

If Infants then be in no present capacity to believe, and without believing in no capacity to receive the Spirit, it follows, That Infants, whilest such, are in no due capacity of receiving Baptism in order to their receiving the Spirit, and consequently that Baptism administered to them, is disagreeable to the Gospel-Ministration, as it is the Ministration of the Spirit; whereas the Baptism of Believers is most commodiously suitable thereunto.

Object.

Nor can it reasonably be supposed here, that such a notion as this will salve this sore, *viz.* That Baptism may be received by Infants in order to their receiving the Spirit when they come to believe, and so their Baptism be agreeable to the Gospel-Ministration as it is a Ministration of the Spirit, notwithstanding it be received in Infancy; Because Baptism hath no influence this way as it is a work done, in which respect only Infants are capable of it, but as it is done, submitted to, and taken up out of faith, and in obedience to God, as hath been already proved before in part, and will be further confirmed afterwards.

2. Infant-Baptism is disagreeable to the Gospel-Ministration as it is the Ministration of the Spirit, in this respect also, *viz.* as it requires all Worshippers, in all acts of worship, in all the Ordinances of this Ministration, *to worship God in Spirit, with the mind, in faith and fear of the Lord.* That these are the terms of the Gospel-Ministration, appears from *Job. 4. 23, 24.* with other places cited formerly upon somewhat like occasion, upon which account I may spare further insisting on them here. He that makes use of a Gospel-Ordinance, and does not discern in some measure the nature, tendency and import of it, contracts sin and guilt to himself thereby, as is most clear in the case of the Supper of the Lord; he that in
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eating and drinking *does not discern the Lords body, eats and drinks Judgment to himself, 1 Cor. 11. 29.* And because this qualification of discerning is not found in Children, therefore they are not admitted to this Ordinance. And how they should be incapable of this Ordinance in this respect, and yet capable of Baptism, I understand not, especially considering that they both represent the death of Christ, *Rom. 6. 3. 1 Cor. 11. 26.* both relate to the great benefit of remission of sins by him, and tend to serve the important interest of men thereabout, *Mark 1. 4. Matt. 26. 28.* Since they both then travel with the same blessing in the main; how comes it to pass that the blessing of the one accrues not to the receiver but by his discerning the mind of God in it? and yet the benefit of the other does, without any such discerning, if that were true which some imagine? Certainly if plain Scriptures will satisfie hereabout, they do inform us, that it is by means of *Faith, and the answer of a good Conscience,* that Baptism becomes beneficial as to its ends, as well as the Supper by a spiritual discerning as to its, *Colos. 2. 12. 1 Pet. 3. 21.* But I shall not insist again upon that which I have already dispatched. In a word, the whole Ministration is denominated by *Faith, (Galat. 3. 23, 25.)* because Faith, from first to last, from one end of it to the other, is to steer all affairs under it on mans part, to act every service, to accompany every Ordinance, to receive every blessing, to render all actions acceptable, and to make all parts of it beneficial.

Where this qualification therefore is known to be wanting, as it is in Infants, certainly there Baptism cannot be applied without an apparent breach of the Laws and Rules of this spiritual Ministration. And thus also have I made good the premises of this third Argument; the Conclusion will follow of it self without help, &c.

A R G U M. IIII.

MY next Argument shall be this: *If none ought to be baptized, but such who appear voluntarily willing to be baptized in obedience to God, then Infants ought not be baptized.*

The reason hereof is, because Infants Baptism cannot reasonably be supposed to proceed from any willingness in them to obey God therein, they being no wise voluntary or active, but altogether passive therein.

Assumption.

But none ought to be baptized, but such who appear voluntarily willing to be baptized in obedience to God. The reason hereof is this, because without this obediential willingness, Baptism will be unprofitable and fruitless to them: and where we know the good of Baptism is not to be attained, there it is not to be administered; for in case we should, it would be a profanation of the Ordinance, a taking of Gods Name in vain: Though the sowing of seed be never so necessary, yet it would be no mans wisdom, but folly, to sow in such a ground, or at such a season, which he knows will render his seed fruitless.

That there is no reason to expect otherwise, but that Baptism should be unprofitable to all such who do not take it up voluntarily, willingly, and in obedience to God, appears upon this account.

1. Because now under the Gospel, this is the standing Rule or Law between Duties and Rewards, between the using of holy Ordinances, and the benefit that comes by them, *viz.* That Duties be done, and Ordinances performed willingly, and in obedience to God: 1 Cor. 9. 17. where the Apostle, speaking of his preaching the Gospel, saith, *If I do this thing willingly, I have a reward.* This saying of the Apostle, though it were uttered upon one particular occasion, yet doubtless it reaches all persons and all duties; If any man do any duty willingly, as unto God, he shall have his reward. But as Affirmatives use to include their Negatives by way of implication, so it is here; If I do it not willingly, I have no reward: For so the particle *IF*, imports the condition upon which the reward is to be received or not received: and you will spoyle the sence of the place, if you suppose, that if
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the Apostle did the thing he there speaks of, he should receive a reward, whether he did it willingly or no. Again, 2 Cor. 8. 12. *If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that which a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.* This also, though it were spoken upon a particular occasion (as many the great Doctrines of the Scriptures were,) yet it is a general proposition, which reaches even all duties. If there be first a willing mind, that is, an obedientious disposition God-ward; and this willingness of mind, and obediential disposition, is that, both which puts a man upon doing his duty according to that ability he hath, and which also renders the same acceptable and rewardable with God. Here again this conditional particle *IF*, *If there be first a willing mind*, must needs imply, that if this willing mind be wanting, the man is not accepted, his action not rewarded, though he do the thing: For so *Paul*, speaking of the same duty of giving, 1 Cor. 13. 3. saith, *Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned and have not Charity, it profiteth me nothing:* Still teaching us, that if there be an inward principle of a willing compliance with the Will of God wanting in any action, which in it self is good, and commanded of God; yet for that very cause it becomes unprofitable to him that does it, in which respect we affirm Baptism of Infants unprofitable to them.

2. Promises made unto duty, or upon condition of duty, are rewards of that obedience which is yielded to God in discharge of duty, when they are fulfilled thereupon. Now it is no wise proper to say, or rational to suppose, that God rewards his creature, man, for that wherein he is only passive, they being such actions which we call moral, and which proceed from the motion of the Will governed by a divine Law, that are rewardable by God. And therefore, unless Baptism be submitted unto willingly, and in obedience to God, which cannot be supposed in Infants; the good things annexed thereto, by way of promisory recompence of such obedience, cannot upon any good ground be expected.

3. I have proved before in another Argument, That now, under the Gospel-Ministration, there is no benefit comes, either by Baptism, or any other Ordinance, but by means of his Faith
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who partakes thereof; *Without Faith it is impossible to please God, (Hebr. 11. 6.)* i. e. in any service to approve ones self acceptable to him; *For whatsoever is not of faith, is sin, Rom. 14. 23.* If then the benefit we speak of comes not without Faith, then neither does it accrue without that willingness of mind and obedientious disposition God-ward we speak of, because it's impossible this should be separate from Faith; I mean, a living active Faith, which is the Faith of Gods acceptation: and therefore, to believe, and to obey, are in Scripture frequently put one for another, and accordingly indifferently so translated, as appears by the double readings.

I shall not here again answer the case of Infant-Circumcision, which possibly may again rise up in the minds of some against what hath been now layd down in this Argument also, but shall refer the Reader, for satisfaction herein, to what hath been already done about that subject in answer to a former Objection, as judging it sufficient at this turn also.

I shall not proceed further to levy more Arguments to serve in this Controversie (unless occasionally) though many more, of like import with the former, might perhaps readily be formed and drawn up, as judging these already insisted on abundantly sufficient to detect the vanity of Infant-Baptism.

Nor shall I apply my self to answer those many contrary Arguments, which are wont to be mustered up in defence of Infant-Baptism; not because I count them, or any of them, either impregnable, or of hard or difficult attempt; but partly because in those Arguments I have produced, there is a ground or foundation layd of answering all contrary reasonings, and which is of easie application this way: and partly because some of the chiefest Arguments on that side, have been produced already Objection-wise, and received their answer: and partly likewise because this hath been sufficiently done by other hands: and lastly for brevity sake, as perceiving copious discourses hereabout to be burdensom.

But because there is one Argument which seems to be much taking with some, which as it is of a later invention then others, so perhaps hath not received such answer and refutation as others have; therefore as to this, I shall give in somewhat by way of answer.

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The Argument is this:

If the love of God to persons be the first and original ground of their being capable of Baptism, then Infants are capable of Baptism: The reason of this consequence is, because Infants are in the love and favor of God, in as much as God hath pardoned that sin, of which they were guilty in and by *Adam*, and so put them into a condition of Salvation by Christ.

But the love of God to persons is the original or first ground of Assumption;
their being capable of Baptism. To make good this minor Proposition, two things are alledged, 1. That the reason why Faith is necessary in persons who have not been baptized in their Infancy, to render them capable of Baptism, is, because it is that mean by which those that are to administer Baptism come to know that they are in the love and favor of God: and if such a thing could be known without such a profession of Faith, as it may in the case of Infants, such a profession of Faith would not be necessary in order to such an admission. 2. That it was upon this ground that Christ himself was capable of Baptism; for otherwise he had no such Faith as is required of men to render them capable of Baptism, *viz.* a Faith in God touching the remission of sins through Christ; but as he was a person beloved of God, upon this account Baptism did belong to him, and accordingly was administered. And yet that Christ did not receive Baptism upon any terms extraordinary, though he himself was a person extraordinary, but upon the same terms upon which others do, and ought to receive it, appears by this, *viz.* in that even his Baptism was administered and received, in conformity to a standing Rule or Law of Righteousness, common to others as well as to him; for so he himself saith to *John Baptist*, speaking of his own Baptism; *Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness, Matt. 3. 15.*

Before I come to answer particularly to this Argument, I shall desire these two things may be observed by the way:

Answer.

1. That this Argument contradicts another that is wont to be employed in this service, to wit, that the promise of God belongs to children of believing Parents, and therefore Baptism: by which Baptism is restrained to such Infants onely as are the children

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children of believing Parents: but by this Argument, Baptism is made to appertain to all Infants whatsoever, whether they be children of believing or unbelieving Parents, because it supposes all Infants to be in the love of God in the fore-mentioned respect: and therefore if this be true, the other must be false in its restrained sense; and contrarily, if the other true, this false: so that you see the witnesses do not better agree in their evidence in this behalf, than the false witnesses did, that came against Christ, in their testimony. 2. This Argument, if it were good, would render, not only all Infants capable of Baptism, but all men likewise, whether Christian or Pagan, because they are beloved of God in such a sense as it's said Infants are, to wit, in having that sin, of which they were guilty in *Adam*, remitted to them. For if that sin were remitted to them in their Infancy, surely that act of grace and pardon is not recalled when they come to be men, in as much as we nowhere find in Scripture, that any mens perishing is at all charged upon that sin which they were guilty of in *Adam*, but upon their own voluntary neglect of Grace, and on their actual transgression. And therefore if it be absurd (as I suppose it will be granted to be) to argue all mens capability of Baptism from this ground, which yet is common to all men as well as Infants, why should it be thought any other then absurd likewise, to infer Infants capability of Baptism from the same ground? *Since in things which are the same, or like, there is the same or like Reason and Judgment, as Logicians speak.*

But to come closer to the Argument; I do deny the consequence of the major Proposition; I do deny that it therefore follows, that Infants are capable of Baptism, though it should be granted, that the love of God is the original ground of rendering persons capable thereof. And the reason of this denial is taken from that difference which is between the original ground of persons capability of Baptism, and the next and immediate ground thereof: for however the love of God be the ground of all Dispensations of good to the Creature, yet it is not so in the self-same respect; but as it exhibits it self in one Dispensation of it in one respect, so in another Dispensation thereof

thereof it exhibits it self upon other terms and respects. And therefore we must distinguish of the love of God as it is the ground of Baptism. The love of God then is to be considered, either, 1. In the whole entire sum or body of it, generally and indefinitely considered, as comprehending and enclosing in it all particular Dispensations of Grace towards the Creature; or else, 2. As it exerts or puts forth it self in those particular Dispensations themselves. The love of God in the former sense, though it be the ground of all particular acts of Grace, and so of that also which appertains to Baptism, yet it is no sound way of reasoning, to conclude persons to be in an immediate capacity of Baptism, because they are in the love of God under this general consideration of it. For upon the same ground one might as well argue Infants to be strong Christians, or fit to be chosen Pastors, Teachers, or Deacons, as to argue them capable of Baptism, because persons are in these capacities by virtue of the love of God to them. And yet who sees not how absurd it would be to reason thus?

If the love of God to persons be the original ground which renders them capable of being chosen into the office of Pastor, Teacher, or Deacon, then Infants are capable of being chosen into these Offices because they are in the love of God: But the love of God is, &c. If the love of God to persons be the original ground of rendering them capable of the denomination of strong Christians, then Infants are capable of the denomination of strong Christians, because they are in the love and favor of God: But, &c.

Again, to put another case like unto these;

If life be the original ground or cause why persons are capable of speaking, then Infants are capable of speaking, because they have life: But life is the original ground or cause why persons are capable of speaking, Ergo.

By the light then of these instances; the invalidity, indeed absurdity of concluding Infants to be capable of Baptism, because they are in that love and favor of God, may you see be sufficiently discern'd.

If then we would come to argue steadily, so as to conclude persons capability of Baptism from the love of God to them, we must consider the love of God under that particular and precise notion

of it, by which persons are put into an immediate, not remote capacity of Baptism. For though it is true, that that love of God, which is vouchsafed Infants in the pardon of that sin that devolved it self on them from *Adam*, does put them into a remote capacity both of Baptism and all other consequential acts of grace, which are vouchsafed men upon their believing and diligent and faithful improvement of all means and opportunities of grace, &c. yet it does not put them into an immediate capacity of these, until they do believe, and have improved those means and opportunities, upon condition of which such additional and progressionary acts of grace are promised and suspended; no more then a child's ability to read his Horn-book, or Primer, puts him into a capacity of understanding his Grammar.

That the Dispensation of Gods grace and love is made to Infants in one respect, and to persons in an immediate capacity of Baptism in another; and that that act of grace which is vouchsafed Infants in the pardon of that first sin, &c. does not put them into an immediate capacity of Baptism, appears upon these grounds.

1. Because that act of grace, or dispensation of Gods love, unto which Baptism does appropriately belong, is that which is exerted and put forth in the pardon of mens actual transgressions, and this too not without their repenting or believing; whereas that act of grace, of which Infants partake, is such as is vouchsafed them in the pardon of original sin only, and this too without their repenting and believing, meerly upon the account of the death of Christ. That that act, or those acts of grace, unto which Baptism appropriately does belong, is the pardon of sin upon repentance, and such other acts of grace as are concomitant and consequential thereunto, appears plainly by this, *viz.* in that Baptism is called (according to the nature of it, and the intent of God in its institution) *the Baptism of Repentance for the remission of sins*, *Mark 1. 4. Luk. 3. 3.* That is, that Baptism which is to be received upon mens repentance for the remission of sins; or that Baptism, in and by which men profess they expect remission of sins in the way of repentance: or because the reception of which Baptism proceeds from a principle of repentance; or else because God doth therein authentically assure men of the remission

on of their sins upon their repentance. Take it which way you will, it proves this, That Baptism is conversant about, and subservient unto that act of Gods grace and love, which is vouchsafed men in the pardon of their sins upon their repentance: and if so, then is it irrelative to the grace of God in the pardon of Infants sin, which is vouchsafed them without, and before repentance takes place.

2. The love of God is the immediate ground of Baptism, so far only as it relates too, or is effective of the good of man in Baptism; for the reception of Baptism is not otherwise to be esteemed an effect of Gods love, then as the good and benefit of men is concerned therein: That which Christ speaks of the Sabbath, how that it *was made for man*, *Mark 2. 27. i. e.* for the good of man, is true of Baptism, and every other Ordinance and Institution of God. In as much then as Baptism is not otherwise beneficial unto any, but by means of their *Faith*, and *answer of a good Conscience*; and in as much also, as that Infants are not under this capacity of means, both which I have formerly evidently proved; therefore it follows undenyably, that God does not love Infants upon any such terms as he does those unto whom he commends and communicates his love in and by Baptism, and consequently, that the love which God bears to Infants, puts them into no immediate capacity of Baptism.

3. The extent of Gods love to Infants, so far as is pretended in the reason of the consequence of the major Proposition, consists onely in the pardon of original sin, and the putting them into a condition of Salvation by Christ; all which love of God they are invested with before ever Baptism can be applied to them; because the love of God in this respect, is not conditional, nor does depend upon the action of any creature, or application of any means, but solely upon the atonement which Christ hath made on that behalf: and therefore Baptism lies out of the verge, compass or circumference of the love of God as enjoyed by Infants, and contributes neither less nor more in that dispensation of Gods love to them; in which respect also Baptism is irrelative to the love of God in that precise consideration of it, in which it is communicated to Infants.

Whereas it is alledged by way of proof of the minor Proposition,

fiction; 1. That the reason why Faith is necessary in persons who have not been baptized in their Infancy, to render them capable of Baptism, is, because it is that mean by which those that are to admit them to Baptism come to know that they are in the love of God; and that if such a thing could be known without such a profession of Faith, as it may in the case of Infants, that then such a profession would not be necessary in order to such an admission.

To this I answer likewise; 1. That a profession of Faith in such persons, to render them admissible to Baptism, is not necessary to inform those that admit them touching Gods love to them in any respect whatsoever, for this may be known without such a profession; but in relation to their knowing them to be in the love and favor of God in that particular respect and determinate consideration, which renders men immediately capable of Baptism; in this respect such a profession of Faith is necessary, because without it the love of God to them upon such terms is not knowable, and consequently they not admissible to Baptism, as was before proved: by which Infants, as touching their capability of Baptism, are clearly excluded. 2. The profession of Faith is necessary in the case in hand, for other causes then merely to inform those that admit persons to Baptism, of their being in the favor of God in general whom they do admit, and that is to let them know that such are capable of the several ends and benefits of Baptism, and so meet for Baptism it self; because unless they have reason to conceive that they have Faith, they can have no reason to conceive them in a present capacity of the ends and benefits of Baptism, and so not of Baptism it self, in as much as these are suspended upon Faith, as hath already been evinced.

Whereas in the second place it is said, that it was upon this ground, *viz.* of Gods loving him, that Christ himself was capable of Baptism, and not his Faith, in as much as he had no such Faith as is required of men to render them capable of Baptism, to wit, a Faith in God touching the remission of sins through Christ; and that yet Christ did not receive Baptism upon any terms extraordinary, but upon the same terms as others do, in as much as it was in conformity to a standing
Law

Law of Righteousness common to others as well as him:

To this I answer; That this reason is built upon a mistaken ground, as supposing Christ to have no such Faith as might render him capable of Baptism, at least such as is required of other men in order thereunto. For Christ had the same Faith which is required of all other persons in that case. For what Faith was required of other men to render them capable of Baptism, save this? *viz.* To believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God? For so when the Eunuch demanded of Philip, saying, *See here is water, what hindreth me to be baptized? then Philip answered and said, If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayst: and he answered Philip again, and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God:* upon which confession Philip baptized him, as counting it summarily to contain the expression of that believing with all the heart, which he before had set as the condition of his admission thereunto; and indeed was none other then the Faith of the Gospel, and the common form of Believers confession: *Mat. 14. 33. Joh. 1. 49. & 6. 69. & 11. 27. & 20. 31. 1 Joh. 5. 5. Acts 9. 20.* And I hope none that own the Scriptures, will deny Christ himself to have this Faith, in as much as it was his own doctrine which he taught, *Joh. 10. 36. & 19. 7. Matt. 27. 43.* The truth is, Christ himself had a Faith in God his Father, (*Heb. 2. 13. Psal. 22. 8. with Mat. 27. 43.*) and did continue in his Fathers love in the way of obedience to his commands, as other the children of God do, *Joh. 15. 10.* And therefore well may it be said indeed, that Christ received Baptism upon the same terms as others did, at least in several respects, and that in conformity to the same standing Law of Righteousness (to wit, the institution of God) common to others as well as to him. For doubtless this was the Will of God hereabout, *viz.* That at what time men undertake publicly to profess and assert the Gospel unto the World in word and deed, then and at that time they are to take up the Ordinance of Baptism; as the examples of persons, whose Baptism is recorded in the new Testament, do abundantly witness. And therefore Christ himself, when he also is coming forth into the world, to profess and publish the Gospel which he had received from the
Father

Father, he also makes a dedication of himself unto this service by the solemnity of Baptism, as others did, and ought to do.

And we might hence well frame an Argument against Infant-Baptism, in stead of wretling it, as a witness for it, thus :

If Christ Iesus his being baptized at that season, and upon that occasion, when he began to profess and publish the Gospel, and not before, was in conformity to a Law of Righteousness in this behalf; then those that are baptized, who yet make no such profession, as Infants are, are not baptized in conformity to that Law of Righteousness :

But Christ Iesus his being baptized at that season, and upon that occasion, when he began to profess and publish the Gospel, and not before, was in conformity to a Law of Righteousness in this behalf; therefore those that are baptized, as Infants are, who yet make no such profession, are not baptized in conformity to that Law of Righteousness.

That which adds weight to the minor Proposition in this Argument (which I suppose is the only thing that will be questioned in it) is this, *viz.* That Christ his fulfilling a Law of Righteousness in his Baptism, did not consist simply in his being baptized at any time, but in conjunction with his Baptism it self, in his being baptized at such a time and upon such an occasion as that was, when and wherein he began to profess and publish the Gospel. For otherwise it is not to be thought, but that Christ had an opportunity of being baptized long before, and much sooner then he was, in as much as *Iohn* had continued baptizing a considerable space of time before Christ came to to be baptized of him. For *Iohn* had travelled much ground, even *all the Country round about Iordan*, both to preach and baptize, which must needs take up much time, especially considering the great multitudes that were baptized of him, even *Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, Luk. 3. 3. Mat. 3. 5.* And as it should seem, after this, or at least after a large progress herein made, *Iesus Christ* was baptized also, as appears by the order of the History of the Evangelists: *Now when all the people were baptized (saith Luke)*

it came to pass that Iesus also being baptized, and praying, &c. Luke 3. 21. Now what may we conceive might be the reason why Christ was not baptized rather with the first then with the last of the people? Certainly, it is not reasonable to conceive, that it was because he had less zeal to fulfil this Law of righteousness, then was in the multitude that were baptized before him; and if not this, what else imaginable but this, *viz.* that his appointed time and season of his appearing with the Gospel in the world, was not till then, and therefore not his time of being baptized, in as much as the one was in order to the other, and was to take its rise and beginning from the other. And this we have further reason the rather to conceive, because of that Particle *NOW*, emphatically here used, as it relates to the fulfilling of righteousness by that which was to be done: *Suffer it to be so NOW (saith Christ to Iohn, touching his being baptized) For thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness, Mat. 3. 15.* Not only in being baptized of him, but in being baptized of him *NOW*, to wit, at that juncture of time in which he was to be manifested to the world to be the Son of God, & to manifest to the world the Gospel of God: *NOW* to be baptized, *viz.* upon such terms, it was a thing very comely, (though *Iohn* seemed to think otherwise) in as much as that it was a fulfilling of righteousness, *i.e.* that righteous law or institution of God, given in that behalf. And thus we see, that the example of Christ's Personal Baptism, which was intreated to bless the opinion for Infant Baptism, hath contradicted it altogether.

** Iesus said unto them, My time is not yet come, but your time is alway ready. Joh. 7. 6.*

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The Second Part,

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How necessary it is for persons to be baptized after they believe, their Infant-Baptism notwithstanding: as also discovering the disorderly and irregular Communion of persons baptized with such as are unbaptized in Church Fellowship.

HAVING in the former part of this Discourse, laid down part of those grounds and reasons which have swayed my judgment, and satisfied my conscience in the sight of God, touching the unlawfulness of Infant Baptism; and which I doubt not will have the like influence and operation upon the unbyassed minds of other men: It remains now that I come to speak something to these two questions following.

1. Whether men may not rest satisfied with that Baptism, which was administered to them in their Infancy, without any further reception of Baptism afterwards, notwithstanding they come to understand the irregularity of their Infant Baptism?

2. Whether it be necessary for such persons who have for some

some considerable space of time, made profession of the faith, though as yet unbaptized; whether it be necessary for them to be baptized? since the ends of Baptism seem to be anticipated by such a continued profession.

As touching the former of these Questions; I conceive I may affirm, that none may safely and without danger of sin, rest satisfied with that Baptism which they received in their Infancy, they coming once to understand the irregularity and sinfulness of Infant Baptism: and I do assert it upon these grounds.

1. Because the Apostle *Paul* (as may reasonably be conceived) did not hold it convenient or safe, for certain Disciples with whom he met, to rest satisfied with such a Baptism as had been formerly either erroneously administered to them, or else which was deficient as touching some special ends of that Baptism, which was enjoined the Disciples of Christ, but did proceed to baptize them, or to cause them to be baptized afresh. The Case before us, is touching those certain Disciples which *Paul* found at *Ephesus*, and of whom he demanded, *Whether they had received the Holy Ghost since they had believed?* Unto whom they replied, *That they had not so much as heard whether there were any Holy Ghost.* Unto what then (said *Paul*) were ye baptized? And they said, *Unto Johns Baptism.* Then said *Paul*, *John verily baptized with the Baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him that was to come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.* When they heard this, they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus. And when *Paul* had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them, &c. *Acts 19. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.*

In this passage of Scripture, there are three things which I would have observed as to my present purpose.

The first is touching the Baptism, which these Disciples are said formerly to have received.

The second is touching their later Baptism, which they received upon *Pauls* instructing them.

And the third is touching the reason why they were now baptized upon *Pauls* preaching to them, notwithstanding they had formerly been baptized unto *Johns* Baptism.

1. That these Disciples had been formerly baptized unto *Johns*

Acts 19. 1. 2. 3. 6.

Baptism, is that which they themselves affirm, *verse 3.*

2. That the same Disciples were now again baptized upon *Pauls* preaching Christ to them, I conceive fairly appears by those words, *ver. 5. When they heard this, (viz. that which Paul had declared to them) they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus.*

There are indeed two other Interpretations of these words urged by some, that do much differ from that sense which I have now given; but are both beside the Scope and meaning of the place, as I suppose I shall presently make appear.

1. Some by their being baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus, as here in this place, would have us to understand it, not of their being baptized with water, but of their being baptized with the Spirit; which is *Master Calvins* sense upon the place: and so he takes these words, *They were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus*, and those that follow in the next verse, *viz. And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with tongues and prophesied*, to import one and the same thing; and that the later words are only an Explanation of the former, shewing after what manner they were baptized: and he further saith, *That for the visible graces of the Spirit which were given by the laying on of hands*; for this to be expressed by the name of Baptism, is no new thing, as he does alledg from *Acts 1.5.* and *11.16.*

But, 1. That their being baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and their receiving the Holy Ghost upon the laying on of *Pauls* hands, were not the same thing as is alledged, may be discerned; 1. By a due consideration both of the different nature of the actions themselves, and the successive order of those different actions. For the doctrine, and so the practise of Baptism is one thing, and that of laying on of hands is another, as is apparent by that of the Apostle, *Heb. 6.2.* where the Doctrine of Baptisms, and of laying on of hands, are differenced by the same note of distinction, by which the Doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment, are differenced from them both. And the same thing appears from the order and succession of these different actions, as well as from the different nature of them. For we have, 1. *Pauls* teaching of these Disciples

Disciples distinctly mentioned. 2. The baptizing of them in Name of Christ as following thereupon, as distinctly described. And 3. The laying on of *Pauls* hands, and their receiving of the Holy Ghost thereupon, as distinctly and differentially described as either of the former. The article *AND*, which stands between the Description of their Baptism, and reception of the Holy Ghost upon the imposition of hands, being a Note here, not of identity or sameness of things, but of transition or passing from one thing to another, or else of copulation of things really distinct, but yet relative. 2. This is further discernable by a collation of this passage of Scripture with others, where we have the same actions, in the same order described, as *Acts 8.16,17.* where speaking of the Holy Ghost, the holy Historian saith, *That he was fallen upon none of them, to wit, the believing Samaritans, only they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus: then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.* Whence it plainly appears, that the Disciples were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus, before they received the Holy Ghost: and that they did receive the Holy Ghost after their Baptism, upon those prayers that were made for them, & hands laid on them for that end: so that these were not one, but two distinct actions. Just so in the place under discussion: though they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus, yet we do not find, that they received the Holy Ghost, till imposition of hands was super-added thereunto.

2. Whereas it is further alledged by *Calvin*, that it is no new thing to express the gift of the visible graces of the Spirit, by the name of Baptism; though this is indeed true, in such a sense as the Scriptures to which he refers intend it, yet I do believe it is a new thing, and not to be found in Scripture, to express the effusion of the Spirit, as divided from Baptism by water, under the description of being baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus, the form here used in the Text under debate. For both those places produced, *Acts 1.5.* and *11.16.* speak of the Fathers, or Christs own immediate act of conferring the Spirit; whereas to baptize in the Name of the Lord Jesus, plainly and directly notes the Agency.

or Ministry of man, managed in the Name of Christ: the one is the Baptism of Christ ministred by himself, the other is the Baptism of Christ ministred by man in his Name. And so *Ma-ster Calvin* himself at another turn will tell you, that, *When John said, I indeed baptize with water, but Christ when he shall come, shall baptize with the Holy Ghost, and with fire, he meant not to put difference between the one Baptism, and the other, but he compares his own person with the Person of Christ, saying, that himself was a Minister of water, but that Christ was the Giver of the Holy Ghost. Instit. Lib. 4. Cap. 15. 5. 8.* And the baptizing in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and the pouring out of the Spirit, are not the same individual thing, but are clearly differenced and distinguished in respect of time, order, and action, as I noted in part before from *Acts 8. 16, 17.* a place in this respect parallel with this in hand. So that still you will find, that to baptize in the Name of the Lord Jesus, signifies such a Baptism as is not without water.

But some others, not liking so well this construction of the words, though they be of the same mind, as to the impugning of that literall sence of them which I have embraced, have thought of another way to evade this, and that is by understanding these words, *They were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus,* as the words of *Paul* recited by *Luke*, declaring the Baptism of these Disciples by *John*, to be the consequent of *Johns* preaching to them, and not the words of *Luke*, as recording their Baptism as consequential to *Pauls* preaching to them; and so the sence they make to be this: That these Disciples, when they heard *John* in his preaching say to them, that they should believe on him that was to come after him, to wit, Christ Jesus, then they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus by *John*. See the late Annotations upon the place for this,

But that neither this is the true intent, and genuine sence of the words, I strongly incline to believe upon these grounds:
1. Because this Interpretation overthrowes the Grammatical sence of the words, and renders them void of Common sence. For it is evident, that what *Paul* is here brought in speaking, he speaks it to these Disciples themselves; for here is no men-
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tion of any other persons but *Paul*, and them. Now then what ever words were spoken by *Paul* to them, must run in the second Person, if you will suppose *Paul* to speak common sence; whereas these words, *They were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus,* are spoken in the third Person, and therefore cannot be the words of *Paul* to them, but of *Luke* concerning them. For if *Paul* would have declared such a thing to the Disciples, as that they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus upon the hearing of *John*, then his words should have run thus: *When you heard this, you were baptized, &c.* and not as now we have them, *When they heard this, they were baptized, &c.* Besides, how uncouth and harsh is it, to make the people whom *John* taught and baptized, and those twelve Disciples, to be the same persons? and to conceive that *Paul* should tell them what *John* said to the people, when all the while he meant themselves; both which you must suppose, if you take the words in that sence which I oppose; because then the people in the fourth *verse*, unto whom *John* spake, and those in the fifth *verse*, which are said to have heard, and to have been baptized, must be the same persons, and consequently both of them these twelve men; because as the Pronouns *they*, and *they*, in the fourth, and fifth *verse*, upon that supposition, that both are *Pauls* words, cannot be understood, but of the same persons, so also the same Pronouns *they*, and *they*, which relate both to the persons baptized, *ver. 5.* and to the twelve that prophesied after *Paul* had laid his hands on them, *ver. 6.* are undoubtedly meant of the same persons likewise: And therefore that interpretation now under examination, which runs us upon such rocks of absurdity, and into such Solecisms of speaking as these, must be rejected; and consequently these words, *When they heard this, they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus,* must be taken as the words of *Luke*, and not of *Paul*, importing the Baptism of these Disciples upon the hearing of *Paul*, and not of *John*.

2. That these words, *They were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus,* are not a Description of *Johns* Baptism administred to these Disciples, but of that Baptism which they received upon *Pauls* Preaching, we have this reason further to conceive; because

because it no where appears that *John* did baptize the people in the Name of the Lord Jesus. Nay, the truth is, that *John* saith concerning him that was to come after him, (which was Jesus Christ) that he did not know him until the time that he baptized him, *John* 1. 30, 31. For he was before me, and I knew him not: and again, ver. 33. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost: It *John* then did not know Jesus, either personally, or by his proper name, until this time, then we have no reason to conceive that he had baptized any hitherto in this proper Name of his, and yet before this time he had dispatched the greatest part of his Ministry, in as much as he was but to prepare the way for Christ, who upon this Baptism of his, entered into his Ministry, he then coming on, when *John* was going off. *Acts* 10. 37. and 1. 22.

But to put the business out of doubt; the Apostle *Paul* here in this fourth verse of *Acts* 19. does plainly declare, that *John* when he baptized did say unto the people, that they should believe on him that should come after him, which *Paul* indeed does here interpret to these Disciples to be meant of Christ Jesus. But if *John* had baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus explicitly, why had not *Paul* said so? rather then to say that He baptized them, saying unto them, that they should believe on him that should come after him? Or why should we conclude, that if these Disciples had been baptized by *John* into Christ Jesus expressly and by name, that *Paul* would have made such a business of it to inform them of that of which they could not be ignorant, viz. that they were baptized into Christ Jesus, If there fore we will take the true scope and meaning of this passage of Scripture, we must I conceive understand it thus. 1. That these Disciples having been baptized unto *John's* Baptism, were baptized into one as yet to come, and to be made manifest unto the world, according to *John's* accustomed manner on this behalf. 2. That *Paul* did now open and declare to them, who that was that *John* said was to come after him, and that he did declare him to them now, not as one to come, but as one already come; for so that short expository saying of *Paul* here,

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THAT IS ON CHRIST JESUS, doth import, as containing the subject matter of *Paul's* discourse then. And then 3. That these Disciples hearing, understanding and believing this, viz. That he who is called Jesus Christ, was he that was now come, and had suffered death, &c. And was he whom the Baptism of *John* did then point at more obscurely as one that was to come, though not then personally and by name known amongst the people; I say upon their hearing and believing this, they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus, as acknowledging him to be that Messiah, into the expectation of whom they had formerly been baptized.

And so we come to the third thing which we were to enquire into out of this Contexture of Scripture, and that is, why or for what reason it may be conceived, that these Disciples were now baptized again upon the hearing of *Paul*, when as they had been baptized unto the Baptism of *John* formerly. And the reason hereof must be, either 1. Because, that though these Disciples had been baptized by *John* unto the Messiah that was then to come after him, yet this was not sufficient when once they came to the acknowledgment of Jesus the Son of *Mary* to be that Messiah, but that notwithstanding this, they were then to be baptized into Christ Jesus as acknowledging him to be that Messiah indeed, which before they did expect: Or else 2. Because there was some error committed, in the administration and reception of their Baptism: and other reasons then these, I think will not lightly present themselves to any mans mind.

For the former of these; some indeed have conceived that such who were baptized by *John* unto him that was to come, not yet knowing him personally, were afterwards baptized again when they came to acknowledge Jesus the Son of *Mary*, to be the Son of God, and Saviour of the world: and truly this opinion is not altogether to be despised, in as much as there is an appearance of reason, both that it was so, and why it should be so.

1. That it was so, there is this reason to induce the belief thereof; because though as it should seem, all the Jews generally were baptized by *John*, yet very considerable numbers of them were baptized afterwards when they came to own Jesus for

the Messiah. That the Jews generally were baptized by John appears, in that it is said, *There went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Iorden, and were baptized of him in Iorden confessing their sins, Matth. 3. 5, 6. Acts 13. 24.* That there were very considerable numbers of the Inhabitants of these places baptized afterwards when they came to acknowledge Jesus to be the Son of God, and Saviour of the world, appears by *Acts 2. 41.* where we shall find, that at *Jerusalem* it self, there were upon the hearing of *Peter*, and their gladly receiving the word, no less than about three thousand baptized in one day. Now let it be considered, how improbable it is; that since the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem* and all *Judea* were baptized of *John*, that these three thousand at *Jerusalem* only, and that in one day, should be converted and baptized, and yet not any one of them be of that number which *John* had baptized before. Besides, whereas it is said, that they that gladly received his word were baptized, it must be supposed, either 1. That not one of all the Jews which were baptized of *John* formerly, did now gladly receive the word; Or else 2. That some of them which had been baptized by *John*, were now again baptized upon *Peters* preaching. For when it is said, They that gladly received his word were baptized, we have reason to understand it of all that did so receive it, for here is no exception made of such as had been baptized by *John*, as indeed there is not in any other place. If then it be no wayes probable, that in so great and eminent a coming in of the Jews to the Gospel, as this was, but that some of those who had been formerly baptized into the expectation of Christ, did now gladly receive the word of the Gospel, by which even Jesus stood declared to be both Lord and Christ, then it cannot but be so probable, that even some of them whom *John* baptized were afterwards baptized again, that there is scarce place left for any contrary thoughts.

2. As there is this reason to prove that it was so, so there is reason also to prove why it should be so: For their being baptized by *John* unto him that was to come as the Messiah, when as yet not known by them, did not prove, as the event declares, either any effectual means by which to own and acknowledge him

him for such when he was come, nor to distinguish them from such who did reject him, which yet are two principal ends of Baptism. For whereas all the Jews in *Judea*, and those parts, did generally receive *John's* Baptism, as being under great expectations of an immediate appearing of the Messiah, and which they notioned to themselves as one that should come in an outward state and glory; yet when he was come, and they found him who was presented to them for the Messiah, to be none other but him whom they called the Carpenters Son, one that appeared in so mean a Garb, and despicable a condition as he did, contrary to their pre-received notion of him, and expectation concerning him, then they generally were offended at him, despised and rejected him, *Matth. 13. 55, 56, 57. Isay 53. 2, 3.* That very few did own Christ Jesus when he came to be made manifest unto *Israel*, of those very many that were baptized by *John*, appears by that saying concerning Christ, *John 3. 32. What he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth, and no man receiveth his testimony:* meaning that very few did. *John 5.* Christ speaking to the Jews of *John* saith, that they were willing for a season to rejoyce in his light, *ver. 35.* but speaking to the same persons concerning himself, *ver. 38.* saith, *For whom he (viz. God) hath sent, him ye believe not.* See *Isai. 53. 1. John 12. 37, 38.* Though all the Jews generally did look for a Christ, yet but few of them did acknowledg Jesus to be the Christ. If then the generality of those that were baptized by *John* unto Christ then to come, did reject him when he was come, then certainly the Baptism which was received from *John*, could be no distinguishing mark, or characteristical badge of the Disciples of Christ Jesus, or that by which their publick and professed owning of him could be reckoned: and therefore by how much it was necessary that the Disciples of Christ Jesus should be distinguished and known from those that believed not in him, and should publicly profess and own Jesus to be the Christ in and by Baptism, (which yet will be found to be none of the least ends of Baptism) by so much it seems necessary, that those that were baptized by *John*, should afterwards be baptized again when they came to own Jesus for the Christ of God.

2. Others there are which conceive, that the reason why these

these twelve Disciples at *Ephesus* were baptized again upon their hearing the Gospel from *Paul*, notwithstanding they had been formerly baptized unto *Johns* Baptism, was, because of some error committed in their Baptism. As 1. That they were baptized into the expectation of Christ to come, after the time in which he was actually come. And 2. That they had not been baptized in the Name of the Holy Ghost, as they ought to have been according to the Commission of Christ on that behalf, *Matth.* 28.19. when as they were (as is supposed) baptized after this Commission was on foot.

1. That they were baptized unto him that was to come as they understood, appears in that they were baptized unto *Johns* baptism, the tenour whereof was an inviting them to believe on him that was to come as *Paul* here asserts, *ver.* 4.

2. That they were not baptized in the Name of the Holy Ghost, is gathered from their own words, by which they declare that they had not so much as heard, whether there were any Holy Ghost, *ver.* 2.

3. That they were baptized after such time in which Christ was actually come, had suffered, was risen again, and had delivered that Commission of baptizing in the Name of the Holy Ghost, as well as the Father and Son, is gathered by comparing several things together. As 1. That they were Inhabitants of *Ephesus*, and therefore probably as *John* was never there to baptize them, so neither were they ever where *John* was, to be baptized of him. But that 2. In probability they were baptized unto *Johns* Baptism by *Apollos* while he was at *Ephesus*, which was long after the Ascension of Christ, and his Commission to baptize in the Name of the Holy Ghost: The probability of their being baptized by *Apollos* is made out by these things considered conjunctively.

1. That *Apollos* was a man who greatly endeavoured the making of Disciples to that way which he himself professed, as appears *Acts* 18. 25, 28. *1 Cor.* 3.5. 2. That while he was at *Ephesus*, he being fervent in Spirit, eloquent, and mighty in the Scriptures, taught diligently the way of the Lord, only so far as was agreeable to the Baptism of *John*, until after *Aquila* and *Priscilla* had privately better instructed him, *Acts* 18. 25, 26. And therefore 3. It

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is conceived by some (as I say) that he did convert these twelve Disciples unto, that way which he himself so diligently taught, to wit, the Doctrine and Baptism of *John*, and that he did thereupon baptize them according to *Johns* manner and form of baptizing.

Now whether you take this to be the reason of their re-baptization, or whether the former, it will amount much to the same as concerning that which I would gather from this example.

For 1. If those which were baptized by *John* himself, were afterwards baptized again when they came to own Jesus to be the Christ, and that because their former Baptism was insufficient in respect of some important ends of Baptism, and in particular in respect of asserting Jesus to be the Christ, a principal end of Baptism, then those that come actually to believe, ought to be then baptized, notwithstanding any Baptism they received in their infancy, because such their Infant Baptism, was altogether insufficient as unto several weighty ends of Baptism, as hath been abundantly declared in the former part of this our discourse. For where there are the same reasons of things as here, there ought the same things to be done and practised; I mean in things of this nature.

Or 2. If an erroneous administration and reception of these twelve Disciples Baptism, was the reason of their Re-baptization, as the other opinion holds, then there is like reason likewise why those who have been baptized in their infancy, should notwithstanding that, be baptized when they come to repent and believe, because that infant-administration, though not in the self same respects, was deeply erroneous as well as theirs, as hath been formerly proved.

But in as much as my judgment doth much rather incline to the former opinion than this later, as touching the reason why these Disciples were re-baptized; I shall therefore here give this further account thereof. And so far as I can perceive, upon a serious consideration of things, a re-baptization was necessary in those that had been baptized by *John*, (Christ only excepted as a case extraordinary) in order to their reception of the Holy Spirit. For we shall find, that not the

baptizing of men into the expectation of Christ to come, had the promise of the Spirit, but the baptizing of them into the faith and acknowledgment of Christ come, and of Jesus to be that Christ, and so consequently that *Johns* Baptism had no such promise annext to it as Christ's Baptism had on this behalf.

1. That *Johns* Baptism had no such promise of the Spirit, appears by his own acknowledgment and assertion, in which he makes this very difference between his own Baptism, and the Baptism of Christ, *viz.* that his was but a Baptism of water unto repentance, but that he which should come after him, should baptize with the Holy Ghost, *Matth.* 3. 11. Nay, *Mark* hath it thus, which is somewhat fuller: *I indeed have baptized you with water, but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, Mark* 1. 8. His manner of speaking seems to import, as if he intended hereby to beat them off from any expectation of the Spirit, upon the account of his Baptism now they had received it; and to put them upon the expectation thereof, from and by the Baptism of Christ when he should come.

2. The Apostle *Peter* (accompanied with the rest of the Apostles herein) addressing himself to that great multitude that heard him preach at *Jerusalem*, advises them in order to their reception of the Holy Ghost, to repent and to be baptized, and that every one of them in the Name of the Lord Jesus, *Acts* 2. 38.

Consider now who these were to whom he gives this advice: And we shall find, that it was the multitude, as they are called, *ver.* 6. that came together, flocking doubtless from all parts of the City upon occasion of that miraculous wonder of fiery cloven tongues, sitting upon the Apostles, and of their speaking with strange tongues, when this was noised abroad, as there it is said. And can any man imagine, that when as but about four years before this, the Inhabitants of this City generally went out to be baptized of *John*, and now as generally came together to hear and see this wonder, that yet none of them that now came together, should be of that number that had been baptized by *John*? Surely such a thing will not be any mans thought, or if it shall, yet will not be believed amongst considering men. And yet even these, notwithstanding their having been

been baptized by *John*, are directed and exhorted now afresh, to repent and be baptized, and that *EVERY ONE* of them in the Name of the Lord Jesus, for remission of sins, and are thereupon assured, that they shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost: Their being baptized then in the Name of the Lord Jesus, was necessary to render them meet to receive the Holy Ghost, notwithstanding their former Baptism by *John*.

3. If things be well weighed, I conceive it will be found, that these twelve Disciples at *Ephesus* were baptized again, though they had been baptized formerly unto *Johns* Baptism, upon this very account especially, and in order to this very thing, *viz.* their receiving the Holy Ghost.

For 1. The manner, form, and import of *Pauls* questions, or demands to them, and their answers to him, do imply, that as it was common for the Spirit to be given upon the reception of Christ's Baptism, so also that it was not wont to be given upon the administration of *Johns*. For when *Paul* queries, *Whether they had received the Holy Ghost since they had believed, ver.* 2. And so when he again demands upon their declaring they had not, *Unto what then they had been baptized?* it plainly implies, that *Paul* did verily expect that they should have received the Holy Ghost upon their being baptized, until he was informed that they had been baptized only unto *Johns* Baptism. And not onely so, but that question of his, *Unto what then were ye baptized, since ye have not received the Holy Ghost?* does also imply, that *Paul* very well knew, that there was a Baptism which was not accompanied with the giving of the Spirit: and therefore the end of his question was to know, *Unto* which Baptism they had been baptized: and upon their resolution of the Case, shewing that they had been baptized only unto *Johns* Baptism, the true reason was discovered why they had not received the Holy Ghost; as being that which did not use to follow upon *Johns* Baptism; the which appears hereby, in that they knew *Johns* Baptism, and the manner of it, they themselves being baptized thereunto; and yet they had not so much as heard that there was a Holy Ghost, to wit, extant in the world upon any such terms, as *Pauls* question unto them did import; of which surely they could not have been ignorant, if the

the Holy Ghost had been wont to be vouchsafed unto men without any other Baptism save that of *John*.

2. That their re-baptizing, or their being baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus mentioned in *ver. 5.* of *Acts 19*, was in direct order to their receiving the Holy Ghost, the thing first in question between *Paul* and them, may easily be gathered from the connexion that is between the *5.* and *6. verses*, and the matters therein related. For that their being baptized as set forth, *ver. 5.* and their receiving the Holy Ghost, *ver. 6.* were neerly related, the later having a dependance on the former, the Conjunction copulative *AND*, which knits both matters together, shews. For so the words run: *When they heard this, they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus. AND when, i. e.* when this was done, *AND when Paul had laid his hands on them:* which imports as much I conceive as if he had said, *AND when also Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Ghost came on them; i. e.* then or thereupon the Holy Ghost came on them. So that their receiving of the Holy Ghost relates, both to their being baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and to the imposition of *Paul's* hands: both which in their due order did prepare and dispose them for that reception.

To conclude this therefore: if then, men were to be baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus, when they came to believe in him, in order to their receiving the Spirit of God, though they had been before baptized by *John*; then surely have they need to be baptized for the same end, who come to the acknowledgment of the truth, though they have been baptized (as men call baptizing) in their infancy, because such their Infant-Baptism as hath been formerly evinced, doth not operate towards their receiving of the Holy Ghost, as true Gospel Baptism will do.

Come we now more briefly unto a second reason why it is not safe for any to satisfy themselves with that Baptism which they received in their Infancy, the irregularity of it supposed, and that is, because it is none of Gods Baptism, *i. e.* it is none of his ordaining, but is the device of mans own heart. As it is said of that Feast which *Ieroboam* ordained, though in other respects, it was like unto the Feast that was in *India*, to wit, of

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Gods own appointing, yet because he took liberty to vary the time of its celebration, from the fourteenth day of the first month, the time of Gods own choosing, unto the fifteenth day of the eighth Month, which is therefore called the month which he had devised of his own heart, therefore was this Feast worthily esteemed none of Gods Feast, but *Ieroboams* Feast, *1 King. 12. 32, 33.* And is there not the same proportion of reason to adjudg Infant-Baptism, to have none other Authour but man, and to be a thing devised of mans own heart? Though it should be granted, that in respect of the outward Element and actions thereto belonging, it were like unto the Baptism which is from God; yet in as much as men take liberty to vary the season of its administration, from the time of mens regeneration, or new birth, the time of Gods own appointment, unto the time of their natural Birth, which is none of Gods; it therefore worthily deserves to be called the device of mans own heart. And if it be none of Gods Baptism, then certainly its no-wise safe to adhere thereto, in as much as Christ hath declared, *That every plant which his Heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up, and that every such worship is vain which is ordered and taught by the precepts of men, Matth. 15. 9. 13. Isai. 29. 13.*

3. Because if Infant-Baptism be sinful; sinful in parents to desire it for their children; and sinful in those that administer it to them (as it hath been proved to be) then may none when they come to maturity, rest satisfied in that Baptism, or in the least own it without danger of partaking with them in their sin, because that which *de facto* is sinfully done by another, becomes my sin when I come to own and approve it, *1 Tim. 5. 22. Luke 11. 48, 49, 50, 51.* which yet is the case of those which satisfy themselves with that Baptism they have received in their infancy.

4. Its not safe for any to rest contented with that Baptism which they received when they were Infants, because that Baptism which is so called, is a meer Nullity in respect of that thing for which it is taken, *i. e.* it is not worthy to be esteemed any such thing as is Baptism indeed, or to pass under that denomination. And the reason hereof is, because there is that wanting in it, which is essential to true Baptism. For, 1. There is the

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right subject of Baptism, wanting in that Baptism; which is applied to Infants; that Infants are not the subject of Baptism, is that the proof and demonstration whereof hath taken up the former part of this Treatise, and therefore shall take it for granted here. 2. As the right Subject matter, so the true external form of baptismal administration is wanting in Infant-Baptism, as it is practised among us. For the external form of Baptism, is not a *sprinkling* of the party baptized with water, which yet is that which is used in the Baptism of infants, but a *dipping* or plunging him under water.

1. This appears at least in the judgment of very many who so rend it that which we have translated baptizing or to baptize; in so much as Master *Daniel Rogers* in his Treatise on the two Sacraments, saith, that dipping is that which *Antiquity constantly and without exception of Countries, hot or cold, witnesseth unto*. And as it is to the same import frequently translated in the *Dutch Bible*, so it is acknowledged, indeed asserted to be the manner of baptizing in the primitive time, to dip or bury the body under water, by *Calvin* himself on *Act. 8. 38.* and by our late Annotators on *Rom. 6. 4. Matth. 3. 6.* Besides Master *Mead* on *Tit. 3. 5.* in his Diatribe, and Master *Thomas Goodwin* in his Treatise of Christ set forth in his death, &c. with very many others.

2. It further appears by that which Baptism represents; and that is the Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Christ; and likewise the party baptized his death, burial, and resurrection with Christ. For the water in which men are baptized or dipped, is no more an Element for them to live in, then the earth is: Nay we know the Sea is frequently made the place of burial for the dead as well as the earth; and therefore a being put under the water, is upon the matter as lively a resemblance of ones death and burial, as it would be if one were so long put under the earth, and so consequently a mans coming or rising from under the water, is upon the matter as clear and lively a resemblance of a resurrection from the dead, as if he did come out of the grave, and from under the earth upon like terms. Now then, those that are dipt in their baptism, do if they answer the nature of that Ordinance, thereby actually profess,

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1. That they do believe that Christ Jesus, into whose Name they are baptized, was as truly and really dead, buried, and raised again in order to the salvation of men, as they are then figuratively dead, buried, and raised again in their Baptism.

2. That they do thereby engage themselves to be conformable to the death and resurrection of Christ, in their being thence forth dead to those sins in which they formerly lived, and from which their lives were then denominated; as likewise as concerning their living a new & spiritual life unto God in righteousness and true holiness. For as Christ when he was crucified, then ceased to live any longer such a life in the flesh as thither-unto he had done; and when he rose again, began that new and spiritual life which before he had not lived; even so all those that answer their engagement and profession entered into by baptism, do from the time of this figurative death and burial of theirs, really cease to live their former sinful life; and from the time of their figurative resurrection, or new-birth, begin to live a new life of obedience and subjection unto Christ their Lord: These things lie fair in those Scriptures, wherein such are said to be baptized into Christs death, to be buried with him in Baptism, wherein also they are said to be risen with him, and to be planted together into the likeness of his death, and the likeness of his resurrection, that thenceforth they should not serve sin, but walk in newness of life, *Rom. 6. 3, 4, 5, 6. Col. 2. 12.* These things then being so, the sprinkling of the party baptized, or the pouring of a handful of water upon his face, is no more a figurative buriall of him, or a true representation of Christs death and burial, then the casting of a handful of dust upon the face of Christ when he was dead could have been a burying of him. And therefore who sees not hereby, that aspersion or sprinkling used in Infant-baptism, is far from the true external form of Gospel-baptism, and that which was anciently used by the Apostles and other servants of Jesus Christ in the first and purest times of that administration.

If then the right subject matter to be baptized, and the due external form of Baptism, be both wanting in that Baptism, which is and hath been administered to infants, then certainly such a Baptism hath that wanting in it, which is essential to the

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true being of Baptism. For what is more intrinsically essential to the being of a thing, than matter and form? Or how is it possible to define Baptism, or any thing else, without the matter and form which do intrinsically constitute the very essence and being thereof? And certainly that which is absolutely necessary to the true definition of Baptism as of all other things, is absolutely and essentially necessary to the being of it. And therefore where either the true matter, or the right form of a thing is wanting, much more where both are wanting, (which is the case in Infant-Baptism) there doubtless is a total deficiency, or non-entity of the thing it self; which clearly is the case of Infant-Baptism in reference to the question in hand. And therefore he that thinks to build any such thing upon that Baptism he hath received in his Infancy, which is competent or proper to true Baptism indeed, hath but air and vanity for his foundation.

THe second thing to be enquired into, is, Whether baptism by water ought necessarily to be received by such persons, who have for some considerable space of time, made profession of the faith, though it be granted that they were never duly baptized before; since such a long continued course of profession preceding baptism, renders such an Administration of that Ordinance unparallel and without example in Scripture, and since also the ends of Baptism hereby seem to be anticipated or prevented?

Which question I must needs resolve in the affirmative, and do say, That notwithstanding all that is pretended to the contrary, it is a thing necessary, and a duty incumbent on every such man and woman as hath not been baptized before, with a baptism duly so called, to submit to, and take up the Ordinance of water-baptism, though it be not till long after the time in which they first began a conscientious profession of the Gospel otherwise. Here I take for granted, upon account of what I have before delivered, that Infant-baptism, and no baptism, are of the same consideration, this difference only excepted, *viz.* That Infant-baptism is a sin of Commission in those that occasion it; and

and Non-baptism is a sin of Omission in those that neglect it, when otherwise they are duly qualified for it.

In the managing of this resolution of the question, I shall endeavour 1. To lay down some reasons and grounds thereof. And 2. To answer those exceptions and objections which take place in the minds of some against the practice of Baptism upon such terms.

The grounds on which I do assert Baptism necessary, though but on the terms before specified, are such as these.

1. Because it is a duty enjoined every one that embraceth the Doctrine of Christ or of the Gospel, to be baptized one time or other. This appears by that Commission which was given by Christ to his Servants and Messengers, to teach all Nations (or every creature, as *Mark* hath it, *Mark* 16.15.) and baptize them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, *Matth.* 28.19. In which Commission there are these two things enjoined amongst others. 1. That they should teach all Nations, or every creature capable of this teaching, *i.e.* should instruct them in the Doctrine of the Gospel, or make them Disciples, as the word is rendered. Now if we would know what they were to teach, and in what to instruct them; we may take information here about, from the practice of the Apostles, when first at *Jerusalem* they began to put this Commission in execution; the brief Sum whereof was to this effect. *That Jesus of Nazareth, approved of God, by miracles, wonders, and signes, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of Gods, was by wicked hands crucified and slain; and that God raised him up from the dead the third day, and hath made him the same Jesus, both Lord and Christ.* They also further taught the people, that in order to their being saved by him, they should repent and be baptized in his Name for the remission of sins, *Acts* 2.22.28. 2. The other part of Christs Commission was, that having thus taught the people; and made them willing to embrace the Gospel, they should then also baptize them; in pursuance of which Commission, the Apostles did accordingly, in the place and time, and to the people before specified, *Acts* 2. For saith the Text, ver. 41. *They that gladly, (or willingly) received his word, were baptized.* According to which

which beginning, we shall find, that they constantly proceeded afterwards, *Acts* 8. 13. 35. 37. and 10. 36. 48. and 16. 14. 14. 31. 33. and 18. 8.

Now then, if it were the duty of these Servants of Christ, to teach all Nations to repent, believe in Christ Jesus, and to be baptized in his Name for the remission of sins; then certainly it was the duty of all these Nations, being thus taught, to obey this voice of the Gospel, as well in being baptized, as in repenting and believing. And by the way, lest any should think the Date of this Commission lasted but during the Apostles dayes; the Lord Jesus in annexing the promise of his presence and assistance to those that should put this Commission of his in execution, causeth the Date hereof to run along to the end of the world, *Matth.* 28. 20. which plainly shews, that he would have this Commission of his observed and kept on foot, even unto the worlds end.

A second Ground is this, Because Baptism being one of the Doctrines of Christ which is practicable, ought therefore to be embraced and practised, by all that profess themselves Disciples of Christ, and followers of his Doctrine. That Baptism is one of the Doctrines of Christ, appears by *Heb.* 6. 1, 2. Those things which in general are called *the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ*, *ver.* 1. being afterwards particularized, *the Doctrine of Baptism*, is set down for one of those Principles. It's a Doctrine of Christ, both because it is a Doctrine concerning Christ, in and by which Christ is set forth, professed, owned, acknowledged; as also because it is a Doctrine which Christ hath enjoined to be taught and practised. And whereas the word is used in the plural number; *Doctrines of Baptism*; it doth not weaken, but strengthen the authority of Water-baptism, as being comprehensive of that, and any other Baptism taught by Christ.

Now that the Doctrine of Christ ought to be obeyed and practised by all that profess themselves his Disciples, will not be gain-say'd, in as much as at what time they give up themselves to him, and in particular make a solemn Dedication of themselves to him and his service by Baptism; they are said to be *delivered into the form of his Doctrine*, (as the Marginal reading

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ing imports) *Rom.* 6. 17. And the Apostle cautions the believing Romans, to hold and avoid such as cause divisions and offences contrary to the Doctrine of Christ, *Rom.* 16. 17. And again, *Who so transgresseth, and abideth not in the Doctrine of Christ, hath not God*, *2 John* 9. Though I will not say, that every transgression of the Doctrine of Christ, riseth so high in the evil effect and consequence of it, as the evils mentioned in these Scriptures amount unto; nor in particular that transgression of which we now speak, unless after conviction pertinaciously persisted in; yet the least that we can say, even of the lesser transgressions in this kind, is, that they have tendency in them hereunto, proportionable to the nature and delinquency of them.

Baptism then being as we see, one of the Doctrines of Christ, and one of his Commissioned Injunctions: what peace can any man have, whose heart stands in awe of the Word, (as *David* did, *Psal.* 119. 116.) that shall live in the transgression hereof, and disobedience hereunto?

3. Baptism is therefore necessary, because it is relative to the salvation of men. Those in *Acts* 2. 37. being smitten with the sense of their sin and misery, upon the preaching of *Peter*, and crying out, *Men and brethren, what shall we do? viz. to be saved*, as *Acts* 16. 30. it cannot reasonably be thought, that the Apostle, being now full of the Holy Ghost, by the newly received power whereof he then spake, would direct them to the belief or practise of any thing, but that which should be very requisite to their Salvation, the thing about which they with such earnestness enquire; and yet we see, the very first thing he directs them to, in answer to their demand, is, *to repent and to be baptized every one of them in the Name of the Lord Jesus for the remission of sins*, *ver.* 38. By which we gather, that Baptism as well as repentance, is one of the requisites to remission of sins, and so unto salvation.

It is the saying of Christ the faithful and true Witness, that *Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God*, *John* 3. 5. By a mans being born of water, Interpreters understand his being baptized of water, as by his being born of the Spirit, his regeneration. See the late

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Annotations upon the place. Those that are pleased to say, that too great a Stress is laid upon Baptism by the Abettors of it, and thereupon blame them for urging and pressing it, as a thing so necessary as sometimes they do, may be turned over unto Jesus Christ for an answer to their exception; for indeed they do not so much blame the Servants, as the Master himself, upon the account of whole Doctrine, they so press this practise. So that each of them in this case may truly say to their Lord and Saviour, *The rebukes of them, that rebuked me, are fallen upon thee.* For none I presume ever laid a greater Stress upon Baptism, then Christ here does, in saying, *Except a man be born of water, (i. e. be baptized) and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.*

Another of the Oracles of Jesus Christ to the same effect is, *Mark 16.16. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved, and he that believeth not, shall be damned.* Where we see our Saviour joyns baptism with faith, as requisite to salvation; and what Christ in this hath joyned together, who is he that dares put asunder? If any shall think, that Baptism is left out in the opposite member here (he not saying, he that believeth not, and is not baptized, shall be damned, but only he that believeth not shall be damned,) on purpose to indulge persons in the hope of salvation who do believe, though they be not baptized; let such rather judge with themselves, that baptism being so expressly joyned with faith in the former part of the *verse*, as that upon which the promise of salvation is made by Christ, to depend as it is, it was less necessary to mention the want, or neglect thereof, with unbelief on the contrary, as that unto which damnation is threatened, because frequently in Scripture dialect, where things are continually delivered, the Affirmative supposes the Negative. And where Christ makes the assurance of salvation to depend upon faith and baptism jointly, as here, certainly it will be no mans wisdom, but extreame folly, to venture his salvation upon the one without the other, upon the account of the afore-suggested presumption.

The Apostle *Peter* likewise, speaking of that salvation which was vouchsafed those in *Noah's Ark*, saith, *The like figure where-*

whereunto even 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, &c. 1 Pet. 3.21. The Negative here, is not exclusive, but interpretative, i. e. when he saith, *Not the putting away of the filth of the flesh*, his meaning is not, that the outward washing or baptism doth not at all contribute towards salvation, which is the effect here mentioned, for that were to render water-baptism wholly needless, an interpretation which would fall foul on other Scriptures, which speak the contrary: But his saying, *Not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, &c.* is to be understood, as if the Apostle had said; Not by that only, or not so much by that; but by the inward washing also, and by the answer of a good conscience in Conjunction with the outward act. It is a like form of speech with that of *Paul*, *1 Cor. 1.17. Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel*: meaning, that he was not sent so much to baptize, as to preach the Gospel: for otherwise, he was sent to baptize, as well as preach, and accordingly he did baptize, as there he himself acknowledgeth, *ver. 14. 16.* And therefore that which the Apostle speaks concerning the man and the woman in another case, is true concerning the outward and inward baptism, in this; *Neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man in the Lord, 1 Cor. 11. 11.* So neither is the outward washing without the inward, nor the inward without the outward in the Lord, that is, by his appointment, and in order to the Salvation of men. If baptism then be a like figure, or that which holds an Analogical Proportion with the Ark in point of salvation, we may then easily guess, how necessary baptism is to salvation. For if we follow the Apostles figure, it will teach us, That as it was necessary for those that would escape drowning in that Deluge of waters, to enter into the Ark, which was Gods appointed instrument of that salvation; so is it necessary for those that would escape the perdition of the ungodly and unbelieving world, to be baptized, as being a means ordained by God for such an end likewise.

If then once to be baptized be a duty enjoined every Disciple of Jesus Christ, or such as profess belief in his Name, as in the first particular; and a Doctrine of Christ to be embraced

and followed, as in the second, and a thing which so much concerns their salvation, as in the third particular hath been set forth; then how comes any mans long neglect of his duty, and of this Doctrine of Christ, and of this means of his salvation, totally to exempt him therefrom? Does a mans doing his duty in other things privilege him in the neglect of this? Or hath any mans long continuance in the profession of the Gospel, made that which was his duty long since to have done, cease to be his duty now at all? when as he hath neither already discharged it, nor wants opportunity yet to do it: Doubtless, all such imaginations are but vain thoughts.

Upon occasion of that which hath been said, whereby the salvation of men seems much concerned in the due use of Baptism, it is like a question will arise in the minds of some, whether I make Baptism a condition of salvation, or a thing necessary thereunto? Since so to do is looked upon, as a most importune notion and conceit, in as much as it is thought a most uncharitable censuring of many thousands godly persons that have died, and yet were not baptized, with other then their Infant-baptism; as likewise of many thousands now living, who cannot be perswaded that it is their duty.

For answer to this question.

1. I desire to make Baptism nothing else then what the Scripture makes it, nor to put more necessity upon it, then what the Scripture hath put upon it, an account whereof I have in part given, and therefore shall refer those that desire satisfaction in this particular, to the word of God, to consider what that makes it, how far necessary, and how far not. Only in reviewing those Scriptures which have been produced hereabout, I shall desire that it may seriously be considered by those that think Baptism superfluous where the Gospel is commonly professed, or at least amongst such persons that have long engaged in a conscientious profession thereof, as likewise by those that make light of it, looking upon it, either as a thing indifferent, or else that which is but little more; I say, I would have it considered by such, whether it would be handsom, or any whit like conscientious Interpretors, or such that fear to *diminish* ought from the word of God, to put such like constructions upon the

the Scriptures, which such an opinion concerning Baptism in reference to such professors does suppose, and which I shall here point at. *John 3. 5. Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God; i.e.* (according to their opinion) a man may enter into the Kingdom of God, that is born of the Spirit, though he be not born of water. Again, *He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved, Mark 16. 16.* that is (the foresaid opinion being Judg) he that believeth shall be saved whether he be baptized or no. So again, when the Scripture saith, *Repent and be baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus, for remission of sins, Acts 2. 38.* that is, (if the opinion aforesaid do not erre,) repent, and ye shall have the remission of sins, whether ever you be baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus, or no. For either this mangling of the sacred word of Jesus Christ, must pass for a currant interpretation of these Scriptures, or else Baptism must be necessary in relation to the salvation of those that will expect salvation in Gods way, and upon his terms, whether they be such as have long since entred upon the Christian profession, or whether such who are yet to begin it. This must be so, unless we will suppose, that God had one method and way of saving men in those times in which these Scriptures were first given out and delivered to the world, and another way now; which if any man hath a mind to suppose, let it be at his own peril; for my part, I look for salvation in the ancient Gospel way, and upon no other terms. For if *not one jot or tittle of the Law shall fail, till Heaven and Earth pass away* (which I am sure is not yet) *Matth. 5. 18.* much less shall any of the Gospel: *For if the word spoken by Angels* (as the Law was) *was stedfast, &c. How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord himself, and afterwards was confirmed by those that heard him? Heb. 2. 2. 3. The word of the Lord endureth for ever, and this is the word which by the Gospel is preached unto you, 1 Pet. 1. 25. Therefore, add not thou to his word, lest he reprove thee and thou be found a liar, Pro. 30. 6. nor take away therefrom, lest God take away thy part out of the Book of life, Rev. 22. 19.*

2. As for those, otherwise godly persons, that are said to have lived and died un-baptized, unless you will suppose what

they received in their infancy to be Baptism) I am far from judging them as touching their eternal state, if this sin of omission of theirs, proceeded from ignorance and mistake, as I believe it did; as I would not judge those who lived and died in Episcopal and other Popish superstitions, whilst otherwise truly conscientious, and men fearing God: Not doubting but that the most merciful God, winked at the days of that ignorance, and did consider the great disadvantages they were under, as coming lately out of that thick darkness of Popish Apostacy and Superstition, and so did accept them, (finding their hearts upright in the main) according to that light they had, and not according to that they had not.

Yet thirdly, for those persons fearing God, whether considered as already dead, or as yet living, that were in their times, or that yet remain non-obedient, (not to say disobedient) to this part of the Gospel, upon occasion of some erroneous notion or opinion, by which they have been persuaded that they have done their duty in refusing Baptism upon the terms in which I plead it, when they have done the contrary; though I will not say their salvation was, or is desperately hazarded hereby, yet I do believe it to be much prejudiced hereby. For to what degree Baptism when duly used, doth by the institutive will and appointment of God, contribute towards the salvation of men, (the contributions whereof are doubtless very considerable this wayes) to the same degree must they suffer prejudice, loss, and disadvantage in their salvation, who by any erroneous opinion about Baptism, do wholly deprive themselves of it, as they do who refuse the Baptism of Gods making, upon a conceit they have it already, when as indeed they have nothing less, *If any mans work burn, he shall suffer loss, 1 Cor. 3. 15.* The Apostle Peter speaking of an abundant entrance that shall be ministred to some, into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, *2 Pet. 1. 11. viz. to such as have quit themselves upon excellent terms of diligence; both to know the utmost of the will of God concerning them, and to do thereafter, as appears by the Context, ver. 5. 9.* he doth thereby imply, that to what degree men are remiss and negligent in making enquiry after the will of God, touch-

touching what they ought to do, or in doing what they know to be his will, to the same degree their entrance into the Kingdom of Christ, will be contracted, made narrow, and straight, for otherwise, if there should not be this different effect following upon diligence and negligence here about, that would cease to be an Argument or motive unto this diligence, which here the Apostle uses for one.

4. But as for those that are, or shall be regardless to know the mind of God here about, not searching after it, nor conscientiously attending to the means of light and knowledge when offered, or else being under conviction shall labour to put out the light in their consciences, and upon this account shall be found disobedient to this Doctrine of Christ, (especially in these times wherein the practise of it is revived) I shall not judge them, (as Christ speaks of himself; *If any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not, the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day, John 7. 47, 48.*) But shall leave them to stand or fall by that word which saith, *Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God: and he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved.* But because I know some think themselves in good and safe condition upon their believing, though they be not baptized, I shall thereof desire such to consider.

1. That persons did believe in the Apostles times before they were baptized, & yet Baptism was not thereupon the less, but the more necessary for them. *If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayst, to wit, be baptized, saith he to the Eunuch, Acts 8. 37.* So that faith was then so far from being a reason why men should not be baptized, as that it was the true reason why they should.

2. Let them further consider, that that believing which is sufficient to ones present justification when he begins to believe, is not sufficient unto his salvation, when he hath the opportunity of obeying other Commands of God and doth not. For though *with the heart man believes unto righteousness: yet with the mouth confession is made unto salvation, Rom. 10. 10.* Though we shall suppose then, that a man believes in Christ, and yet shall be ashamed to confess him before men, (which it seems was the case of many of the chief Rulers, *John 12. 42.*) Christ Jesus will

will be ashamed of him before his Father and his holy Angels. So I say, if you will suppose that any man believes in Christ, and yet shall refuse to put on Christ (as they put him on who are baptiz'd into him, *Gal. 3. 27.*) either for the shame and contempt which the world casts upon such a practise, or for any other carnal respect, he may for ought I can from any word of God assure him to the contrary, fall short of salvation at the last, notwithstanding his present belief. *James 2. 14. What doth it profit, my Brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? Christ is our Saviour of eternal salvation, but it is to such as obey him, Heb. 5. 9.* And therefore sayes, *He that shall break one of these least commands (as some men notion Baptism to be,) and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven, Matth. 5. 19.*

The premises considered, it is to me matter of wonder as well as of offence, that some (who otherwise are far from being ignorant of the Scriptures) should compare Baptism now, with Circumcision in the Apostles dayes, saying, that as *circumcision was nothing, nor uncircumcision nothing, but the keeping of the Commandments of God; to be baptiz'd, or to be un-baptiz'd, is nothing, but the keeping of the Commandments of God is; when as it is the express Doctrine of the Scriptures, a thing urged and pressed both by Christ himself, and by his Apostles; and therefore sure the Commandment of God. For I, saith Christ, have not spoken of myself, but the Father which sent me, he gave me commandment what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his Commandment is life everlasting, (i.e. being observed.) whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father hath said unto me, so I speak, John 12. 49, 50.* And Paul thus: *If any man think himself to be a Prophet, or spirituell, let him acknowledge, that the things that I write unto you, are the Commandments of the Lord, 1 Cor. 14. 37.* The Doctrines then of Christ, and of the Apostles, whether delivered in preceptive form, or otherwise, are the Commandments of God. But now, to put an Ordinance of God (as Baptism is) which is now in force, and will be, I doubt not, to the end of the world, into the same capacity with circumcision in the Apostles dayes, the Date whereof was then expired, yes, and

to compare them which press the necessity of Baptism now, with those that pressed the necessity of circumcision then, as if the one would render Christ as unprofitable to them as the other; what is it else, then *to make void the Commandment of God, that they might establish their own tradition?*

But as no man, that does acknowledg the Authority and Divinity of the Scriptures, can easily satisfie himself in living in the Breach of any of it's known rules and precepts, without the countenance and protection (such as it is) of some vain imagination, and deceitful reasoning or other, so is it in this case with some, who having no mind to this way of God (Baptism I mean) though otherwise convinced of the nullity of Infant-baptism) have taken hold of certain delusive Pleas, whereby to justifie their non-conformity to this rule of the Gospel, and Doctrine of Christ. As,

1. That Baptism according to Scripture example, is not to be administred to men, but at the time of their first believing, and not as now it is practis'd by some, long after the time in which they first began to believe and professe the Gospel; nor to any, but such as are Babes in Christ, or weak Christians, and not to strong men in Christ, or well grown Christians: and that where it is otherwise practis'd, there that Baptism is not like the Apostles Baptism; and consequently is without rule, or example from the Scriptures. And further, that since the time of ones new-birth or Babeship in Christ, is the proper season for the reception of Baptism, and that *every thing is beautiful in its season*, that therefore much of the beauty and lustre of that Ordinance is lost, when administred to old Disciples, and is a thing as uncomely and incongruous, as it is for a man to do an action proper to a child.

To all which I answer, 1. By way of concession, and do grant, that the time of mens new-birth or babeship in Christ, is the fittest time and best season, and the New-born babes in Christ, the properest subject of baptismal Administration: and that it was the usual custom in the Apostles times, to baptize new Converts, and so ought to be practis'd in these dayes: all this is that which I have already asserted over and over.

Object. 1.

Answ. 1.

But then secondly, I answer further by way of Exception; 1. That it no way follows, that because a man both ignorantly & negligently, however, sinfully omitted the fittest and properest season of doing that which was his duty in that season to have done, that therefore he is by that omission of his, discharged from, and disobliged to that duty it self. It is the duty of all men, *to remember their Creator in the dayes of their youth, i. e.* begin conscientiously to serve God betimes, *Eccles. 12. 1.* but shall we say, that because youths have let slip this season and opportunity of grace, that therefore they are ever a whit the less obliged to remember their Creator afterwards, when they come to be old men? Nay, rather on the contrary, does not the greater obligation lie upon them, then, if possible, to double their zeal and diligence therein?

Though the fourteenth day of the first month, was the proper time and season for the celebration of the Passover, by Gods own appointment, as being the precise time in which that was done, of which the Passover was a memoril, and from which it took its rise, *Exod. 12. 17. 42.* yet if any had omitted it in that appointed season, upon occasion of their being in a journey, or of their being unclean; they were, notwithstanding that omission, to keep it afterwards on the fourteenth day of the second month, *Numb. 9. 10, 11.* Nay, circumcision it self, which was but once to be received, though the eighth day after the childs birth, was the proper time of that Ordinance also by Gods own injunction, yet when this had been omitted about forty years by the *Israelites*, after the appointed and proper time, yet it was not uncomely for them to do that then, which should have been done long before, *Josh. 5. 2. 7.*

2. Whereas it is suggested as an uncomely thing for old Disciples to be baptized, and that which tends to take away much of the beauty and lustre of the Ordinance; I demand, wherein the uncomeliness lies? Is it any disparagement to the Ordinance it self, that a tall and well grown man in the things of God otherwise, should stoop down to it to take it up? or is it any disparagement for him so to do? Indeed it is a disparagement to him, that he hath neglected his duty so long, as all sin is a disparagement to him that defiles himself with it; but it is his

his honour, that he remembers himself at last, and obeys his God: acts of conformity to the will of God, adorn the creature. Yea a subjection to the will of God in this Ordinance, is a comely thing, even in persons of the greatest attainments in the things of God. Christ Jesus himself, though he was *anointed with this oyl of grace above his fellows*, yet he counted it no disparagement to him, or uncomely thing in it self for him to be baptized: *Suffer it, saith he, to be so now, for thus it BECOMETH us to fulfil all righteousness, Matth. 3. 15.* As long then as it is an act of righteousness, or conformity to a Law or Institution of God to be baptized, it can be no uncomely thing, no not in one of the growth of Christ Jesus himself: but without doubt, it is a foul disparagement, and a thing very unseemly and incongruous to the profession of a Disciple of Jesus Christ, out of a conceit or vain opinion of high attainments in Christianity, to refuse to follow his Lord and Master through the water, whose attainments I am sure, were then greater when he submitted to this Ordinance, then thine are at the highest pitch, who ever thou art that thus vainly disputest with, and foolishly rejectest the Counsel of God against thy self.

And because it is said by way of illustration; that for a strong Christian to be baptized, is a thing as incongruous and uncomely, as it is for a lusty man to do an action proper to a child; I demand, whether a man having omitted to do that in his minority, which had been mo't proper for him then to have done, and supposing the doing of which, would have had an influence upon him, as unto his accommodation and benefit, all the dayes of his life, whether is it an uncomely thing for such a man now seeing his former folly in his former neglect, to do that now at last in order to his future good, through the former neglect whereof he hath sustained too much loss already? As for example, we know the time of childhood, is the fittest time and season for the drinking in the first rudiments of learning; yet this having been neglected by one in his childhood, and youth, it is so far from being an uncomely thing in him to learn to read when he comes to be sensible of his want of skill that way, that indeed it is his praise and commendations, that he endeavours then to fill up that defect in order to his future

benefit. Even so, Baptism having a spiritual influence upon a Christian throughout his whole life, and not only at the time of his first taking it up, it therefore follows, that if a man was so weak and injudicious in this particular, at the time of his new-birth, as not to judge this Baptism we speak of necessary, yet for him to see his former error, and to repent of this ignorance, weakness, and sin of his, when he comes to better understanding, and resolve to be no longer without the benefit & blessing which God hath put in this Ordinance, for the continuall good and benefit of a Christian all his dayes, is none of his uncomely things, but that which renders him truly wise, both in the eyes of God, and good men. It was the duty of the Church of *Ephesus*, to repent, and do her first works, having through back-sliding and decay, fallen beneath them, *Revel. 3. 5.* And shall we then think it an uncomely thing, for a man to repent of his former neglect, and now at last to do that which should have been his first work?

3. Whereas it is objected, that there is no example in the New Testament, as to administer Baptism to grown Saints; I answer, that if this be true, then it is, because there are no examples in the New Testament of grown Christians their being unbaptized, and so no grown Christians that wanted Baptism. For that corruption of such a sinful omission of Baptism, was not then crept into the Church, and so there was no occasion or place for such an example. And yet this example we have, viz. of *Cornelius*, his being baptized long after the time in which he began to fear and serve the Lord; for his religion and devotion this way, was of that continuance and standing before his Baptism, that it grew famous, as it seems, throughout all the Nation of the Jews, though he himself was a Gentile, *Acts 10. 1, 2. 22.* And if those who had been long professors of Christianity, (as it appears they had been of whom the Apostle speaks, *Heb. 5. 12.* in that he saith, *For the time they ought so have been teachers,*) had yet need, because of their dulness, to be taught again, which were the first Principles of the Oracles of God; then surely such as yet never learned all these first principles, but are un-instructed in the due use of the Ordinance of Baptism, which is one of them, and that upon occasion

sion of their dulness this way, have likewise need now to learn it practically, though it be not till long after their first entrance upon the Christian profession.

4. If because we have no examples in Scripture, of old Disciples their being baptized; I say, if this be a reason against ancient professors their taking up the Ordinance of Baptism, when thitherunto omitted by them, then the like plea, would be as good an argument against their being Members of Churches, and their partaking of the Supper of the Lord who are un-baptized; for where is there any example in the New Testament of any ones being joynd in Church-fellowship, & thereupon partaking of the Supper, who had not been first baptized? So that if this Argument be good for any thing, it is to beat down both Churches and Ordinances; a thing which would doubtless much gratifie those that already sit too loose that way, which I believe some that have used this way of reasoning, did not so well consider, whilst they build up with one hand, what they endeavour to throw down with the other.

But about a work of reformation after a great Apostacy and general defection from the purity of Gospel-worship, and Administration, it is no good way of reasoning, to say, that because we have no examples in Scripture of such and such endeavours of reformation of abuses crept into the worship of God, therefore we may not thus and thus endeavour it. In such cases, it is sufficient that we have the Original rule to direct us, what it is that God did require of his people when he first delivered them those laws and rules to walk by, and that we endeavour practically to answer these, as near as the possibility of our present condition will admit; and not totally neglect them, upon a pretence of an impossibility in us, by reason of disadvantage contracted, to answer the first accustomed manner and usage, in such or such Ordinances and Administrations in all particular circumstances. If the Jews upon their coming out of their *Babylonish* captivity, had gone this way to work, they had never set upon the work of reformation, and restitution of Temple and Worship, as indeed they did. For they had no example before them, of that which they were now to do: viz. to re-build the Temple, and restore the Decays

of worship, in those particular cases and circumstances peculiar to them, no, nor any particular direction from the law, in several of their emergencies, but only general rules of original Order and Institution. And yet upon the authority of those Laws, by which God at the first enjoined the erection of a Temple, and the use of such and such Ordinances, they proceed to re-edifie the one, and restore the other from under their decays and discontinuance, though in the doing thereof, they had no more Prophets, or other extraordinary means to direct them, then we have now in our work of reformation and restitution of Gospel-worship and order. And yet that in thus doing, they did nothing but what was their duty, appears by this, in that when they desisted from the work, and God raised up two Prophets, *Haggai*, and *Zechariah*, they down-rightly reprove them from the Lord for letting their hand slack from the work, and not proceeding as they had begun, *Hag. 1.2.4.* &c. Which clearly argues, that it was their duty to have gone on, as well as to have begun, though God had raised them up no extraordinary Prophets to assist them; and that their first endeavours therein, were approved of God, as their after dealings were reprov'd by him. And therefore, these things well considered, I should rather think, that such persons, who having begun, and made some good progress in the work of reformation otherwise, but in this of Baptism slack their hands from the work, should much rather expect to be sharply reprov'd from God with these *Jews*, for being partial and remiss in this work of the Lord, then to be indulg'd in the neglect of this duty upon a pretence that the season thereof is over with them. *This people say, (saith the Prophet) the time is not yet come, the time in which the Lords house should be built, Hag. 1.2.* But our present Opposers, err on the other hand, saying, the time is now past, in which the Lords Baptism should be administered to them.

A second

A second Objection against the baptizing of Persons of a long standing in the Christian Profession.

Another pretence against their receiving Baptism who have otherwise, is this, *viz.* because by such a long continued course of profession, the ends for which Baptism was wont to be received, are prevented. For Baptism being a Christians visible transition or passing from under his former profession, manner of worship, and conversation, into a new condition in these respects, and that whereby he does engage to renounce, forsake, and disclaim the former, but to continue constant in the worshipping, serving and obeying him, into whose Name he is baptized; hence it comes to pass, that when any men or women have by a continued, constant, and publick profession of repentance from dead works, and faith towards God, and love towards men, given up their names to God, and to Jesus Christ, and declared themselves his servants; hence it comes to pass, say they, that the foresaid ends and uses of Baptism are sufficiently provided for by such a profession, and consequently Baptism to such is needless, and unnecessary, because Baptism, as all other things, is necessary only in respect of the ends whereto it serves; and therefore where the ends of it are attained, it self being the means, ceases to be any further useful.

The Answer.

To this I answer, 1. By demanding, that if the ends of Baptism, or the same things for the sake of which Baptism was ordained, could be attained by a Christian profession without Baptism, how came it to pass then that God did ever institute and ordain Baptism at all? For such a Christian profession as is spoken of, will be granted, I suppose, to be every mans duty, whether he be baptized or no. And surely where the same end is sufficiently provided for by one means, God is not wont to super-adde another,

Answer 1.

ther, for he makes nothing in vain. It is upon this principle of truth I conceive, that the Apostle argues the insufficiency of the Law to accomplish the same end for which the Gospel is given, *viz.* in that he did ordain and make the Gospel, notwithstanding the being of the Law. *If there had been a Law given, which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the Law, Gal. 3. 21.* And again, *If that first Covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second, Heb. 8. 7.* Upon the same account may we say, If the same ends which God intends to bring about by Baptism, could have been attained (upon the same terms of wisdom and goodness) by the Christian profession mentioned, and by this only, then he would never have levied this other means of Baptism too for the same purpose: it argues weakness and deficiency in those that out-match their ends with means. And therefore to say, that the ends of Baptism may be as commodiously attained without Baptism in the Christian profession as with it, is to reflect a foul disparagement upon the wisdom of God in his instituting and making Baptism, or giving it any being at all. *But let God be true, and every man a liar,* and let the foolishness of God be esteemed (as indeed it is) wiser than men; and so let the shame and disparagement which some have unawares thus foolishly cast upon God, fall upon their own hearts and faces in humiliation before him with whom they have been so un-becomingly bold.

But second. I demand further, how it comes to pass that Baptism and the profession of Christianity are divided, and that Baptism is excluded the Christian profession? For what do they else say in effect, who say the ends of Baptism are attainable by the Christian Profession without Baptism? For hereby they would make the Christian Profession intirely compleat as to the production of all its ends without Baptism, and so consequently render Baptism no essential part of the Christian profession; a thing directly contrary to the stream and current of the Scripture, which derives its petty-gree from the same Authour with, and assigns its place and standing among other the principles of the Doctrine of Christ of which the Christian profession doth principally consist.

3. I yet

3. I yet answer further, by denying that the ends of Baptism are adequately attained by any continued course of profession whatsoever without Baptism; and do say on the contrary, that persons not having as yet been baptized, though of the greatest attainments in religion otherwise, do stand in need of Baptism, as to the effecting the ends thereof: and this I do assert upon these grounds and considerations following.

1. Because as well Baptism as a mans entrance upon, or progress in Christianity, is appointed by God as a means of effecting the same end, to wit, salvation. This hath been already made manifest from those Scriptures, where persons have been directed to the use of baptism as well as repentance, in order to their being saved, *Acts 2. 37, 38.* The like conjunction is made between believing and baptism, *Mark 16. 16.* And between regeneration and baptism, *John 3. 5. Tit. 3. 5.* and between a good conscience and baptism, *1 Pet. 3. 21.* and all in order to the same common end, salvation. Now where several means are enjoined men by God in order to the obtaining the same end, there it is not safe for any that really desire that end, to omit any one of those means upon any pretence whatsoever, nor in case of such an omission, does God stand obliged by any promise of his, to confer the grace and benefit of salvation, nor can such in that case with any sufficient ground of confidence, expect it at his hands. Effects depending upon the concurrence and co-operation of several causes, are not to be expected upon the operation of part of them only. As there are several syllables that go to the making up of one word, so there are several things which by the appointment of God go to the making of a man regularly capable of salvation; as repentance, faith, baptism, obedience, &c. So that as he that propounds to himself the writing of such or such a word consisting of several syllables, disappoints himself of his end in omitting any one of them; so he that propounds the putting of himself into a regular capacity of salvation as his end, and yet voluntarily omits any one of the means appointed by God for that purpose, takes a like direct course to disappoint himself of this great and important end of his, *viz.* his regular capacity of salvation. If God shall please to save any man upon easier terms than those which he hath set

as his ordinary and standing method, and upon which he hath obliged him self by promise and covenant to save men, I shall not (so far as I know mine own heart) be troubled at it; but shall advise all men that prize their salvation, not to trust to that, but to expect salvation from God upon his own proposed terms, that is in a way of doing that which he requires of men in order thereunto, as *David* did, saying, *Lord, I have hoped for thy salvation, and done thy Commandments, Psal. 119. 166.* Faith obtains at the hands of God, not simply by believing that God will do this or that good thing which he hath promised, but by putting him in whom it is upon obeying God in the use of such means, upon the condition or taking place whereof he hath made such promise; as likewise, by depending upon the power, goodness, and faithfulness of God for performance, in a conscientious and obediential use of the said means. It is said, that it was by faith, that the walls of *Jericho* fell down, *Heb. 11. 30.* but how? not in omitting any one of those things which God enjoined for that purpose, though otherwise very despicable and unlikely to produce such an effect. And it may very well be questioned, whether those walls would have fallen down as they did, if they had compassed the City but six times when he had enjoined seven, or otherwise had omitted the blowing of the rams horns, or any other piece of Solemnity which God had commanded as a Sacramental means of achieving that great enterprise, though otherwise, there was no proportion of natural efficiency in those actions, to produce any such effect, when intirely performed. But the faith and obedience of men to God, is many times more seen in doing this or that at his appointment in reference to an end, which in it self promises nothing towards such a prediction, than it is in doing greater matters that seem more proportionate to their end, because in such cases it is a signe that God is more eyed, then the means. Whereas doubtless, it is a great temptation upon men, and oft proves a stumbling block in their way, to despise and so to neglect the use of such means as through the institution of God would richly conduce to their good, because they promise so little in visible appearance. This was the cause why the *Jews* stumbled at *Christ* himself, when they saw the lowness of his condition in
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the world; this likewise caused them to prefer works before faith as to their justification. This was the stone at which *Naaman* the Syrian began to stumble, when he was commanded to wash seven times in *Jorden* for the cleansing of his leprosie, supposing that to be an unlikely thing to produce that effect: *I had thought, (saith he concerning Elisba) that surely he would have come out me, and have stood, and called on the Name of the Lord his God, and have struck his hand over the place: are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better then all the Waters in Israel, &c. 2 King. 5. 11, 12.* And indeed, I much fear, that the sect of many who other-ways are godly and wise, are taken in this very snare of under-valuing and disesteeming the Ordinance of Baptism, because it is a thing, which according to outward appearance, is despicable, and promiseth so little. For from what else can those diminutive expressions of some concerning it proceed? who say, that if it be a duty for Christians not to baptize their children, and to be baptized themselves; yet it is one of the least of duties among ten thousand. And as it was from that low esteem which *Naaman* had of his washing in *Jorden* seven times, and the improbability of it in his eye to effect his cleansing, that made him to say, *Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better then the Waters of Israel's* So doubtless is it from the like low esteem which they have of this Ordinance of Christ, that some conceive, that the other parts of the Christian profession, are likelier to produce the effects assigned to Baptism, then Baptism it self is. But as many times great weights do hang on small wyers, so, the wisdom of God hath put much as to the good of men, in those very things which many times seem least in the eyes of men, that the excellency of the treasure and benefit, may so much the more manifestly be known to be of God, by how much the vessel is earthy and weak, in which it is brought.

And wherefore have I thus enlarged? but to shew, that Baptism by water, however by mens mis-representation of the matter to themselves, it seems to be numbred among the least of the Commands of God, or rather excluded their number as to the professors of these dayes, yet being enjoined by the same

Lord, in the same Gospel, in order to the salvation of men, as well as repentance from dead works, and faith towards God; and that God doth no more exempt or privilege any man from the one, then he does from the other, by any word of his, or does any whit more ascertain his salvation in the neglect of the one, then he does in the neglect of the other, that therefore it is of mans weakness and vanity, and not from any wisdom received from God, to make such an election and reprobation among the Doctrines of Christ as some do, who while they account the one absolutely necessary to salvation, yet do in the mean while with another eye, look upon the other as indifferent, needless, and superfluous, as touching any such need which the salvation of men hath thereof; yea judging them deeply culpable (almost as much as they who said, *Except ye be circumcised ye cannot be saved*) that urge the practise of Baptism as necessary to salvation; though in the doing thereof, they put no other necessity upon it, then what the Scripture hath put.

2. As there is one common end of believing, repenting, Baptism, growing in grace, and persevering to the end, which is salvation; so there are subordinately, several different ends of Baptism it self: and there is also a gradual accession to those ends; in both which respects, Baptism is necessary in persons otherwise of the largest growth in religion. For though it should be granted for arguments sake, that some of the ends of Baptism may be prevented, by a long continued course of profession preceding it; yet that any should affirm, that all the ends of Baptism are anticipated by such a profession, me thinks is strange.

For 1. Baptism in the use, influence, and operation of it, runs parallel with a mans life and dayes; so that though the act be transient, yet the Spirit or obliging power of that act, is or ought to be permanent and lasting. For what ever a man by his baptism doth engage himself to; this baptismal engagement of his, if the intent of it be observed, hath an influence upon him all his dayes, to walk answerable to it. And so we shall find the Apostle teaching the believing *Romans*, to improve their Baptism which they had received long before, unto their then

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present mortification and sanctification, answerable to the true intent of it, *Rom. 6. 2, 3, 4, 5*. As a wife ought all her dayes, to remember and keep that engagement of fidelity to her husband, into which she entred the day of her marriage, so ought a Christian, to make it his continual work, and daily business, to answer, fulfil, and make good, that engagement of subjection and fidelity to Christ Jesus, into which he entred at the time of his Baptism. So that this then running parallel with a Christians profession, influencing and acting the same, it cannot possibly be prevented by such a profession.

2. One end of Baptism is to confirm, strengthen and increase in men, that which in some good measure they had before they were baptized. Men either do or ought to believe before they are baptized, as hath been already shewed, and yet they are to be baptized for the bettering and confirmation of that faith of theirs notwithstanding. So men have some presence and operation of the Spirit before Baptism, in as much as they are enabled to believe before. *For no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, (as they do that believe before Baptism) but by the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. 12. 3*. And yet Baptism is to be received for this end among others, *viz.* that they may receive the Holy Ghost; *i.e.* a greater measure and presence of the Spirit then before they had, *Acts 2. 38, 39*. Now then, unless that any professors can come forth and say, that they have so much faith, and so much of the Spirit, that they need no more; I cannot understand how their profession, though otherwise never so substantial and real, can carry them above their need of Baptism. Certainly, they have outstript *Paul*, either in proficiency, or in opinion of their own worth, who can say they have attained, to wit, perfection of degrees. *Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, says Paul, Philippi 3. 12*.

Now that Baptism, ought to be received in relation to some of its ends, though others of them should be prevented by some precedanious work of grace, or gift of God, will appear. 1. From the example of our Saviours Baptism, who though he had no need of baptism, in respect of some of those ends for which Baptism was ordained, and in respect whereof all other men

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needed it, yet in some other respects, we see it was necessary even in Christ himself, viz. as it was a thing, well becoming him to fulfil all righteousness, and to obey God in this, as in all other his Commands and Institutions then on foot, *Matth. 3.15.* 2. It appears from the Baptism of *Cornelius*, and his Company. For though one end of Baptism, is to put men into a regular capacity of receiving the Holy Ghost, as hath been noted; yet God preventing this end of baptism as unto them, in causing the Holy Ghost to fall upon them extraordinarily, while the word of the Gospel was in speaking to them, and before they were baptized; the Apostle *Peter* hereupon, is so far from making this an Argument why they should not be baptized, or had no need of Baptism, as that he thence infers the reasonableness of the thing, why they should be baptized in reference to other ends, *Acts 10. 47, 48.* *Can any man forbid Water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the Name of the Lord.*

Obj. Etion.

I might also from what hath been now last mentioned, take occasion to answer another Objection against the continuation of Baptism in these dayes; which Objection is this, That experience shews, that Baptism now produces no such effects, as it did in the Apostles dayes; for then those that were baptized with water, were baptized also with the Spirit, some visible effects thereof frequently ensuing. But no such effects are now produced by that Baptism which men take up in our days; for what have they more of the Spirit who are baptized, with this new baptism (as they call it) then those that are not? and if they have no more, then to what purpose is the practise of it continued?

Answer.

To this I answer, 1. That by what hath been just now observed about the baptism of *Cornelius* and his Company, it appears that baptism is necessary for other ends, then to render men capable of those extraordinary receptions of the Spirit. For we therefore see, that baptism was necessary to them though they had been prevented herewith.

2. If this Objection were forcible against the being of true baptism

baptism now in the world, it might be to as good purpose an objection against the being of any true believers in the world, at least so far as known to us: For there are no such effects, as a miraculous speaking with tongues, &c. that follow mens believing in these dayes, which yet were promised to believers, and received by them in the Apostles dayes, *Mark 16. 17.*

But as the ordinary and common effects of believing, to wit, obedience, love, &c. do now follow mens believing, as well as they did in the Apostles dayes, though those extraordinary effects are ceased, or at least suspended, as having been vouchsafed for a certain time only, by way of special dispensation, & designe for the confirmation of the Gospel-ministration whilest it was but yet new, *Mark 16. 20. Heb. 2. 4.* So do the ordinary, common, and indeed most salvivical effects of baptism where duly used, now remain, when as those that were extraordinary, and by way of extraordinary designe, and of special dispensation, for a time vouchsafed are now ceased, or at least suspended.

Neither were those gifts which we call extraordinary, extraordinary in point of saving benefit, above those which we call ordinary; nor indeed equal to them: for the Apostle having spoken of these extraordinary gifts, *1. Cor. 12. 10.* concludes thus in *ver. last*; *Covet earnestly the best gifts, and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way:* And what was that more excellent way, but the way of Christian love and charity, of which he speaks in the following Chapter: the which I wanting, though otherwise a man had the tongue of men and Angels, and the gift of Prophecie, and saith to remove mountains, yet he would be nothing, but as a sounding brass, or a tinkling Cymbal, *1 Cor. 13. 1. 2.*

But 3. whereas it is demanded; what have they more of the Spirit who are baptized, then those who are not? Though I believe they will not boast of their measures of the Spirit, yet I dare say, that if they have not a greater presence of the Spirit with them then others have, to acquaint them with the things freely given them of God, to mortifie the deeds of the body, to lust against the deeds of the flesh, to crucifie their affections and lusts to the old world, to guide them in the wayes of truth, to help their

infirmities in prayer, to strengthen them to suffer, and to support them in suffering for righteousness sake, and to fill them with that joy and peace, which is unspeakable, and full of glory; it is not because these and the like blessed effects of the Spirit, are not deducible from God by baptism, if rightly improved, but it is, because they either rest in the work done, or do not exercise faith about the Ordinance, and the promise of God annexed to it, or else do not frequently and seriously apply themselves to God for these supplies from it, nor study how they may all their days make the best improvement of it: for otherwise, this Ordinance is not barren, nor is that a vain word which assures men of the Spirit that obey God herein. Indeed Baptism doth not procure these effects by any natural efficiency, or by the work done, neither indeed doth any other Ordinance of the Gospel; but in a moral way. If then there be that *answer of a good conscience*, joyned with it, of which Peter speaks, it will doubtless, give a good account of it self, as touching both what and whose it is. Let any mans heart but serve him to obey God in this Ordinance of his, and he will find himself upon better terms of confidence towards God, to expect larger receptions from him then before he could do, especially whilst he was under any jealousy of mind, lest he had not as yet sought such and such grace at his hand, after the due order of the Gospel.

Objection. I perceive also, that many stumble at this stone, as to conceive, as if Baptism were an Ordinance and Administration peculiar only unto the first times of the Gospel, and not to continue longer, then whilst the first Plantation of Churches by the Apostles was in hand.

Answer. Towards the removing of which stumbling block, laid in their way by Satan, I will not say much in more then what I have said, though much more might readily be produced on that account. But I would demand of the consciences of such, whether Baptism were ever at any time an Ordinance of the New Testament of Jesus Christ or no? And whether that New Testament in which Baptism hath its place & standing, were not the last Will and Testament of Christ? And if so, as I suppose it will not be denied so to have been; then whether it be not intolerable presumption and boldness for any man to alter the
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last Will and Testament of the Lord, and to wipe out Baptism which he hath left as part of the Legacy of his Church and people? The Apostle saith, *Though it be but a mans testament, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto, Gal. 3.15.* And should vain man make more bold with his Redeemer and Sovereign Lord, by whom he must be shortly judged, then the most ordinary ingenuity will suffer him to do with men, when they are dead and gone? Or if they will say, that Christ Jesus himself hath made any alteration in this behalf, or that he ever did appropriate Baptism to the elder brethren, viz. the primitive believers, with the exclusion of the younger brethren, to wit, those other believers, which in their successive generations have been, are, and shall be *Partakers of like precious faith*, and of the same *common salvation* with them, let them shew it, before they require our belief of it.

But if they will believe Jesus Christ himself, (which is sure to be believed before them) he testifies concerning such Doctrines, Rules, Precepts, Laws, and Ordinances, as those Primitive and Apostolical Churches then had and did enjoy, viz. that they should be *HELD FAST* by the Churches, and continued in the Churches, *UNTIL HE COME*, viz. until he come again at the end of the world: for that was his injunction which he laid upon those faithful ones of the Church of *Thyatira* in opposition to those, who had begun to decline and degenerate into corrupt principles and doctrines, *Revel. 2. 24, 25.* *But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden, but that which ye have already; HOLD FAST TILL I COME.* See the like concerning the Church of *Ephesus*, *Revel. 3. 3.* and the Church of *Philadelphia*, *Revel. 3. 11.* and the Church of the *Thessalonians*, *2 Thess. 2. 15.* However others were looking after other doctrines then what they had been taught by Christ, or by his Apostles, yet says he, *As for you that have not this doctrine, that are not yet corrupted with any new doctrine, I will impose no further burden upon you, then the keeping of those things which you have been already taught, and have received: but as for these,*
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said he, *Hold them fast till I come.* As it was the will and Command of Christ, that that Church in the succession of its members, should have continued a pure and uncorrupted Church until he should come again, so it was his will likewise, that what ever Ordinances they then had, (and surely Baptism was not yet extinct according to our Adversaries own opinion, the Apostle *John* being yet alive,) the same were to be held fast by them, in the pure use of them, even until his second coming also.

For Gospel Ordinances, (among which Baptism at least in the Apostles dayes, is acknowledged to be one,) did not die with the Apostles, but as the Apostles were to teach others the same things they themselves had learned from Christ, (*Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, Matth. 28. 20.*) So those that succeeded the Apostles, were to transmit and carry over the same things to others that should come after them, which they themselves had learned from the Apostles. And not only so, but those also of the second remove from the Apostles, were to hand over the same things to the next Generation to them, and so from one generation to another, till Christ shall come again to put an end to this Gospel ministrations, as at his first coming he did put a period to the Legal. *The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also, 2 Tim. 2. 2.* Just as it was in Israel of old, when God had first given them the Law and the Ordinances thereof by the Ministry of *Moses*: those Ordinances did not cease when *Moses* ceased to be any more among them, but one generation was to instruct and teach another the knowledge and observation of those Laws and Ordinances, until the coming of Christ in the flesh, *Psal. 78. 5, 6 7.* For he established a testimony in *Jacob*, and appointed a Law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers; that they should make them known to their children: that the generation to come might know them, even the children who should be born: who should arise and declare them to their children, that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his Commandments. The Will and Testament

Testament of Christ then, being ratified in his blood, and confirmed by his death, *1 Cor. 11. 25. Heb. 9. 16, 17.* He that shall go about to disannul or alter it, to put out and put in at his pleasure; and to say this part of it remains in force, and that does not, as touching such things as at the first were enjoined Christians as Christians; though it should be *Paul* himself, or an Angel from Heaven that should do it, the Apostles would have such an one to be esteemed accursed, *Gal. 1. 8, 9. Rev. 22. 18, 19.*

And there is great reason why the Spirit of God, and the Servants of God, should be so severe against these alterations in the Will and Testament of Jesus Christ, which perhaps some men may count matters of no great moment, because by weakening the Authority of any one Ordinance of Jesus Christ in the minds of men, the whole Gospel is in danger of being thereby undermined, as touching its credit and authority with them: For as the saying is in the civil Law, *He that hath wronged one, hath threatened many:* Or rather as the Apostle *James* hath it, *Jam. 2. 10.* *Whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all;* So verily, they whomever they be, that deny the continuation of Baptism in the Church, do in effect deny all the Ordinances of the Gospel, yes, and the Gospel it self too, (as too many now a dayes have done; who at first began, but where those Antibaptists do begin,) because all the rest, both Doctrine and Ordinances, stand but upon the same foundation, and by the same authority as Baptism it self does: And he that thinks he may make bold to slight the one, hath as much reason (which is none at all duly so called) to proceed to despise the other; and it is a thousand to one, but if the Devil be too hard for him in the one, he will not leave him till he hath brought him to the other.

And therefore to such as are nibbling and tampering with this or any other sacred Ordinance of Jesus Christ, by way of questioning its authority and perpetuity; my advice to such shall be in this case, the same which *Solomon* gives in another, *Prov. 17. 14.* *The beginning of strife, is as when one letteth out water; therefore leave off contention, before it be meddled with;* Cease betimes all your questioning of, quarrelling and contending against this Ordinance of Baptism, or any other divine Institution:

Question: For if you once give liberty and way to your selves, to question the Divinity, Authority, or Perpetuity of any one Ordinance of Jesus Christ, you no more know where you shall make an end, then he that opens a little breach to the Sea, knows what it's progress will be, or how far it will spread.

Let this then suffice, as touching the resolution of that question, *viz.* whether it be necessary for such persons to be baptized, as have of a long time been professors of the Gospel, they not having been baptized sooner, as they ought to have been?

A word of advice to such who are baptized, to incorporate themselves in a way of Church-Fellowship, with such only who are baptized also.

HAVING already proved Infant-baptism unlawful, and so a nullity to every one that in their Nonage have received it; as likewise that it's therefore the duty of men fearing God, not to satisfy themselves with that Baptism, as if that would pass for current obedience with God, who requires a voluntary subjection to his counsel in that Ordinance; and having further evinced, that a mans pre-ingagement in the Christian profession, is no bar against his taking up this Ordinance, having not formerly done it; I shall now for a close, offer a word of advice to those who have lifted themselves under the Command of Christ Jesus in this Ordinance, touching the disposal of themselves, for the future in Church-Communion, unto which Baptism hath been wont to be preparatory.

Now the question will be, whether persons whose consciences having prompt them to take up baptism, may not still continue their wonted Church-Communion, with those whose judgments standing engaged another way, will not suffer them herein to accord with them? I must confess for my own part, should my inclination and disposition be made Judge in the case, considered by it self, and as un-influenced by my reason, Judgment
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and conscience otherwise, it would rejoicingly, without the least demur, resolve it in the affirmative. Yet when I consider what reasons and motives are found in the other ballance, I must acknowledge, my reason and judgment carry it against my affection, to give my advice in the negative: which reasons, motives, or considerations, are these, and such as these which here follow.

1. Because Baptism is one of the foundation Doctrines upon which a right constituted Church is built. That the Doctrine of the Apostles and Prophets is the foundation of a Church of Christ, in which himself is the *chief corner-stone*, is evident from what the Apostle asserts concerning the Church of Ephesus in this behalfe, *Ephes. 2. 19, 20.* Now therefore, ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but Fellow-citizens with the Saints, and of the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.

Now if it be demanded, what Doctrines of Christ & of his Apostles they are, which are the foundation of a Church? (for it is in respect of their Doctrine, I conceive, that the Apostles are called, the foundation,) we shall find them particularly reckoned up by the Apostle, as those upon which the Church of the Hebrews was built, (which was indeed the first Church of Christ constituted by the Apostles, whilst they were yet together, presently after the Ascension of Christ; and therefore a rule and pattern to all succeeding Churches,) and they are these, *Heb. 6. 1, 2.* Therefore leaving the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the FOUNDATION of repentance from dead works, and of faith towards God, of the Doctrine of Baptism, and of the laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgement. Now in this enumeration of foundation doctrines, we have baptism in the list, as well as repentance from dead works, and faith towards God, and so the rest. When the Apostle said, not laying again the foundation of repentance, &c. It is hereby manifest, that repentance, faith, baptism, &c. had been formerly laid as the foundation of that Hebrew Church, for so these Hebrews were, as you
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may see Chap. 3. 6. and 10. 24. 25. and 13. 7. 17. 24.

It then the Doctrine of Baptism practically in braced, was a part of the foundation of the first Churches, which were most exactly built according to the direction of Christ Jesus himself, whose house they were, and that it was the Doctrine of the Apostle, that so it should be, for so I conceive it was, in which respect Baptism, as the rest there mentioned, is called both doctrine and foundation, *i. e.* a foundation laid according to doctrine: I say, this considered, it nearly concerns all those that put to their hands to erect and constitute a Church unto Christ, to do what ever they do there in as much as in them lies, according to the Original Pattern given by God, and that in building they leave out no part of his foundation. *Other foundations* (as the Apostle speaking of Church-building) *can no man lay, when that is laid, which is Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. 3. 11. that is,)* - *It is Christ in his doctrine; for he that abideth in the Doctrine of Christ, hath Christ, as he that abideth not in his Doctrine, hath him not, 2 John 9* According to which, we may also say, that they who lay not the Doctrine of Christ for a foundation, do not lay Christ for the foundation, Upon which account, amongst others, the Synagogue of Rome is denied to be a true Church, though Christ in his Person is owned amongst them. But when I say, Christ in his Doctrine is the foundation, other than which no man can lay, I do not mean Christ in all and every of his Doctrines, as if there could be no true foundation where every Doctrine of Christ is not received; but according to the Apostle in this behalf, I mean Christ in such of his Doctrines, which are called the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, or the beginning Word of Christ; which principles, are called the foundation, *Heb. 6. 1, 2.* This then being the foundation laid by the Apostles, other foundation, saith he, can no man lay, *i. e.* with any commission or approbation from God.

We know when *Moses* was to build a Tabernacle unto God, his strict charge from God, was to do every thing there about according to the pattern which God had shewed him: *Look, saith he, that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the Mount, Exod. 25. 40.* And so afterwards, when *Solomon* was to build a Temple to God, he likewise was

to do it according to the pattern which *David* had received by the Spirit, as it is said, and which he was made to understand in writing, by the hand of God upon him, *1 Chron. 28. 11, 12, 19.* And doubtless there is not less exactness, sedulity, and circumspection to be used now in times of the Gospel in building a spiritual house unto God, then was under the Law in those that were typical. For as Christ is faithful in all his house, *i. e.* in all things belonging to his house, as was *Moses, Heb. 3. 2. viz.* in his directions how he would have it built, and the affairs thereof ordered, as he received of his Father, so ought the servants of Christ to be as faithful also in following their Original pattern. For that exactness under the Law, served as an example or shadow of Heavenly things, *i. e.* spiritual or Gospel things, *Heb. 8. 5. Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God, when he was about to make the Tabernacle: For see (saith he) that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee on the Mount.*

2. As it was a Doctrine of Christ, delivered by the Apostles, that Churches should be founded upon Baptism as well as other principles of the Doctrine of Christ; that is, that men should first be baptized, and then associate themselves in Church Bodies; so in the second place, we shall find it to have been the practise of believers, and such as subjected themselves to the Doctrine of the Gospel in the Apostles time. The first Church that was erected by the Apostles, I mean the Church at *Jerusalem*, observed this method, *Acts 2. 40, 41. Those that gladly received his word, were baptized, and here upon the same day were added to them, viz. to the Apostles, and other Disciples, about three thousand souls: and then it follows, that they continued stedfast in the Apostles Doctrine, and Fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.* 1. They gladly received the word. 2. Were baptized. 3. Were added to the Church. 4. Continued in the Apostles Doctrine and Fellowship, and in breaking of bread and prayers. So, that as their gladness receiving the word, preceded their baptism, so did their baptism in respect of order, precede their addition to that particular body of Christians, and their communion and fellowship together in the Ordinances of the Gospel, as breaking of bread, and the like.

The Apostle gives thanks to God in the behalf of the believing Romans: For that though they had been the servants of sin, yet had obeyed from the heart that form of Doctrine whereto they were delivered, as it is in the Marginal reading, i. e. unto the profession and practice of which they were delivered, when they first turned Christians, & were baptized, Rom. 6. 17. For that now is evident, that what ever this form of Doctrine was, it was such doctrine as was first taught them, & first believed & obeyed by them upon their becoming Christians. For it was at that time in which they ceased to be any longer the servants of sin, and did become the Servants of righteousness, (which must needs be the time of their conversion) in which they are said to have obeyed that *Form of Doctrine*. Now what reasonably can be imagined to be the form of doctrine here spoken of, which was subjected to at their first conversion, but that which the Scripture elsewhere calls, (as we have already noted) the beginning doctrine of Christ, or the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, or that Systeme, body, or platform of doctrine which was made up of those six Principles, wherein men were first instructed, and which were laid as a foundation of what ever might be called a progress in Christianity afterwards? Heb. 6. 1, 2. These believing Romans then, did not only obey the doctrine of the Gospel simply considered, and in the general, but also in the formality of it, or according to that method and order which does appertain to the laws & precepts of it, of which an account was before given. That believers were baptized before their admittance into Church communion, and in order to it, is clear enough; but that any were admitted to Church Fellowship before Baptism in the Primitive times, is a thing which to me nowhere appears from the Scripture, but is a thing void of precept or example from Scripture, in those that now practise it.

If then it was the practise of believers in the first times of the Gospel, to associate themselves in Church Fellowship, with such only who were baptized; a great inducement doubtless it ought to be, to all Christians now to go and do likewise. For the Scripture-injunction is, *To walk in the way of good men, and to keep in the path of the righteous, Prov. 2. 20. To be follow-*

ers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises, Heb. 6. 12. To mark them which walked as the Apostles walked, as having them for an Example, Philip. 3. 17. 1 Cor. 11. 1. And it was the great praise of the Church of the Thessalonians, that they made the Churches of Judea, (which were Churches of the first Plantation,) their pattern and example, 1 Thess. 2. 14. For ye, brethren, became followers of the Churches of God, which in Judea are in Christ Jesus, &c. and what was praiseworthy in that Church, will be commendable to any Church now.

3. None are in a due and regular capacity of holding Church-Communion with a particular Church in her appropriate privileges, who are not regularly visible members of the universal Church: as no man is in a due capacity of being a member of a particular Corporation in a Nation, who not being free-born, is not first made a free Denizen of that Nation. For particular Churches receive their respective beings from the Universal, as particular Rivers receive theirs from the Sea.

3.

That Baptism is the Ordinance of visible initiation or admission into the universal Church of Christ, is a thing which generally hath been acknowledged, and is by Pedobaptists themselves constantly asserted, and is that which I have already proved in the former part of this Treatise from 1 Cor. 12. 13. Rom. 6. 3. and Gal. 3. 27. to which I refer the Reader for satisfaction herein. What persons are, or may be in Gods account and acceptation, upon account of their faith and repentance, &c. preceding their baptism, is not the thing in question, (if it were, I hope I should not be found too narrow and straight, in my Christian allowance as unto that,) but the question is, what they are visibly unto men, when they make a judgement of them according to rule. And if Baptism be the means of visible admission into the Church, and of visible ingrafting into Christ, then this end is not to be expected without this means; where there is opportunity of making use of it; God never being used to vouchsafe things in an extraordinary way, when ordinary means are at hand, and neglected; and consequently, that none are to be looked upon as regularly visible members,

no not of the *Universal Church*, who are not baptiz'd. For men are not left to their own liberty herein, but are tied up to a rule to judge by. And indeed should there not be a certain standing rule, such as Baptism is, by which to determine when men are visibly of the *Church* universal, and when not, there would be a great deal of uncertainty, by what, how, and when to esteem them members thereof.

Should we make any thing else the rule of this Judgement, we should find our selves at a strange loss to give right judgement herein. For example, Should we make a mans profession of the Christian Religion in general this rule; then the question will be, whether every profession of the *Christian Religion* does render a man reputably a member of the *universal Church*? If not (as I suppose it will not be asserted that it doth) then the question will be, to what degree a man must profess before he be worthy that denomination? And who is able here to give the rule unto his brother? yes, or unto himself either? but that he will be in danger of making it too high, or too low, too narrow, or too wide. But now, if we take the rule which God hath fitted to our hands, (Baptism I mean) we shall then find our selves delivered from those uncertainties, difficulties, and dissatisfactions, yea from that un-evangelical arbitrariness in the things of God, which otherwise will of necessity and unavoidably befall us herein. For according to Scripture rule, all they, and only they are to be esteemed visibly of the *universal Church*, who so far profess repentance from dead works, faith towards God, and the rest of the foundation principles, as thereupon to submit to the Ordinance of Baptism, as engaging themselves thereby, to be no longer the servants of sin, but thenceforth the servants of Jesus Christ, and of righteousness: I shall not here repeat the proof of this, you have it already.

If then none are to be esteemed as visible members of the *universal Church*, but only such as are baptized, then none but such as are baptized may be admitted as members of a particular *Church*. For it is altogether irregular, indeed absurd, to admit any into particular *Church-Fellowship*, who are not first visibly members of the *Universal*; because particular *Churches*, and

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so particular *Church-members*, receive their right of being such, of and from the *Universal Church*, and from that precedent standing they had there as branches and members of it. As the special must and doth agree with the general kind in the general nature of it, or else it is no special of that general, as *Logicians* speak; So must a particular *Church* agree with the universal, in the universal nature of it, otherwise it is no particular of the *Universal*, but is something of another kind. But now Baptism is so essentially, formally, and universally necessary to the visible being, (I say visible being) of the *universal Church*, and of every member of it, as that it is the distinguishing mark between those that are, and those that are not visibly of it. For it is that mean, or only visible door, by which visibly men pass out of the world, into the *Church*, from under the dominion of sin and Satan, into the Rule and Government of *Jesus Christ*: That the Scriptures do assigne this office unto Baptism, I have formerly proved, as I suppose, and is the vote and concession of all men generally, a few only excepted of those that profess *Christianity*. If the Scriptures do in any other quarters of them repeal this mean, and ordain another in its stead, or do assigne any other besides this to the same service, I desire to be directed therein that I may know what it is, and where I may find it; for I must profess my total ignorance of any such thing, though I have made diligent search for it. Nor is it indeed Gods way and method to leave more means for the same end, when one is every way sufficient; as I have formerly shewed.

Baptism then being so much of the general nature of the *Churches* visible being, as that no man can according to Scripture-rule, esteem any one duly and regularly a member thereof without it; those particular *Churches*, or *Church-members* then, that partake not hereof, cannot in due form of Evangelical Law, nor according to the principles of reason, be esteemed particular *Churches*, or *Church-members* of the *universal*, but either of some other kind, or at the best of an un-evangelical form and constitution.

4. This being Gods method, order, and way of bringing men into the enjoyment of *Church-communion*, and *Church* privileges, viz. through the door of Baptism (as hath been already observed)

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observed) this very method, and order of his, ought to be very sacred unto us, and inviolably observed by us. For as God is the God of order, and not of confusion, for he hath commanded us to do all things; (*viz.* which he hath commanded in Church-Affairs,) *decently and in order*, 1 Cor. 14. 40. Now what is it to do all things in order? but to do every thing in its due place, that first, which in order of institution is first, and that afterwards, which hath a relative dependance upon that which goes before.

There is indeed a beautiful harmony, and comely agreement between the wayes of *Jesus Christ*, Ordinance and Ordinance, when each of them is observed in that order that is proper to them, in which respect I suppose, the Tabernacle or House of God of old, was called, *the Beauty of holiness*, or the Ordinances thereof, *the comely honours of the Sanctuary*, as Master Ainsworth tenders it; which yet were but a pattern of heavenly, i. e. Spiritual or Gospel things, Heb. 9. 23. and 8. 5. The which spiritual beauty, being beheld by the Apostle in the Church at Colosse, he was much taken therewith: *Joying and beholding your order*, &c. Coloss. 2. 5. i. e. Joying to behold your order: which argues that this order of theirs was a lovely object.

And doubtless, it is a duty incumbent upon every one of them, who have devoted themselves to *Jesus Christ*, and the Affairs of his Gospel, to endeavour as much as in them lies, the honour of their Master, and of the Affairs of his house: and therefore if there be any piece of comeliness or beauty more in one way, then there is in another, (as doubtless there is more in God's order and method, then there is in that which is but of man) it will well become the servants of the Lord Jesus to be zealous of that. The best way and method of doing the best things is to be covered, as well as the best things themselves.

And as it is a thing very well pleasing unto God, to have his own things done in his own way and order, so it is a provocation to him, to have his way and order neglected, and another introduced instead of it, yea, though such a disorder proceed from no wicked intent, but from inadvertancie only, *The Lord*
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our God (saith David) made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order, 1 Chron. 15. 13. meaning in that stroke upon Uzzah, who did but touch the Ark. (out of an intent doubtless to uphold it upon the stumbling of the Oxen,) other wise then Gods order was. And shall we think that the same Lord, who hath his eyes like a flame of fire, is not as jealous now for the due order of the Gospel, as he was for the due order of the Law? And is there not the same reason to fear, that if any Church now shall transgress the Laws of his House, that they also shall feel his hand in one kind or other, as well as they did in times past in like case? to the end, *That all the Churches may know, that it is he that searcheth the reins, and the hearts, and that will give to every one according to his works: i. e.* that they may know, that he is a narrow Observer of what is done in his Churches, Revel. 2. 23.

Since then it was the Original Order of the Churches of Christ, in the midst of whom Christ himselfe walked, to admit such only to their Church-communion as had been baptized, (and that as we have reason to believe, according to what they had been taught by the Apostles, who did appoint them their order of doing, as well as the things they were to do, Tit. 2. 5. 2 Thes. 2. 15. 1 Cor. 14. and 11. 2.) How does it concern such as are studious of reducing things in the Worship and House of God to their primitive purity and beauty, to tread in their steps, and not to deviate there-from upon any pretence whatsoever.

It is true, (as I observed before upon another occasion) that it may so fall out, that in undertakings of reformation and restitution of ordinances and worship from under their corruptions and decayes, there may be an impossibility, precisely, and in all things, to answer the original usage, but that through an indispensable necessity, there will be in these reformers, some variation either in the Administration, or in some considerable circumstance of the administration; in respect of which indispensable necessity, *God accepts men according to what opportunity they have, and not according to what they have not*; when they proceed according to the Rule and Original pattern, to the utmost of their power and opportunity. But now in the case
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in hand, no man amongst us, is staved off from a close conformity to the original Order, by any absolute and indispensable necessity, or for want of opportunity, there being a great variety of baptized Churches in these dayes, amongst whom baptized persons may cast in their lot, and take out their portion of Christian Fellowship, and Communion. So that where there is a mingling of persons baptized, with such as are unbaptized in Church-Fellowship now amongst us, the departing herein from the ancient Gospel-order, is not by way of necessity (which according to the Proverb hath no Law) but is meerly voluntary, and of choice, and therefore (so far as I understand) inexcusable.

I know indeed that such things as these, seem but little in some good mens eyes, (I fear much less then of right they ought) who count men more nice then wise, who make a business of it to stand upon such punctillioes. But be it so, that they are the least of many among the things of the Gospel, yet why should they not have their share of respect amongst men according to what they be? What dispensation hath any man to despise or neglect the least of the things or wayes of Christ Jesus because they are little? The *Jots* and *Tittles* of the Law (which were the least things of it) were to have sacred respect amongst men, and to be observed, *Matth. 5. 18.* And though *judgment, mercy, and faith, were the weighty matters of the Law, and accordingly ought to have been done, yet the paying tythe of mint, annise, and cummin,* which were the lighter matters of the Law, ought not to have been left undone, *Matth. 23. 23.*

And was the tythe of herbs, the *jots* and *tittles* of the Law which came by *Moses*, to be duly kept and observed? and shall any of the things of the Gospel which came by Jesus Christ, be neglected because of their littleness? This is the praise of the faithful servant, that he is *faithful in a very little. Luke 19. 17.* And it is the positive conclusion of Christ himself, who knows what is in man, and what are the principles of his actions; *That he that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much, Luke 16. 10.* And therefore it concerns every man that hath a desire to approve himself a faithful servant in the account of his Lord

Lord and Master Christ Jesus, to make conscience even of these things, Gospel-order I mean, how little soever otherwise they seem to be in their eyes, whose sight is so bad as that they cannot see small objects, or else they so in-observant as that they overlook them.

5. We know that none were to be admitted into the Passover of old, but such who had been first circumcised, *Exod. 12. 48.* And therefore if Baptism bear the like relation to the Supper of the Lord, as circumcision did to the Passover, (which yet is a thing generally acknowledged by all,) then it follows, that as none uncircumcised might be admitted to the Passover, so none unbaptized may be admitted to the Supper of the Lord, and consequently not to Church-communion whereof that is a special part.

6. I demand, according to what rule or principle of reason, judgment, or wisdom, any man is to steer his course in his spiritual Affairs, in a way that is more dubious and dark, when he hath opportunity of proceeding therein upon terms of clear and certain satisfaction, and such as are full of lights. In other cases we suspect them who *wait for the twilight, and unto whom the morning is as the shadow of death, as the Scripture speaks, Job 20. 15, 17.* Whereas on the other side, *He that doth righteousness cometh to the light, John 3. 21.* And whether those that decline a more lightsome and clear way, and choose that which is more obscure and dark, may not reasonably be suspected to have some practise to promote which holds no communion with the light, I leave it to indifferent men to be considered. Doubtless it argues a distempered mind in a man, (that's the best you can make of it) when he chooses uncouth wayes, and unknown for his journey, when he may have such as are straight, plain, and well known.

But now that the joyning together of baptized persons, with baptized in Church-communion, was practised in the Apostolical Churches, is a thing so evident and clear, that I think none will deny; but that it is as clear, that baptized and unbaptized persons did in the Apostles times incorporate themselves into Church bodies, I think none will affirm; however it will be found there is no reason so to do. And therefore now for any

to chuse rather to joyn themselves in Church-communion with unbaptized persons, when they have a fair opportunity of associating themselves therein, with such as are baptized, is at the best to prefer uncertainty before certainty of Scripture-ground, in so weighty a business as is that of Church-Fellowship. And where there is any flaw in the evidence or ground upon which a man acts in matters of Religion, there will be a proportionable deduction of comfort and spiritual joy in the doing of the work; because all the joy and comfort of any mans actions in Church-Affairs, (or indeed in any other) does arise and spring, partly from the knowledge he hath that it is a work of Gods approving, and partly from his confidence of his being accepted with God in the doing of it; the later of which takes not place without the former.

Object. 1.

But it may be some will here object and say, That though it do not lie so fair and clear in the Scriptures with that degree of evidence, that unbaptized persons were admitted into Church-Fellowship with those that were baptized, as it does appear that baptized ones held communion together, yet it does appear at least upon probable grounds, that unbaptized persons, were Church-members with those that were baptized, in the Churches of *Galatia*, and *Rome*. For when the Apostle saith, *Gal. 3. 27. As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.* And again, *Rom. 6. 3. Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death?* Do not these Particles of Speech, *so many of us, and as many of you, as have been baptized,* imply that there were some in, and of those Churches that were not baptized into Christ? For the form of Speech, and manner of Phrase, here used by the Apostle, is partitive, or distributive, and supposes the persons of whom he speaks, to be part of them baptized, and part of them unbaptized.

Answer. 1.

To this I answer, That upon due consideration had of the manner of speaking, Scope of the Apostle, and the Collation of other Scriptures here with, it will appear, that no such thing can be duly collected from the Scriptures mentioned, as is pretended in the Objection.

1. That

1. That though this form of speaking, *As many of you, and so many of us, &c.* is sometime used in a partitive, or distributive sence, and does denote a manifest difference between the persons of whom the predication is made, yet it is not alwayes so used, nor does it alwayes import such a thing, *1 Tim. 6. 1. Let as many servants as are under the yoke, count their own Masters worthy of all honour, that the Name of God, and his Doctrine be not blasphemed.* Here we see is the same form of speaking with that mentioned in the Objection. But if we should understand it in a partitive, or distributive sence, then we must suppose, that some servants only were under the yoke of servitude, and that others were not; and also, that the Apostle would only have some servants; viz. such as were under the yoke, to count their Masters worthy of all honour, but that he laid no such injunction upon other servants, both which were absurd to imagine. But the Apostles meaning, is, that all servants, for as much as they are under the yoke, should exhibit all respects of honour to their Master, becoming such a relation.

And therefore in as much as this manner of expression is used, sometimes distributively, and sometimes collectively, of all particulars to which it is applyed, that light by which we must know when it is used in the one sence, and when in the other, must be had from the Context and Scope of the Sentence where we find it.

2. And therefore, I answer further, that the Scope of the Apostle being consulted in the places mentioned in the Objection, it will evidently appear, that the inference made thence in the Objection, is altogether groundless and unreasonable. For the Apostle having said, *Gal. 3. 26. Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus,* those words in *ver. 27. viz. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ,* are alledged by him, as the reason of what he had said before in that *ver. 26.* as hath been opened more at large upon another occasion, in the former part of this Treatise. But now if their putting on of Christ in Baptism, was a proof of their relation to God as children, (as the Apostle you see makes it to be,) then that which he gives in by way of reason and proof,

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proof, that they were all the children of God by faith, would fall very short of this end, if only a part of the members of these Churches had been baptized, and not all. For though they who are baptized into Christ, and have thereby put on Christ, are thereby evidenced to be the children of God; yet how would it have followed, that they had been all the children of God by faith upon that account, when only but a part of them had been baptized? So that indeed, if you will understand this Scripture, as supposing some part only of these Churches to be baptized, and another part unbaptized, you force and fasten upon the Apostle a Solecism in reason, a gross absurdity, and piece of ridiculousness in his way of reasoning, as you will easily perceive, if you do but put the matter of his words so understood, into a Syllogism which then must run thus.

If some of you only have been baptized into Christ, and have thereby put on Christ, then you are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. But some of you only have been baptized into Christ, and have thereby put on Christ, *Ergo*, you are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. To understand then the Apostle in such a distributive sense as that is for which the Objection pleads, is to deal by the Apostles argument and reason, as *Hannu* did by *David's* Messengers, when he cut off their garments to their buttocks, and to render it altogether inadequate to his Scope and purpose. Whereas to understand his *as many of you, &c.* in a collective sense for all the individual and particular members of those Churches, is to render the Apostles argumentation comprehensive of its end, correspondent to its Scope, and as hitting the mark. For if their being baptized into Christ, was a proof of their Sonship to God, (in the sense formerly declared) then he might well conclude them all, (and not some of them only) to be the children of God by faith in Christ, in as much they had been all baptized into Christ Jesus.

The Scope of that place likewise, *Rom. 6. 3.* will not admit of a distributive sense of those words, *Know you not, that so many of us, as were baptized into Christ Jesus, were baptized into his death?* For the Apostles pressing the great duty of Mortification upon this whole Church at *Rome*, he is to mak
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his exhortation the more effectual, remembers them how they engaged themselves to the practice thereof by their Baptism, upon which account he does enforce it upon them as you may perceive, if you carry your eye along from *ver. 2.* to the *12.* So that you must suppose the Apostles ground or reason of his Exhortation, to be of as large an extent as his Exhortation itself, otherwise you reflect disparagement upon the wisdom of the Apostle, that would use such an Argument to persuade the whole Church, which concerned only but a part of them. But now if you will suppose the Apostles foundation suitable to his building, and such as would bear it; then you must conclude, that as the whole Church of *Rome* is persuaded to mortification upon the account of their engagement thereunto in and by their Baptism, so also that the whole Church had formerly put themselves under such an engagement by their Baptism, and consequently that the whole Church was baptized.

3. Lastly, besides all this, such a supposition that these Churches did consist partly of persons unbaptized, as well as of those that had been baptized, does cross those other Scriptures, by which we have proved that none do duly in a visible way enter into the universal Church, much less into a particular Church, which is subordinate thereunto, but by the door, or through the water of Baptism: The Apostle doth not say, that some are, but that *all are baptized into one body, i. e.* into one Church body, *1 Cor. 12. 13.*

2. Others they object further thus: That such persons as have repented, and do believe, and which are sanctified, are fit matter whereof to make a Church, and accordingly are to be admitted into Church-Fellowship; for the Christian Churches in the Apostles times, are described to be such as *are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be Saints, Rom. 1. 7. 1 Cor. 1. 2. and sometimes the faithful in Christ Jesus, Ephes. 1. 1. and the faithful brethren in Christ, Col. 1. 2.* And therefore, in as much as many of those, who though they have not been baptized since they believed, yet being godly sanctified persons, and in that respect fit matter whereof to make Church-members, ought to be admitted into Church-Fellowship upon their

Object. 2.

their desire, their non-Baptism notwithstanding.

Ans.

To this I answer by distinguishing of fitness in men to make Church-Members, and of their right thereunto upon that fitness. There is a mediate and an immediate fitness in men for Church-Membership (for though these words and phrases are not found in the Scripture, yet we shall find the matter of this distinction there.)

That which I call an immediate fitness, is such a qualification, which does directly dispose a man for, and render him regularly capable of admission into Church-fellowship, without any other thing intervening or coming between.

That which I call a mediate fitness, is such a qualification, by which a man is remotely and to a degree, (yea it may be in all degrees, one onely excepted) rendered capable of such an admission as that is of which we speak; but yet so, that something else, some other qualification then any yet he is invested with, must intervene, before he be regularly, compleatly, and according to Gospel-order, capable of that admission. According to this latter acceptation or notion of fitness, I do with all my heart acknowledg, that very many unbaptized persons (as I count unbaptized) are fit to make Church Members, that is, they are so fit for it, that there wants nothing else to make them fit, but onely their Baptismal obedience, to wit, their subjection to that part of the Gospel which requires them to be baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus; unless it be the Imposition of hands also with prayer in order to their receiving a greater presence of the Spirit, which according to the Primitive practice, was wont to follow Baptism, *Acts* 8. 15, 16, 17. and 19. 5, 6. *Hebr.* 6. 2. We may well suppose the persons we speak of, to be as fit for Church Communion, as those converted Jews were, *Acts* 2. and the Eunuch, the Jaylor, and others, were upon their repentance and belief, before they were baptized.

But that they are immediatly fit for admission into Church fellowship by vertue of their repentance, faith, or sanctification without Baptism, is that which hath been, and is still denied, there being no ruled case in Scripture to justify such an admission. Whatever the faith or holiness of any man was before, yet his Baptism did still precede his Church Membership in the Primitive times, as hath been before declared. Let a man in all other respects imaginable

ginable, be as fit as fitness it self can make him, to be the husband of such or such a woman, yet he may not enjoy her as a man enjoys his wife, this his fitness notwithstanding, untill the solemnities of Marriage are passed between them. In like manner may no man regularly and in due form of Gospel-proceeding be admitted into Church-fellowship upon any account of fitness otherwise, if this fitting and preparatory qualification of Baptism be wanting; in as much as God hath as well instituted Baptism as a means to bring men into visible communion with the body of Christ which is his Church, (*1 Cor.* 12. 13. *Gal.* 3. 27.) as he hath instituted marriage as a fitting means to bring man and woman into that civil Communion which is proper onely to man and wife.

And whereas those Churches to which the Scripture quotations mentioned in the Objection relate, are described, not by their being baptized into Christ, but by their faith in him, and by their Sanctification or Saintship; I would to this say these three things briefly, by way of answer.

1. Though they are not described by their being baptized, yet the persons so described were baptized, as appears by other passages in those very Epistles where the said descriptions are, as *Rom.* 6. 3. *1 Cor.* 12. 13. *Col.* 2. 12. *Eph.* 4. 5. and 5. 26. compared with *Acts* 19. 1. 5.

2. When they are said to be sanctified in Christ Jesus, they are inclusively, or by way of implication said to be baptized; as the mentioning an effect supposes its cause, so does their sanctification suppose their being baptized; because their Baptism was a special means of their sanctification. *Ephes.* 5. 26. The Apostle speaking of Christ giving himself for his Church, saith, he did it, *That he might sanctifie and cleanse it, with the washing of water (i.e. Baptism) by the Word*: The Word and Baptism then, were two great Instruments of their Sanctification. And if you understand by their being sanctified, their being separated from the rest of the world, and set apart or dedicated unto God (which most properly answers the notion of sanctification) then their being said to be sanctified, may be understood in respect of their Baptism in special, though not that onely, because by their Baptism they were visibly put into a new condition, and into new relations, being thereby

thereby transmitted or carried over from the fellowship of the world, into the fellowship of Christ and of the Saints, and solemnly set apart for the service of Christ.

3. The Reason why the Apostle describes those of the Churches aforesaid, rather by their sanctification, than by their being baptized, was not (as may well be conceived) because Baptism was not positively necessary as to their Church being, but because sanctification was more comprehensive of all particulars requisite, not onely to their being a Church simply considered as such, but also as unto the excellency of such a being. For their sanctification (the thing by which they are described) includes in it, both their Baptism, and all other parts and degrees of that qualification, by which they were, or might have been, eminently the Churches of God: Whereas Baptism being one of the principles or beginning Doctrines of Christ, and such as which the Apostle leaves behind as it were, when he endeavours to advance the Hebrew Church to higher perfections (*Hebr. 6. 1, 2, 3.*) if the Apostle had described them by this, his description of them would have fallen beneath their qualifications, they having now made some progress in Christianity when those Epistles were written to them.

These things then considered, the Apostle his describing the Churches to whom he wrote, by such qualifications wherein Baptism is not particularly mentioned, will not minister any ground of making Church Members of such who are not baptized.

Object. 3.

3. Another Objection (and indeed all that I know further considerable) is this: The Apostles exhortation to the Church at Rome was, that they would receive such as were but weak in the faith, to wit, such as erroneously held it necessary to abstain from such meats which in themselves were indifferent and lawfull to be used, *Rom, 14. 1, 2.* and if their weakness in the faith, or error in their knowledg hereabout, was no sufficient bar against their admission into Church fellowship, then why should a like error and weakness in men now about Baptism be counted a sufficient, and just impediment to their admission into Church Communion?

Answer.

For answer to this, several things may be considered, by which gradually we may come to a clear resolution and full satisfaction in the Case, as touching the invalidity of this Objection.

1. That

1. That as on the one hand, it is not every weakness in faith, or error in knowledge about the things of the Gospel, that does exclude a man from Church-Fellowship, as appears by the Scripture now mentioned in the Objection; so on the other hand, it is not every profession of the faith neither which men make, that does render them duly capable of it. For then the worst of men, if but making any kind of profession of the Christian Religion, should be admittable into the Communion of Saints, which yet is a thing altogether dissonant unto the Laws of Church-Communion. Some errors then must be acknowledged to be in some men professing the Gospel, which do justly debar them from Church-Communion.

2. This being granted, in the next place, to the end men may be upon terms of certainty, as to know what errors they be, which do *de jure* exclude men from Church-Fellowship, and what do not; recourse must be had to some fixed standing rule, by which to make a right judgment in the case; otherwise men will but rove at random, and be in danger of making such errors exclusive of mens Church-membership which are not, as likewise of making the door of this admission wider then God hath made it.

3. That then which must be the standard, by and according to which to make a right judgment in the case, must be that thing what ever it be, which is appointed by God as the next and immediate means appropriately of mens visible union with the Church: and the reason hereof, is, because as on the one hand, less then a mans coming up to that mean what ever it be, which is the immediate inlet into the Church, cannot minister either a right or opportunity of his being of the Church, so on the other hand, nothing more then this can be duly insisted on as absolutely necessary to make a man capable thereof: and therefore who ever attains thereto, cannot upon any account of infirmities otherwise, be justly debarred his communion with the Church.

4. That thing then which is the appropriate and immediate means of a mans visible entrance into, and union with the Church, is Baptism, is being as the Bridge over which, or as the

the Gate through which men declaredly pass over from the friendship of the world, into the fellowship of the Saints: this hath formerly been proved, and therefore needs not here to be repeated. It is true indeed, Baptism is properly the immediate means of admission into the universal Church, but whoever is by it duly made a member of the universal Church, hath thereby a right of admission into a particular Church, and not otherwise.

5. Therefore in the last place; If Baptism duly administered and received, or mens coming up to the laws and terms of its due administration, be the standard according to which men are to be judged meet, or unmeet for Church-communion, then it follows, that whatever errors or infirmities are in men, yet if they be not of that nature as to detain them from embracing Baptism on Scripture terms, these errors do not, cannot justly debar them of Communion with the Church; and on the other hand, whatever other qualification there is in men towards the disposing and fitting of them for Church-communion, yet if they be under the power and command of any such error, which causes them to refuse baptism upon these terms, according to which, upon Scripture account it ought to be administered, and so causes them to fall short of the formall and immediate mean of their regular union, and visible conjunction with the Church, that error does necessarily deprive them both of right and opportunity of being of the Church visibly.

These things then being duly considered, we may easily come to a resolution about the two Cases mentioned in the Objection, viz. Whether this error about Baptism, of which we speak, does no more deprive men of a right of admission into Church-Fellowship, then that weakness in the faith did of which the Apostle speaks. For that error about abstaining from meats (which is the weakness in the faith, of which the Apostle there speaks) being an error of that nature only, which did not keep them that were under it from closing with Baptism as the means of their union with the Church, (I mean, upon those terms according to which God had authorized the administration

tion and reception of it,) but that they might, and did repent and believe the main Principles of the Gospel, (the terms qualifying men for Baptism,) and did thereupon receive Baptism for all this weakness of theirs: Hence it came to pass, that they were to be admitted into Church-communion, this weakness of theirs notwithstanding. But now their error about Baptism of whom we speak, being an error of that nature, by which they are kept off from embracing Baptism upon Scripture terms, and so of attaining to, and making use of that which is the appropriate mean of their visible union with the Church, this error of theirs does in a direct way unavoidably cut them short both of right and opportunity of a regular admission into Church-Fellowship.

There being then so broad a difference between the two errors compared in the Objection, as you see there is; the one consisting with, the other being repugnant to that very mean, without which a visible conjunction and union with the Church is not attainable on Scripture terms, it therefore no wise follows, that because the one was no just impediment unto mens Church-Fellowship, that therefore the other is not neither; for where things and cases do really differ as these do, there the consequences of those things cannot be the same.

Thus having finished my Answers to these Objections, I suppose it doth appear by what hath been offered to consideration on this behalf, these Objections notwithstanding, that persons baptized, refusing to joyn themselves in Church-communion with those who are unbaptized, is not without such grounds which will render them approved in so doing.

ERRATA.

Page 6. l. 29. for, to, r. by. p. 10. l. 15. r. is, p. 16. l. 3. for end, r. need, p. 18. l. 19. for disciples, read visible members, p. 20. l. 39. for who, r. we, p. 21. l. 20. r. of, p. 22. l. 1. r. no, p. 22. l. 33. for any, r. my. p. 24. l. 20. for dealings, r. declinings. p. 29. l. 7. r. to. p. 31. l. 4. r. upon, p. 33. l. 38. omit, old. p. 33. l. 37. omit, the deeds. p. 34. l. 30. omit, in; p. 109. l. 7. for, into, r. unto, p. 109. l. 19. for, lights, r. light.

The End.