
CONCERNING BAPTISM.

Christ, after his resurrection, commanded his apostles, saying, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world, Amen," Matt. 28: 19, 20.

Here we have the Lord's command concerning baptism, when and how, after the ordinance of God, it shall be administered and received; namely, that the gospel must first be preached, and then those baptized who believe therein, as Christ says, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth

not, shall be damned," Mark. 16: 15. Thus has the Lord commanded and ordered; therefore, let no other be taught, or practiced forever. The word of God abideth forever. Young children are without understanding and cannot be taught, therefore, baptism cannot be administered to them without perverting the ordinance of the Lord; misusing his exalted name, and doing violence to his holy word. In the New Testament there are no ordinances enjoined upon infants, for it treats, both in doctrines and sacraments, with those who have ears to hear, and hearts to understand, Matt. 13: 16. Even as Christ commanded, so the holy apostles also taught and practiced, as may be plainly perceived in many parts of the New Testament. Thus Peter said, "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," Acts 2: 38. Again, Philip said to the eunuch, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest," Acts 8: 37. Here, faith did not follow baptism, but baptism followed faith, Mark 16: 16.

Christ has thus commanded baptism, and received it himself, according to the following manner: When the time had come, and the hour had approached, in which he would fulfill the commission enjoined upon him, preach the word, and make known his Father's holy name, he came to John, to the Jordan, and desired to be baptized of him, that he might fulfill all righteousness. He prepared to meet temptation, misery, the cross and death, and as a willing, obedient child, resigned himself to the will of his Almighty Father; he himself saith, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that send me," Jn. 6: 38. He was baptized of John, attested to by the Holy Ghost, and acknowledged by the Father, as a beloved Son, Matt. 3: 17; 17: 5.

Behold, thus Christ commands, and was himself baptized; thus the apostles taught, and practiced. Who will rise up against the Lord, and say, it shall not be so? Who will teach and instruct wisdom? Who will accuse the apostles and evangelists with falsehood? It would be entirely unbecoming for a child to command and judge his

father, or a servant, his master, and it is much more unbecoming for the creature to exalt himself above his Creator. But now it is manifest that the whole world, with its unprofitable doctrines, and commandments of men; with its anti-christian customs, long standing usages, its tyrannical, murdering sword, judges over Christ and his word. The truths of Christ are esteemed lies; his wisdom, foolishness; his light, darkness, and his gospel, perverted and false. In short, Christ must be silent and suffer.

Now it may probably be said, that this was necessary in the beginning of the gospel, because at that time, there were no believers whose children might be baptized; but now, if the parents are believers, then are the children also to be baptized, even as Abraham, when he believed, circumcised his children, Gen. 17: 23. O no! this does not follow.

Although Abraham believed God, only one-half of his seed was circumcised, namely, the male children, and not the female, though he was the father of the female, as well as of the male children, of which, by the grace of God, more shall be said in the replication.

In the beginning the gospel was to be preached, and faith followed hearing, and baptism followed faith; this is incontrovertable, for so the Scriptures teach, Rom. 10: 17. But that the children of believers should be baptized because Abraham's children were circumcised, can in no wise be sustained by Scripture; but if it could be established, though it cannot, there would then be but few children baptized, for the number of true believers, it is to be lamented, is very small, as any one may see.

They are not all christians who are so called. But those only who have the Spirit of Christ, are true christians, though I know not where many are to be found. Yea, what more shall we say? All who with Abel bring an acceptable offering; those who are born with Isaac of the free woman, and with Jacob have the birthright, and have obtained the paternal blessing, must be slain by bloodthirsty Cain, mocked by Ishmael, and hated by Esau, even as we hear and see on all sides. May God effect a change for the better.

Behold, this is the word and will of the

Lord, that all who hear and believe the word of God, shall be baptized (as above stated), thereby to profess their faith, and declare that they will henceforth not live according to their own will, but according to the will of God. That for the testimony of Jesus they are prepared to forsake their homes, chattels, lands and lives, and to suffer hunger, affliction, oppression, persecution, the cross and death; yea, they desire to bury the flesh with its lusts, and arise with Christ to newness of life, even as Paul says, "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life," Col. 2: 11, 12; Rom. 6: 3, 4.

Beloved Reader, take heed to the word of the Lord, for this also Paul teaches, who received not his gospel of men, but of the Lord himself; even as Christ died and was buried, so also ought we to die unto our sins, and be buried with Christ in baptism; we are not to do this after we have been baptized, but we must commence and do all this before hand. "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin; for he that is dead is freed from sin," Rom. 6: 5—7; for even as Christ died, hath taken away sin, and liveth unto God, so every true christian dieth unto sin, and liveth unto God.

Think not that we teach, that christians are to die unto sin, in such a manner, as to become insensible to sin. Not by any means; but they die unto sin, so as to be no longer obedient to their impure lusts, as Paul says, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof," Rom. 6: 12; also, John says, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin,* because he is born of God," 1 Jn. 3: 9; 5: 18.

* According to the Holland, "He has *no desire* to sin."

For as the death of our Lord would not have profited us, had he not risen from the power of death to the praise of his Father, neither will it avail us anything to bury our sins in baptism, if we do not arise with Christ Jesus from the power of sin, unto a new life, to the praise of the Lord. "For in that he (Christ) died, he died unto sin once," says Paul, "but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God; likewise, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ." And, "As ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and iniquity, unto iniquity; even so now yield your members, servants to righteousness and holiness." For being made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness, and have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life, Rom. 6: 10, 11, 18, 19, 22.

Here observe, intelligent reader; you who desire to know the truth, and seek the salvation of your soul, what the great and holy apostle Paul has taught you. If you believe his word, doctrine and testimony to be true, you will no doubt readily perceive, from these instructions, and from many other passages in the Scriptures, that baptism is no more applicable to infants, than circumcision was to the females of the Israelites; for we are no more commanded to baptize infants than Israel was to circumcise female children. It is also impossible for little children to die to sin, as long as they have not been made alive to it; neither can they rise to a new life, as long as they are not born of God through faith, and by the Spirit of God led into righteousness. Therefore beware, for the intent of baptism is to bury sin, and to rise with Christ into a new life, which can by no means, be the case with infants; therefore, consider well what the word of the Lord teaches you on this subject.

Again, Paul calls baptism "the washing of regeneration." O Lord, how lamentably thy Holy Word is abused. Is it not greatly to be lamented, that men are attempting, notwithstanding these plain passages, to maintain their idolatrous invention of infant baptism, and set forth that infants are regenerated thereby, as if regeneration was simply a pressing into the water? O no, re-

generation is not such a work of hypocrisy, but is an inward change, which converts a man by the power of God, through faith, from evil to good, from carnality to spirituality, from unrighteousness to righteousness, out of Adam into Christ, which can in no wise take place with infants. The regenerated live by the power of the new life; they crucify the flesh with its evil lusts; they put off the old Adam with his deeds; they avoid every appearance of evil; they are taught, governed and influenced by the Holy Ghost, Rom. 1: 17.

Behold this is true regeneration with its fruits, of which the Scriptures speak, and comes through faith in the word of God, without which no one, who has arrived to the years of understanding, can be saved; as Christ says, "Verily, Verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," Jn. 3: 3. Yea, it is all in vain, if one were even baptized of Peter, or Paul, or Christ himself, if he were not baptized from above with the Holy Ghost and with fire, Matt. 3: 11, as Paul says, "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature," Gal. 5: 6; 2 Cor. 5: 17. All who are thus born of God, changed and renewed in the inner man, and translated from Adam into Christ, are ready to obey the word of the Lord, and say with holy Paul, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" They deny themselves with all their minds and hearts; they submit to the word and ordinances of the Lord, without dislike or opposition; they receive baptism according to the command of the Lord, Matt. 28: 19. They become and manifest themselves as fruitful branches of Christ, the true Vine, and joint heirs in the church of the Lord, John 15: 5. They receive forgiveness of their sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost; they put on Christ; enter the ark of safety, and are secured from the dreadful flood of wrath, which, like a net, will come upon all them that dwell upon the earth. This, however, is not effected by the power of the water or the sign, but by the power of the divine word, received through faith; for where there is no faith, which through love worketh obedience (we again speak of those who have come to the years of understand-

ing), there is no promise. "He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him," Jn. 3: 36.

The Lord commanded Moses that he should stretch forth his hand, and with the rod smite the sea, and the waters should be divided. Moses believed the word of the Lord; stretched forth his hand and smote the sea with his rod; the waters were divided and Israel was redeemed; not by the rod and the stroke, but by the power of the divine word received by Moses, through a sincere and living faith. Had Moses not believed the word of God, and through disobedience not smote the sea, undoubtedly affrighted and oppressed Israel would have fared ill. He also received a command in the wilderness to erect a brazen serpent, so that when Israel looked thereon, they might be healed of the bite of the serpents. Moses believed the word of the Lord, and erected a serpent; Israel looked upon it and was healed, not through the virtue of the image, but through the power of the divine word, received by them through faith. In the same manner salvation is ascribed to scriptural baptism, Mark. 16: 16; the forgiveness of sins, Acts 2: 38; the putting on of Christ, Gal. 3: 27, and incorporation into his church; not on account of the water, or the administered sign (else the kingdom of God would depend upon the elements and signs), but on account of the power and truth of the divine promise, which we receive by obedience through faith. For all those who teach reliance upon words, the elements and works, with Aaron, make a golden calf, and suffer a people without understanding to commit idolatry and abominations therewith, for in Christ, faith alone availeth, which worketh by love, the new creature, and the keeping of the commandments of God.

Beloved sirs, friends, and brethren, awake and delay not, render the Most High his due praise and honor, and give ear to his holy word, for those who maintain that the baptism of children that are incapable of understanding, is a washing of regeneration, do violence to the word of God; resist the Holy Ghost; make Christ a liar, and his holy apostles false witnesses; for Christ and his apostles teach that regeneration comes

through faith from God and his word, which word is not to be taught to those who are unable to hear or understand,* but to those who have the ability, both to hear and understand; this is incontrovertible.

The holy apostle Peter also explains the same and says, that "even baptism doth also now save us; not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God (or the covenant of a good conscience toward God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ," 1 Pet. 3: 21.

Here Peter teaches us how the inward baptism saves us, by which the inner man is washed, and not the outward baptism by which the flesh is washed; for only this inward baptism, as already stated, is of value in the sight of God, while outward baptism follows only as an evidence of obedience which is of faith; for could outward baptism save without the inner washing, the whole Scriptures which speak of the new man, would be spoken to no purpose. The kingdom of heaven would be bound to elementary water; the blood of Christ would be shed in vain, and no one that is baptized could be lost. No, no! outward baptism avails nothing so long as we are not inwardly renewed, regenerated, and baptized of God, with the heavenly fire and the Holy Ghost. But when we receive this baptism from above, we will be constrained through the Spirit and word of God, by a good conscience, which we thereby obtain, to believe sincerely in the merits of the death of the Lord, and in the power and benefits of his resurrection; and henceforth, because we are inwardly cleansed by faith, and the spiritual strength which we have received, we submissively covenant with the Lord, through the outward sign of baptism, which is enjoined on all the believers in Christ, even as the Lord has covenanted with us in his grace, through his word, that we will no longer live according to the evil, unclean lusts of the flesh, but walk according to the witness of a good conscience before him.

Though these words of Peter are very plain, the learned are not ashamed to force them into a very different signification, by

means of their plausible comments and their much boasted reason (probably that they may retain the favor of the world, and live in opulence without cross or affliction), and teach, that baptism is a sign of grace; which according to my limited understanding, can in no wise be established. Our sign of grace is Christ Jesus alone, through whom God's abundant love is freely dispensed and declared unto us. By signs he was gloriously prefigured to the ancient patriarchs, as by the coats of skin to Adam and Eve; by the rainbow to Noah, by circumcision to Abraham, by which sign they were assured of the divine covenant. But we are assured of God, of his divine grace, and his eternal peace, by this one sign only, which is Christ Jesus. The seal in our consciences is the Holy Ghost, but baptism is a sign of obedience, commanded of Christ, by which we testify, when we receive it; that we believe the word of the Lord, that we are sorry for, and repent of our former life and conduct; that we desire to rise with Christ unto a new life; and that we believe in the forgiveness of sin through Jesus Christ. Not, my beloved, that we believe in the remission of sins through baptism; by no means; because by baptism we cannot obtain faith and repentance, neither do we receive the forgiveness of sins, nor peace, nor liberty of conscience, but we testify thereby that we have repented, received pardon and faith in Christ, as before said. With the fathers it was not thus, for they, through the signs, received assurance and comfort that the promise would be true and sure. We have this assurance in Christ Jesus alone, in whom all the figurative signs were completed; so that we have in this only true sign, Christ, that which the fathers had in many figurative signs. In short, had we forgiveness of sins and peace of conscience, through outward ceremonies and elements, then the REALITY would be superceded, and his merits made of no effect.

Behold, this is the only and true foundation of baptism maintained by the Scriptures, and none other. This we teach and practice though all the gates of hell rise against us; for we know it is the revealed word of the Lord, and his divine ordinance, from which we dare not take away, nor add

* This has reference to infants, that are incapable of understanding.

thereto, lest we be found disobedient and false before God (who alone is the Lord and God of our consciences), for, "every word of the Lord is pure; he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him," Prov. 30: 5.

Oh God, what are the learned and highly learned masters of this world doing, who are so earnestly engaged in derogating from God's word and wisdom, and ingeniously urging their own vain reason and wisdom; they will not prosper; God will not give his honor to another, for he is the Lord; that is his name, and beside him there is no other, Isa. 42: 8. Conquering, he will conquer them. He will turn wisdom to folly and their reason to disgrace, for he "knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain," 1 Cor. 3: 20.

Luther writes, that children should be baptized on account of their own faith, and adds, "If children had no faith, then their baptism would be blaspheming the sacrament," &c. It appears to me, to be a great error in this learned man, through whose writings at first the Lord effected much good, that he maintained that children, without knowledge and understanding, had faith, while the Scriptures teach so plainly, that they know not good from evil, that they cannot discern right from wrong, and he (Luther) says that faith is dormant and concealed in children even as in a believing person who is asleep, till they arrive at the years of understanding. If Luther writes this as his sincere opinion, he writes much in vain concerning faith and its power, but if he writes to please men, may God have mercy upon him, for I know of a truth it is only human reason and the invention of men; but it shall not make void the word and ordinance of the Lord. We do not read in Scripture that the Apostles baptized a single believer while asleep. They baptized those who were awake, and not the slumbering. Why then do they baptize their children before that sleeping faith awakes and is confessed by them?

Bucer does not thus support this doctrine, but he maintains infant baptism differently, namely, not that children have faith, but that they, by baptism may be added to the church of the Lord, and instructed in his word. He admits that infant baptism is not

expressly commanded, nevertheless he maintains that it is right. O Lord! how lamentably they do err, who court the favor and honor of men, and seek not the favor and honor of God. Since infant baptism is not expressly commanded of God, as he acknowledges, it cannot be acceptable to the Lord, *Et per consequence*, i. e., and by consequence, no promise can follow. Therefore, the reader should know, that true christians ought not to be governed in this matter, by the opinions and traditions of men, but by the word and the ordinances of God. For we have but one Lord and Master of our conscience, Christ Jesus, whose word, will, command and ordinance, it becomes us, as his willing disciples, to follow, even as the bride rejoices greatly to hear the bridegroom's voice, John 3: 29.

Since we have not a single command in the Scriptures that infants are to be baptized, or that the apostles did practice it; we modestly confess, with a good conscience, that infant baptism is but human invention; a selfish notion; a perversion of the ordinance of Christ; a manifest abomination, standing in the holy place, where it ought, properly, not to be, Matt. 24: 15.

Beloved sirs, how little the word of the Lord is regarded, which says, Ye shall not do after that which is right in your own eyes, but observe whatsoever I command you, Deut. 12: 8. Did not the Father testify from heaven and declare, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him?" Matt. 17: 5. Does not the whole Scripture direct us to Christ? Are we not baptized in his name that we should hear his voice, and be obedient to his word? Do you not boast to be the apostolic church? Why do you then depart from Christ and adhere to anti-christ; from the apostolic doctrine and practice to the doctrine and practice of the learned? Do observe how severely and frequently God punished men for the self-formed opinions which they maintained as works of holiness and divine worship.

Nadab and Abihu, because they offered strange fire before the Lord, were suddenly destroyed by fire, before the altar, through the wrath of God.

Saul had mercy on Agag, the king of the

Amalekites, and prompted by his good intentions, spared the best sheep and oxen, to sacrifice unto the Lord, contrary to the word of the prophet. That seeming act of mercy and laudable zeal was punished as the sin of witchcraft and idolatry, because he acted according to his own judgment, and not according to the word of the prophet. He was reprov'd by the prophet, smitten with a pestilence, his kingdom taken from him, and given to a more faithful one, 1 Sam. 15: 23.

Manasseh, the king of the Jews, and others in Israel, made their children pass through fire. They built temples and altars in all the high places, also in cities and countries, with good intentions; for they were desirous thereby to honor the Almighty and eternal God, as may be plainly seen, 2 Kings 21: 3—6. This glorious and holy choice was so offensive before God, that Jeremiah refused to intercede for the people. Israel was desolated, Jerusalem and the temple burnt; and the people with the holy vessels were carried into a foreign land, 2 Kings 25: 9; 2 Chron. 36: 12. Therefore, saith God by the prophet, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people; and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you; not those of your own choice; that it may be well with you, Jer. 7: 23.

What advice then, my beloved friends, shall be given in relation to such wilful deceivers, who so presumptuously do violence to the expressed word of the Lord, and so shamefully belie the Almighty, the Most High God, and teach that it is the word of God; though such things he never proposed, much less commanded, and never will.

How awful it is thus to sin against God, and so lamentably to pervert his holy and precious word! Yea, they shall be severely punished of the Lord with heavy judgments, they shall not escape the ire of his fierce wrath, if they do not repent and reform; for God is an enemy to all liars. They have neither part nor lot in his kingdom; but their portion is eternal destruction, in the lake of fire, 2 Thes. 2: 8; Rev. 20: 10; 19: 20.

In the second place, it is evident, that infant baptism is an accursed, abominable and idolatrous institution; for all those

who are baptized in infancy, are called christians and are accounted partakers of the Lord's grace, merits, death and blood, and are called his people, although the whole course of their lives, is entirely heathenish, wild and dissolute; yea, they indulge in nothing but gluttony, drinking, gaming, whoring, cursing and swearing, as though the water in baptism could make and preserve them christians. O no! Paul declares, "He that hath not the Spirit of Christ, is none of his," Rom. 8: 9. Yea, the helpless, innocent children, though baptized with the blood of the Lord, and having the sure promise of the kingdom of God, if not baptized, with this baptism, must be buried without the grave yard as accursed. What infamy!—what blindness! We will say nothing of godfathers, of crossing, breathing upon, sprinkling with salt water, anointing, spitting upon, and their abominable exorcism, all of which is nothing else than open blasphemy, and not commanded of God. What abominable, detestable idolatry these things are.

In the third place, we are informed by historians, ancient, and modern, and also in the decrees, that baptism was changed both as to its mode and time of administering. In the beginning of the holy church, persons were baptized in common water on their first profession, upon their own faith, according to the Scriptures. Afterwards a change was made; they were examined seven times before being baptized; after that, they were baptized at two stated periods; namely, at Easter and Whitsuntide. Higinus, the tenth pope, instituted godfathers, in the year A. D. 146. Finally, Luther tells us, that in the year A. D. 407, Pope Innocent confirmed infant baptism by a decree, and it is to be feared that it will not be abrogated, but at the expense of much innocent blood of the saints and children of God; even as the prophets, in their days reprov'd the accursed abominations and idolatry of the kings, priests and people, not by admonition only, but also with their blood, as we read in both sacred and profane history.

If infant baptism was commanded of God, in his word, why did Innocent add his decree? How can baptism as practiced by the

world, be right, since it has been so frequently changed? We entreat you, for Jesus' sake, to reflect that Christ Jesus and not the learned, is King and Lord of his Church; and rules over it with his sceptre, Spirit and word, Matt. 11: 27. As it is said, He is made unto us Wisdom, and none can instruct him; he appeared, in order that he might testify to the truth. They that love the truth, hear his voice; believe his word, and not that of the learned; for his word is truth; but the word of the learned, in this respect, is seduction; for Christ commands that believers should be baptized; but in relation to infants, that are without understanding, he gave no command. But the learned say, he that has not his children baptized, and is himself baptized upon his faith, as Christ commanded, is a fanatic, ana-baptist and heretic.

We have here given you the principal reasons why we oppose infant baptism, not only in doctrine, but also to the sacrifice of our lives and possessions. For we well know, by the grace of God, that there is not one word in the Scriptures in its support. We tell you the truth and lie not. Is there one under the canopy of heaven who can show us, by divine truth, that Jesus Christ, the Son of Almighty God, the Eternal Wisdom and Truth, whom alone we acknowledge as the Lawgiver, and Teacher of the New Testament, has given a single command that children should be baptized; or that his holy apostles ever so taught, or practiced?

What need then to urge this upon us by tyranny and punishment? Only show it to us in the word of God, and the difficulty is removed. For God, who is omniscient, knows, that in our weakness, we humbly seek to walk according to the divine ordinances, word and will, for which we, poor miserable men, are shamefully reviled, banished, robbed and slain by every one in many countries, like innocent sheep; but the Lord be eternally praised! We are esteemed as unworthy of heaven or earth, even as Christ said, "They shall deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake," Matt. 24: 9.

It is our determination, in this matter as in all other matters of conscience, in view of the wrath of Almighty God, that we will not be influenced by lords and princes, nor by doctors and teachers of schools, nor by the influence of the fathers, and long established customs, for in this matter, neither emperors, nor kings, nor doctors, nor licentiates, nor councils, nor proscriptions against the word of God, will avail. We dare not be bound to any person, power, wisdom or times, but we must be governed alone, by the expressed and positive commands of Christ, and the pure doctrines and practices of his holy apostles, as remarked above; for if we do so, we neither deceive any one in this matter, nor are we deceived. Alas! woe to him, woe to him, who departs from this foundation, or is compelled to do so, either through the infirmities of the flesh or tyranny, or by false doctrine; and will not testify of the word of his Lord until death, unto this wicked and sinful generation, both in word and deed, Matt. 10: 38; 16: 24.

Observe, all of you who persecute the word of the Lord and his people, this is our instruction, doctrine and belief concerning baptism, according to the instruction of the words of Christ, namely, we must first hear the word of God, believe it, and then upon our faith be baptized; we are not seditious or contentious; we do not approve of polygamy; neither do we seek nor wait for any kingdom upon earth.

O no! no! to God be eternal praise; we well know what the word of the Lord teaches us and testifies to, on this subject. The word of the Lord commands us that we, with a sincere heart, desire to die to sin, to bury our sins with Christ, and with him to rise to a new life, even as baptism is a figure thereof.

That we seek to walk humbly and uprightly in Christ Jesus, in the covenant of his grace, and his eternal peace, and with an approved conscience before God, even as the mouth of the Lord has commanded; as he has testified by his example, and as we are taught by the pure doctrines and practices of the apostles, 1 Pet. 3: 21.

COUNTER ARGUMENTS WITH THEIR REPLICATIONS.

Having briefly noticed the Lord's command, and the apostolic doctrine, practices and signification of baptism; that it is and will be the true baptism to the end of time, we will also, now, through the grace of God, as a duty, refer and reply to some scriptural passages of which the learned wrongfully make use, to make void the ordinance of the Lord, and place in its stead their own.

In the first place, they teach that we are all the children of wrath, and sinful; born of the sinful seed of Adam, and therefore, say they, children are to be baptized, in order to be purified and washed from original sin, &c.

To this we reply thus: With the word of the Lord, we believe and confess that we all come from, and are born of unclean seed; that we through the first Adam, who was of the earth, became wholly depraved, and children of death and of hell, Rom. 5: 12. Nevertheless, as we fell, and became sinners in Adam, we also believe and confess, that through Christ, the second and heavenly Adam, we were restored to grace and justified. For he appeared upon earth, that in and through him we might have life. Through him only we glory to have obtained grace, favor and the forgiveness of our sins with God our Father; and not through baptism, whether we are children or believers; for if redemption, and the washing away of original sin, were through baptism, and not by the blood of Christ alone, then would the sweet smelling sacrifice, which is of eternal worth, have been in vain, and without effect, or, there would be two remedies for our sins. Alas, no! the Scriptures speak but of one, which is Christ with his merits, death and blood, 1 Pet. 1: 19. Therefore, he who seeks the remission of his sins through baptism, rejects the blood of the Lord and makes water his idol. Therefore, let every one be careful lest he ascribe the honor and glory due to Christ, to the outward ceremonies and creature elements.

It is true, Peter says, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of

Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins." But this is not to be understood, that we receive the remission of our sins through baptism. O no! for if it be so, then Christ and his merits must fall. But we receive the remission of our sins, in baptism, as follows: The Lord commanded his gospel to be preached to every creature, so that all who believe and are baptized, may be saved. Where there is faith, which is called the gift of God, by Paul, there also are the power and the fruits of faith. Where there is an active, fruitful faith, there also is the promise; but where such a faith does not exist (we speak of adults), there also is no promise. For he that hears the word of the Lord, and believes it with the heart, manifests his fruit, and faithfully observes all things the Lord commanded him; for the Scriptures teach, the just shall live by faith, Heb. 10: 38. Then the remission of his sins is preached to him, as Peter teaches and instructs.

Had Noah and Lot not believed the word of the Lord, they would have fared ill. Had Abraham not believed, he would not have obtained such glorious promises; but they believed, and did right, and became heirs of righteousness, Heb. 11: 8.

Had Moses and Israel not believed the word of the Lord and been disobedient, how could they have been succored in the sea and in the wilderness? But they believed, and according to his promise, were protected by the mighty hand of the Lord. But those who provoked him, and believed not his gracious word, and the great miracles, fell in the wilderness, and entered not the promised land.

There was also reconciliation connected with the sacrifices of the Old Testament, not on account of the worth of the smoking offerings upon the altars; for it was not possible, says Paul, that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin, Heb. 10: 4. Before it was offered, it was all the Lord's, and the cattle upon a thousand hills, were his, says David, Ps. 50: 10. But because the righteous believed the word of divine promise as true, and walked in obedience

to his command, so now also is the remission of sins preached through baptism; not on account of the water, or the ceremonies performed, for Christ, I repeat, is the only source of grace; but, because the righteous receive the promises of the Lord by faith, and obediently follow his word and will.

This direction does not extend to infants. For in all the Scriptures, there is not a single command given to baptize them. Therefore, it is not required of them as a sign of obedience. Since, then, infant baptism is performed without the command of God, it cannot be a ceremony of God, but a pernicious superstition of men, and evidently idolatry; therefore, the promise of God cannot rest upon such abominations. It seems to me, it is high time to awaken, and to give heed to the Scriptures. For Jesus' sake, sin is not imputed to infants that are innocent, and incapable of understanding. Life is promised, not through any one ceremony, but out of pure grace, through the blood of the Lord, as he himself says, "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God," Mark. 10: 14. But concerning baptism he did not command them any thing.

According to my opinion, it is a great error, which some entertain, that the children of the Jews were acceptable to Christ on account of circumcision; and that ours are acceptable to him on account of baptism. O blasphemy and infamy! In every instance, Christ, the only medium of divine grace must be set aside, and grace must be attributed to the lifeless rites and elements. Here I would ask all Pedit-baptists, how they are going to prove that these blessed children were all circumcised, and that there were not among them female children? If they were acceptable on account of their circumcision, as they pretend, then, why were not adults who were circumcised, acceptable?

Although they were circumcised, he commanded that adults should be baptized upon their faith; but concerning infants he gave no such command. He took them into his arms, laid his hands upon them and blessed them; promised them the kingdom,

and dismissed them; but did not baptize them.

Thus did the wisdom of God himself; but the world would be his teacher. Christ does not command that infants should be baptized, but believers; but the world commands that we should baptize children and not believers.* Yea more, if any one is baptized upon his faith, because the Lord has so commanded; and for conscience' sake has not his children baptized, because God does not command it, his name, alas! is reproached by all, and he is subjected to torture, misery and death; and this is not to be attributed so much to the rulers, as to those who are esteemed teachers and preachers, for what the rulers do, they generally do by the counsel and instigation of the learned. By their fruits, they show who is their father, for they do his works. It seems to me they always have been, and ever will be those, who, with their false doctrines, revengeful spirits, and hard hearts, shed the blood of the righteous, Rev. 17: 6; 18: 24. Alas! such persecution is so disgraceful, that it is almost a shame to mention it. For as clear as the sun shines on this world, and is seen by every one, so manifest is the inhuman, raving tyranny of the learned against the Lamb and his chosen. God grant that the eyes of these blind, perverted, blood-thirsty teachers, with all their tyranny, may be opened, that they may become satisfied and weary of their false doctrine and the shedding of innocent blood, Amen.

In the second place, they teach that the children of Israel under the Old Testament, were admitted into God's covenant and church through circumcision; but now, our children are admitted through baptism. To this, in accordance with Scripture, we reply, No. Whoever reads the Scriptures understandingly, will clearly perceive, that Abraham was in covenant with the Lord, many years before he was circumcised. And that the children were circumcised on the eighth

* Menno means to say that Christ commands, that those who have come to years of understanding, who have the ability to receive the truth and believe it, should be baptized, and not infants who can neither receive nor understand the truth, and therefore are incapable of believing.

day, although they had been in the covenant before. For it is evident, that we do not become the children of God through any outward rites, but through the paternal and gracious choice, through Christ Jesus. But an outward sign was required of Abraham as a seal of obedience and faith. And likewise of his seed, that they should circumcise the male children on the eighth day; no sooner nor later, and not the female children. Had the covenant depended upon the sign, and not upon the assurance of grace, what would have become of the female children, and the males that died uncircumcised before the eighth day?

Beloved reader, give heed to the word of God. Although the women and female children were not circumcised, they had the promise in common, in the promised seed, the holy land, the kingdom and glory. They were no less the seed of Abraham and subject to the covenant of God, and the things signified by the sign thereof, than the circumcised men and male children. From which it is evident, that the children of Israel were not in the Lord's covenant, on account of circumcision, as Pedo-baptists assert, but through the divine choice of grace.

And even as Abraham and the children of Israel, the female as well as the male children, were in the covenant not through the sign, but through the divine choice, so also are our children in the covenant of God, although not baptized. The word of Paul is incontrovertible. He (God) has chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, and has ordained us his children through Jesus Christ, Eph. 1: 4.

Again, Children are entitled to the kingdom of heaven, and are under the promise of the grace of God, through Christ; as has been said; and therefore we truly believe, that they are blessed, holy and pure, acceptable to God; are under the covenant, and in his church, but by no means, through any external sign; for there is not a word in all the Scriptures whereby to maintain, that children should be admitted into the covenant and the church by such a sign. Besides, it is very evident that they cannot be taught or admonished by word, or sacrament, as long as they are without the ability to hear and understand.

Therefore, are the signs not to be used for any other purpose than that for which they were instituted and commanded of the Lord. Since Christ has ordained and commanded to baptize believers; and has not said a word about infant baptism, we believe and teach that the baptism of believers is of God and his word, and infant baptism of the dragon and the beast.

All the rites ordained of God, both of the Old and New Testament, are ordained to exercise our faith and to show our obedience. Therefore we should not use and change them at our pleasure; but we must use them as the Lord himself has ordained and commanded, if we would escape being punished by the fierce wrath of God, as were Nadab and Abihu, Lev. 10: 2.

Since Christ has commanded that believers should be baptized, and not infants, and the holy apostles taught and practiced thus, in accordance with the instructions and commands of Christ, as may be seen in many places of the New Testament, all reasonable-minded men must admit, that infant baptism, although alas, practiced by nearly the whole world, and maintained by tyranny, is nothing less than a ceremony of anti-christ, open blasphemy, an enchanting sin, a molten calf; yea, abomination and idolatry.

We also well know how they apply circumcision as a figure of baptism, and adduce the saying of Paul in proof thereof, namely, "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, &c., Col. 2: 11. He that will attempt to prove, by this passage that infant baptism is right, does violence to holy Paul, and falsely perverts his testimony. For he does not teach that external circumcision is a figure of baptism, but alludes to inward circumcision. For even as actual circumcision of the foreskin was performed with a knife of stone, so also must our inbred and carnal nature be cut off with that spiritual knife of stone, and circumcised with a circumcision made without hands. The stone is Christ. The knife is the word of God, 1 Cor. 10: 4; Heb. 4: 12. It is with this circumcision that believers, not children, are circumcised, as Paul evidently intends to teach by this scripture, "Ye are circumcised with the cir-

cumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ, buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God," Col. 2: 11. It appears to me, that these words plainly show that Paul spoke not in relation to the baptism of infants; but in regard to the inner circumcision of the believers. Read also what we said above concerning Romans 6.

In the third place, they say that children are regenerated, put on Christ, and receive the Holy Ghost in baptism.

To this we reply: To be regenerated, to put on Christ, and to receive the Holy Ghost, is one and the same thing; and according to its power, inseparable. Have you the one, you have the other also. But that does not at all concern infants; for regeneration takes place through faith, through the word of God, and is a change of heart, or of the inward man, as above said. To put on Christ, is to be transplanted into Christ, and to be like-minded with him. To receive the Holy Ghost, is to be a partaker of his gifts and power, to be taught, assured and influenced by him, as the Scriptures teach. This cannot take place with infants; for they have no ears to hear the word of the Lord, and no understanding to comprehend it; for through the word and the hearing of the word all this is accomplished.

Here it may be asked, whether God is not powerful enough to work faith in children; because John the baptist, yet unborn, leaped for joy in his mother's womb.

We reply to this, that we are not speaking of the power of God; he made aged and barren Sarah fruitful, and caused Balaam's ass to speak. But it does not follow that all old, barren women will become fruitful, and that all asses are to speak. He does not at all times do all that he can, or has power to do; we speak only of the precept of the Scriptures, what they teach and command us concerning this matter.

Because infants do not understand, they cannot believe, and because they do not believe, they cannot be born again. Reason teaches us that they cannot understand the word of God. That they do not believe and are not regenerated, is evident from their

actions. Whether they are baptized or not, their inbred nature is prone to evil from their youth. They know no difference between Christ and satan; between good and evil; between life and death. Whereby then shall we know their faith, regeneration, or that they possess Christ and his Spirit? The regenerating word must first be heard and believed with a sincere heart, before regeneration, the putting on of Christ and the influences of the Holy Ghost follow.

Behold, thus we are taught by the word of the Lord. He that does, therefore, not desire the palatable bread of the divine word, upon which our souls have to live, may satisfy himself with the husks that the swine eat, Luke 15: 16; we cannot forbid him. I trust that the gracious Father will protect and preserve us forever, through his great mercy, from their anti-christian doctrines and Pharisaical leaven.

In the fourth place, they say that although infants are not so washed from original sin in baptism, that there are no remains of it, still, for the sake of baptism it shall not be imputed to them as sin.

To this we reply: Thus to teach and believe, is open blasphemy against Christ and his blood. I have proved more than once by the word of the Lord, that Christ is the only remedy for our sins, and that there is forever none other, Isa. 43: 25; Matt. 1: 21; Acts 4: 12. If men will not believe the word of God, there is no human help for them. But the way or manner in which believers receive the remission of sins, in baptism, is fully explained above, and he that reads it understandingly, will give the Lord Jesus the praise due him, and not ascribe the remission of his sins to rites and elements.

In the fifth place, they say that Christ has cleansed and sanctified his church with the washing of water by the word. Children, they say, belong to the church, therefore they must be cleansed with the washing of water by the word, Eph. 5: 26.

To this we reply: Paul does not speak of infants, but of those who hear and believe the word of the Lord, and thus by faith, are sanctified and cleansed in their hearts; for such are cleansed by the washing of water, as the mouth of the Lord has commanded.

Since infants have not this pure, sanctifying faith, nor the means thereto (that is, the understanding), and are not commanded in Scripture to be baptized; how can they then be cleansed with the washing of water by the word, having no faith in the word, and no washing of water by the word? Therefore, all pedo-baptists should know, that their infant baptism does neither cleanse nor sanctify, but that it is idolatry *in toto*, without promise, pernicious, and contrary to the word of the Lord.

We have before shown, that the remission of sins, or reconciliation was connected with, and consequent upon the Jewish offerings, if performed according to the instructions of Moses. But when not thus performed, they did not obtain reconciliation, but made themselves the more guilty, as Saul, Uziah, Nadab, Abihu and others. In like manner is the church sanctified and cleansed, with the washing of water, by the word, if it is done in every respect according to the instruction of the word. But if it is not done so, we are not cleansed but much more commit sin.

And although infants have neither faith nor baptism, think not therefore that they are damned. Oh no! they are blessed; for they have the Lord's own promise of the kingdom of God; not through any elements, ceremonies and external rites, but only by grace, through Jesus Christ, Matt. 19: 13—15. And therefore, we do truly believe, that they are under grace, acceptable to God, pure, holy, heirs of God and eternal life, and on account of this promise, all sincere, christian believers, may assuredly rejoice and comfort themselves in the salvation of their children.

In the sixth place, they say that infants are to be baptized on account of the promise made them, as above stated; although Christ did not baptize the children brought to him, nor had them baptized; but they say that he had infant baptism taught and practiced after his death.

To this we reply: This is a false doctrine, and has not the word of God to sanction it; yea, it cannot be supported by a single word in the Scriptures. We rejoice with all our heart, that they have this promise; the Scriptures, however, do not teach that

they should, therefore, be baptized; and that they were not baptized before Christ's death, gives us greater assurance of this still, and that for this reason: We certainly know, that he taught no other word, no other doctrine, no other baptism, nor did he give another Spirit, or another promise, nor did he instruct others to teach differently after his death, than he did before that event. That he commanded his holy apostles, after his death and ascension, to teach and practice infant baptism, can never be proved by the word of the Lord.

Oh Human Nature! thou art not ashamed to charge lies upon Jesus Christ and his apostles, and to practice infant baptism under the semblance of the divine word, as if the Lord had taught it, although he never did. How much you are like those who say, "The Lord saith it; albeit, I have not spoken," Ezek. 13: 7; thus saith the Lord.

As often as the question is put to us, Why shall infants not be baptized, since they are in the church of God, and partakers of his grace, covenant and promise? We answer: Because the Lord neither taught nor commanded it.

In the seventh place they say, The Scriptures inform us that the apostles baptized whole families, from which we may readily conclude, that there were infants among them.

To this in the first place, we reply: Since they endeavor to maintain their position with uncertain conjectures, they acknowledge by their own arguments, that they have no scriptural authority for this doctrine.

In the second place, we answer: In things of such importance, we dare not build upon uncertain suppositions, but upon the sure word, which is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path, Ps. 119: 105.

In the third place, we answer: Four families are mentioned in the Scriptures, as having been baptized; namely, That of Cornelius, of the Jailor, of Lydia and of Stephanas, Acts 10: 48; 16: 15, 33; 1 Cor. 1: 16, and the Scriptures plainly show that three of these were all believers; namely, the family of Cornelius, of the Jailor, and that of Stephanas. But touching the family of Lydia, although the Scriptures say nothing defi-

nately concerning it, the reader should know that it is not usual in Scripture, nor the common custom of the world, to call the family by the woman's name, as long as the husband is living. Since then, Luke mentions the family by the name of the woman, reason teaches us, that Lydia was at that time either a widow or a virgin. Of the probability as to whether there were infants in her house or not, we shall let the pious reader judge.

In the fourth place, we answer: The word *household*, or *houses*, does not include the minor children as mentioned in the Scripture; for Paul speaks of vain talkers who subvert whole houses. Now it is incontrovertible that an infant cannot be subverted by any false doctrine. Therefore, by the word *house* or *houses*, no others can be understood than *those* who have ears to hear, and hearts to understand.

In the last place, they appeal to Origen and Augustine, and say that these assert, that they have received infant baptism from the apostles.

To this we answer and inquire, Can Origen and Augustine prove this by the Scriptures? Have they done so? We desire to know; if not, then must we hear and believe Christ and his apostles, and not Augustine and Origen.

That this is not the case may readily be seen from Cyprian, because he neither enjoined nor condemned infant baptism, if those who for many years past have been preachers at Norlingen, have rightly informed me in their church records, and not deceived me in the meaning of the word *Liberum*.

Cyprian also was a Greek, as well as Origen, and lived twenty-five years after him. If then infant baptism was the doctrine of the apostles and practiced by them, as Origen and Augustine assert, it must first be proved by the Scriptures, and in that case Cyprian must have committed a great sin to leave the observance of the doctrines and practices of the apostles at liberty. For any thing that is apostolic, dare not be changed by any man. The word of Paul is

indisputable, "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed," Gal. 1: 8. Else we would be constrained to acknowledge, that the twelve apostles with their doctrine, were not the twelve foundations and twelve gates of the new Jerusalem, Rev. 21: 12.

If infant baptism is apostolic, why does Tertullian write and say, "They who are to be baptized, confess for a considerable time in the church, before the bishop, that they renounce the devil, his pomp and angels. After that they are," &c.

Revanus annotates on this passage and says: That it was the custom of old, that adults (grown persons) be baptized by the washing of regeneration.

That infant baptism was not apostolic may be distinctly seen from the insipid remarks of Athanasius, as Rufinus plainly shows; see *Eusebius*, 10 *Libro Ecc. His.*, Cap. 14.

Remember also how the early writers contended about infant baptism. Had it been apostolic, and found in the gospel, why should they have thus wrangled.

Read also Erasmus Rotterod, in *sua concion*, i. e., in his public orations, Sebastus Frank's Chronicle, Ulrich Zuingli, in his book of Articles, Martin Cellarius, *de immensis operi, Dei*, i. e., Concerning the immense works of God, and you will find, that infant baptism is not the doctrine and practice of the apostles.

Behold, beloved reader, I admonish and advise you, if you seek God with all your heart, and do not wish to be deceived; depend not upon men and their doctrine, no matter however old, holy and excellent they may be esteemed; for the divines, both ancient and modern are opposed to each other; but put your trust, alone in Christ and his word, in the sure instruction and practice of his holy apostles, and you will through the grace of God, be perfectly safe from all false doctrines and the power of the devil; and may walk with a free and pious mind before God.

AN ADMONITION ADDRESSED TO THE SCORNERS OF THE WORD CONCERNING BAPTISM.

We well know, beloved reader, that there are many unprofitable talkers, who teach from the letters of the Scriptures, that infants should not be baptized, but only christian believers; nevertheless they say: Why my beloved, what can water avail us? We have been once baptized in the name of God. Had we only the new life, it would suffice us. O dear Lord! thus is thy precious word every where esteemed of this vicious world as fables of Æsop; as if Omnipotent Majesty, the Eternal Wisdom and Truth had taught and commanded some things to no purpose. No, my good reader, no; his name is the Sovereign Lord; his word is his will; his command is eternal life. All things which he has taught and commanded us, he will undoubtedly have us to observe; if we do not, woe to us. Christ says, "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you," John 15: 14. "My counsel," says the prophet, "shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," Isa. 46: 10. Therefore, O Creature, do not longer fight against God. Give ear to him and obey his voice, for it is his divine counsel, word and will. Who are you, that you would contend with God? Christ's sheep hear his voice. True christians believe and obey. Are you a sincere christian, born of God? Then why do you dread baptism; which is among the least that God commanded you? It has always been a difficult and important command to love your enemy; to do good to those who hate you; to pray in spirit and in truth, for those who persecute you; to crucify your wicked and ungodly flesh, with its impure lusts and desires; to subdue your arrogant pride; your avariciousness; your offensive unchastity; your bloody hatred; your eating and drinking to excess; to renounce your accursed idolatry; to desist from your envious revilings; to curb your slanderous tongue; to govern your heart, and flesh; to love and fear with all your heart, your Lord and God, your Creator and Redeemer; and in all things to submit to his holy word, and

serve your neighbor in sincere and unfeigned love, with all your powers, with all your possessions, with your counsel, with your labor, yea, if required with your death and blood; with a sincere heart to suffer misery, disdain, and the oppressive cross of Christ for the Lord's word; and to confess Christ Jesus before lords and princes, in prison and bonds, by words and deeds, unto death.

We think that these, and the like commands, are more painful and difficult to perverse flesh, which is naturally so prone to follow its own way, than to have a hand full of water applied; and a sincere christian must at all times be ready to do all this; if not, he is not born of God; for the regenerated are of one mind with Christ Jesus.

All who, by the grace of God, have been translated from Adam into Christ, and become partakers of the divine nature, and are baptized of God, with the Spirit and fire of heavenly love, will not contend so deridingly with the Lord, and say: My beloved, what can water avail? But they say with trembling Paul, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" And with the penitents on the day of Pentecost, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" They will renounce their own wisdom, and willingly obey the word of the Lord, for they are influenced by his Spirit, and through faith, with willing, obedient hearts perform all things commanded them of the Lord.

But as long as their minds are not renewed, and they are not of the same mind with Christ; are not washed in the inner man with clean water, from the living fountain of God, they may well say, What can water avail us? For as long as they are earthly and sensually minded, the whole ocean would not cleanse them.

My faithful reader, think not that we put great stress upon the elements and rites. I tell you the truth in Christ, and lie not. If any one were to come to me, even the emperor, or the king, and would desire to be

baptized, still walking in the unclean, ungodly lusts of the flesh, and were he not unblamable, penitent and regenerated, I hope by the grace of God, I would rather die than to baptize such an impenitent and sensual man. <For where there is no renewing, regenerating faith, leading to obedience, there is no baptism.* Even as Philip said to the Eunuch, "If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest." But nevertheless, you ought to know, should the subject for baptism come with a hypocritical heart, under semblance of faith, that his hypocrisy would not be imputed to the baptizer as a sin, but to the dissembler; for no man knows the heart of man, save the spirit of man which is in him, 1 Cor. 2: 11.>

It appears to me, that you may readily conclude from the language which we have used that we desire no other water, than that which the word of the Lord has commanded. For since we believe that Christ is the true Messiah, to whom the law and the prophets pointed, whom all the righteous fathers and patriarchs desired; that he came from heaven and testified to the truth, and that his command is eternal life, we must, therefore, hear his voice and obey his word; if not, we actually show that we do not believe, but that we reject his counsel and word, and are ungrateful towards him, for his love.

I know well, that many of you will say, We were once baptized in the name of God, and with that we are satisfied. To which we reply: If you fear God with all your heart, and acknowledge that his word and ordinances are just and good, you must decide that you are not baptized in the name of God, but contrary to it. It is true that the adorable, exalted name of God was pronounced over you, but not otherwise than it is pronounced over church-bells, churches, altars, consecrated water, tapers and palms. All anti-christian idolatry and abominations, alas, are performed under the semblance of the divine name; although they are not done by virtue *of*, but *against* his name, for they are done contrary to his word and will.

My dear reader, reflect well upon these

words and judge them by the word of God, and you will find that the baptism which you have received is without the command of God's word; that it originated through self-righteousness, and was invented by man, and therefore it must be accursed of God, who alone will reign and rule in his church. Would you rejoice in the promise and be partakers of the church of Christ, you must believe the word of the Lord, be obedient to, and follow his counsel, will and ordinances. But if you refuse, and follow your own, and not the Lord's counsel and will, you cannot comfort yourselves with any scriptural promise, for "he that believeth not," says Christ, "is condemned already."

Therefore, do no longer comfort yourselves with such vain comfort, and say, We have been once baptized; for at heart you are yet entirely unbelieving; yea, rebellious and unclean. Your whole life is earthly and carnal, your baptism anti-christian, and without the sanction of the word of God. Therefore, awaken, repent, believe in Christ, seek, fear and love God with all your heart, then the word of the Lord and his unction will teach you what is proper for you to do or not to do, in this matter. And say not, as some do, I will renounce the church and idolatry; I will serve my neighbor, &c.; but I do not wish to be baptized.

O you blind men! Do you think that the Lord is pleased with your staying away from the church, or with your alms, or any thing of the kind, if you reject his counsel and word? No! no!! He desires your obedience, but not sacrifice. He desires the whole heart, the entire man. With him, neither church nor alms will avail, neither words nor deeds, as long as you do not manifest a new heart and life. "For in Christ Jesus," says Paul, "neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love, a new creature, and the keeping of the commandments of God," Gal. 5: 6; 6: 15; 1 Cor. 7: 19.

And whosoever is renewed in Christ and born of God, he liveth no more, as Paul says, but Christ Jesus liveth in him. In all his ways he conforms to the word of the Lord, for that powerful, active faith constrains him to all obedience, and to every good work. But where this new life is not,

*There can be no scriptural baptism administered.

there fair words may indeed be, but in truth, there is only unbelief, disobedience, wantonness, presumption, and perverseness.

I hereby entreat and admonish you, beloved reader, not to be so obstinate against the Lord, and say, What can water avail us? But do reflect that Christ Jesus himself was baptized, Matt. 3: 13, although he was without sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, 1 Pet. 2: 22; yea, who was himself righteousness, the way, the truth, and the life. Tell us then, what could water avail Christ, who was all in all things? The disciples also at Ephesus were re-baptized of Paul, because they knew nothing of the Holy Ghost, although they had been baptized with the baptism of John. If Christ himself was baptized, who was without sin, and others were re-baptized of Paul, who had been baptized with the baptism of John, which was also from heaven, Why do you then despise the Lord's baptism, you who are poor, miserable sinners, who were baptized without knowledge and faith, with the baptism of the dragon and the beast?

Cyprian, the Martyr, with his entire council in Africa, resolved that those who were baptized of heretics, should be re-baptized with the christian baptism, and this for the reason, that they maintained that the baptism of heretics could not be the baptism of Christ. Reflect a little, kind reader, who they were that baptized you; by whom they

were sent; what kind of faith they had; what kind of lives they led; with what doctrine and practices you were baptized. If you will seriously reflect thereon, I hope by the grace of God, if you desire true peace and liberty of conscience, you will soon be aware that you never knew either the external or internal baptism, much less received it.

Behold, beloved reader, here you have the true foundation and scriptural instructions of the baptism of Christ, and an explanation of the baptism of anti-christ.

Pray the Lord, the Most High, for a sound and clear understanding, that you may sincerely know the right and blessed truth, believe, and in the fear of the Lord, faithfully observe it. Cease from all useless disputing and gainsaying; for whosoever will dispute and gainsay with the determination to remain in the broad way, will ruin his soul, never walk with a good and sure conscience before God, and always find occasion to dispute and wrangle.

Therefore, do examine, believe, and obey the word of God with a sincere and devout heart, and be not deceived by being led into the appearance of godliness, by fair speeches, and you will certainly obtain the sure doctrine of the saving truth, and the consoling promise of grace. The Lord Jesus Christ grant you his grace, Amen.