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A S E R I O U S  
R E P L Y  
T O T H E  
Rev. Mr. J O H N W E S L E Y  
In Particular,  
And to the People called  
M E T H O D I S T S  
In General;  
In much Love and christian Friendship  
R E C O M M E N D E D  
To his and their very serious Consideration:

By *GILBERT BOYCE,*

*To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. Isaiah viii. 20.*

*There is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. Ephes. iv. 4, 5, 6.*

*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. Math. xxviii. 19, 20.*

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M D C C L X X .

BRITISH MUSEUM

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T H E  
P R E F A C E.

PERHAPS by some it may be thought a great piece of presumption in me to speak or write any thing against what so great, so learned and so worthy a man as the *Rev. Mr. John Wesley* hath spoke or wrote; a man so highly esteemed on account of his very arduous and successful labours both in writing and preaching, by which means he hath made many profelytes; --- hath gained many followers; among whom it is charitably hoped there are some who are converted from a sinful and wicked course of life to a good and religious life; though as yet they may not be altogether *such christians* as the gospel describes.

However, at the conversion of sinners every good man will rejoice and be glad; and for my part, I can truly say, that where *Mr. Wesley* has been successful to gain or really convert Ten, I wish it were Ten thousand; and where-  
insoever he stands approved of God. I wish him Ten thousand successes more. Nothing can be more pleasing to me, nothing give me greater  
a joy

joy, than to hear of poor lost, miserable sinners returning from the error and evil of their ways and doings, *to the living and true God.*

But *Mr. Wesley's* being ever so successful in gathering followers, &c. does not prove that he is in *nothing mistaken*; and if he is mistaken, although it should be but in a few things, or even but in *one thing*, it can be no harm in a friendly and affectionate way to tell him of it. And that he is mistaken, greatly mistaken in some things at least, I have, I think, if I am not greatly mistaken too, evidently made appear.

It is certain, there were men in the world who were successful in gaining followers before *Mr. Wesley* was born, and there are such men now besides him; but what doth *success* in gaining followers prove? --- That those who are their teachers and leaders are in nothing mistaken? No such thing. Considering how many different teachers and leaders there are, and how very widely they differ one from another, evident it is, they must some of them be mistaken, notwithstanding the *success* they *all* may have in gathering followers. *Success* is no proof of *infallibility*, nor that a man is raised up and sent of God to preach the gospel, nor that God owns and approves of him as a teacher and preacher of the gospel. The *success* even of the *apostles* themselves, in their ministry, taken abstractedly from every other consideration, neither did, nor could prove they were infallible,  
nor

nor that they were sent of God to teach mankind; nor consequently, that he owned, approved and accepted them and their followers. As to success in gathering followers, &c. if that were any proof of a man's being raised up and sent of God to teach and preach, and that he and his followers are owned and accepted of him, who could claim a higher title thereto than the *Pope of Rome*? He has had such amazing *success* in making profelytes and gaining followers, that kingdoms and nations have been under his power and authority; kings and emperors have submitted to his government, and thousands of persons have received it as a peculiar mark of great honour to be admitted to *kiss his TOE*. But we *Protestants* do not think he is ever a whit the more to be listened to and followed, because kingdoms and nations have paid him such profound homage. It is not men's having their teachers and leaders in the greatest esteem and veneration, it is not their admiring, applauding, or extolling them ever so highly, that can prove them to be what hath been hinted above. *Therefore let no man glory in men, 1 Cor. iii. 21.*

Our blessed Lord hath positively told us that, *Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name cast out devils? And in thy name done ma-*



*ny wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me ye that work iniquity, Math. vii. 21, 22, 23. O strange! never knew such as these? What! bid such as these (the world's wonder) depart! One would think, were we to see such men now, we should all be wonderfully taken with them, and be ready to conclude without the least doubt or hesitation, that if there were any persons in the world owned, approved and sent of God to teach mankind, these must be the very persons. And were we to make this conclusion, the next must be, we are all deceived.*

*St. Paul also speaks of some, even in his own time, who were false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the ministers of Christ. And no marvel (says he) for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also, be transformed as the ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works, 2 Cor. xi. 13, 14, 15. Hence it appears that the devil hath his ministers as well as Christ hath his. And that they do by various and numerous artifices, but all diabolical, mimic those who are the ministers of righteousness. Let us therefore be very careful and watchful, that we may not be imposed on and deceived by bold pretenders, proud enthusiasts or vain boasters; who any where, and at any time lie in wait to deceive, Ephes. iv. 14.*

Therefore

Therefore whosoever call themselves *the people of God*, and whatever sect, party or denomination of christians they are and call themselves, we must by no means take their word for it, but must endeavour to be well assured, that they have upon them the true and genuine, the real and evident *scriptural marks of God's people*. All such therefore who will not comply with the sacred institutions and commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ, but stiffly and strenuously oppose and contradict, deny and disobey, despise and contemn them or any part of them, what sort of people must we call them? What must we think and say of them? Are they not sadly deceived? --- Lamentably deluded, though they should flatter themselves they are safely and securely led by the spirit of God? But it deserves to be remembered, that the spirit of God never did, and never can lead any man to disobey the least gospel precept, or any part of the word of Christ and of God.

There have been, and perhaps still are many people who follow their leaders and teachers (as it were) blindfold. Eagerly receiving all for truth which they tell them is so, because they believe they are sincere and upright, and would not deceive them: And many are either not willing to be at the pains, or not capable to examine, try and prove their doctrines to know whether they are true or false. But as no man by his sincerity and uprightness can prove he is not in an error, so likewise can no  
man

man prove by being ever so positive, peremptory and dogmatical, that he is in the truth. No: The scripture only must direct and teach us what is truth, because it is our only rule and guide. Let any man read and well consider what *St. Paul* writes to *Timothy* in his second epistle, chap. iii. 15, 16, 17 verses, and he will easily allow that the scripture is a plain, full and perfect rule and guide to us, teaching us all things necessary to be known and believed in order to our salvation.

There are indeed some who make great pretences to being led and guided by the *Holy Ghost*; but I do not know that they ever gave any solid and substantial proof of their being *more* led and guided therewith, than some of their neighbours; though they may perhaps, wonderfully please themselves with thinking they certainly are: and they may if they please, think so still.

Such as these will also talk much of their perfection and assurance of their salvation, die when they will, as I have known and heard. But I think such talkers do assume too much to themselves, and it would, in my judgment, look much better and much more like a christian, to talk with more modesty and humility; especially when it is remembered, that some of them however have most shamefully fallen back again into their old course and habit of sinning, as if they had never been what they pretended to be, and thereby have brought much reproach  
and

and dishonour not only upon themselves, but also upon the Society they once were in connexion with. But it would be very unjust to charge a whole community with the faults of some among them, or that have been among them. It is too evident to be denied, that there have been in all christian societies some bad men one time or other, and the christian religion hath been brought into much contempt by the shameful and scandalous conduct and actions of such persons; and I doubt not but *Mr. Wesley* has known such scandalous persons in his societies, whom he hath excluded and turned out from among them.

But I will now inform my readers that I do not write against any thing said or written by *Mr. Wesley*, because I take delight in disputation, no truly; I take no delight in it any farther than as it may serve, or have any tendency to correct mistakes, prevent the spreading of errors, advance the truth, contribute something towards a public good, and that all may be to the glory of God.

Had I been hot and eager in pursuing controversy, I should not have staid so many years as I have done before I had returned an answer to what *Mr. Wesley* last wrote to me. And had it not been for the reasons I have given him, he would certainly have had the last word; for I had quite laid aside all thoughts of writing any thing more than what I had written. And some perhaps may think I had better have  
done

done so still. Perhaps so too. ---- But of that I cannot be sure.

I know that what I have written will either stand or fall among men, just as it is received or rejected by them. --- And I know that I can do nothing better than pray, and desire every serious christian and lover of the truth to pray, that God would be pleased to make all that use of it which may be most for his own glory and the good of mankind. And as this is *my hearty prayer*, I doubt not but it will be the hearty prayer of all who believe and love *the truth as it is in Jesus*. To whose protection and defence, I do with all reverence, humility and sincerity commit it, wishing every understanding reader, who is really desirous to live in a sincere and universal conformity to the sacred institutions and commandments of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, may find all that profit and advantage by reading, which was and sincerely is designed and heartily desired by the Author: who hath nothing more at heart, than the real, the everlasting welfare and happiness of all men.

I here advertise my readers that the two letters replied to in the following Sheets, are the two last letters I received from *Mr. Wesley*; and therefore that which I call his first letter, is not the first I ever received from him, having received several before, but the first of the two which I have here replied to: which reply is only an  
abstract

abstract of what I sent to him many years ago in manuscript.

If any person or persons should question the truth of my having received two such letters from *Mr. Wesley* which I have replied to, they may, if they please, apply to him, who can give them full satisfaction as to the truth of it. I can produce the originals at any time, and once thought of publishing them with my own, but afterwards I thought there was no necessity for it, and therefore I omitted it.



ERRATA

## E R R A T A.

In the Preface. Page 2, line 28, for *approve* read *approves*. p. 4, l. 11, for *those* read *these*. p. 7, l. 30, for *wrighting* read *writing*. p. 8, l. 26, for *foolwing* read *following*.

In the Reply. Page 6, l. last, read *then*. p. 7, l. 1, dele *comma* after *than*. p. 9. l. 6, put a *period* after *lips*; and for *do* read *Do*. l. 9, after the word *difference* read *between them*. l. 19, for *you* read *them*. p. 32, at the bottom, for *reasons* read *nor*. p. 41, l. 15, for *come* read *came*. p. 44, l. 29, dele *we*. p. 45, l. 18, for *tha tall* read *that all*. p. 53, l. 1, dele *who*. l. 16, for *venerous* read *venturous*. p. 60, l. 26. read *to*. l. last, for *prodigious* read *prodigiously*. p. 61, l. 19, for *practice* read *practise*. p. 65, l. 9, for *for* read *of*. p. 71, l. 23, for *nowhere* read *nowhere*. p. 88, l. 3, in the note, for *fleshy* read *fleshy*. p. 89, l. 3, for *no truly* read *no surely*. p. 92, l. 12, for *comes* read *come*. l. 28, for *invention* read *inventions*. p. 96, l. 30, before--- *If*, put a double *comma* or *quotation*. p. 100, l. 33, before--- *That*, put a *quotation*. p. 107, l. 2, read *an acknowledge truth*. p. 115, l. 22, for *to* read *soon*. p. 124, l. 5, next to the word *examines* read *Heb. x. 22*. p. 125, l. 13, dele the first *have*. p. 133, l. last but one, for *exbaltation* read *exaltation*. p. 134, l. 9, read *by those with whom*. p. 151, l. 15, for *opiniated* read *opinionated*. l. last for *instuted* read *instituted*. p. 159, l. last but two, for *exampelar* read *exemplar*. p. 162, l. 26, for *regenerated* read *re-regenerated*. p. 167, l. 32, dele the first *for*. p. 177, l. 8, for *eat* read *ate, or did eat*.

The above Faults, or others which the Reader finds have escaped the Press, he is desired to correct or excuse.

T O





T O T H E

Rev. Mr. JOHN WESLEY,

Reverend and Dear SIR,

**I** REMEMBER I once told you that I had begun to write something in answer to what you, (now a long time since) had last wrote to me; but I soon after laid it aside, and never intended to proceed any farther in it, because what you had written to me was no answer to what I had written to you. But since that time, it having been so often reported that you had, both publicly and privately told many persons you had written to me last, and from thence it was inferred by many of your followers, in a sort of triumph, that what you had written was *unanswerable*. On hearing of this, many of my friends requested, nay, from time to time strongly importuned me to draw up an answer and send it to the press. I have at length yielded to their restless solicitations; and have attempted an answer not only to your last letter, but also to some things which you have advanced in your notes on the New-Testament, and in some other writings.

B

You

You will easily perceive, fir, that I write no more from anger now than I did before; that I am just as free, open, and simple as I was then. I have no notion of giving men hard names, defaming their persons and characters; no, fir, I look upon that to be a most scandalous, unchristian, and unjustifiable practice; and what I hope I shall never be guilty of. I have no design in the least degree to promote unchristian strife and contention; but on the contrary, love, peace, and unity. And therefore I do not contend for mere opinions, but for that *Faith which was once delivered to the Saints*. Jude 3. I hope therefore my publishing what I have now written in answer to your last letter, with an abstract of what has formerly passed between us, as introductory thereto, will not displease you. For,

My desire is still to do every thing that is just and right, to have every thing kept in the same place where our great master has fixed it. And to know *what* is just and right, and *where* and *how* every thing in the worship and service of God ought to be fixed; we must, undoubtedly, have recourse to the word of God. Therefore (according to article 6,) I say, "Holy Scripture contains all things necessary to salvation: So that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of faith." You also say, "Can any steward of the mysteries of God be found faithful if he change any part of that sacred *Depositum*? No: He can abate nothing; he can soften nothing. He is constrained to declare unto all men: I may not bring down the Scripture to your taste. You must come up to it or perish for ever."\*

What words can be more awful and solemn than these? Again, You appeal to the "law and to the testimony, as the only sure and infallible test of all. That

\* Farther Appeal, part iii, p. 102.

That all doctrines are to be decided by scripture and reason. That whatsoever is agreeable to these you receive, as on the other hand, whatever is contrary thereto you reject." To all which, with the utmost readiness and chearfulness, I subscribe a hearty *Amen*. And yet we are still divided. How must we account for it? The Scripture is not divided against itself. The Father is not divided. The Son is not divided. The Spirit is not divided. God is unity. And we are sure there is no division in heaven. Saints and Angels are perfectly united in worship, adoration and praise. What means all this jumble, confusion and distraction here on earth? Is it because the Scripture is not sufficiently clear and convincing? No: That cannot be. For how would God be just, if the rule he gave us to walk by, was not easy and intelligible? Is it because he is mindless of his creatures, careless whether they are happy or miserable? No: This cannot be neither. For how would he be a merciful God? *God is love.* 1 John iv, 8 and 16. Once more, Is it because he leaves every man to his liberty, to chuse what he pleases and reject what he does not like? No: This is not at all likely. For where would be his authority as a Lawgiver? But it is to be feared, men have taken this ungiven liberty, and thereby have thrown the christian world into all that anarchy and disorder, which so evidently, but lamentably appears at this day.

From this unhappy source has issued such a mighty stream of contention, as will not, I fear, be easily stopped. And indeed how should it be otherwise, when men will not be governed by the rule as God gave it? But will boldly either add to, or diminish from, or change some part or other of it, or substitute something of their own instead of it, to gratify and make it speak in favour of their own selfish and ambitious humours, their high conceits and fond opi-

nions? But *you* have observed in your rules for your societies, "The Scripture is the *only* rule, and the *sufficient* rule." "This is bravely said indeed sir. All therefore that I insist upon, and desire of you is, that you would prove by this unerring rule, of which "nothing can be abated, nothing softened," nor changed; that the Church of England is the one true Church of Christ; or shew me where to find it. When you have finished this work, sir, you will certainly have performed a very noble and a very signal piece of service for much great good to mankind. And I promise you that if I live to see it done, I will immediately join myself thereto, and use my utmost endeavours to persuade as many as I can to join with me.

I am,

Reverend and dear Sir,

With great respect and esteem,

Truly and unfeignedly,

Your very affectionate,

Tho' unworthy brother,

In the Lord Jesus Christ,

GILBERT BOYCE.

A



A  
S E R I O U S R E P L Y  
T O T H E  
Rev. MR. JOHN WESLEY'S  
F I R S T L E T T E R.

Reverend and Dear SIR,

You tell me

First, “**F**ROM the time you wrote to me first, I found my heart quite free and open towards you, and so I do still; therefore I am glad to hear of you and from you at any time.” Just so it was fir, and is with me toward you. When I first wrote to you, no man could possibly have a greater love for another (so I think) than I had for you, although I had never seen you; I thought I could most gladly have spent my whole life in your company, because I took you to be a most ardent and sincere lover of Jesus Christ. That fir, is the foundation of my love to you and to all good men; and will arise toward such in proportion to the manifestation of their love to him: for by *how much* any man loves the blessed Jesus, by *so much* do I love that man. And therefore at this day, I have a hearty and unfeigned love for you.

Secondly, you say, “The difference of opinion which is between us need not create any strangeness

OR

or coldness." 'Tis true fir, if it be mere difference of *opinion* which is between us, it need not and ought not. "It does not (you say) on my part; I love you no less, not only tho' you do not think as I do; but even though I have no expectation of your thinking otherwise till our eyes are opened in eternity." Neither does it (that is difference of opinion rightly defined) on my part, lessen my love to you: but here fir, I must beg leave to observe what you have known longer than I, viz. There is a wide difference between a man's private opinion strictly taken, and a plain and necessary article of Faith; between speculation and practice; between things abstrusely, and things plainly delivered to us in the word of God; between what is necessary, and what is not necessary to Salvation.

Now you know, fir, whatsoever exists only in opinion, or is merely speculative; whatsoever is abstrusely delivered, and not plainly decided by the word of God, either this way or that; whatsoever hath no tendency to stir up strife and contention, to make rents and schisms in the body of Christ; whatsoever leads to no evil practice, nor to the omission of any necessary duty, nor raises any false and dishonourable notions of God: in short, whatsoever is not necessary to salvation, though we differ in our private sentiments about such things; we may and ought to love one another no less than if we all thought exactly alike. But our difference is not only about mere *opinions*, whether right or wrong, but about those things also, which the scripture plainly and fully determines to one side only: and if this were not the case, one of us must certainly be to blame for separating from the other. I believe when our eyes are opened in eternity, we shall love one another much more than we do, or can do now; because we shall be much more like unto our holy and ever blessed  
Jesus

Jesus than, we are now, or can be in this imperfect state.

Thirdly, "God's first design is (say you) to save you and me and every man round about us. That is, to renew us in his image, and then receive us to glory. To this immediate end of renewing each soul in love, and in the whole mind which was in Christ, he has pointed out several means, many of which we cannot use, at least not fully, without joining together. A company of men joining together for this purpose, we are accustomed to call a church." I believe all this is very just and right. To the end we may be saved, God has pointed out the sure, certain and unalterable means thereof. *God has pointed them out; we are to look well about us, and take particular care to use them, and in the same manner too, which he has pointed out. We must not form schemes of our own, and like the Jews of old, set aside the commandments of God to keep our own traditions.*

Dear sir, take great care what you do, look on every side you, be sure you take right steps: Do you make use of the means *exactly* as God hath pointed them out? Do you vary in nothing? Do you follow Christ as *Paul* did? Are you worthy of *praise* for keeping the ordinances as they are delivered to us in the holy scriptures? 1 Cor. xi. 2. Do you take the same equal steps in forming your societies as the apostles took in forming theirs? If not, you are wrong. There is but *one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one Spirit, one Body*, (that is one church) *one Hope, and but one God*. Ephes. iv. 4, 5, 6. Are you sure you are a member of this *one body* or church? When was you made so? After what manner was you so made? Have you been baptized into this *one Faith* of this *one Lord*? Are you sure you have received this *one Spirit*, by which you are united to this *one body* or church, of which *Christ is Lord and Head*? When did you receive  
this



*this one Spirit?* How, or after what manner did you receive it? Did you receive it by *prayer and laying on of hands* by an authorised person? If you have received the Spirit of God, how comes it to pass, sir, you do not act according to his directions? For can it be justly and rightly concluded, that he directs you in a different way and manner from the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ? It cannot. If you were wholly directed by the Spirit of God, you would, I am sure, do several things you do not, and leave undone several things you do. Remember your own words: "Can any steward of the mysteries of God be found faithful, if he change any part of that sacred *Depositum*? No: He can abate nothing, he can soften nothing, &c." Dear sir, it is incontestably evident, that even you yourself, continue in the change of some things contained in that sacred *Depositum*, the Holy Scripture. Your own practice contradicts your own words, and by it you make yourself that very person whom you condemn. God hath pointed out the true and right means to bring men into community one with another, and you have pointed out others; some of *his* you have taken away, and placed some of *your own* instead of them: Whom are we to obey, God or man?

When I consider and reflect upon what you have said of the minister's and people of the church of England, having represented them more like the *Synagogue of Satan*, than the pure and spotless spouse of Christ; the *church of the first-born which are written in heaven*. Heb. xii. 23. I stand astonished at your present conduct! Be pleased to review your own words in your Farther Appeal \* especially where you are speaking to those whom you call your "brethren, and priests and prophets of the Lord." You say, "Can such  
" as you, be said to honour or fear God, any more  
" than

“ than those spoken of by Malachi? May not God  
 “ complain, these priests have violated my law and  
 “ profaned my holy things? Yea, whensoever you  
 “ presume with those unhallowed hands to touch the  
 “ mysteries of God: whensoever you utter his name  
 “ or his word with those unhallowed lips, do you put  
 “ a difference between the holy and profane, him  
 “ that feareth God and him that feareth him not?  
 “ Do you put an effectual difference even in the most  
 “ solemn office of our religion? At the Table of  
 “ the Lord do you take care to separate the precious  
 “ from the vile? Is it not for want of your making  
 “ this difference, as well as for many other abomina-  
 “ tions; that with regard to some among us (how-  
 “ many God knoweth) that scripture is now also ful-  
 “ filled: his watchmen are blind, they are ignorant,  
 “ they cannot understand.” And then you go on to  
 speak of other abominations which are found among  
 you; and farther observe, (speaking of the want of  
 good order, true christian discipline,) “ all are jum-  
 bled together without any care or concern of yours.”  
 Meaning your “ brethren the Priests and Prophets of  
 the Lord.” And again you say, “ Does the church  
 “ of England gain either honour, or strength, or  
 “ blessing, by such wretches as these calling them-  
 “ selves her members? By ten thousand drunkards,  
 “ whoremongers, and common swearers? Nay ought  
 “ she not immediately to spew them out? To  
 “ renounce all fellowship with them? Would she  
 “ not be far better without them than with them?” \*  
 Yes certainly. Then all good men would love her  
 and greatly esteem her.

You do separate from them in your societies and  
 private bands, and yet not at the Table of the Lord.  
 Can this be justified? How, sir? Is it more necessary  
 to separate from them in your societies, than at the  
 Table of the Lord, that solemn part of our religion?

C

How

do you prove it fir? Can you write and preach fo much againft them, and actually feperate from them; and yet confiftently join with them? Really fir, this is fuch a piece of conduct as far furpaffeth my knowledge. 'Tis certain, we may not do evil that good may come; the higheft pretences all put together, can never juftify fuch conduct.

What a dull, dark, black, ugly, deformed picture, have you drawn of thofe whom you call the "Priests and Prophets of the Lord," and the ten thoufand other members of your church! And were you to paint her more ugly, (were that poffible) you could never make her appear by fuch dull colours you have laid upon her, to be the amiable and beautiful fpoufe of our moft glorious and everlafting King: The dearly, the beft beloved Son of God.

It would be happy for us, if there were no difference in the articles of our Faith; and much more fo if there were none in our religious opinions. However, this is certain; God's word is the rule by which we are to form and regulate both the one and the other. To that we ought to pay the ftricteft regard. That alone is the rule for the trial of all doctrines and fpirits. The rule by which every man, to whom it is given, muft be tried at the laft day.

I have in the fmall courfe of my reading met with the faying of a Papift \* who did not fcruple to acknowledge that "if the fcripture alone muft be the rule of Faith and Practice, we muft all, both Papifts and Proteftants, crofs the cudgels to the *Anabaptifts*." Such an opinion had that author of the wrong-named *Anabaptifts*, walking nearer to the fcripture plan than any other denomination of chriftians. And if what you fay be true, that the "fcripture is the only rule and the fufficient rule," the *Baptized Chriftians* (fo I chufe to call them) are the only people who do moft ftrictly adhere

\* *Deftor Bale*, in his end to controversy.

adhere to it, in gathering and governing their churches. Not that I will pretend to justify the conduct of every one among them, any more than you will every one among your societies. But you tell me,

“ Fourthly, “ There are many things in the Church of England which you like, and some which you dislike.” As to your liking or disliking, *that* you know sir, proves nothing; either that *this* is right, or *that* is wrong. But you tell us somewhere in your writings, that you “ prove all your doctrines by scripture and reason.” Now sir, if you will prove by scripture that all those things which you like in the church of England ought to be observed and practised, you will give me much satisfaction.

But again : you say, “ I have not found any community, who, (in my apprehension) come so near the scripture plan, or so nearly answer the original design of a church as the people called *Methodists*.” But pray dear sir, what doth this prove? Not that the *Methodists* are the one true church of Christ. Indeed you do not positively say they are, but speak very modestly, and far from that overbearing confidence with which some of your followers have spoken, for I do not know whether I ever heard any people (who have less to say upon several things) more positive and dogmatical in my life. But *you*, sir, only say, “ in my apprehension,” which I take to be a lowly expression, much like that of one of the greatest men we ever heard of, namely *St. Paul*, when he says, “ *I think I have the Spirit of God.* 1 Cor. vii. 40.

*The Spirit of God*, Of and concerning which, I have heard some of your people speak with all that strength of assurance, as if they were able to give as clear demonstrations of their having received it as the apostles themselves; frequently quoting those scriptures which can refer to nothing short of miraculous operations. Not that they pretended to any

such measures, but generally disclaimed every thing of that nature; insisting chiefly on the sanctifying influences of it, by which the heart and life are changed and purified; as undoubtedly every other real christian has so received it as well as they, though they do not speak of it in the same language, nor chuse to say so much about their having received it as they do; believing that where *the fruits of the Spirit* really are, they will much more loudly declare their great author, than all they can speak with their tongues.

But what I particularly remark upon their bringing such texts to prove their having received the Holy Ghost, is, how sadly they are mistaken in, and how far from the true knowledge of, many passages of the Holy Scripture; bringing of it down to their own *taste* and weak apprehensions. I have heard one say, "I am sure I have received the Holy Ghost: The Holy Ghost is *within me now*." And another, "I have been *baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire*." I believe many of them do not know the meaning of the words, but too hastily run away with a mere sound; without staying to take with them the true and proper meaning of them.

I remember you tell us in one of your journals, \* that among your people at Bristol you "found a spirit of enthusiasm was breaking in upon many, who charged their own imaginations on the will of God, and that not written, but impressed on their hearts. If these impressions (say you) be received as the rule of action instead of the written word, I know nothing so wicked or absurd, but we may fall into, and that without remedy." I believe you may find in other places at this day, such a spirit possessing many of them; I could speak largely of what I have seen and known. And must needs say with you, that if their imaginations are to be received as the rule of action  
instead

Journal from 1739 to 1741, p. 93.

instead of the written word, I know nothing indeed so wicked or absurd but they may soon fall into." What therefore you have so justly observed in some of them, I know by real experience to be true of others of them: and when I have confined them to the written word, they have either made no reply, or acknowledged the truth; and yet even afterwards have immediately returned to their former notions, as if they were ashamed of their confession, or afraid to stand to it any longer; and then generally had some quibble or other to evade the force of an argument, when they knew not what to say. Often times appearing to be *wise in their own conceits*.

Upon the whole, I may safely and without erring conclude, that, let a man pretend to what he will, 'tis certain, he can never be led by the *Spirit* of God who is not led by the *Word* of God: for the Word and Spirit are one: they agree in one: they speak the same thing. Whosoever therefore opposes and contradicts the Scripture, opposes and contradicts the Spirit. The Spirit doth not say and unsay: Hath not said one thing by the Apostles, and another by the *Methodists*; no, no: He cannot be guilty of self-contradictions. Therefore whoever are led by the Scriptures are led by the Spirit, for the Scriptures are the divine breathings of the Spirit of God. And whatever *secret whispers* any one may pretend to have as an *overplus*, if those whispers contain any thing in them, which is contrary to the express and plain-spoken words of the scriptures, they are not the whispers of God's Spirit but of the devil. Every man therefore ought to be very careful how he entertains a whispering spirit.

By this you see, sir, I am as far from enthusiasm as you are, I wish every one who is called a *Methodist* was as far from being an Enthusiast as I am. I hope you will not be displeas'd with this digression which I

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was so easily and readily led into by observing the wide difference between your way of speaking and some of your profest followers, who have not, it is evident yet rightly learned that important lesson *humility*. I now return just to observe again.

You say, "You have not found any community who come so near the scripture plan, &c. as the people called *Methodists*." Perhaps you have not searched so universally as to be acquainted with all societies or communities. Have you a full knowledge of the people I mentioned above, the *baptized christians*? Do you know the principles they profess to be governed by? Are you acquainted with the foundation upon which they, as a church are built? If you fully know these things, sir, I desire you to tell me, wherein the *Methodists* exceed them. And though you apprehend they are nearest the scripture plan, yet you have not given me one scripture proof, so that at present it rests only upon your apprehension, which is too weak a foundation for me (whatever it may be for others) to build my faith upon. You have therefore, all that work to do I desired of you.

Dear sir, let me intreat you to speak plainly either one way or other, prove to me sir, by the scriptures, that the church of England, or the *Methodists* if you like it better, are rightly gathered and brought into a church state and rightly governed; or else tell me the scripture does not prove it: For either it does or it does not; if it does, then you can do it too; if it does not, then do you frankly own it, and acknowledge that you have been mistaken; and so return all the glory to God and your Redeemer.

And now I conclude this, with assuring you sir, that, although I have spoken plainly, yet never angrily; for it is all in love, and nothing else but love to you and those that walk with you: and with the most upright view to honour and exalt our most holy and  
ever

blessed Lord and Lawgiver, Jesus Christ: Whose laws and ordinances I esteem infinitely above the best human schemes in the world.

You may easily perceive, sir, I am quite free, open and simple, without art or craft, I am for honesty and plain dealing; let who will chuse the dark, I am for broad-day light. I wish I knew how to chuse my words, to convince you that I am all that I pretend to be; honest and sincere before God, full of love and tender affection to you and yours.

The reason of my writing thus is, I find it hard to convince some men of my really good intention. If I speak in a soft and gentle manner, I am suspected a dissembler, flatterer, or hypocrite; if plain and close to the point as I can, I am censured as rigid and uncharitable; so that in this bigotted and censorious age, one hardly knows how to speak. But let any man think or say what he will of me, I know whose I am and whom I serve. *By grace I am what I am.* And no man's good word makes me better, and no man's bad word makes me worse: For what I am in the sight of God, *that only I am.*

Pray God bless you, and make you to increase in the *knowledge of his will, and in all true judgment; that you may approve things that are excellent; that you may be sincere and without offence until the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God.* Amen.  
Phil. i, 9. 10.



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S E R I O U S R E P L Y  
T O T H E  
R E V . M R . J O H N W E S L E Y ' S  
L A S T L E T T E R , & C .

Reverend and Dear SIR,

**I**T is as evident as the light at noon, that when the apostles went forth to gather a people out of the world for Christ, they had one plain, full and unalterable rule given them to act by, and but one; and that those holy men did, to the honour of their great Lord and Master, strictly adhere to it, is as plain and indisputable: And it is no less certain we ought to follow their steps. 'Tis also equally true, and may be absolutely depended on, that, *that Rule*, is the same in all ages and nations to the end of the world; and consequently, no man hath any authority to add to it, or diminish any thing from it. What was a rule to *St. Paul* for converting or bringing men to believe in Christ, and making them members of his church, is equally so to you and every preacher in the world. Therefore whether you are converting *Indians, Jews, or Turks, Tartars, Chinese or Hotentots*; it is all one, and there ought to be no difference. The scripture makes no difference between converting *Englishmen* and *Indians*, why do you sir? *St. Paul* says, *Be ye followers*

lowers of me as I also am of Christ, without taken any notice of states or places, whether in *Europe* or *America*. There is but *one Gospel* to preach, as there is but *one Jesus* to save; and consequently, but *one Rule* given, by which we are to be directed in the way of salvation. And though all men do not hit of that way, nor walk by that rule, yet, it is not less certain that there is but one. *One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism*. Ephes. iv. 5. But do not conclude from hence sir, I condemn every man who does not walk in that *one way*: For I condemn no man, I cannot if I would. I leave every man to answer for himself, for *to his own master he stands or falls*. Rom. xiv. 4. I believe many will be found in heaven, who were never members of Christ's visible church on earth. I believe *God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him*. Acts x. 35. God expecteth not that man to improve two talents, to whom he hath given but one. I do assure you sir, I bear a hearty love and good-will to all men, especially to them *who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity*. Ephes. vi. 24. And as my love to my fellow-creatures must be consistent with that obedience my great master calls for, and requires at my hands; so it is consistently with both, that I now write in vindication of what I conceive to be the truth, and agreeable to his mind and will. And when we have all said all we can say, we must leave all men in the hands of the infinitely-wise and good God, who knows best how to dispose of every thing and every person. And therefore will certainly *judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained*. That is our Lord Jesus Christ. Acts xvii. 31.

This however, is certain and evident, our great and honoured Lord has delivered to the world an entirely new system, and placed things on a quite different basis from what they had ever been before.

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To this end, That both *Jews* and *Gentiles* might become *one people*; be united together under *one head*; walk together in *one way*; and be all happy together in *one heaven at last*, In consequence of which, he must, undoubtedly expect, that all who would be saved by him, should inviolably observe his *one method* of salvation. That is, so far as they have attained to the knowledge of it, or how can they expect to be saved by him? Has he made any promise of salvation to any one who does not walk in his own instituted way? Or has he any where appointed more ways than one to lead men infallibly to eternal life? If nothing of this can be found in the New Testament, what I have said in the beginning stands immoveable. In your last letter, you tell me,

First, “ I do not think either the Church of England, or the people called Methodists, or any other particular society under Heaven to be *the true Church of Christ*. For that church is but one, and contains all the true believers on earth. But I conceive every society of true believers to be a branch of the one true Church of Christ.” But, whatever you think, sir, I cannot help thinking, that there is a people somewhere who very justly and properly may be called *The True Church of Christ*: Or else we must be at a very great loss to know who, or what sort of people, we ought, as christians, to join ourselves to; unless we are to make no difference between those who keep the ordinances as they were delivered by the apostles \* and those who do not. And if this be right reasoning, what avails the reformation from *popery*? Why were men so foolish to spill their blood rather than \* join with the *papists*?

Suppose a man was to come to you sir, and ask, “ what society of christians ought I to join myself to, that I may have communion and fellowship with them in

\* 1 Cor. xi. ii.

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the order of the gospel, according to the institution and commandment of Jesus Christ? What would you say to him? Would you not direct him to one which you preferred above the rest? To one, which in your apprehension, came nearest to the Scripture plan? Or would you tell him "all societies are alike, it matters not which of them all he joins himself to? Every society of true believers is a branch of the one true church of Christ?" But, suppose he should further ask, "where must I find a society of true believers?" What would you say to him then sir? I know what I must be obliged to say upon your scheme, if I were in your place. I must say, now you have *non-plussed* me. For,

Is it not the common cry, *lo here, lo there*? Do not all christian societies (so called) lay claim to that honourable Title, *The True Church of Christ*? But are all societies that One true church? No, "All societies of true believers are." Now we are just gotten where we were before, and here we must be; for according to the definition you give, of the One true church of Christ, we can never stir a step farther, or if we do, we shall quickly revolve to the same point again. For thus you say, "The church of Christ is but One, and contains all the true believers on earth, every society of true believers is a branch of the One true church of Christ" Why did not you extend it a little farther sir, and say it contains all the *true believers* that ever have been, are, and shall be upon earth, from the beginning to the end of the world? You might very well have done so. For the church of Christ, considered as the church of God, most certainly is but One, and contains all that shall be saved at the last day. But what is this to the purpose? How much wiser is any *enquirer* for this? I made no doubt, sir, but you had been much more exact and methodical, in forming your notions of a church

than you express to me. How shall any man know by your general definition where to find the true church of Christ; for as I said, all parties lay claim to it, all call themselves orthodox and true believers? Now if there be not one standing and invariable rule by which we may safely and certainly distinguish the right from the wrong, the true from the false, how must we ever be able to convince gainfayers?

Now sir, if what you think and say be true, viz: that the church of England is not the true church of Christ, you have certainly, though undesignedly excluded yourself and all your brethren with you, from being members of the true church of Christ; for which, I suppose, they will scarcely give you thanks. But probably you will tell me, "the church of England is one particular society of true believers, and, therefore is, among others, a *branch* of the one true church." I suppose then we are to account every denomination (or as you word it society) of christians to be a *branch* of the one true church, are we not sir? If you say "Yes," you compel me to say, it is a most confused jumble. For true and false, right and wrong, without any difference or distinction are all blended together. And if you say "No, Every society of true believers is." It is the very same, because all will call themselves orthodox and true believers.

But perhaps you will say, "I do not mean that all that are called christian societies are all individually to a man, true believers; but that there are *some* true believers in every christian society: And these true believers, wherever they are found, make up the one true church of Christ." And if this be your meaning, sir, as it seems to me it must be, then we must conclude, that the church of Christ is gathered out, and composed of all the different societies of professing christians. But, dear sir, (let that be as it will) is this describing the church of Christ by any  
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rule that can be found in the Gospel? No certainly, it is not. I say fir, this description of the church of Christ is not according to any *gospel rule*, but is given at random, at very great random indeed fir. It is hoped, you can give a much fairer and more beautiful description of the church of Christ than this; which is no less, and no other, than making his church to be a *collection* of persons out of all societies, parties, or denominations of christians: Which *collection*, you know fir, will not be made until the last great day: So that according to this account, the church of Christ is such a church, as no body knows nor can know till it be gathered from the Four Winds. If I have mistook your meaning, I ask forgiveness.

Be pleased to permit me now fir, to ask you, where must we find a society of true believers? In your way of reasoning it seems to me absolutely impossible. For you say, “you think no society under heaven is the true church of Christ, but that all true believers make up that church.” If so, then, as these true believers are supposed to be scattered up and down, in a promiscuous manner throughout the whole of Christendom, and hid, as it were, in the several societies to which they do severally belong, where shall we find a society of true believers? For if no particular society be the true church, there can be no society of true believers. But if there be a society of true believers, that very society is the true church. Consequently, so many societies of true believers, just so many true churches.

“Every society of true believers is (say you) a *branch* of the one true church of Christ.” Every society of true believers is (say I) *a true church of Christ*. By a society of true believers, I understand (and must I think by every one be understood to mean) a number of persons joining together with their respective pastor or teacher, stately to worship God, and perform

form the public duties of religion, or in your own words, "to use the means of salvation," according to the order of the gospel. Now if this be a just definition of a society of true believers, as you will, I think, not deny; then it is evident, that such a society is a true church; as the following scriptures, with many more, do fully prove. *What thou seest, write in a book, and send it to the SEVEN Churches which are in Asia*, Rev. i. 11, 20. and Chap. ii. 7. All the CHURCHES shall know, ver. 23. The CHURCHES of Christ salute you, Rom. xvi. 16. *The care of all the CHURCHES*, 2 Cor. xi. 28. *But if any man will be contentious, we have no such custom, nor the CHURCHES*, (not branches) of God, 1 Cor. xi. 16. These texts are, you know, sir, so many glaring proofs of what I have asserted. By all which, it plainly appears, there are many true churches; even as many as there are societies of true believers; for it is certain, we shall never be all *one church* till we get to heaven. Therefore as many as agree together, to put themselves under the immediate care and government of their particular pastor or teacher, and who are under the just rules and regulations of the Gospel; are now, and ever were stiled a church of Christ. *Unto the angel or minister, bishop or pastor, of the church* (not branch) of Ephesus, Rev. ii. 1. Thus sir, I have, I think, clearly proved without leaving room for the least objection, that each society of true believers is a true church.

As to the difference some are pleased to make between *a* true church, and *the* true church, I look upon it to be mere trifling; for if *a* church be not *the* true church, it cannot be *a* true church; and if it be *a* true church, it must be *the* true church. *Unto the angel of THE church* (not A church, much less branch) in Philadelphia, Rev. iii. 7. Here was a particular society of true believers called *the* church, (as it is generally

generally in other places) and wherever there is a society of true believers at this day, that very society is *the* true church of Christ *in that place*, though not the universal true church of Christ over the whole world: For in the whole world Christ has many true churches.

Now sir, I hope you will not scruple to acknowledge you are in a mistake, about what you call a *branch* of the true church of Christ. When he said to his disciples, *I am the vine, ye are the branches*, John xv. 5. We very well know he did not mean that his disciples were so many societies of true believers. But I will add no more on this head, only tell you here, you very well knew I did not desire you to shew me the *invisible* church of Christ; that being impossible for any man to do. None can tell the individuals that shall be saved among those who have lived from the days of Adam to this day; and it is equally impossible to tell every individual, that shall be saved among those who are yet to be born from this to the last day. So that I can look upon what you have said upon this head to be nothing but mere evasion. And indeed sir, before I can persuade myself to proceed any farther, I am obliged to tell you, you do not deal candidly and ingenuously with me, not like a man of honour. For instead of sending me a direct answer, you send me no answer at all. You do not prove any thing, nor indeed do you undertake to prove any thing. "I do not conceive. So far as I know. According to the best of my judgment." These are your arguments to me sir, but do not clear up any one thing. What is the reason you keep so much at a distance? Are the things I spake of below your notice? Or are you conscious of the want of substantial arguments to stand before the face of truth? You say, "I, upon fixed principle, absolutely refuse to enter into a formal controversy upon the head" of church government. But why, sir, have you made  
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it a fixed principle, absolutely to refuse discussing that point? Are you afraid others should know what your form of church government is? Or are you fearful you are not able to defend it? You say, "I cannot spend time in opposing or defending this or that form of church government. I have *proved all things* of that kind for more than twenty years: I now *hold fast that which is good.*" Do you sir. That's well. But I fear there is *some good*; you are so far from *holding fast*, that you have not yet received. But you add, "That which in my judgment is not only not contrary to scripture, but strictly agreeable thereto." But in my judgment, it will, I think, be found in its proper place; you do hold that which is contrary, and therefore far from being strictly agreeable to holy scripture. Let me add sir, you do not seem willing to imitate the great and good *St. Paul*. He did not make it a fixed principle with him to refuse disputing for the honour of his master, for he was very often engaged in that work. Had it been a fixed principle with him to refuse disputing, he must also have made it a fixed principle to refuse preaching, for men would oppose him. Is it no matter what men believe, if they do but live well? (so it is called) This indeed with some, seems to be a favourite notion; the very *Sibboleth* of the present age; the darling of our times. All sorts of men are ready enough to say, "It signifies nothing what religion we are of, if we do but live good lives: It will never be asked what religion we were of." But what monstrous stupidity and downright falsehood is this! as might easily be evinced by unanswerable arguments. But what do men mean, think you sir, by "living good lives?" If they mean such lives as are according to the gospel, I know nobody that will contradict them. But this I fear is not the case, but a mere pretence, only designed to stop the

the mouths of them who oppose their gross errors. But I now observe,

Secondly, You tell me, " You think the mode of baptism is necessary to salvation ; I deny that even baptism itself is so ; if it were, every Quaker must be damned ; which I can in no wise believe." Dear sir, your believing or not believing either this or that, concerning the Quakers salvation, is nothing to the purpose. You could not possibly think sir, this would be received for argument : on the contrary, it is a sufficient proof of the want of it. Indeed, to speak freely, you are no more baptized than they. Sprinkling being no more a baptism, than scattering a little earth on the face of a dead person is a burial. This, the Quakers themselves will tell you. You and they stand upon a level merely with regard to baptism ; otherwise, you are worse than they. They neither have, nor pretend to have any water-baptism. But you call that baptism which is no baptism. You say and do not ; and yet dare not say as you do. You sprinkle a few drops of water on the face of a person, and say, " I baptize thee," which is not true. And you dare not say *I sprinkle thee*.

You say " I think the mode of baptism is necessary to salvation." But I must beg leave to tell you sir, you have spoken more than you know ; it was a word too far, you was too hasty and concluded too soon : You are therefore entirely mistaken ; I think no such thing. It is not so much the *mode* of baptism, as baptism itself I insist upon. Let but the *thing* be done, and I dare say we shall not differ about the *mode* or manner of doing it. But here sir, is " *your* grand mistake." You call that baptism which is no baptism, nor hath any resemblance or likeness to it. Baptism is a burial. 'Tis a burial (though indeed but for a moment) of the whole person in the water, as literally and truly as that is of a dead person when laid in the

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grave; only with this difference, one is buried in the water, the other in the earth. Now sir, you know that no one is buried who only lies upon the surface with a little dust sprinkled upon his face, any more than Job's three friends were buried, when they *sprinkled dust upon their heads*, Job ii, 12. Neither is that person baptized who has only a little water sprinkled on his face. And it is exactly agreeable to what I now say, that *St. Paul* himself speaks of Baptism, when he says, *We are buried with him* (that is Christ) *by baptism*. Rom. vi, 4.

No man ever did yet, nor ever can prove sprinkling to be baptism. They are not only different *names* but as different *things*; and convey as different ideas, being as different in sense as they are in sound. I therefore add, Baptism is immersing, overwhelming, or dipping. If therefore sprinkling be baptism, then sprinkling must be dipping; for all allow that baptism and dipping are synonymous terms; consequently, dipping and sprinkling are synonymous terms also. Now if this be just and right reasoning, it is no bad English to say, such a one has been dipped by only sprinkling a few drops on him. But I must observe farther, you look upon *sprinkling* to be not a mode only, but as *much*, as *properly* and *equally* (to all intents and purposes) *baptism*, as dipping itself is. By which we are led to conclude that sprinkling is dipping, and dipping is sprinkling. 'Tis allowed on all hands that baptism is *dipping*, and you say *sprinkling* is baptism; if so, then sprinkling must be dipping. Again, say you, baptism is sprinkling. (I mean, you own and acknowledge it so to be, and so do thousands more besides yourself) And all say *dipping* is baptism; if so, then dipping must be sprinkling. How can these things be reconciled sir? If therefore you will insist upon it that sprinkling is baptism, you must also in-

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upon it that sprinkling is dipping. Now fir, if these are not real inconsistencies, yea palpable contradictions, then let our next conclusion be to throw away our bibles and our reason together. You cannot but see fir, that allowing dipping and sprinkling to be each of them fully and equally baptism, they do necessarily infer one another, as I have proved. Let us now see what we can make of it, by allowing them to be two different *modes* of baptism. But first we are obliged to lay down the following conclusion, viz.

Dipping and sprinkling are of the same import and signification, *one and the same thing*; at the same time they are allowed to be *two different modes of that same thing*. 'Tis indeed a strange conclusion! But however, we cannot help it, if it be wrong. give me leave to pleasantly tell you, we must impute it to the learned, such as you fir. I proceed; dipping and sprinkling are two different modes of baptism: This very naturally leads one to ask what is baptism? Why, it is either or both dipping and sprinkling. Profound reasoning! Who can stand against the force of such an argument? Dipping and sprinkling are each of them distinctly and separately, truly and properly, baptism. Dipping and sprinkling are two distinct and proper modes of baptism. Then say I, dipping and sprinkling are modes of one another? which I thus evince.

You allow dipping to be a *mode* of baptism, and that sprinkling is baptism; that is, sprinkling is the *thing* which dipping is the *mode* of. Therefore *dipping* must be a *mode* of sprinkling. Again, you allow that *sprinkling* is a *mode* of baptism, and that *dipping* is baptism; that is, dipping is the *thing* which sprinkling is a *mode* of: therefore *sprinkling* must be a *mode* of dipping.

Thus it appears that by making dipping and sprinkling synonymous terms, they produce a heap of synonymous nonsense. If indeed it were so, that tho' they

they are two different sounds, yet they carry but one and the same *sense*; two names, but express one and the same *thing*; two words, but convey one and the same *idea*; all would be well enough. But it is no such thing. we all know it is not; indeed dipping and baptism are exactly so, and we are all sure and confident of it, no body disputes it: but all the world can never make the others so.

Suppose a man should affirm with all the assurance and confidence imaginable, that creeping and jumping are two different modes of leaping; yea, that they are distinctly and separately, truly and properly leaping itself, would any body believe him? What would such a man be called? Or suppose a man ever so dogmatically to assert that he is as rightly and truly buried, who lies upon the surface with a little earth upon his face, as he is who is put into it and covered all over with it, would not every body laugh at him and say, the man is either touched in his senses, or knows not what a burial is, or cares not what he says? Again,

What would that mistress say to her maid, who having commanded her to wash the linen, should, instead of washing it, only sprinkle a few drops of water on it? Or it being rightly washed, should bid her sprinkle it in order for folding it up, and she should, instead of that, go and dip it into the water? Once more.

Suppose you was to send a piece of cloth to be dyed and the Dyer was only to sprinkle a few drops of the colour upon it, and send it you back again, what would you say to it? Would you say it was really and properly dyed? Or would you not rather say, the Dyer never dipt this cloth in his Vat, he has only sprinkled, spotted and stained it, and thereby has done it more harm than good. The application is easy.

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Now sir, it does, I think, most clearly appear that sprinkling is so far from being baptism, that it is not so much as a mode of it; hath no likeness to it, nor any resemblance of it, but is as different from it as creeping is from leaping. Thus I have sufficiently and justly exposed the weakness and absurdity of allowing sprinkling to be baptism, nay, or so much as a mode of it. Do you not see sir, that it unavoidably involves you in inextricable difficulties? And do you not see that your distinction between what you call the mode of baptism and baptism itself, has no just foundation? You make a difference where it is not possible to be made, and part those things which all the world cannot put asunder, and join those together which are at the utmost distance from each other. For to speak of dipping as a *mode* of baptism is to make a difference where there is none; and is just as good sense, as saying dipping is a mode of dipping, which is no sense at all. I say therefore, dipping is not a *mode* of baptism, but *baptism itself*. And to speak of sprinkling as a mode of baptism, is joining those things together which can never come near one another, for it is no less and no other than making sprinkling to be a mode of dipping, which is like the other, no sense at all. Therefore, when we speak of the *mode* of baptism, it is to be conceived and understood only of that particular act of the baptist or administrator upon the person baptized. But to talk of dipping and sprinkling being modes of baptism is to talk downright nonsense. And now I conclude this with wishing that you, and all others who are not, may soon become right and fit subjects for baptism in the right and true sense.

You have said sir, that "I think the mode of baptism is necessary to salvation," and I have told you that you are mistaken, and that I believe no such thing. But whatever I think, *you* do flatly and positively

tively "deny that even baptism itself is so." But what if I should prove that *even you yourself* do make baptism necessary to salvation, what would you say then sir? However I will try for once what can be done.

Remember pray sir, and well consider your own words in your Farther Appeal, where you say, "We approve of, and adhere to all that we learned when we were children, in our catechism and common-prayer-book. We hold, and ever have done, the same opinions we received from our forefathers. We approve both the doctrines and discipline of our church. We agree with you, both in the externals and circumstantials of religion." \* Now sir, as you say you "approve of, and adhere to all you learned in your catechism and common-prayer-book, &c." You must I think, allow, that Baptism is necessary to salvation. For in the answer to the very second question in your catechism, it is said, "wherein I was made (i. e. in baptism) a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." What doth this mean? Is it not a full declaration that baptism is necessary not only to your being made a member of Christ, the child of God, but as the certain consequence thereof, and inheritor of the kingdom of heaven? For what had you, or any other child more at what you call baptism, than *baptism* to make you an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven? Now sir, if you were not, and could not be made a member of Christ, the child of God and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven without baptism, then you must acknowledge that it is necessary to make you both the one and the other; consequently, it must be necessary to salvation. And if you were, or could be both the one and the other without baptism, what was you (as you call it) baptized for? But that you make baptism necessary

\* Farther Appeal, page 134 and 135.

say,

to falvation will farther appear, from hence. You fay, you “ hold, and ever have done, the fame opinions with your forefathers.” Now fir, was it not the opinion of your forefathers, and therefore your own; according to article 9, “ that in every perfon born into this world it deferveth God’s wrath and damnation ?” And is it not in confequence of this opinion, (call it if you like it better, an article of your faith,) that every child ought to be baptized ? Is not baptifm fupposed at leaft to wash away *Original fin* ? And is not that fin fupposed to be the caufe of every perfon’s being in a ftate of wrath and damnation at his coming into the world ? And that every perfon is delivered therefrom, and removed into a ftate of falvation, in, or by his baptifm ? This is I think what is generally believed, or why is the minifter fent for in fuch hafte to fprinkle a child that is thought to be in danger of death ? ’Tis evident you dare not let your children go out of the world without what you wrongly call baptifm. Pray what doth this look like ? Is it not making baptifm neceffary to falvation ? If it is not, tell me what is. If therefore, you do not make baptifm neceffary to falvation, why do you (as you call it) baptize them ? Now if a child fhould die immediately after it is baptized, (to ufe not to allow the term) you have no fear of its damnation, becaufe it is fupposed to be by *baptifm* put into a new and different ftate from what it was in before ; therefore, if before baptifm it was in a ftate of damnation, but at, or in baptifm in a ftate of falvation ; I appeal to all the world, whether you do not make baptifm neceffary to falvation. And now fir, you are I think, brought to this *Dilemma*, viz. You muft either allow that baptifm is neceffary to falvation, or deny that it is neceffary to baptize infants. And if you will not allow the former, you muft either acknowledge or deny the latter. Acknowledge it you cannot, for that would  
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be allowing what you deny, viz. that baptism is necessary to salvation. And if you deny it, you entirely dissolve infant baptism. How you will find your way out of this Labyrinth fir, I do not know, except you renounce your error and embrace the truth.

'Tis true, I have known some of the church of England who had no fear of their childrens damnation had they died without sprinkling, but only had it done out of custom and to obtain a decent burial for them. This brings to my mind what I have often wondered at, I mean your refusal to bury an unbaptized child in the common way of burying those you call baptized. In some places not so much as suffering the Bell to be rung to let any body know a child is dead. Pray fir, what is the reason of it? Is it because the unbaptized child's soul is gone to hell, and therefore its body is not worth taking notice of? One would hope not; and yet some people would be almost tempted to think so. 'Tis I think a piece of partiality, though no real hurt done to those little ones. But upon the whole, if it appears that the church of England holds baptism necessary to salvation, as it seems pretty clear and evident she does; and as you approve of, and adhere to all you learned in your catechism and common-prayer book, &c. &c. you must, consistently therewith, notwithstanding your denial to me, allow that baptism is necessary to salvation, And now fir, I will take the liberty to reason a little upon the necessity of Baptism, and give you my real thoughts upon it without reserve, in all plainness and simplicity. First, to whom baptism is not necessary. Secondly to whom it is, and to what ends.

First, Baptism is not necessary to those who never heard of Christ; nor to those who have heard of him and yet continue unbelievers, whether they be *Pagans, Jews, Turks or Deists*; and all others be they who they will that do not believe in Christ. Nor to ideots,  
reasons

nor infants. All which, without the least scruple, will, I doubt not, be readily granted, except the infants last mentioned. And therefore I must give the reasons why baptism is not necessary to them, much less to their salvation, although you and your church make it so. But here I must observe, that baptism, nor indeed any other duty singly and alone, avails no one. (To add nothing farther at present) But your church makes infants salvation to depend upon baptism only, and that not as an act of their own neither; for as every body knows, they are wholly passive in it: So that if baptism be not necessary to their salvation, it is indeed in no sense necessary to them.

For they are wholly destitute, and altogether incapable of religious principles and practices; and this is one good reason why baptism is not necessary to them. Which I will farther illustrate from your own catechism, which will, I hope, have the more weight with you, because it is what you approve of and adhere to. Therefore,

When with respect to baptism, it is asked, What is the inward and spiritual grace?" The answer is, "a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness; for being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace." This answer is exactly agreeable to what I have observed before, concerning the state of infants before and after baptism, 'Tis allowed here they are born in sin, and the children of wrath, and are by baptism made the children of grace. By *baptism* therefore they are supposed to be brought out of, or changed from their former state of sin and wrath into a state of grace, &c. So that it is plain, you attribute abundantly more to baptism than either *we* or the scriptures ever do. For in them we no where read that baptism is so efficacious, or were ever designed so to be to any persons, much less to infants, about  
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whose baptism, no one ever read a word therein. Here then is another plain proof you do make baptism necessary to salvation. It is most evident and certain, that according to the sacred scriptures, there must be some qualifications in every one previous to baptism; which qualifications are entirely wanting, nay, it is absolutely impossible they should ever be found in infants; and consequently it is not at all necessary that they should be baptized.

Now these qualifications according to your own catechism, are, "a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness." These make up what is called "the inward and spiritual grace," which no infant can be possessed of. \* Again, you farther ask, "What is required of persons (indefinitely) to be baptized? To which the answer is, "Repentance whereby they forsake sin, and Faith whereby they stedfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that sacrament." What repentance and faith are there or can possibly be found in infants sir? Without these you know there can be no death unto sin, no new birth unto righteousness; consequently, no inward and spiritual grace, which ought to be always joined with the outward and visible sign or form in baptism. It is therefore evident to a demonstration, that as infants want those qualifications which, according to your own catechism, are previously necessary in order to make fit subjects for baptism, it must needs follow by an unavoidable consequence, that baptism is not necessary to them.

But to the next question, "Why then are infants baptized," (ay say I why indeed?) when by reason of their tender age they cannot perform them? That is, the duties of repentance and faith. Or in other words, as repentance and faith are required of per-

\* No one at its baptism ever gave proof of a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness.

persons previous to their being baptized, why are infants baptized, who can neither repent nor believe? Answer, "Because they" [infants] "promise them both" [viz. repentance and faith] "by their sureties, which promise, when they come to age, themselves are bound to perform." In this answer is contained the reason why infants are baptized, although at that time they can neither repent nor believe. And the reason is, "because *they* promise" (so it is expressed) to do "both" sometime, and that is "when they come to age." Here let us observe, 1. *Who* are said to promise? 2. *What* they are said to promise, 3. *By whom* they are said to promise. 1. *Who*. --- *Infants*. I deny it. They promise neither: For they promise nothing. Nor can they, being utterly incapable of making a promise; therefore for any one to assert it, is no less than an insult upon the common sense of mankind; a high and glaring affront to their understanding. None can make a promise without his own knowledge at least. 2. *What* infants are said to promise. To repent and believe. No such thing. You know they do not. For if (as has been said) they promise nothing, they do not promise to repent and believe. But 3. *By whom* they are said to promise. "By their sureties." So it is said indeed, but it is far from being right; for if infants can make no promise at all, they can make none by their sureties; if they could make a promise by their sureties, they could make the same promise without them; so that it is the same thing exactly to promise by their sureties as to promise without them; for none can make a promise by another to a third person without his own personal knowledge. Every promise made to another, whether by surety or deputy, (call him what you please) must be the act and deed of the promiser. Let us for once suppose a man should come and tell you that a child of three days old, had promised by him, to give you a thousand pounds when he came

to age, would you pay any regard to such a promise, or to the person who told you so? Would you not rather resent it as an insult, or laugh at him for his ridiculous foolery, or pity the weakness of his intellects, and shew him the absurdity and impossibility of such a promise? And could that child be obliged when he came to age to make such a pretended promise good? It is therefore a wrong answer to a needless question in your catechism; for, in short, the child is so far from promising any thing, by his sureties, that if there be a promise made, it is by the sureties for the child, not the child by the sureties; as is plain from the third question in the catechism. "What did your godfathers and godmothers then for you? Answer, "*They did promise and vow (not I by them) three things in my name,*" in my stead. for me, or in behalf of me. *They did promise.* That is it sir.

But it is to be observed, that the promise which infants are said to make by their sureties, is not expected nor required to be performed by them till they come to age; that is, till they are capable of knowing and understanding the nature of the promise they are said to have made; if so, why in such haste to have a promise made so many years before it can be performed with any advantage? Therefore if the promise is not, cannot be performed till they come to years of understanding, of what use can the making of such a promise be to them? What end can it answer? Can they for whom it is made, be any better for it? Wherein? They are not bound to observe it till they understand it; would it not be soon enough to make it when they do understand it? Surely it would. For if they for whom it is made, neither are nor can be the better for it till themselves perform it, what stands such a promise for? Do you say, The promise made for infants by their sureties lays them under a greater obligation to perform it when they do come to

to age? That is sooner said than proved; however I will venture to deny it. No person can be under any obligation at all to perform a promise made for him by another, and which he himself never made, nor authorized any one to make for him; for as I have said the infant does not, cannot make it, no not by his sureties. Every promise which a person stands engaged to perform, must be made by himself personally; therefore if any person makes a promise for another, it must be by the order and appointment, authority and commission, will and consent of that other person, in whose name, and for whom he makes it.

How extremely wrong therefore it is to say as you do at what you call baptizing of infants. --- "This infant must also faithfully for his part, promise by you that are his sureties that he will renounce the devil." And again, For as much as this child hath promised by you his sureties to renounce the devil and all his works, to believe in God, and to serve him; --- ye must see that he be taught what a solemn vow, promise and profession, he hath here made by you." Whereas on the contrary, it is most certain, the child neither did nor could make such a promise; nor do the sureties take it so, but that they themselves made the solemn vow and promise for the child. This is evident by their being desirous to clear themselves of it as soon as they can, at least some of them. Though there are many who never think any more about it, or only laugh and make a mere jest of it. Pray what stand such sureties for?

Besides, who can help observing the inconsistency which so evidently shews itself in this transaction? --- One while the child is said to promise by his sureties, another while the sureties are said to promise for the child; what a strange jumble of things is here! Not one word of scripture to support such a practice. Now fir,

fir, by what I have said, doth it not plainly appear you make baptism necessary to salvation?? That you make it necessary to the salvation of infants? Why else do you make so much ado about their baptism?

Let us now proceed a step farther, and see what we can find in the holy scripture to favour infants baptism; for if there be nothing to be found for it there, I am very sure it can never be necessary upon christian and protestant principles.

Well, --- I have sought, but can find nothing of it in the holy scripture; I may be allowed to assert therefore, that the baptism of infants is not necessary as a thing belonging to christianity. Now who can imagine that he who is so great a lover of our souls, would have neglected to appoint any one thing to be done by us as necessary to our own or our childrens salvation? Had our blessed Lord seen it necessary that our children should be baptized, we are absolutely sure and certain, he would have given us not some slight intimation of it, much less have never mentioned it, (which is indeed the very case) but would have absolutely and certainly required it at our hands, and therefore would undoubtedly have enjoined the same upon us, as God did circumcision upon the Jews by *Moses*. We cannot surely entertain such a thought of the kindest and best of Beings. that he requires that of us which he has never revealed to us, has given us not so much as the farthest distant hint of. Do you say, "The scripture no where forbids us to baptize infants?" Very true. And it is equally as true, that it no where requires us to baptize them; now fir, I think I am even with you. But I will try if I can to put the odds on my side; and thereby if possible, to put the matter out of dispute.

It is, I know, frequently said that "The scripture no where forbids us to baptize infants, therefore they may be baptized." What a reason is this! How very  
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low and trifling. By whose authority may they be baptized? If men may do that as an act of religious worship which is not forbidden, purely because it is not forbidden what arguments must we use against the *Papists* to convince them of doing many things wrong? they will say such a thing is not forbidden. It is well known that many errors have crept into the church at this door. If it is necessary that infants should be baptized, is it not equally necessary that they should receive the Lord's Supper? --- Why not? It is no where forbidden. But if this is not necessary, neither is that. Pray sir, be pleased seriously to consider Deut. xviii. 18, 19, 20. and I think you may there see, that under the christian dispensation God hath strictly forbid any thing to be done in his name which he hath not commanded; and hath also given a sanction to the general prohibition by a most severe threatening.

If therefore any man would prove that such, or such a thing ought to be done as an act of worship, he ought certainly to shew a command from God for it, or at least a precedent from the scripture. But if he can bring neither precept nor example from the scripture, he can never prove either *this* or *that* ought to be done as an act of religious worship. Now, if this be the case with respect to infants baptism, as you know it really is the very case, then for this very reason, it must surely be allowed, infants ought not to be baptized. It will readily be granted, that whatsoever the gospel commands, it is our indispensable duty to obey; because whatsoever is commanded, is necessary to those persons to whom the command is given; on the other hand, whatsoever is not commanded, nor so much as mentioned in the Gospel, as infants baptism certainly is not, can in no sense be obligatory on us. I add,

If Christ has commanded all things necessary to be done by us, but has no where commanded us to baptize



baptize infants, then infants baptism is not necessary. Now sir, which way will you enervate this argument? You will not deny that Christ has commanded all things necessary to be done by us; nor will you I think, assert that he has commanded us to baptize infants; therefore it must needs follow that infants baptism is not necessary. Again,

If Christ has only commanded penitent believers to be baptized, then surely we must conclude that only such are to be baptized. Therefore if the former be true, so is the latter. I farther add,

If infants may be baptized because it is not forbidden, for the very same reason they may receive the Lord's supper, because it is not forbidden. Pray sir, for what reason are infants denied the Lord's supper? I know it hath been said, "if infants were not to be baptized, it would have been expressly forbidden in the scripture?" No sir, there is you know no need for such a prohibition, any more than for their being prohibited to eat the Lord's supper, or to preach. They are as incapable of baptism as they are of eating the Lord's supper, or of preaching. There can be no need to prohibit a person to do that which he is quite incapable of doing. Infants are altogether incapable of repentance and faith, which must always precede baptism, and therefore it cannot be a duty according to the gospel rule, to baptize infants in the name of the Lord. Once more,

Infants baptism cannot be at all necessary, because our blessed Lord who certainly knew all things, and therefore knew their state and condition better than we, hath pronounced them to be *such* who are of *the kingdom of heaven* without it, Math. xix. 14. They therefore need not be baptized to make them inheritors of *the kingdom of heaven*, for our Lord hath absolutely assured us (and who dare deny it?) they are of *that kingdom*. Thus sir, it stands clear and plain, that

that baptism is not necessary to the salvation of infants ; which was the thing I undertook to prove, and which I have, I think, sufficiently proved. I shall therefore let it rest here till you, or somebody else shall refute what I have advanced. I proceed,

Secondly, To give you my thoughts of the persons to whom baptism is necessary and to what ends it is so to them.

First, Baptism is necessary to all those who repent and believe the gospel, and to them only ; for they only are the persons who are commanded to be baptized. To prove which, we will begin our account from *John*, who was the first commissioned *Baptist* in the world. Now sir, you very well know that those who come to be baptized of him, were such as confessed their sins, repented of them, and believed his doctrine, Math. iii. 6. Mark i. iv. Luke iii. 3. Acts xix. 4. As therefore *John* baptized none but such as these, it is most evident *he* baptized no infants ; nay, there were *Pharisees and Sadducees* came to be baptized of him, but he rejected them, because the *fruits meet for repentance* (which he bid them bring forth) did not appear in them, Math. iii. 7, 8. 'Tis therefore plain that only such as repented, &c. were baptized, which, 'tis certain they need not have been, if baptism had not been necessary ; likewise our great Lord himself when he became a teacher of men, the first lesson of instruction he taught them, was, to *repent and believe the Gospel*, Mark i. 15. And all who learned of him and received his instructions, and so were made his disciples, were also baptized, John iv. 1, *Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John*. But if baptism had not been necessary to penitent believers in virtue of the original divine command God had given to *John*, we have no reason to think our Lord would have continued to practise it ; but we are very sure he did as long as he continued to make disciples. And

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when he was just going to leave the world and his chosen disciples together, he gave them full commission and authority to continue making disciples by the same means he himself had used, viz. by teaching and instructing them into the knowledge of the same doctrines he had taught them, and afterward to baptize all such who were so taught and instructed in every part of the world where they were to go, Math xxviii. 19. *Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them.*---- Nothing can possibly be more full and express, more evident and certain, than that the apostles were first to *teach* men the knowledge of God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and whatever was needful for them to know in order to make them disciples of Christ, and so to fit and prepare them for baptism. Let us now follow our Lord's disciples a little way into the world, and see how well they executed the commission they received from their great master.

First, we find *Peter* preaching to a numerous audience of Jews, his own countrymen and citizens of Jerusalem; thousands of whom being fully convinced of the truth of his doctrine, *said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ.*--- Acts ii. 37, 38: Now if *Peter* had known that baptism was not necessary, he would only have said *repent every one of you.* His connecting it so closely with repentance, seems as if he made it as necessary as repentance.

Now if those enlightened and convinced Jews had entertained the same notion of baptism as some in this day do, who pretend to be no less enlightened, if not much more so, than they, we might have expected to have heard them making the same, or such like objections as these do now. "What need is there *Peter* for us to be baptized? We repent of our sins, we believe in Christ; and for the future will act upon new principles,

ples, and devote ourselves wholly to him and his religion. Is not this therefore sufficient without baptism? Why must we be baptized? Baptism is only an outward thing, a little thing; (as many of your followers have said) what benefit can it be to us?"----- But we hear of no such objections in those days. Men were I believe then, greater lovers of Christ and his ways than to dispute whether they should obey him or not, even in the smallest matters. Again,

It is certain and evident that the same apostle seems to lay a great stress upon baptism, and fully makes it appear that it is necessary to something whatever it is, and that of very great moment too, even to such who had received the extraordinary gifts of the *Holy Ghost*. For says he with respect to Cornelius and his friends, *Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized,* Acts x. 47, 48. Now if any persons ever had the least reason to refuse to be baptized, these, next to our blessed Lord, must have had the greatest. But we do not hear so much as one of them opening his mouth against it. None saying I have been baptized with the *Holy Ghost and with fire*, I need no other baptism, as some of your disciples have vainly pretended. Pray sir, what could it possibly be that made baptism so necessary to those converted Gentiles? It was not their not having received the Holy Ghost; for that they had received. It must be, one would think, something very extraordinary that made baptism so necessary to them. But what it was, I will leave you to determine as you please.

I add farther, as a proof that baptism is necessary to those who repent and believe, that most surprising instance of *Saul*; who, though converted in that extraordinary way by Christ himself, as we read of, Acts ix. and xxii. chapters, yet must be baptized. And

when " *he trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? The Lord said unto him, arise, go into the city [Damascus] and it shall be told thee what thou must do,* Acts ix. 6. Accordingly he went into the city, and our Lord sent one *Ananias*, a good and a devout man, to teach and to tell him what he was to do; and among other things one was to be baptized. What so wonderful a convert to be baptized! What necessity could there be for that?

But 'tis evident you see sir, it is not the highest degree of grace given, or being possessed of the greatest blessings and privileges below, that will, or can, or were ever designed to exempt any one soul from being obedient to the Lord Jesus Christ in baptism. No sir, no more than from any other duty. Notwithstanding all that Saul had given him by Christ, or was now become by grace, *he must be baptized.* Yes sir, it *must* be so; it was so then, it must and ought to be so now. It is very remarkable and worthy of attention. Saul cries out *Lord what wilt thou have me to do?* And the Lord bid him go into the city and it should be told him what he *must do.* How very emphatical are these words of our blessed Lord, *must do.* This necessary work of baptism Saul seemed to be very dilatory about, which made Ananias say to him, *And now, why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord,* Acts xxii. 16. Therefore I conclude, that what was necessary for penitent and believing *Saul* to do, *we must do;* is equally necessary, for every penitent, believing soul now to do; yea *must do.* For who is to make laws for Christ? Or what authority hath any man, or body of men to change the unalterable laws of the Son of God? But

Lastly, Let baptism however be what it will, either for greatness or necessity, it is our sovereign Lord and King hath made it so; and as none ought to make it  
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less, so none can make it greater and more necessary than he has made it by his own example, and by his own authoritative command. 'Tis well known the apostles did not invent and set it up of their own authority, for they had none, and pretended to none but what they received from their great Lord and Master; and as they acted solely by his authority, so they punctually obeyed him in baptizing as well as preaching, for one was their work as well as the other, which they carefully and constantly performed in all places where they were received.

I ask, was it necessary that Christ should have been baptized? It was. Which appears plain from his own words to John. *Thus it becomes us to fulfil all righteousness*, Math. iii. 16. Though it seems John thought otherwise. But Jesus knew better than John. Now if it was necessary that Christ himself should be baptized, is it not as necessary that all who call themselves his disciples and followers should be baptized also? Surely it is highly necessary that they should. His command makes it necessary to us, for we ought to obey him in all things whatsoever he has commanded. This he himself has given us as the criterion of our being his friends and disciples, John viii. 31 and xv. 14. And therefore to excite us to *this*, as well as to any other part of duty we have. 1. His command. 2. His example. 3. A sure declaration that he is the *author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him*, Heb. v. 9. Not partially but universally. But can it be rightly and properly said of those persons who will not be baptized, that they do universally obey him? It cannot; For baptism is certainly a part of that obedience we owe to our Lord Jesus Christ. It is well known and universally acknowledged that the least act of disobedience is a sin; all therefore who believe in Christ, and will not be baptized according to his command, are, in that particular, disobedient, and con-

consequently must live in sin. Now if baptism (not sprinkling) be a command of Christ, how will you and your followers clear your consciences of guilt, if you will not obey it? Is not one command as forcible and binding as another? Which may we dispense with and not be guilty? In short, if baptism be not necessary to be complied with by the persons to whom it is commanded, it cannot be necessary at all. And if Christ has commanded us to do *that*, which when done, will be nothing to our spiritual interest, or if left undone, will be no detriment to us, what stands such an insignificant command for?

Some there are who excuse themselves in their disobedience to Christ, in neglecting baptism, thus, "We cannot see it to be our duty; --- we have no burden on our consciences in the omission of it. -- If it be our duty, we hope God will shew it us; will convince us of it by his spirit, &c." But if such persons will not see it in the New Testament, for there it is written, and there it stands to be seen and read, and known of all that have a real desire to acquaint themselves with, and cheerfully perform every part of duty; I say if they will not see it in the New-Testament, and be convinced of their duty from that inspired, sacred and unerring word, I know not that they have any reason to expect a new revelation. And indeed, according to that way of reasoning, if it will bear that name, men may excuse themselves from just what they please. Whatsoever they have no mind to comply with, they may pretend they do not see it to be their duty. --- But if they will not hear and believe *Moses and the prophets*, Christ and his apostles, I know not of any other means that will be sufficient to bring them to believe.

There are some that do not scruple to say, "*faith* in Christ is not necessary" as *Jews* and *Deists*. But what doth their sayings prove? Truly nothing. Now the

the *Quakers* say the same of the Lord's supper as they do of the Lord's baptism: But ought they not to be baptized? Ought they not to receive the Lord's supper? Can such as these be rightly called *True Believers*? Are they according to Christ's gospel and the rules therein contained, as safe, and therefore may be as certain of salvation without these things, as others are with them in the answer of a good conscience? If so, what do they stand for? If at the last day excuses will be received for just reasons and pretences for performances, who will not have something to plead? And then who will not be saved? If persons who entertain wild enthusiastic notions, who maintain false and dangerous doctrines, are to be accounted True Believers, what must we do with our bibles? What is our rule of faith and practice for? O dear sir! let us be very careful we do not *sew pillows to peoples arm-holes*, Ezek. xiii. 18. Let us never prophecy smooth and deceitful things out of our own hearts, to make them quiet and easy, and so to rest and be satisfied in their errors and false doctrines. The *Jews* may come at the last day and tell their judge, we could not see it while we lived on earth to be our duty any more than we could see it to be for our interest and happiness to believe and own thee to be our *Messiah*, we had no burden upon our consciences for putting thee to death, as a blasphemer, &c. We believed then that thou wast an imposter. Had God by his Spirit convinced us that thou wast indeed the very Christ, or hadst thou come down from the cross, we would certainly have received and owned thee. But alas! how vain will all this be at such a time; and is it not equally as vain now for any man to say he cannot see it to be his duty to be baptized? When it is certain there is no christian duty more plainly and expressly declared in the New-Testament.

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There are indeed some, who under the notion of charity to all who profess christianity, think, that the want of baptism is not at all hurtful to them who pretend they cannot see it to be their duty to be baptized, and therefore those who are baptized, ought not to scruple to receive and own those as members of the visible christian church who are not baptized, and allow them to have communion with them at the Lord's Table. And that to make any difference between those who are, and those who are not baptized, is both unreasonable and uncharitable, and destroys peace and unity. But to such persons it must, I think, be said, they mistake the true notion of charity.

What is charity but the love of God and our neighbour? And wherein is our love to be manifested? Why first, I think our love to God is to be manifested by our steady adherence to, and universal compliance with all his commands; agreeable to which saith St. John, *This is the love of God that we keep his commandments*, 1 John, v. 3. And saith our blessed Lord, *He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me. If any man love me he will keep my words*, John xiv. 21, 23. Secondly, Our love to our neighbour is to be manifested by our readiness and willingness to do him all the good service we can, both to his soul and body. *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*, Math. xix. 19. And to do unto him all that which we would have him do unto us. This is charity to God and man. But surely God no where requires us to sacrifice and give up the truth, or any part of it, for the sake even of this noblest kind of charity to our neighbour. And it would cease to be charity, or love to God, if I was to break his commandments. For how absurd would it be to pretend to love him, and at the same time to disobey him, or countenance others in their neglect of any of his commands. At the same time therefore that we pretend

tend to exalt charity, let us be very careful we do not set aside a plain, positive and express command of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This would be making one duty to interfere with another; nay, even to destroy or make void another. 'Tis also supposing at least, that the doing of one duty is to atone for the neglect of another, which is certainly wrong; and is running directly into the same error with those *St. James* speaks of, chapter the ii. 10, 11. --- But whether is that charity greatest, which destroys an ordinance of God for the sake of pleasing men, under a pretence of greater love to them, and for the sake of living in peace and unity with them; or that which obeys God in all things, for the sake of pleasing him, and thereby manifesting the highest regard and love to him?

Hath God any where given me leave the better to shew my love to my fellow-creature, to disobey any one of his precepts? Or hath he the better to shew my love and regard to himself, commanded me to obey him in all things whatsoever he hath said unto me; although all men should be displeas'd with me; should speak all manner of evil against me; and among other railing language; should call me an uncharitable, narrow-spirited, precise, conceited fool? Or hath he driven me into such a strait, that if I will maintain true christian love and peace with men, I must inevitably disobey him in some one or other of his commands? Or else if I will resolutely and constantly adhere to him, and strictly and universally comply with his just and sovereign will, I must necessarily want charity to men? I say sir, is the true state of the case? You know and every body else may know that it is not. Therefore, let us resolve with the aid of omnipotence, come what will come, to obey God in all things; and if men will despise and contemn us, nay, will even persecute and destroy us for our close adherence to every part of duty, we shall however be

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approved

approved of God, who will, according to his gracious promise, gloriously reward his faithful and dutiful servants and children, whose steady conduct is directed and governed according to his own most wise and unerring rules. But,

Secondly, To what ends baptism is necessary. First, It is necessary to the fulfilling all righteousness, Math. iii. 15. To this end our blessed Lord himself submitted to it, and yielded obedience to the will and commandment of his Father; and at the same time has left us the most illustrious example to excite us to do what he hath done before us. Now if it was necessary for our Lord Jesus Christ to be baptized in order to fulfill all righteousness, is it not necessary that we should be baptized also? Was it more necessary for him to be baptized than for us? Wherein? If he could not fulfill all righteousness without it how can we? If our Lord had not been baptized, he had omitted some part of righteousness; consequently, all those who refuse to be baptized must live in sin. Can we think Christ fulfilled this part of righteousness to exempt us from it? No surely. We are very sure that he fulfilled all righteousness, but with no design to exempt us from any part of duty. 'Tis plain therefore, that baptism is an act of righteousness, which is our duty, and becomes us to be found in the practice of. Christ's words are very remarkable, he doth not say --- *For thus it becometh ME*, but *US to fulfill all righteousness*. US who call ourselves his followers. How can you sir, or any other person be perfectly righteous, if you will not submit to this part of *the righteousness of God*? As much as you cry up perfection, this neglect of duty is certainly a great imperfection, and spoils the boast of many of your followers, who arrogantly say they live without sin. Neither is it to any purpose to say, "We have been baptized in our infancy," for I have proved that to be a mistake.

take. And it is to as little purpose to say, as they seem to be vastly fond of saying, and even to greatly glory in, viz. "we have been baptized with the Holy Ghost." This I may venture absolutely to deny. But if they have been so baptized yet are they still under the same obligation to be baptized with water, and that you know very well from the instance of Cornelius and his friends already mentioned.

Secondly, baptism is necessary to the receiving persons into the visible church of Christ, in order to their being made partakers of all the blessings and privileges thereof. For Christ himself has assured us that *except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into his church or kingdom*, John iii. 5. And it is plain, that in the days of the apostles, none were received members of his church before they repented and were baptized, as the New-Testament abundantly confirms. Therefore, in those days no infant was ever admitted. Indeed no unbaptized person how holy and godly soever, could find admittance into Christ's church then, consequently no unbaptized person ought to be received into his church now. If so, then this is a plain proof that baptism is necessary to church-membership. We read in Acts ii. 41, 42, *Then they that gladly received the word of the gospel preached by Peter, were baptized and added to the church; and that they continued stedfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers.* So that it is evident the mother church which was first founded at *Jerusalem* had no infant in it. As therefore the church there was wholly composed of believers, so they were such, and none but such as were baptized. All which is quite contrary to your practice of sprinkling infants, and thereby making them church-members. --- And yet they are never the better for it neither; for they are ignorant of the apostles doctrine, incapable of having fellowship with be-

lievers, of commemorating the death of Christ by partaking of the sacred elements and offering up prayers and thanksgiving with the congregation. All which are certainly of no use to them, but of great benefit to those who rightly know and believe in Jesus. --- 'Tis true indeed, I have read that the *eucharist* has been given to children, but you do not do so. Why fir, are they not as capable of the Lord's supper as they are of the Lord's baptism? What is it that incapacitates them? If they are not capable of the former, I need never be afraid to say, they are incapable of the latter. Prove that they are capable of baptism, but prove it by the New-Testament, or otherwise I cannot receive it, and I will prove that they are capable of the Lord's supper. You do agree with me fir, about the necessity of baptism in order to church-membership; we only differ about what is truly and properly baptism, and who are to be accounted the only proper subjects of it; and consequently, who are to be received as proper members of the *body of Christ the church*, Ephes. i. 22, 23. And indeed it is a material thing to be well assured of. Were we all of one mind in these things, many strifes and divisions, contentions and animosities, would soon and for ever cease. O that we could once see that day! What exultation! What joy would fill the hearts of all pious souls! How would every sincere lover of the Lord Jesus rejoice and be glad to live in love, peace and unity. with all his bréthren and fellow-members of the pure, the uncorrupted body of Christ their head! O how pleasant would the dawning of that day appear! But alas! it is not yet come. Divisions seem rather to increase than decrease. Do fir, let the New-Testament decide the controversy between us. But,

Thirdly, Baptism is necessary to penitent believers to *entitle* them to the promise of *forgiveness of sins*, which

which is freely given unto all such who through the redemption which they have in Christ, through his precious blood, according to the riches of God's grace, Ephes. i. 7. Accordingly *St. Peter* says to his new-made converts at *Jerusalem*, *Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins*, Acts ii. 38. It ought to be observed, that remission of sins is not promised to repentance only, but to repentance and baptism. The apostle seems to make baptism as necessary as repentance to entitle them to the promise; not to either of them singly and separately from one another, but to both conjointly. Therefore, it appears plain that baptism is to be an inseparable companion with repentance, as faith is to be with them both, in order to receive the promise. If any man will be so venterous as to cast out baptism from the above text, and declare remission of sins to repentance only; I may, by the same authority he can produce, cast out repentance and declare remission of sins to baptism only. But I will only add, the case of *Paul*; which seems plainly to confirm the necessity of baptism to entitle penitent believers to the promise of forgiveness of sins, Acts xxii. 16. *Ananias* undoubtedly understood the necessity of baptism to answer its designed end, or he would not have expressed himself in such terms. Now suppose the three thousand mentioned, Acts ii. 41. and *Paul* in the above text, had objected against, and refused to have been baptized, would they think you have been received as members of the church of Christ? Would the apostles and the rest of the brethren, the church, have admitted them into fellowship with them? Or would they without such admission and baptism, have received remission of their sins? If not, then what I have said of the necessity of baptism under this head is just and right. Therefore if it was so in the apostles time it must be the same, the very

very same in our time; and I appeal to you fir, and every serious knowing christian, for a decision in this point.

Fourthly, Baptism is also previously necessary not only to entitle penitent believers to the promise of forgiveness of sins, but also to the promise of receiving the *Holy Ghost*, Acts ii. 38. as above cited. Nor do we certainly know of any one person besides Cornelius and his friends, that ever received the Holy Ghost before he was baptized. As to the wild enthusiastic notions of some, about their having received the Holy Ghost, I am sure no wise and judicious christian, no sober thinking person, will pay any regard to them.

'Tis the New-Testament, not mens fancies, conceits and heated imaginations, that must be our rule and guide; 'tis the scripture must teach and confirm us in the truth of things. As therefore in the time of the apostles, none received the Holy Ghost in the ordinary way, before they were baptized, we have no reason to believe that any do now, notwithstanding the vain and mighty boasts of some men. What doth any man's saying he hath received the Holy Ghost prove? Truly just nothing but his spiritual pride. Our blessed Lord has established an invariable rule and method; according to which, we are to proceed in order to receive the promised gifts and blessings of the gospel. Which rule and method, if we break in upon, and turn things out of their places, I know no reason we have to expect the fulfilling of the promises. Now the method Christ has established in order for our receiving the gifts of the Holy Ghost, is, to repent, believe and be baptized; and then prayer with the *laying on of hands* of the elder, pastor, or bishop, (call him which you please) that the baptized person may receive the Holy Ghost, in such a measure as God may be pleased to give it; this is exactly scriptural, and to  
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this the promise is made. If you can shew me another as scriptural, and to which the same promise is made. do sir, and I will receive it. *St. Paul* writing to the Ephesians saith to them --- *after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy spirit of promise*, Ephes. i. 13. And was it not *after* they were baptized? Most certainly ; and not before, according to what has been observed above.

Fifthly, Baptism is a standing and continual testimony, a just and necessary representation of the death and resurrection of Christ, and also of our death to sin and resurrection to newness of life. Now it is well known that the doctrine of the resurrection was a quite new doctrine to the heathens, and when it was first preached among them, was not believed by thousands of them ; nay, so far were they from believing it, that they laughed at it, mocked and despised it, and the preachers of it. Every one therefore who was baptized, did by *that action* as well as verbally, declare their steady belief of the death and resurrection of Christ, and also that they themselves should be raised up from the dead ; and what can we find more significant than baptism to represent a death burial and a resurrection by ? Herein appears the wisdom of our Legislator in commanding all his followers to be baptized. For if at any time they were asked why or for what reason they were baptized, they had among others, this very good reason to give, viz. To declare their belief in the death and resurrection of Christ ; and in their own resurrection. This I think might be one end for which our Lord instituted baptism, that the doctrine of the resurrection might be more fully known and established among the gentile converts ; for it is certain, if our Lord be not risen, we shall not rise from the dead ; and if so, all preaching is in vain, we are yet unredeemed from our sins. Nothing can give us greater consolation  
than



than to be assured that we shall rise again from the dead to live for ever with Christ. We are therefore perfectly assured, and by baptism do declare, that we believe as Christ rose again from the dead, so shall we rise from the dead. Our being immersed or put under the water, represents our death and burial in the grave; and our being raised up again out of the water, as clearly represents our resurrection from death and the grave. Now as it was of the utmost importance, so it was of the greatest necessity that the death and resurrection of Christ should be rightly known and fully established; and to this end, besides preaching the gospel, our Lord hath most wisely and graciously commanded his followers to be baptized in his name. It appears therefore plain enough, that baptism is a necessary declarative, a standing testimony, a true and real witness of the truth of Christ's resurrection and our own; of Christ's dying for our sins and rising again for our justification, Rom. iv. 25. You see sir now, how significant and necessary a command baptism is; and if we consider its direct tendency as it stands connected with faith, we shall see what a profitable part of obedience it is to us. For as we do at baptism profess to repent of our sins, so our certain belief that *Christ died for us, to redeem us from all our iniquities*, that we might be freely and fully pardoned, is represented by our being buried in the water, which hath a direct tendency to lead us to forsake our sins with the utmost abhorrence; so likewise our belief of Christ's resurrection and our own, represented by our rising up out of the water, as directly tends to excite us *to live to him who died for us*. 2 Cor. v. 15. This is the use *St. Paul* makes of the doctrine of baptism. *How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? 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*

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. 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, Rom. vi. 3, 4, 5, 6. Therefore it is at baptism we lay ourselves under these solemn obligations, to die unto sin, and to live unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord, ver. the 11th. Without which, baptism, and ten thousand baptisms will be of no use at all to us. We give up ourselves to God in a holy covenant, we devote ourselves solely to him as our God and our Father, to love and serve, honour and glorify him all the days of our life. We do these things *ourselves* fir, not others for us when we knew nothing of it.

But, if after all, you should say, "The death and resurrection of Christ and our own, may as fully and certainly be known and believed without baptism as with it." I need only reply, so may his death and blood-shedding upon the Cross be remembered without eating bread and drinking wine. But what then? Does that prove that eating bread and drinking wine are not necessary to remember our holy and ever blessed Lord? By no means. This very answer will sufficiently invalidate the other objection. But,

Lastly. I have said that our sovereign Lord and King Jesus Christ, has made baptism all and whatsoever it is. Therefore whether it be more or less, or not at all necessary to salvation, it is all that, and only that which he has made it. Let us hear what he says of it. He says, *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved*, Mark xvi. 16. I just observe here that, the meaning of our Lord cannot be that every one who makes a profession of faith in him, and is baptized, shall infallibly be saved; but he that continues

nues to live and act according to his own solemn engagement at his baptism, and *endures to the end the same shall be saved*, Math. xxiv. 13. He does not promise salvation to faith exclusive of baptism, as some of your preachers are very desirous to make their hearers believe. I have heard them quite misread the words, thus; *He that believeth --- shall be saved*. Which is very unjustifiable, the text does not say so exclusive of baptism; and I have observed that even *you yourself* sir, have done the like; perhaps they learned of you to do so too. What a pity it is that holy scripture should be so mutilated and torn in pieces. How would you like it sir, if any person was to cite a passage out of some of your writings, and break off some material part in the middle of a sentence, and thereby destroy the just connexion of your words, to make them speak what you never intended? I suppose it would not be very pleasing to you; yet both you and some of your preachers have ventured to do so, and very often too by your great Lord and Master. How do you think he will take it sir? 'Tis a liberty you have no reason to think he will allow of, for by such curtailings of scripture men may make it speak just what they please. 'Tis certainly a high affront to the great author of it; it is diminishing his honour and authority. Dear sir, take heed you do not continue in so very ill a practice; a practice which reflects so much dishonour on your Lord and Saviour.

In your Journal \* you say "I published the great decree of God. *He that believeth --- shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned*, Mark xvi. 16." I wonder sir, you would say such a thing! You will not be angry if I tell you, you did not publish the great decree of God contained in Mark xvi. 16. It was only a part of it. Why did you thrust out the words --- *and is baptized?* --- You very clearly see how

\* I think from 1739 to 1741.

closely

closely they stand connected with the foregoing, *He that believeth*---The words, *and is baptized*, must at no time, under any pretence whatever, be lopt off from the others, but must always stand and grow together. I venture to say our blessed Lord has not, Mark xvi. 16. promised salvation to believing, exclusive of baptism; unbaptized believers, I say again, are not under that promise? but baptized believers only. So that I may justly conclude, it is not faith alone, nor baptism alone, considered singly and separately from each other, but both together; which have the promise of salvation. And this no rational man can or will deny. And is it not as clear as the light, from this, as well as from other scriptures, that persons are to believe before they are baptized? And that they who do believe, must of necessity be baptized, in order to receive the promise annexed to it? Extraordinary cases excepted, such as the thief upon the Cross. But perhaps you will say, I think baptism is necessary to salvation; if I do, so do *you* too, as I have fully proved. But whatever I think of it, that makes no alteration in it at all. My thinking or your thinking it necessary or not necessary to salvation, makes it neither the one nor the other. What it is, it is; and whatever it is, it is Christ has made it. I only reason upon it from the scripture, as it stands recorded there; I neither do, nor can make it any thing but what it is. I believe it is necessary in its place to answer its designed use and end, or what it is commanded for? Why did Christ institute it, if it serves no end or purpose! It is of no use, nor indeed is any other positive duty singly and alone. And if our great Lord has enjoined any one duty that was never designed by him to be of any use to us, I cannot imagine what such a duty was enjoined for at all. Was it merely to display his power and sovereignty? Who can think so? But sir,

If baptism be in no sense useful and necessary to us in the way of salvation, neither is the Lord's supper useful and necessary to that end. If therefore the Lord's baptism and the Lord's supper are not in some just and proper sense necessary in the way of salvation, we may as well all turn *Quakers*, and as they have done, cast them both away together; and when we have done so, we may perhaps find something else to throw away after them, and at last turn *Ranters*.

As to the *Quakers*, they are to answer for themselves, as all other men are. *To his own Master every Man stands or falls*, Rom. xiv. 4. I have nothing to do to judge them that are without. *Them that are without God judgeth*, 1 Cor. v. 12, 13. And he is infinitely wise, and just, and good, and will do right. This may be said. It is not our charitable thoughts or opinions of men, nor our good wishes, nor hopes of their salvation, or the contrary that will make their state and condition at all either better or worse, or in any degree change or alter it; for what every man is in the sight of God, that only he is.

I sincerely and heartily wish if that would do any good, that all men were in the true gospel way of salvation. But those who will not comply with the gospel terms, must be left the *uncovenanted mercies of God*. An expression some persons are very fond of.

But what a strange gospel should we soon have, if things were left to some men; in time perhaps, we should have no gospel at all. One sect would throw away *this*, another *that*, and in the end would perhaps throw all things into confusion. Dear sir, let us remember we are not to measure the non-necessity of a gospel duty by some mens disobedience to it and rejection of it; for if we do, we must no longer say that *faith in Christ* is necessary to salvation; for if it is, all *Jews* and *Deists*, which make up a prodigious greater

greater number than the *Quakers*, must be damned, according to your assertion. But what of all this?--- Let who as will fall under the terrible sentence of damnation, the gospel is as it is, and must be preached as it is, without making changes and alterations in it, or any part of it. Our kind thoughts and charitable opinions of men about their salvation, do not alter the laws and precepts, the promises and threatnings contained in the gospel. Let us hear what St. Paul says. *Though we or an angel from Heaven preach any other Gospel,---or if any man preach any other gospel,---let him be accursed,* Gal. i. 8, 9. Terrible indeed! Every preacher ought to look well about him, and take good heed that he preaches all, and no other, neither less nor more than what is contained in sacred scripture. Dear sir, is sprinkling infants in the name of the Father, &c. any part of *that gospel* which Christ taught and commissioned his apostles to teach and practice? If not, then it ought to have no place in the christian church; this allowed, the dispute will end. I recommend once more to your serious consideration, Deut. xviii. 18, 19, 20. Comp. with Acts iii. 22, 23.

But after all, perhaps you will say as some have done, that, "The Lord hath promised that he who believes shall be saved, where he is silent in respect to baptism?" True. And hath he not also where he is silent in respect to repentance, and several other parts of gospel obedience? But is not obedience included and necessarily to be understood in a true gospel and saving faith? Certainly it is: even an universal obedience to every known command, which will never put us to shame. *Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect to All thy commandments,* said the royal Psalmist and pious king *David*, Psal. cxix. 6. And thus saith the Son of God, who is greater than David, for he is David's Lord and our Lord. *Ye*  
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are my friends, if you do whatsoever I command you, John xv. 14. By this we see what sort of persons Christ our Lord will own and acknowledge to be his friends; even such, whom he will no more be ashamed of, than they will be of him, when they shall stand before his judgment seat. Now sir, as baptism is a part of, and must always be included in, faithful obedience, so it is certain, that it must always be put into the definition of that general duty; for the whole must contain its parts. I therefore add, if Christ will absolutely and certainly account, receive and own us to be his friends, though we knowingly and wilfully disobey him in this duty of baptism, which he among the rest hath commanded us to do, then it stands for no more than a mere, trifling, insignificant ceremony. To say which, is a grand impeachment of the wisdom, truth and goodness of the Son of God. It no more follows therefore, that, because baptism is not always in every text expressly named with *faith*, where this term is mentioned, that our salvation is secured by faith alone, than that we are saved without obedience, because this term is not always mentioned in every text where faith is named. Suppose I was to say, The Lord hath promised remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost to those who repent and are baptized, where he is silent in respect to faith; would it be just reasoning to say, remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost is promised to those who repent and are baptized, exclusive of faith? No surely. Yet this is certainly as just reasoning as to say, The Lord has promised that he who believes shall be saved where he is silent in respect to baptism. Hence one may see how some men rack and torture their own brains and the scripture too, to find out if they could, some art or device to exclude the necessity of baptism. But all their witty inventions and artful contrivances, are found and proved to be quite ineffectual and successful,

cessless, and ever will be, so long as we have the scripture to be our rule and guide.

I hope you do not forget sir, that I have not, and do not pretend to argue upon the necessity of baptism (considered singly and alone) to such sort of persons, and to such ends and purposes which have been mentioned, as sufficiently efficacious of itself, to accomplish those ends and purposes; for that would be to exclude the necessity of all other duties; but only as it stands connected with others, and so must have among them its particular place and use, according to the design of its great author and institutor. If this be remembered, all mistakes, I hope will be prevented, and all objections too, against the necessity of baptism for ever cease. I would now desire leave to ask,

Are all God's commandments necessary to be obeyed? If they are, to what ends and purposes are they necessary? Is baptism one of God's commandments? if it is, to what ends and purposes is it necessary? Does not your church make baptism and the supper of the Lord, generally necessary to salvation? She does; but why does she so?-----This I shall leave, and only observe farther, that, no sooner did the *Eunuch* perceive water, but he immediately asked *what doth binder me to be baptized?* Acts viii. 36. And others also, who no sooner believed, but were ready and willing to be baptized. What a pity it is the case should be so sadly altered as it is in our day.

Let us now just sum up at least a part of the evidence for the necessity of baptism, and we shall, I think, clearly see in a few words, the real truth of the matter.

First, Our great and glorious Lord, the head of the church, hath said, *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.*, Mark xvi. 16.

Secondly



Secondly, his apostle Peter said to those converted by his sermon preached on the day of Pentecost, that ever memorable day! *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 ii. 38. And to the converted Gentiles he said, *Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized who have received the holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord,* Acts x. 47, 48.

Thirdly, Of the Samaritans it is said, *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,* Acts viii. 12. No children it seems.

Fourthly, Ananias said to Saul, afterwards Paul, *And now, why tarriest thou? arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins ---* Acts xxii. 16. This being what Christ intended, when he said, *it shall be told thee what thou must do.*

Fifthly, St. Peter speaking of Noah and his family being saved in the Ark by water, adds, *The like figure whereunto even baptism doth now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, as he very justly observes. No fir, we neither say, nor think so, it is not because the body is washed in the water when baptized, but as it is the answer of a good conscience towards God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,* 1 Peter iii. 20, 21. Hence I observe, that we are not saved merely by the death of Christ, though it certainly was a sacrifice for sin, for he loved us and gave himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour, Ephes. v. 2. But also by his resurrection from the dead. His death would have profited us nothing, though he was delivered for our offences, if he had not rose again for our justification, Rom. iv. 25. Now as baptism is an evident and

and standing witness of Christ's death and resurrection, it is very just and necessary that we should be baptized as an evident proof of our certain belief of that salutary doctrine, as has been before mentioned. Not that we believe we are saved merely by baptism, any more than we believe we are saved merely by Christ's death. No sir, we look to a much higher cause of our salvation than baptism, nay, we do not look upon baptism to be any *cause* at all for our salvation, but the *grace of God alone through Jesus Christ* --- I think therefore, from all these scriptures, without mentioning any more, it clearly appears that baptism is necessary to believers and new-made converts to the christian religion, in order to answer the ends designed by Christ in the institution of it.

Thus I have endeavoured to shew to whom baptism is not necessary, and to whom it is necessary and to what ends. If I have said any thing wrong, I will upon conviction, very readily and thankfully acknowledge it. I have a very high esteem for all *divine truth*, and should be extremely glad to see it promoted and established; and I think if that gross error of infants-sprinkling was once removed out of the christian church, there would be one great obstruction to it taken away; and then we might hope to see not only much more of truth, but also of love, peace and unity among all good christians. --- Which I do most sincerely wish every one of us may, by every just and right method, diligently and constantly pursue, and by our unwearied endeavours, with the blessing of God accompanying us, at last joyfully obtain.

I cannot therefore forbear telling you sir, that if infants were not to be sprinkled, it would be one means to restore true baptism, which, were it once accomplished, would, I doubt not, be of very great advantage to mankind in every nation where the gospel is preached, or shall hereafter be preached, and

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particularly in our own. The plea that is generally made use of among us, is, "the *climate is so cold* (though it is no colder than it was when the Fonts were first erected) that it would hazard the health, nay, lives of many children." No, not at all more so than when baptizing was practised. But however, no such excuse can be made for adult persons, whose bodies it is well known, are able to endure it even in the coldest seasons, as thousands can witness. And here I cannot but wonder that even such persons who are to be baptized among you in your church, are always sprinkled. I have indeed known some of the clergy who have told some of their own people who were not satisfied with their infant sprinkling, that they would go down into the water and baptize them, but always when it came to the test, they took care to decline it; endeavouring to excuse themselves as well and as handsomely as they could, either telling them "if it was left to them they would do it." Or if they could not be so satisfied, "they must go to them who did baptize." But again,

As by sprinkling instead of baptizing them it is pretended they are regenerated and born again, and so made christians, they are also taught as they grow up to believe it; and thousands of them look for no other baptism and no other regeneration than that which they were told they had in their infancy, which indeed were none at all; and they generally continue as ignorant of what it is to be born again, as they were when they were said to be baptized; they know no more of real christianity than they did at that time, and as they increase in years, too visibly increase in wickedness; and though their lives are ever so wicked, yet they are made to believe they are christians; that they were made so when they were sprinkled, and had their names given them by which they are called. Thus, in a poor, careless, thoughtless man-  
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ner they live on from year to year, without knowing, or without so much as considering what their real state and condition is. Though they curse, swear and lie; though they be drunkards, sabbath-breakers and commit lewdness, and many other vices, yet must they be called christians; and when they will, may be allowed to partake of the sacred memorials of the body and blood of Christ, when at the same time they are *in the gaul of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity!* Acts viii. 23. Yea, notwithstanding this, every one of these poor vain, wretched creatures, must, at his interment, have it said, "Forasmuch as it hath pleased almighty God of his *great mercy* to take unto *himself* the soul of our *dear brother* here departed, we commit his body to the ground, --- in *sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life.*" Now sir, if none were to be admitted into the church by baptism, nor acknowledged christians, till such time as they appeared to be regenerated indeed, it might have a very good tendency to put many of them upon thinking what a sad state and condition they are in, as persons out of Christ, and without hope of heaven and happiness, untill they repent and are converted and become new creatures, and members of the body of Christ, the church. But infant sprinkling has no such tendency, but generally spoils it all. Men trust so much to *that*, and what they are made to believe concerning it, that when they are told of the absolute necessity of being *born again*, some or other of them are ready enough to say, "I need not be born again, I was born again when I was baptized. What! would you have me deny my baptism? --- This is what you have observed and taken notice of. This is your own remark in your own words, which I return to you again. And thus according to your own knowledge and observation, you plainly see the bad consequences of infant-sprinkling, what it leads to. Besides as I

have observed above, supposing you did baptize them, which you do not, as I have also evidently made appear, yet could it be of no use to them, but rather hurtful, as is plain from your own words. For they know no other, seek out for no other, concluding they want no other baptism nor regeneration than what they had in their infancy. I say sir, such baptism can be of no use to them, because they have all that work to do when they come to mature years as those have who were not baptized in their infancy. For it can never be proved that they are less inclined to sin, and actually do sin less than those do. Neither are they who die in their infancy, at all better for being sprinkled and having a name than those who die without them; I mean sprinkling and a name, unless you make baptism *alone* necessary to salvation. However, I shall now leave these things just as they are, and every one may draw what conclusions from them they please. I have so far done what appears to me to be just and right according to the holy scriptures. *And if any man will be ignorant let him be ignorant,* 1 Cor. xiv. 38.

Thirdly, You say, "You hold nothing to be (strictly speaking) necessary to salvation, but the mind which was in Christ." Neither do I sir. We are therefore now (generally speaking) apparently agreed. But may it not be asked, what are we properly to understand by "the Mind which was in Christ." This rightly understood and agreed to, may be a special means to end all disputes in religion; provided men will be persuaded to act accordingly. Now sir, without criticising upon words and phrases, I understand you to mean by the mind which was in Christ, when applied to ourselves; our being like him in our tempers, desires, and affections; in our whole will, conversation, and actions. That we ought to govern ourselves through every part of our  
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lives by all those wise, just and good rules which he has given us; agreeable to all those things which he has taught and commanded us; that so we may be wholly changed and renewed, and brought into his own divine image and likeness. If this be your meaning sir, as I cannot but think it is, though I may possibly express it differently from you, I do assure you it is really mine also; and therefore as I said, we are seemingly agreed. But it should be observed, that there are a great many things which must be put together to compleat the mind of Christ in us, or which amounts to the same, to compleat our likeness to him.

He was meek, humble, loving, kind and condescending, &c. so must we. He was universally obedient to his heavenly Father both in doing and suffering; so must we according to the ability we have received. His will was to do the will of him that sent him, our will must be to do his will, who came and did the will of his Father. We must imitate him, for he has *left us an example that we should follow his steps*. Now sir, are we not agreed thus far;

But you will give me leave to farther observe, that Christ is our Lord and Lawgiver, whom we are to obey. as well as our Exemplar whom we are to imitate and follow. We are therefore to consider him under that high and awful character; we are attentively to hear what he says, strictly to do what he commands, and wholly comply with his sovereign will and pleasure. And as he hath taught and commanded us all things necessary for us to know and do, it was certainly agreeable to his own mind so to teach and command us. And what was his mind to teach and command, ought certainly to be ours to learn and do; or otherwise we have not the mind of Christ; for it is plain, he did not dispute with his Father about doing or suffering any one thing he commanded him to do or suffer. *For though he were a son, yet learned he obedience,* John

x. 18. Phil. ii. 5, 6, 7, 8. Heb. v. 8. Therefore we are not to dispute with him, who is at once our Teacher, our Commander and our Exemplar. If therefore we have the mind of Christ, or be of the same mind he was of, we are like him in love, obedience and real holiness; we are possessed of those heavenly tempers and dispositions he was possessed of, though in a lower degree. This is to be a christian indeed. And this is all I intend, and am endeavouring to have established in all others as well as in myself. This is the end of my writing, I have no other view (God knows before whom I speak) than to promote the whole mind which was in Christ. To be a strict Imitator, a close and steady *Follower of the Lamb whithersoever he goes*, Rev. xiv. 4. This, I would incessantly labour after to my life's end. If therefore, dear sir, you can prove it was the mind of Christ that we should sprinkle our children and say we baptize them, and thereby receive them as members of his church, I will immediately comply with it.

Now it either was, or was not the mind of Christ that we should baptize infants, if it was, what is the reason he never gave us the least intimation of it; We all know the New-Testament is entirely silent about it. Saint Paul saith he had not *shunned to declare all the counsel of God*, Acts xx. 27. and yet he hath no where declared that it was the mind of Christ little children should be baptized. Is it not a plain case therefore, that it is no part of the *counsel of God*? Consequently they are not to be baptized. Can any thing be more plain. The *Papists*, who are as much for infants baptism as you, or any Protestants in the world, do not scruple to confess there is no command or authority for it in the scriptures, but they have fetched it from tradition, which you know they make of equal authority with those sacred writings. Now if those quick-sighted men could not find it there, I believe

lieve it will be very difficult, nay, impossible for you or any body else to find it there. And if it be not there, let it be where it will besides, we ought not, and therefore must not dare to have any thing to do with it.

How can we think our blessed Lord would have been so much wanting in his love to his church, or to his own divine authority as a Lawgiver, to omit teaching and commanding us to baptize our children, if indeed it had been his mind and will we should baptize them?---Surely, he would not have been forgetful or negligent in such a material case as this, if it be so material as some people pretend it is. But how is it possible for any man to know it is the mind of Christ that little children should be baptized, when it is certain to a demonstration he has at no time and in no place told us so? At best, it can be no more than mere guess-work and imagination, which is much too weak a foundation to derive a christian ordinance from.

If therefore it was not the mind of Christ, that children of a few days or weeks old should be baptized, as it now here appears it was, it follows by a plain and necessary consequence, that all those who do baptize them, do certainly act contrary to the mind of Christ in this very thing. And is not that very wrong? Now sir, I am for the whole mind which was in Christ, and none but his to be strictly observed and complied with by all of us as necessary to salvation. If the baptism of penitent believers be one part of the mind of Christ, as you very well know it is, I beg you will no longer refuse to comply with it; and if you can make it as plainly appear that the baptism of infants is another part of the mind of Christ, I will immediately comply therewith. And what can you desire me to say more? May I intreat you sir, to look over the New-Testament again, and examine it



it thoroughly with as much strictness and impartiality as you possibly can, and see if there be not something which is the mind of Christ you should have done, but have not; should not have done, but do. I cannot forbear thinking if you would but throw aside the prejudices of your education, and read the gospel with a quite unbiassed mind, you would certainly find some errors in your present practice, which you ought to renounce, and some truths which you ought to receive and practise. But,

Fourthly, You say, "They who believe with the faith working by love are God's children." Very right sir, I believe so too. The children of God are not lazy, idle, slothful children; but dutiful and obedient to their heavenly Father, zealous and active to promote his honour and glory, by readily, willingly and chearfully doing whatsoever he commands them. They will not leave undone any part of that work he bids them do under any pretence whatever. And each child of God can say,

"Thine is the work and thine alone ---

"But shall I idly stand?

"Shall I the written word disown,

"And slight my God's command?

"Wildly shall I from thine turn back

"A better path to find;

"Thy holy ordinance forsake

"And cast thy word behind?

"Forbid it gracious Lord that I

"Should ever learn thee so!

"No,-----let me with thy word comply,

"If I thy love would know.

Again.

"I chearfully comply

"With what my Lord doth say,

"Let others ask a reason why,

"My

- “ My glory is t’obey.  
 “ Because he saith do this,  
 “ This I will always do.-----”

Now all this, if I mistake not, you do say in some of your hymns upon the ordinance of the Lord’s supper, which may be as justly applied to the ordinance of the Lord’s baptism by yourself and all others who know and love him. If therefore you will not “ disown the written rule, nor slight your Lord’s command,” you must sir, I venture to say it again, you must be baptized. I beseech you do not forsake that holy ordinance and cast the word of your Lord behind you. If you would thoroughly know his love indeed, speedily comply with your Lord’s mind and will in this as well as in all other parts of duty. While others stand disputing against it, do you bravely vindicate it, and endeavour to rescue it from that abuse and contempt it hath for so long a time fallen into. And let it be publicly seen and known you do count it your glory to obey your Lord therein, and that purely because he hath said Do this.

Fifthly, You say, I do not conceive that unity in the outward modes of worship is *so* necessary among the children of God, that they cannot be children of God without it, although I once thought it were.” But if you do not, yet you will I am sure allow, that unity in the worship of God, is a very pleasing and desirable thing, and which we ought diligently to endeavour after, and according to the scripture as much as possible to advance and promote; *Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the band of peace*, Ephes. iv. 3. Christians are frequently exhorted to *be of one mind, and of one judgment; to speak and mind the same thing; to strive together for the faith of the gospel*, that there might be no divisions among them. And thus it was once, when *they all continued stedfastly in the apos-*

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ties doctrine and fellowship, in breaking of bread and in prayers. Acts ii. 42. See also 1 Cor. i. 10. 2 Cor. xiii. 11. Phil. i. 27.

Sixthly, You say. "I do make use (so far as I know) of all the means of grace God has ordained, *exactly* as God hath ordained them." Do you sir? Why then I give you not only my hand but my heart, so far as I ought to give it to a friend and a brother. This is all I wish and desire, and pray may be done by you and all men. How far you know the means of grace I cannot tell, but so far as I know them, I must say, I think you do not use them *all exactly* as God hath ordained them, if baptism be one of the means of grace; for wherein pray sir, do you make any use of baptism? I know you make use of the *name* but not of the *thing*, as I have already proved, and shall endeavour still farther to prove hereafter. You add,

"But here is your grand mistake, you think my design is to form a church. No; I have no such design. It is not my design or desire that any who accept of my help, should leave the church of which they are now members." Though it is well known you have been for many years, and still are collecting a number of people, and forming them into distinct societies, according to their various situations in *England* and *Ireland*. But I suppose you will not call these distinct societies, *churches*, nor the whole collection taken together a *church*; well sir, you may call it what you please. But you say, "it is not your design or desire that any who accept of your help should leave the church of which they are now members." Perhaps not sir; but there are those who have done so. And your people are always hugely pleased when any one does do so; and as much displeas'd when any one leaves your society and joins to another. But if you are not forming a church or people for Christ,  
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what are you doing of fir? Why do you give rules and orders for receiving persons into society one with another, and oblige them to act according to those rules and orders; Do not you receive into, and exclude out of your society, such persons whom you approve, or disapprove of, independently of all other societies whatsoever? I think you do. But fir, are you not endeavouring to bring men to the knowledge and practice of christianity, that they may become one people; *prepared and made ready for the Lord*? If this is not your design, I know not indeed fir, what you are aiming at; and if this is not forming a church, I should be glad to know what is. But if you are not forming a church, why do you set up any society at all? Why do you oblige all who enter into it, to act by your rules? Why do you not tell people to keep closely and strictly to those churches to which they belong; not to leave their brethren of that fellowship and order in which they are joined; not to play fast and loose with their profession; but to be steady and invariable therein?-----

This fir, I think you should do, because it would be a special means to prevent many troubles and uneasinesses which afflict the minds of many pious persons; and at the same time would effectually prevent their thinking hardly of you. If therefore, you have no other design or desire in your preaching, than to make all men good men, one would think you would leave them where you find them; I mean in the churches to which they belong. But this is not the case, you receive all that come, all that will join with you conformable to your rules and orders, may, whether they hear their own ministers or not; whether they receive communion with their brethren or not. But you farther add,

“ Was I converting *Indians* I would take every step St. Paul took. But I am not; therefore some

of those steps I am not to take." You are not converting *Indians*, it is true sir; nor are you, properly speaking, converting christians. Every christian is a convert to Jesus Christ; and every such convert is a christian. Who are you converting sir? Englishmen? Englishmen! Why are they not, especially those of your own church, long since converted? If not, what is become of their regeneration, which they were said to have at the time when they were rantized or sprinkled? They were then said to be regenerated, made members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven. It seems they did not continue long in it, but soon degenerated and apostatized therefrom. But were they indeed sir, put into that happy state at the time of their rantism? If they were, how came it to pass that they equally as soon and as much stood in need of being converted as those who never were rantized? Pray sir, what are the real and genuine marks, the proper and distinguishing character of a member of the visible church of Christ, a truly regenerated child of God? Be so kind as to tell me if you can sir, whether there ever appeared any thing of this nature in an infant at the time of its being rantized.

How strange it is that persons should be regenerated, made members of Christ, children of God and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven; and yet that there should never appear any marks peculiar to such a state in thousands of those who were said to be in it! Is not this the very case sir, do not you know it is with great numbers in your church? --- You know it very well, that it is too sadly and evidently true. What are they the better for being rantized, when after all that is said of them, they have the same need to be converted as the *Indians* themselves? For wherein is a wicked *Englishman* better than a wicked *Indian*? The truth of the matter is, though they are told

told and made to believe they were baptized, regenerated, made members of Christ, children of God, &c. at their rantism, yet they were neither the one nor the other. What therefore do your pretended infant-baptism and infant-regeneration amount to? It is plain, it is all talk and nothing of it true in fact. Why then let them stay till they are converted before they are really baptized; this would be acting rationally and agreeably with the holy scriptures and the practice of the holy apostles.

Upon the whole therefore, it must be concluded, that all those whom at any time our Lord sends to preach his gospel and to convert sinners, whether of this nation or others, such preachers must preach and teach them all which Christ taught and commanded; and in the same order and according to the same method too which he laid down in his instructions which he gave to his apostles; which was and is to preach repentance from dead works, faith towards God and our Lord Jesus Christ; and all such who do sincerely repent and believe the Gospel, those preachers are to baptize, and then the bishop, pastor, or elder is to lay his hands upon them, with prayer that they may receive the gifts of the Holy Ghost in such a measure and degree as it may please God to give them. This is (I will not say methodistical sir, but) exactly methodical and strictly scriptural. Now if a man is a sinner, a blind, ignorant, dark, dead sinner, he is to be proceeded with in the same manner as any other sinner, whether he be an *English*, or an *Indian* sinner, or let him be of what nation soever.

And now sir, pray give me leave to ask you what step did St. Paul take in converting sinners of any nation which you are not to take in England, Scotland or Ireland? Which of the above steps are you not to take, in order to fit and prepare sinners to become members of the mystical body of Christ?-----

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But you say, "I still join with the church of England so far as I can." --- "so far as you can?" How far is that sir? Do not you, cannot you join with her in all things? It seems not. Pray sir, what are those things in which you cannot join with the church of England? If there be some things in which you cannot join with your own church, as your words do very fairly imply, how is this consistent with your "approving of and adhering to all you learned in your catechism and common-prayer book, with holding the same opinions you received from your forefathers, or with approving the doctrine and discipline of your church, and with agreeing in all the externals and circumstantials of religion?" Or do you mean by "joining with her so far as you can," so far as she will let you? But supposing *this* be your meaning, yet there must be something in your present conduct and method, that is contrary to her rules and orders, and consequently, to your own words as above; or else she would undoubtedly receive and own you as one of her sons still; for what can she possibly require and insist upon *more* than what you have declared? But be that as it will, you add,

"I and my friends use several prudential helps, which our church neither enjoins nor forbids, as being in themselves of a purely indifferent nature." If what you call "prudential helps," be really such, they ought I think to be viewed in a light very different from that of a purely indifferent nature; for that which is only of an indifferent nature, may be either used or let alone, without either gain or loss. But who has enjoined those prudential helps you speak of sir? You say your church has not, and may I not say Christ has not? If he has, they are undoubtedly as good and useful, as they are wise and prudent; and ought to be used not as being in themselves of a purely indifferent nature, but as necessary  
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to answer those ends he designed them for. But if they be what *you* have enjoined and set up, it may be questioned whether they deserve the name of *helps* or not, much less *prudential*; unless you have discovered some new helps which our blessed Lord either forgot, or had not the knowledge of. But none will thus impeach his wisdom and goodness, who *is the power of God and the wisdom of God*, 1 Cor i: 24. I say therefore, if the helps you speak of be from Christ, and he hath enjoined them, whether your church has or not, they may, they ought for very prudential reasons to be received and used. No church hath any authority to enjoin what God forbids, nor to forbid what he enjoins. But if they are in themselves of a purely indifferent nature, they have neither good nor harm in them, and as such I'll leave them.

Seventhly, You say. "What I affirm of the generality of teachers and people of the church of England, I affirm of teachers and people of every other denomination; I mean so far as I have known them." Nay sir, this doth not appear. You have given to none so black a character as that you have given to the teachers and people of the church of England. But if you have so affirmed, I beg sir, you will be so just as to prove it, or you will make bad worse. But you say, "so far as you have known them." How far is that pray sir? What do you know of the denomination of *baptized believers* either in *Europe* or *America*, of which you can as justly affirm the same of their teachers and people as you affirm of the teachers and people of your own church? Do you prove sir, that those teachers and people are all that which you affirm of *these* and it shall suffice; but if you cannot, your affirmation, wherever it is, ought to be obliterated. 'Tis true, in your Farther appeal, \* you ask, "Do all your members adorn the gospel? I

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fear not. I have known some instances to the contrary, and doubtless you know many more." And then indeed you affirm, "There are unholy, outwardly unholy men in your congregations also." And are there not some such in your congregations or societies too? I can say truly enough, I have known some instances, and doubtless you know many more. But such persons are no more connived at and tolerated among us than they are among you. 'Tis well known there were disorderly persons in the first churches, even in the days of the apostles. But what then?-----

You seem to think that we do not exclude disorderly persons from among us, but suffer them quietly and unmolested to continue in their communion with us; for you ask, "Is this done?" Yes sir, it is. An open sinner cannot remain a member in our churches. But you take it for granted, "unholy men are still suffered to remain among us." And you suppose the reason may be this, "That many of us have unawares put *Opinion* in the room of *Faith and Repentance*." But in this sir, you are quite mistaken, we do neither the one nor the other. I mean, we neither put *Opinion* in the room of *Faith and Repentance*, nor do we suffer unholy men to remain members of our churches.

But I will take this opportunity to tell you sir, that such men though excluded from us, do frequently attend public worship among us, and because it is not always publickly known to every one that they were excluded; some people may think, and I know that some have thought they were still members with us. And those instances of unholy persons whom you say you have known, might very probably have been excluded persons, though you at that time knew nothing of it. And now sir, by what I have said, I hope you may cease your fears.

Pray

Pray fir, give me leave to ask, have there not been, are there not even now disorderly persons in your societies? I dare not think they are all truly *Philadelphia*. Are they all of them to a man real penitents and true believers in Jesus Christ? Do they all heartily and universally obey the gospel! Are they all baptized and regularly brought into the church of Christ? Do they all adorn his doctrine in all things? Are they all so pure and holy as to need no reproof? So invariable and uniform in their whole conversation as to need no admonition? so diligent and industrious in the work and service of the Lord, as to need no exhortation to any part of duty? Do they all exactly and inflexibly observe the rules of justice and honesty in all their dealings with mankind? Is there none of them will tell a lie for his profit and advantage when he thinks he can do it undiscovered? Do none of them ever put off a bad commodity for a good one, and at the same price too if they can? Do they always tell the buyer every fault in that which they sell, that he may not be cheated? Do they never take any more for a thing than it is really worth? Have none been excluded from your societies? If they have, it was undoubtedly for some fault. But do not you bear with offenders for a while before you exclude them? If you do, then may it be said with equal truth and propriety, that there are unholy, outwardly unholy men in your societies as well as in others. But I do assure you fir, I take no pleasure in recrimination, or else I might have added much more.

But it seems you directed your discourse to those who hold and maintain the doctrine of particular redemption; for in page the 59th you say, "Supposing the opinion of particular redemption true, yet how little does it avail towards salvation? Nay were we to suppose that none can be saved who do not hold it, it does not follow that all will be saved who do." So

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that if the one proved a man to be in ever so bad a state, the other would not prove him to be in a good one." Very true sir. I do not know who will deny it.

But after all that you have said, I do not find that you have given so black a character to the teachers and people of our denomination, as you have to the teachers and people of the church of England. And when you tell me "so far as you have known them," it is very clear and evident, you have not known them to have deserved such a character. For had you known it, you would no more have spared them than you did your own brethren, whom you call the Priests and Prophets of the Lord."

But you add, "I never saw an unmixed communion yet, unless (perhaps) among the Moravian brethren, or the *Methodists*." And (perhaps) not among either of them. Are the *Moravians* or *Methodists*, so pure and simple as to have no mixture of error in doctrine or in practice? Whatever you do, I cannot yet believe it, nor will I, until I see some better proof of it than any I have ever seen yet.

You farther add, "Yet that God does bless us, even when we receive the communion (your words are the Lord's supper) at St. Paul's, I can prove by numberless instances." This sir, I take to be only *gratis dictum*. But why do you say, "even at St. Paul's?" Is it because it is a rare and uncommon thing for God to bless those who receive the Lord's supper in that place, where there is such a mixture of bad and good? I know not else what you bring it for. But should not the *vile* be separated from the *precious*, especially at the Lord's Supper? Yes: This is what you complain of the want of in your church. If therefore you and your friends are the *precious*, why do you mix yourselves with the *vile*?

Eighthly.

Eighthly, You say, " If I were in the church of Rome I *would* conform to all her doctrines and practices, so far as they were not contrary to plain scripture. And (according to the best of my judgment) I conform so far only to those of the church of England." Why sir, do not you conform so far to the church of *Rome* even now, though you are a member of the church of England? If so, then your conformity to the church of *Rome* is just now exactly the very same as it would be if you were in that church. But pray sir, if you were in that church, must you not conform to *to all her doctrines and practices*, how much soever contrary to plain scripture? Undoubtedly you must. Yes sir, you know you must, whether you would or not; she would force you to it, or force you into a worse place, or else out of the world. But what use am I to make of what you say? Is it, that as you believe there are some doctrines and practices in the church of Rome, which are contrary to plain scripture, so likewise there are some such in the church of England, to which you do no more conform than you do to those in the church of Rome? if this is not your meaning sir, I know it not, nor what use you intended I was to make of your words. You say, " You conform to the doctrines and practices of the church of England so far only as they are not contrary to plain scripture." Which very fairly implies you do believe there are some doctrines and practices held and maintained therein, as well as in the Romish church, which are contrary to plain scripture. And I believe so too. In this we are agreed. But perhaps not in what those doctrines and practices are. Do sir, be so free as to tell me what those doctrines and practices in the church of England are, which are not agreeable to plain scripture, and to which you cannot nor do not conform. But if there be any such doctrines, &c. in

your church which you cannot and do not conform to, how is this consistent with what you say in your Farther Appeal, "We approve both the doctrines and discipline of our church." But,

Ninthly, You say, "I do believe the doctrine, worship and discipline (so far as it goes) of the church of England to be agreeable to the word of God." I suppose you mean so far as the *discipline* of the church of England goes, you believe it to be agreeable to the word of God. Here again you seem to imply that the discipline of the church of England does not go far enough, that there is something wanting of its full extent, that its measure is not parallel to the word of God. And indeed I am of your mind, Let us therefore for once (for I hope there will be no harm in it) take a short view of some parts of the doctrine, worship and discipline of the church of England, and see if they are all agreeable to the word of God. And

First, Of the *doctrine*. 1. In the 27th Article, you teach. "The baptism of young children is in anywise to be retained in the church, as most agreeable with the institution of Christ." But how is this to be proved? Is it not plain to every one who will open his eyes, that there is no such thing in the institution of Christ? And is not this flatly contradictory to what is taught in the 19th Article concerning the visible church of Christ? For it is there defined to be "a congregation of faithful men, &c." It is not said and *infants* also who have no faith. *They* must therefore, I think, by this definition, be excluded from being members of Christ's visible church on earth. Again, How can the baptism of young children be *most* agreeable with the institution, when you teach in the same Article, "that baptism is a sign of regeneration, or new birth, and they that receive baptism rightly, are grafted into the church; the promises

promises of forgiveness of sins, and of our adoption to be the son's of God by the Holy Ghost, are visibly signed and sealed; faith is confirmed and grace increased by virtue of prayer unto God? Dear sir, is it possible that these things can be made to correspond with the state and condition of infants? I will leave it to you and all wise men to judge and determine. But the article says, "*most agreeable* with the institution of Christ." From whence comes this sir? From Christ or his apostles? May I not say from neither? Doth it not come from *human* invention only? But wherein pray sir, doth it appear that the baptism of young children is *most agreeable* with the institution of Christ?-----Is not the baptism of *penitent believers* as much, nay is it not *most agreeable* therewith? Is the baptism of infants at all agreeable therewith? I appeal to the *institution* for decision.

2. You teach that sprinkling a little water on the face of a person is baptizing him. But this has never yet been proved, and never can.

3. You teach, "that in every person born into this world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation." Art. 9. But where hath our blessed Lord so taught and told us? Where do we read that every person at his birth is in a state of wrath and damnation? Tho' St. Paul says, *We are all by nature children of wrath*, Ephes. ii. 3. Yet he does not say, *we are all by nature children of damnation*. It is by some supposed that Adam's first sin produced this most terrible and dreadful effect in human nature. And how is it removed? By sprinkling a little water on the face?----- Surely you cannot with any seriousness say it is.

But if every person born into this world deserveth God's wrath and damnation, pray sir, what had they done before they came into this world to deserve it.--- Surely none will say they did any thing between the time of their birth and the time of their baptism to deserve it.---How must we account for this strange doctrine?

doctrine? Do *fathers eat sour grapes, and are their childrens teeth set on edge* thereby? Do they deserve to be damned for another man's sin?---Does God deal thus with his creatures, the works of his own hands? That be far from our thoughts, as it is far from his, Ezek. xviii. 4, 17, 20.

Do you say Adam's first sin was imputed to his posterity, and thereby they all became equally guilty with him; and therefore as he deserved God's wrath and damnation, so in like manner do all his children? Why sir, does the imputation of one man's sin to another, make that other man guilty to whom it is imputed? How sir?---Suppose I were to steal a horse, would you think it just that my theft should be imputed to you, and that you must suffer death for it? You would not. How then can we think that the just and righteous God will bring all Adam's children into this world in a state of wrath and damnation; and yet pardon their father, who with Eve his wife, were only the delinquents! But who is it that imputes Adam's sin (if it is imputed) to his children? Is it God? Where has he told us so?

Yet it must be said, if Adam's sin is imputed to his posterity, and they are all guilty of it, in virtue of such imputation, and as the consequence thereof, are brought into the world in a state of wrath and damnation; I say sir, that it must be said, that God only so imputes it. For who besides him hath that power and sovereignty over his creatures but himself who created them? Now if he had not imputed their father's sin to them, none other could, and then they would have had none at their birth, consequently, would not have been brought into the world in a state of wrath and damnation. So that this doctrine of the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, makes God to be the author of sin to them; and is not this most shocking and horrible! Does not this reflect the greatest

greatest injustice on the most just and righteous; the most gracious and merciful of all Beings? On him who is *a God of truth and without iniquity*, just and right is he? Deut. xxxii. 4. But I remember that you have said, "*You do not believe that any man will be damned merely for Adam's sin.*" Give me leave to ask you this one question fir; Is there any sin chargeable upon a man, but what is his own act and deed? \* I only add, if I have represented any thing wrong, relative to the above article, I desire to be set right.

## 4. You

\* There can be no need one would think of the imputation of *Adam's sin* to his posterity, that they may at their coming into the world deserve God's wrath and damnation; for the plain and evident, but sad and dismal truth is, we all begin to sin soon enough, and thereby we all become guilty before God: So that for our own actual sins, without the imputation of another man's sin to us, we soon enough deserve God's wrath and damnation.

But there are others who tell us "that as all men were in the loins of *Adam* when he sinned, so all men sinned in him. If so, then there can be no need that his sin should be imputed to all, to make them all sinners. But *St. Paul* seems to tell us otherwise, when he says, *By ONE man sin entered into the world.* But if *all men* sinned in *Adam*, it must be by *all men* that sin entered into the world, and not by one man only. Again, He tells us, — *through the offence of ONE many are dead. The judgment was by ONE to condemnation. By ONE man's Offence death reigned by ONE. By the Offence of ONE judgment came upon all men. By ONE man's disobedience many were made sinners,* Rom. v. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19.

If therefore what *St. Paul* says be true, that it was by *ONE man*, and by *ONE offence* of that *ONE man*, that the consequences of which he speaks, came upon all men, then it could not be that *all men sinned in Adam*. Upon the whole therefore, it seems to appear very plain (at least to me) that God did not impute *Adam's sin* to his posterity, nor did all men sin in *Adam*; but every man actually sins in his own person, and so it comes to pass that the *whole world* of men  
are



4. You teach (Art. 13) "That works done before justification or faith in Christ, (as I suppose is meant) have in them the nature of sin." Why fir, had Cornelius's works, his *prayers*, his *alms*, &c. when they ascended *up for a memorial before God*, Acts x. 4. I say fir, had they in them the nature of sin? Although the prayers of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord, Prov. xv. 8. and xxviii. 9, yet, prayer, considered as prayer simply in itself, cannot have in it the nature of sin, whatever sin the person has in himself that prays. Besides, as there must be a time for every sinner to begin to repent and believe in Christ; to make confession of his sins to God and to pray for pardon, &c. before he can be justified; surely such works cannot have in them the nature of sin. Men may say if they will, that works done after justification have in them the nature of sin, and that we sin in every thing we do, as some do say. And they may say so as long as they please, I am not bound to believe them.

5. You teach (Art. 20.) "That the church hath power to decree rites and ceremonies." But where hath Christ or his apostles taught us so? Who gave the church that power? But who are we to understand by the church? The whole collective body of

*are become guilty before God. For all men have sinned and thereby have come short of the glory of God, Rom. iii. 9, 19, 23.*

It is true indeed, we derive our fleshy nature from *Adam*, which is prone enough to sin, as we all find by sad experience, and therefore when the *devil* comes with his temptations, he always finds matter enough to work upon, for alas! we are soon drawn into sin, and soon begin to take delight in it, which makes it absolutely necessary for us to be regenerated or *born again*, as our Lord told *Nicodemus*, John iii. 3, 7. Our loss by *Adam's* sin is certainly very great, none being able to recover and save themselves from the direful effects and consequences of it; which makes a Saviour absolutely necessary to us.

the

the people? I suppose not: They are for the most part too ignorant or too profane. Must it be the bishops and clergy only? No truly: It must be very improper to call them the church who are only the Teachers and Rulers of the church. Then are we to understand it synecdochically fir, a part for the whole? Well, be it so. I still want to be informed where our blessed Lord has told us so. For if he has no where taught or told us any such thing, nor his apostles neither, it must be a mistake, and consequently not to be received as true and sound doctrine. But

Lastly, You teach (Art. 26.) " That evil ministers do minister by the commission and authority of Christ, that you may use their ministry both in hearing the word of God, and in the receiving of the sacraments; -----although they be ministred by evil men." Pray fir, does Christ's commission authorize evil men to be ministers in his church? Is not this a great dishonour cast on the ever blessed Son of God? Is it not quite contrary to his doctrine and example, the doctrine and lives of the apostles, and his faithful church in all ages. Should not his ministers live as holy now as they did in the very first age of christianity? Should they not all be *stewards of the manifold grace of God?* 1 Pet. iv. 11. And is it not *required in stewards that a man be found faithful?* 1 Cor. iv. 1, 2. But can it be justly said that evil ministers are faithful? An evil minister is surely no minister of Jesus Christ. And as he never commissioned him and authorized him to teach and preach his gospel, so it is certain he will never own him as such. I always thought and still think, that Christ's ministers should be examples to their people in all manner of conversation and godliness, 1 Tim. iv. 12. that they might the more successfully lead them on in the path of holiness, and in that way to have their whole dependance

on the Lord Jesus Christ for eternal life. Should not every minister therefore so order his life by the grace of God, that he may be able to say to his people, *Be ye followers of me as I also am of Christ?* 1 Cor. xi. But alas! how much doth the contrary appear? How often do we hear the people saying, "We must not do as the *parson* does, but as he says." But what a sad and lamentable saying is this. The people must not do as their ministers do! Their actions it seems are so bad, they are not fit to be imitated by their people!---But sure I am, they ought to be taught another very different lesson.---We must do as Christ's ministers do. They neither swear nor lie nor are drunken; they are neither proud nor haughty, envious or revengeful, covetous nor worldly-minded; neither must we. They are honest and just, sober and temperate, true and faithful, so must we; they are meek and humble, kind and affectionate, charitable and heavenly-minded, so must we; they are holy, harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, such must we be also, Phil. ii. 15. We see how careful, strict and circumspect they are in their lives and conversations; we must imitate and follow them.---Is not all this right and true sir? You know it is, with much more of the same nature that might be said. It is therefore plain, that some part of the doctrine taught in the church of England is not agreeable to the word of God; consequently, you must believe wrong, when you say "you do believe it is agreeable thereto." For "no doctrine can be right unless it is the very same which was from the beginning." This sir, is what you yourself have said before me.\* If therefore you cannot prove that the whole doctrine taught in the church of England, is the very same which was taught and preached from the beginning by Christ and his apostles. I say once more sir, you

\* In your Discourse on sin in believers, p. 11.

must

must believe wrong; I will therefore leave it with you, pray sir, try what you can do. If you prove this point, I will no longer separate myself from the church of England.

Secondly, Let us now take a short view of the *worship* of the church of England. And 1. I cannot help observing that, though formerly she hath been very strenuous (even to persecution) in pressing men to uniformity of worship, yet in this she is not consistent with herself. For you know sir, that the worship of the church of England is not in all places alike, therefore not uniform. What is the reason pray sir, that there is so great a difference between the Cathedral and the Parochial form of worship? If God be worshipped in a just and right manner in the Cathedral, he is not justly and rightly worshipped in the Parochial form. If there be nothing superfluous in the former, there must be something deficient in the latter. This surely no man will deny. But if it should be said, there is nothing superfluous in the one, nor any thing wanting in the other that is useful and edifying to the people, may I not ask what is all that for in the *Cathedral* which is not observed in the Parochial worship? For Pomp and Splendor? If God be as acceptably worshipped and the people as much edified and comforted in the Parochial form of worship, as those are who worship God in the Cathedral form, what end doth this latter form of worship answer? But pray sir, what part of the *New Testament* is either the one or the other kind of worship agreeable to? For

2. From whence come all your music and your singing boys? By whose authority were these appointed and brought into the christian church? What word of Christ are they agreeable to? What religious purposes do they serve? What real good do they bring to the souls of men? What honour to Christ? Your musicians and singers may perhaps please themselves and the

ears of their admirers, but who is made more holy and religious thereby? If music and singing do not make us more acceptable to God, do not make us at all better christians, &c. God may say to us as he did to his people of old by the prophet Amos. *Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs, for I will not bear the melody of thy viols. But let judgment run down as waters and righteousness as a mighty stream.* Amos v. 21. to 24.

3. Where is the rule for singing in a promiscuous manner; good and bad, holy and unholy, men and women, boys and girls, all mixed together? From whence comes all these songsters fir? And who hath appointed them? May poor ignorant boys and girls, and profane men and women be allowed to sing the high praises of God? If you call such conjoint singing by such sort of persons to be a part of divine worship, and you believe it to be agreeable to the word of God in the New-Testament, pray fir, shew me that word. May not God say to such singers, *When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hands, to tread my courts?* Isa. i. 12. 15. Psal. l. 16. 17. *To take my name into your polluted lips, seeing you hate instruction and cast my words behind you.*

4. Where do you find that Christ has given the least intimation to his worshippers to *read* and sometimes to *sing* their prayers, as is frequently done in your church? Are not reading and singing of prayers purely the invention of men? Also your frequent repetition of the Lord's prayer before your worship is ended, where is there a word from Christ for that? Does it not come under his just censure and rebuke? And looks as if you thought to be heard for your much speaking, Math. v. 7. Your reading-praying, your singing-praying, your repetition-praying, whence are they? Whence come they?

5. Your bowing at certain times to the altar, and to the East. and at the name of Jesus, what word of God

God is this agreeable to?----- These are some of the parts of worship performed in your church, which if you can make them agreeable to the word of our Lord Jesus Christ, pray do sir, and I will observe them as strictly, and with as much zeal as you or any other person can do.

Thirdly, We will now look a little way into your discipline. But if it be true what a certain Clergyman some years ago told me, it will I doubt be somewhat difficult to find it. For he very ingenuously told me in these words, "Our church has lost her discipline." Has she sir? Did the gentleman say true? If he did, I am sure it is a very great loss. I heartily wish it were found and again restored to its proper place and use.----- True gospel discipline is one sure mark of a true church of Christ. And indeed I greatly fear you have it not in your church. If you had, you would not, I think, allow of evil ministers to preach and administer the sacraments, and evil persons to partake thereof. The church of Christ is to be kept pure and holy, and there is nothing more evident than that great numbers in your church are very far from being so. I remember sir, you once told me you "knew a man who received remission of sins at the same time he received the holy communion from the hands of a drunken priest." But what a shame it is that such a thing should ever be mentioned. A drunken priest! Whose priest were he? And for whom, and by whose authority did he minister? And how came that man there, whoever he was, before he had received remission of sins? Did Christ constitute and appoint his last supper to be received and eaten by unregenerated, unrenewed and impenitent persons? Such who were never baptized and entered members of his church? No such thing. I always thought it were, with other means, appointed and designed to cherish and comfort the faithful

faithful, to confirm and strengthen them in the faith and love of the Redeemer, as well as for other special uses, and not as a means by which to receive and obtain remission of sins; for that is the design and use of baptism. *Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins*, was the word which the Holy Ghost spake by Peter, Acts ii. 38. But we no where read eat and drink the Lord's supper for the remission of sins. Nor *Do this* for the remission of sins; but *Do this in remembrance of me*, said our blessed Lord, Luke xxii. 19.

Such therefore who have a right to receive the Lord's supper, are such who are real penitents and true believers, who are in Christ and who received remission of sins before they received the Lord's supper. And that man you mentioned, if he really were a member of Christ and a child of God, he really had received forgiveness of sins before he came there. Indeed no man can have a right to partake of the Lord's supper, who is not baptized, and united to him by a true and lively faith, *a faith that worketh by love*; and consequently has received forgiveness of sins----- We do not receive it in *hopes* our sins *shall be forgiven*, but in *faith* that they are *forgiven through his blood according to the riches of God's grace*, Ephes. i. 7. 'Tis true, the man might say and be very confident that he had received remission of sins at that instant, but no mans confidence in such a case can be any proof of the truth of what he says. But pray sir, how did he know that he had received remission of sins at that time? Who told him so? I doubt there was much more of enthusiasm and pretence than reality in the case. Pray sir, give me leave to ask you here, how, or by what means doth any man know, or can know his sins are forgiven? Is it by certain feelings, impulses, secret whispers, strong conceits, or heated imaginations; or is it from God's declared will

will and promise in his word, through faith in Jesus Christ? And I would beg leave farther to ask you, who is the man and what is his character, to whom God has declared and promised forgiveness of sins? Is he any thing different from the penitent, baptized and obedient believer? And whether does not every such person receive forgiveness of sins at his baptism according to the scripture declaration? But to return. This story which you told me of the man abovementioned; seems to be calculated to encourage evil ministers in that holy office, and evil men to partake of that holy ordinance; which the former have no right to give, and the latter no right to receive. Is it not therefore for want of right order, true christian discipline and good government, that evil men and such who are void of a lively faith in Christ are suffered to receive the holy communion?

Suppose the great master of assemblies were to come in at the time of receiving his supper, how many would he find with their *wedding garments on*? If all the ignorant and profane, the artful hypocrites and empty formalists, the fiery zealots and fashionable religionists were taken away, would it be difficult think you sir, to count the remainder, of whom it might justly be said, *These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth*? Rev. xiv. 4. Is it not a great sin to admit to the holy communion such who do not discern the Lord's body? It is. St Paul, who certainly had as much knowledge in this matter as any man, says, *Now we command you brethren in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that you withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly*, 2 Thes. iii. 6. Do you of your church do so? You know you do not. What answer will you make to Jesus Christ, (in whose name you are commanded to do this) for your great and continued neglect? Since therefore it is plain that according to the gospel rule,

none



none may minister and none may receive the Lord's supper who are ungodly and undevout, and your church allows of both, you must needs want good discipline, good government and good order. Do you think that all those who receive the Lord's supper in your church, know what it signifies? I fear great numbers of them know nothing of the matter. Know not that it is expressive of Christ's great love to us, and of ours to him; of the closest union with him, and the sincerest love one to another, &c. Are we to withdraw ourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly? We are. And can it be more necessary than at the table of the Lord? It cannot. If we are not to partake of the sacred memorials of our redemption with ungodly and disorderly persons, what a dishonour must it reflect upon our glorious Lord and Saviour to admit such to eat and drink at his sacred board. Are not his people to be a separate people from all others, and to distinguish themselves from others by marks and characters peculiar to themselves? And shall they notwithstanding, join with those who are the ungodly?-- ---I am sure you must conclude with me and say, *my brethren these things ought not so to be.*

Away then with all unholy souls out of his church, for I am sure they have no business there. And all this you have allowed, and strongly pleaded for, as has been mentioned before. And I cannot forbear taking notice on this occasion of what you farther say.-----If by order were meant *true christian discipline*, whereby all the living members of Christ are knit together in one, and all that are putrid and dead immediately cut off from the body: This *Order* I reverence, for it is of God. But where is it to be found? In what diocese, in what town or parish within England or Wales? Are you Rector of a Parish? Then let us go no farther. Does this *order* obtain those?

there? Nothing less. Your parishioners are a rope of sand. As few (if any) of them are alive to God, so they have no connexion with each other, unless such as might be among *Turks* or *Heathens*.\* These sir, are you know, your own words; which with the clearest evidence do fully prove what the reverend clergyman above-mentioned declared to me. You are I find both in one mind. How therefore can you with any propriety say, "you believe the discipline of the church of England so far as it goes, to be agreeable to the word of God? For that which hath no existence cannot go at all, can move neither hither nor thither. Nay you still farther add, continuing your discourse to the nameless rector. Neither have you any power to cut off from that body, were it alive, the dead and putrid members. Perhaps you have no desire; but all are jumbled together without any care or concern of yours. It is plain then, that what *order* is to be found, is not among you." By this you have sufficiently confirmed what I have said. So that at last we are both come to one and the same conclusion in this point.

You insist on having such good order to be kept up and maintained, that all the putrid and dead members should be cut off from the body of Christ. So do I. But pray sir, who, or what sort of persons are they that compose the living body or church of Christ? Are they not renewed and converted persons? Real penitents and true believers? They are. And the putrid and dead, are the ignorant and profane, the unrenewed and unconverted. Now sir, if such persons ought to be *cut off*, it is certain, they ought never to have been *admitted*; for the same reason will hold equally strong against the one as against the other.

But may it not be asked whether those putrid and dead members were ever alive? Whether they ever

\* Farther Appeal, p. 112 and 113.

had

had the life of Christ in them, or ever knew any thing of it? If not, then as I said before, they ought never to have been admitted and owned as members of Christ's church at all. You know very well sir, that those who do not *repent and believe the gospel* can be no members of the true church of Christ. And yet how many thousands are there, who, notwithstanding their *admission* into the church, never repent nor know what the gospel is? And do you not own such ignorant and impenitent persons to be members of your church? You do.

How therefore can you say, you "believe the discipline of the church of England (so far as it goes) to be agreeable to the word of God?" For the very reverse is most plain and evident. Is she not quite out of *order* even from the beginning? Is it not equally as disorderly to *admit*, as it is to *continue* such persons in the church! Are not all your members (a very few only excepted) at their admission totally ignorant of Christ, and altogether void of every gospel qualification necessary to fit them to be members of his church? You know they are. And do they not generally live all their lives long in the same ignorant and unqualified state? Nay, do they not make their lives much worse than they were at their admission, by their numerous sins? They do. Can such persons have the least right to church-membership? If not, then they can have none to church ordinances, that is to say, baptism and the supper of the Lord. For neither the one nor the other was instituted and ordained for such unqualified and unholy souls; but for such, and such only, who *repent and believe the gospel*. Neither were they ever designed by the great author of them, to be used as means to bring men to repentance and faith, to regeneration and conversion. No sir, very far from it. Repentance and faith must precede

precede baptism, and all these must precede the Lord's supper. This is according to order.-----Therefore what you have formerly written cannot be right and according to order and true gospel discipline. For

1. You say, "-----Of later times many have affirmed that the Lord's supper is not a converting but a confirming ordinance. And among us it hath been diligently taught, that none but those who are converted, that have received the Holy Ghost are believers in the full sense of the word, ought to communicate; but experience shews the gross falshood of that assertion.---For many now know the very beginning of their conversion to God (perhaps in some, the first deep convictions) were wrought at the Lord's supper. Now one single instance of this kind overthrows the whole assertion."\* No sir, nor a thousand instances do not, nor cannot, unless you can prove it by the New-Testament. And if what I have said above be just and right, you can never do that. Putrid and dead souls, and such are all *unconverted* persons, ought not to come to the Lord's supper, but to be cut off from being even so much as members of Christ's church. You say so too. Pray sir, do not be inconsistent with, and contradict yourself.

How exceedingly preposterous must it needs be for persons to communicate before they are converted and baptized, and made members of Christ's church. Give me but one instance from the New-Testament of this kind and I will readily receive it. You add

2 "Our Lord commanded those very men who were then unconverted, had not received the Holy Ghost, were not believers in the full sense of the word, to *do this in remembrance of him*, and delivered the elements to them with his own hands."

What sir, were Christ's apostles unconverted, when he said to them, *Do this in remembrance of me*? How

\* Journal from 1739 to 1741.

Is this proved? 'Tis true indeed they had not then received the Holy Ghost, but that does not prove they were unconverted. Are none converted before they receive the Holy Ghost as the apostles did? But what do you mean, pray sir, by their not being believers in the full sense of the word? Can you tell what was then lacking in their faith? ----- But supposing there was something, which for want of a more perfect knowledge of they did not fully understand and believe, yet neither does that prove they were unconverted.

They were however such believers who knew and acknowledged that *Christ was the Son of the living God*, Math xvi. 16. They were such believers, and so far converted that Christ himself said to them, *Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you*, John xv. 3. Mark it sir. --- 'Tis the word which Christ spake unto them through which they were clean. The Lord's supper, is the means of conversion, &c. Again said Christ to them, *The Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and believed that I came out from God*, John xvi 27. From hence it is plain that they were such full believers, and such converted persons whom the *Father loved*. Would to God all who communicate in your church, were such converts, such believers. But you still farther add.

3 "The Lord's supper was ordained by God to be a means of conveying to men either preventing, or justifying, or sanctifying grace, according to their several necessities." Where's your scripture for it sir? In what part of the New-Testament may I find it so written?----- That the persons for whom it was ordained, are (you say) all those who know and feel they want the grace of God, either to restrain them from sin, or to shew their sins forgiven, or to renew their souls in the image of God." No sir, it is a  
mistake.

mistake. The persons for whom the Lord's supper was ordained, are all those who *are* renewed in the image of God, whose sins *are* forgiven, and who *are* restrained from sin by the grace of God before received, and still continued in.

Lastly, You say, " There is no previous preparation indispensibly necessary, but a desire to receive what he is pleased to give. That no fitness is required at the time of communicating but a sense of our state, of our utter sinfulness and helplessness: Every one who knows he is fit for hell, being just fit to come to Christ, in this as well as in all other ways of his appointment."

O dear sir, what a strange medley is this ! without one word of scripture to countenance it. This seems fitted for that church, and that only, which admits of all sorts of persons to communicate. How contrary to what you have wrote in your *Farther Appeal*, concerning order and true christian discipline. How can you ever make it at all consistent therewith? You say

" Every one who knows he is fit for hell, being just fit to come to Christ in this as well as in all other ways of his appointment." Pray sir, who are they that know themselves fit for hell? Not real penitents, not true believers, not the sincere lovers of Christ; for they (if there be any) know they are fit for heaven: Having according to the riches of the grace of God, received forgiveness of sins, are justified and sanctified, and *accepted in the beloved*, Ephes. i. 6. Being the adopted sons of God and heirs of glory. Such as these therefore are not the persons who know they are fit for hell; and for such as these was the Lord's supper ordained. But the impenitent, the unconverted and unbelievers may indeed know they are fit for hell, when they are first awakened and have a right and full sense of their miserable state and condition.

tion as poor lost sinners. But for these, considered as such, the Lord's supper was never ordained. Hath he any where bid such persons *do this in remembrance of him*? Are they not first to come to him in the way of repentance and faith, and then to be baptized and joined to his church, and afterwards to eat and drink at his table? Is not this the direct way to come to Christ according to his appointment?

When Christ said *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*, Math. xi. 28. And *If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink*, John vii. 37. Did he mean they were to communicate before they were converted, baptized and joined to his church? But pray sir, what is it to *come to Christ*? Is it not to believe in him, to own and acknowledge him to be the Lord and Saviour of the world? And afterwards to trust in him, to absolutely depend on him, and what he hath done and suffered, &c. in order for salvation? Are not these with what hath been said above, the very steps which we are to take; do not these lead us into the way by which we are to come to Christ with acceptance? Certainly they do.

How sensible soever men are of their lost state and condition, how fit soever they know they are for hell, it can never with any propriety be said, that it is agreeable to gospel order, such persons are just fit to come to Christ in the appointment of his supper; because it was never appointed for them, till they are joined to his church in the way and manner above-mentioned. Therefore such a previous preparation is indispensably necessary, such a fitness is required of every one at the time of communicating. And it is from such a preparation and fitness, that we find in ourselves a desire to receive what he is pleased and has promised to give. And as we live in a delightful sense of his love, so we *continue stedfastly in his doctrine*.

*trine, in fellowship one with another, in breaking of bread and in prayers.*

I might have added a great deal more, but this is enough to shew what a gross mistake you are fallen into. I therefore must insist upon it fir, that you will not fail clearly and plainly to prove that Christ appointed his last supper to be used as a means by such persons who know they are fit for hell to come unto him by. Or to use your own words, that they are "to come unto him in this way of his appointment, without a previous preparation, or fitness for it" by repentance and faith, &c. I only add, if such a preparation, or fitness is not indispensably necessary to come to Christ in this ordinance, it is not indispensably necessary at any other time, and then farewell all order and true christian discipline. But

Tenthly, You tell me, "I wish your zeal was better employed than in persuading men to be either dipped or sprinkled; I will employ mine, by the grace of God, in persuading them to love God with all their heart, and their neighbours as themselves." As to my zeal being employed in persuading men to be sprinkled, you need give yourself no pain about that, for be assured fir, I shall never so employ it. But if I should employ it in a prudent and scriptural manner to persuade penitent believers to be baptized, (which is the same thing as to be dipped) agreeable to Christ's institution, *in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost*; I hope there can be no harm in that, because it is agreeable to the commission he gave to his apostles, and to their practice, Math. xxviii. 19. And I farther tell you fir, that my zeal being so employed, does not at all lessen its being employed by the grace of God in persuading men to love God with all their heart, and their neighbour as themselves. But the former I make use of as a good argument to persuade to the latter, which is more than you can do. Pray fir,



fir, can my zeal be better employed than in persuading men to observe all things whatsoever Christ hath commanded them? Math. xxviii 20. Assuring them for their encouragement to a ready and chearful compliance therewith, that Christ hath promised that, *He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved,*----- Mark xvi. 16. If you can prove that dipping in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is not a command of our Lord Jesus Christ, I here promise you that I will no more employ it in any such matter. And what would you have me say fairer?

Lastly, You tell me, "You are thoroughly convinced I did not write from anger." I am very glad you are; for indeed it is very true. I neither did then, nor do I now write one word in anger. But when you say, "but from a zeal for my own opinion and mode of worship, I must beg leave to tell you fir, that in this you are mistaken. It is from a zeal, I hope a prudent and becoming zeal for the honour of Christ, and the advancement of true christian baptism according to his mind and will. For I would no more be zealous to promote a partial obedience, than I would be partially zealous. But you add, "It might be worth while for another man to dispute these points with you, but for me it is not. I am called to other work; not to make church of England men, or baptists, but christians; men of faith and love.

Dear fir, though you say you are called to other work than to dispute these points with me, yet you have entered into disputes with other men upon other points. Was it *more* worth your while to dispute with them upon those points than with me upon these? Well fir, supposing it was, are these of no importance at all? Do they not merit your attention in any degree? Can you pass them by as things of no concern to you? Have you forgotten what our blessed Lord says?-----*Whosoever shall DO and TEACH one of*  
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*the least of these commandments, shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven*, Math. v. 19. Now if it be your duty to DO and TEACH even *the least commandment*, surely it must be equally your duty to vindicate and defend it. Is not this a part of the work you are called to fir? Is not baptism a part of christianity? Is it not one of the commands of the Son of God? If it is, are you not called to do and teach it, to vindicate and defend it as much as any other man whatsoever? You say, you are called to "make christians." Of whom, or what sort of persons are you called to make christians? Are you called to make infants of a few days old christians? If you say this is the work Christ has called you to? I deny it. But if you make infants christians when you rantize them, you do more than ever Christ called you to do, or his apostles either; nay more than he himself ever did. Yet I suppose you intend to make them christians when you rantize them, do not you fir? If not, what must be done with your common-prayer book? --- But after all, the christians you are called to make, are, you say, "men of faith and love." Pray fir, are there no other christians but men of *faith and love*? If not, then you do not, you cannot make infants christians any more than you can make them men. Will you acknowledge any to be christians besides those who are *men of faith and love*? If not, then farewell infant-christians and infant rantism together. For if by rantizing them you do not make them christians, you make them nothing more, and therefore not one jot better than they were before. --- Some persons perhaps would ask, Can you make christians, men of faith and love?

But once more, Do you, as it is pretended, make infants christians, and yet have they as much, nay, ten thousand times more need to be made such over again when they are men? The truth of the matter is, no babe of eight or ten days old, can be made a

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christian. Why therefore do you attempt to do impossible things? But I cannot help observing that, notwithstanding your prodigious fondness for having infants rantized and made members of the church, yet you have for ever excluded them therefrom, if what you have written in your journal before-mentioned be true. For you say, "In the ancient church every one who was baptized communicated daily;" if so, where will you find room in the *ancient church* for infants? will you say *They* communicated daily? If you will not, then I am sure you must not say they were baptized. The conclusion therefore must be, that, either infants communicated daily, or infants were not baptized. For in the ancient church (you say) every one who was baptized communicated daily. Now sir, if you cannot prove (and it is impossible you should, that infants communicated daily in the ancient church; you can never prove that they were baptized and made members of the ancient church. And now again farewell infants baptism and infants church-membership also. ----- Were you therefore sir, to write to the age of *Metbuselab*, you could never write one argument for, or in defence of infant baptism. For if what you have written be true, it will for ever beat down and destroy whatever you or all the men in the world can raise against it. Again

If in the ancient church, every one who was baptized, communicated daily, then it must needs follow, that every one in the ancient church was a penitent and a believer, was converted and baptized. And this is the true, orthodox christian doctrine. The renowned ancient doctrine, to which the renowned ancient church was exactly fitted.

*Then*, in the ancient time, those days of old, those golden days, it was, that *they that gladly received the word were baptized; and continued stedfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and*

*in prayers*, Acts ii. 41, 42. Therefore there was no infant in the ancient church. This must be acknowledged truth, at least by you sir, for your own pen has established it. ----- I wish I had discovered it sooner, it might have saved me both time and labour in writing; but I do not think much of any time or labour I can make use of in defending and propagating any one real and substantial truth of the gospel of our glorious Lord and King, Jesus Christ, *the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth*, John i. 14. But

To conclude, Pray sir, give me leave to tell you, that whatever work *you* are called to, I look upon myself to be called to the *whole work* of christianity, and therefore must leave undone no part of it under any pretence whatsoever. I have no more authority from my great Lord and Master (who hath called me by his grace to speak in his name) to refuse to baptize penitent believers, than I have to refuse to teach sinners to repent and believe, and that they may be men of real faith and love indeed. And sure I am, that baptism hath no tendency to hinder any man from being a sincere believer and fervent lover of the holy and ever blessed Jesus, who himself hath commanded it and also performed it. For it is most certain and indubitable, that all in the ancient church who were men of faith and love, were such who were baptized; *that was the very way by which they entered into it and so became members of it.* This sir, is the *old path, the good way*, in which you and all men ought to walk, that they may pass directly into the church of Christ, as they did antiently. *Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways and see and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.* And O that none may say as those rebels did to whom these words were spoken, *We will not walk therein*, Jer. vi. 16.

Having now returned a full and sufficient answer to your last Letter, I will beg leave to reply to something you said to me when you was at my house; and also to some passages in your *Notes on the New-Testament*, relative to baptism.

You may remember sir, that when you were at my house, you told me, "It could not be proved that *our Lord* nor the *Eunuch* were dipt." As to Mark i. 9. 10. Where it is written of our Lord that *he came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan, and straightway coming up out of the water*--- you said "it might be referred to his coming up out of the valley where the river runs." And concerning the *Eunuch's* baptism mentioned, Acts viii. 38, 39. Where we read of his going *down into the water and coming up out of the water*, you said, "It might be referred to his going down hill, or going down out of his chariot and coming up again into it." To which I reply,

It is expressly said by St Mark that our Lord was baptized IN or INTO, not AT Jordan; and by St. Math. chap. iii. 6. it is said of the people in general that they *were baptized in Jordan*.-----For what reason therefore did our Lord and others go into the water? To have a little of it sprinkled upon their faces? Surely no body will say so. For what end could it answer to go into a river to be only sprinkled? The reason you gave me why you thought it could not be proved our Lord was dipped, was this; "Jordan (you said) is but a little river, yet at some times of the year it overflows its banks, and it cannot be supposed they went into it then: and at other times it was too shallow, and did not contain water enough." Dear sir, Is not this mere quibbling against plain conviction? But do you not know sir, that very small rivers, though they may be shallow in *some* places, may notwithstanding, be deep enough in others

thers for the purpose of baptizing? There is a small river runs at the end of my garden, called the *Baine*, which at sometimes of the year (like the Jordan) overflows its banks, and at other times is very shallow, yet there is always at some of the windings and turnings of it, a sufficient quantity to baptize a person of the largest stature. And in which I myself have baptized a great number. And if the *Jordan* be no larger than the *Baine*, John could, and certainly did find such places in it which were suitable and convenient for his purpose. But make the worst of it, if at some times there were not water enough in the Jordan to baptize in, he could you know sir, go to *Enon*, for *there was much water there*, John iii. 23. Perhaps you never thought of this sir. But whether you did or not, you know it is fact.

As to the Eunuch's not being dipped by Philip, I will leave till I come to your note on the text. And will now begin with what you say upon Math. iii. 6.

I find you have given another reason besides that you gave to me at my house, as abovementioned, for your thinking John did not only not dip our Lord; but likewise not any body else. I must needs say indeed sir, I was greatly surpris'd when I read what you have written upon the above text. It seems you are resolv'd at all adventures to maintain your beloved sprinkling, and thrust out the Lord's commanded baptism, or you never could or would have given such an explanation of it as you have done. An explanation which no man, I think, ever gave before you, or ever thought of.

Your reason why John did not dip those who came to his baptism, is this; "Such prodigious numbers could hardly be provided with change of raiment for it; and they could not be immerg'd naked with modesty, nor in their wearing apparel with safety." This is your reason sir, such a one as it is, which you had  
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much better have kept to yourself. It shews nothing more clearly, and proves nothing more fully, than that you was driven to the utmost extremity, and therefore resolved as much as in you lay, to do all you could to support your scriptureless practice of rantism instead of baptism.

But do not you remember sir, the *Jews* were a people very much used to washing and bathing? --- And therefore were not so fearful of going into the water as many are now to be baptized. How then can it be imagined that they were unprovided with such garments as were necessary? And I think it is not to be disputed that they knew they were to be baptized upon confession and repentance of their sins. For those who had first been with John and had been baptized, did undoubtedly soon report the Baptist's work. And those prodigious numbers that went with honest and upright hearts, could, and no doubt did take with them such garments as were convenient, knowing from the report of others, what was John's work and what were to be theirs. But such prodigious numbers you think could hardly be provided with change of raiment for it. Why sir, could not ten thousand be provided with change of raiment as well as ten? Is it more difficult for each person of such a number to carry a light garment than for ten or two? Wherein? Besides, though in the whole, John might baptize many thousands, yet who can tell what number resorted to him every day to be baptized? But be that as it will, baptized they were, this cannot be denied; but baptized they could not be if they were not immersed or dipped.

But you add, "It seems therefore that they stood in ranks on the edge of the river, and that John passing on before them, cast water on their heads or faces." To which I add, and it might fall on several other parts of their bodies also. Dear sir, can any thing be

be more weak and foreign in point of argument than to talk in this manner? What kind of instrument do you think John made use of for that purpose?---What a strange awkward manner do you make the Baptist, (not the rantist or sprinkler) to do his work in! And how vastly troublesome, if not impossible, must it be for him to do as you suppose. For if there was but little water in the river, and if the banks were high, it must be extremely laborious and equally difficult to cast water on their heads or faces in any tolerably decent and regular manner, unless he had an exceeding curious instrument, and were a very ingenious artist. But at other times when the river overflowed its banks, where did the people stand then fir?-----

I remember you told me, "when the Jordan overflowed its banks, the people could not then go into it to be dipped." Very right fir; nor could they stand on the edge of it to be sprinkled, or have water cast on their heads or faces: neither need they at any time, if John only sprinkled them, have gone thither at all: a bucket might have served as well as a river. For what necessity could there be for him to chuse a river to baptize in, or indeed AT, if he only sprinkled them? And now fir, I fear this is too puzzling a question for you to answer.

But what must we do with that text where we are told that *John was baptizing in Enon, near to Salem, because there was much water there?* John iii. 23. These words do flatly contradict and quite spoil your fine contrivance.

Why, come fir, I will tell you. Let us lay aside all human inventions, and entirely yield and give up ourselves to be directed, guided and governed by the plain simple truths of the gospel. You see how we are, and must perpetually be embarrassed and perplexed, when we go about to set up new ways and methods contrary to, and quite different from the  
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One plain and unalterable rule contained in the infallible word of truth; and which you say "is the only rule, and the sufficient rule." That glorious and immoveable standard, from which we are to take all our measures, and according to which all religious opinions, doctrines and practices are to be exactly fitted. Let us therefore be satisfied with, and heartily thankful to our good God for the word of his grace, — his revealed will in the scriptures. *The scriptures, which are able to make us wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus,* 2 Tim. iii. 15.

Pray sir, let me now ask you for what reason was it you gave us never a word upon John iii. 23. when you came to that text? Did you think it was not worth your while to tell us for what reason John chose that place to baptize in? Or was it because you knew you could not possibly explain it consistently with your practice of sprinkling? The words, *because there was much water there,* are you know sir, very emphatical; and must, and for ever will utterly exclude sprinkling from having been the practice of John the Baptist. So that if there were no other text in the New-Testament but this, it is sufficient to establish the point I am upon. And surely you cannot but see that sprinkling was none of the Baptist's work. -----

But to return to Math. iii. 6. You add, "And this way" (that is John's sprinkling or casting water on the heads and faces of the people) "most naturally signified Christ's baptizing them with the Holy Ghost and with fire which John spake of, as prefigured by his baptizing with water, and which was eminently fulfilled when the Holy Ghost sat upon the apostles in appearance of tongues and flames of fire."

Surprizing indeed! I wonder sir, that you should express so much weakness! Was the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles on the day of *Pentecost* pre-

prefigured by John's casting or sprinkling water upon the people? Yes say you, "most naturally;" *most unnaturally say I*. Dear sir, before you had ventured to publish this, you should have taken care to have fully proved that *John did sprinkle*, or cast water upon the people, in the way and manner you speak of. 'Tis strange that you should write so much at random! Surely you never rightly considered nor examined what is truly and really fact. However, I have, I think, sufficiently made it appear that John did not sprinkle the people in that way and manner you speak of, nor indeed in any other. And if so, it follows that the way you say most naturally signified Christ's baptizing with the Holy Ghost, proves to be most naturally insignificant. Now to make this clear and plain, let us look a little into the manner, and circumstances of that extraordinary transaction

We are told that the apostles with the rest, to the number of about a hundred and twenty, were assembled together in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, Acts i. 14, 15, and ii. 1 to 4. This is the account St. Luke gives us of that grand affair; that is, the manner in which the Holy Ghost descended, and in which, and with which the apostles are said to be baptized.

That which is particularly to be remarked, is, the house or room where they sat was filled, they were therefore all immersed therein, or surrounded on all sides at once; as every one is with air whether in a house or out of it; and as every one when rightly baptized, must be, and actually is with water. The Holy Ghost descending in that astonishing manner, not only filled the room, but all those who were therein, with his amazing power and influence. Which was the power from on high their Lord bid them wait

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for, Luke xxiv. 49. and which was now given to enable them to begin and carry on that great work which he had call'd and appointed them to, which did very soon appear with great success.

Now sir, what was there in all this that could possibly be prefigured by John's sprinkling? The apostles were *filled* with the Holy Ghost, this could not be prefigured by sprinkling, for it has no likeness to it. The room was also filled, to which sprinkling bears no more resemblance than it does to their being filled with the Holy Ghost. Wherein therefore does sprinkling a little water on the faces of persons, most naturally signify baptizing them with the Holy Ghost and with fire? If you have no more of the Holy Ghost than what was prefigured by John's sprinkling those who came to him to be baptized, I need not be afraid to say you have none at all.

But it was John's *dipping* the people by which they were covered and surrounded on all sides in and with water, which did most naturally signify and prefigure Christ's baptizing them with the Holy Ghost. For any body may clearly see a plain and easy analogy which the one bears to the other. But sprinkling is no ways analogous to their being baptized or immersed in the room filled with the rushing mighty wind, and the apostles filled with the Holy Ghost. Therefore it was without any dispute or question at all, that both John and our Lord himself used the phrase---*baptized with the Holy Ghost*, in allusion to their practice of baptizing, immersing or dipping in water all those who became their disciples.

Sprinkling is such a low, mean, paltry insignificant thing, that in such a case as this, it would be vastly dishonourable to the Holy Ghost, to compare his descent in that most wonderfully grand and august manner to so small and trivial an act. Besides, there is this farther reason to be given why sprinkling could

could never signify and prefigure the baptism of the Holy Ghost. viz. A very little water as every body knows, will suffice for that purpose, and therefore could signify and prefigure but a very little of the Holy Ghost to be given. But baptizing a person, as it requires a large quantity of water compared with sprinkling, so it might very naturally signify and prefigure Christ's baptizing with the Holy Ghost, or which amounts to the same thing, bestowing the gifts of the Holy Ghost in a large degree; which was in fact you know sir, the very case on the ever memorable day of *Pentecost*. More might be said, but this sufficiently shews what your invention amounts to. You was therefore very wrong in saying John's sprinkling or casting water on the peoples heads or faces, most naturally signified Christ's baptizing them with the Holy Ghost and with fire, because it yet remains for you to prove that John did so. Now if he did not, you are sadly wrong indeed sir. And if you cannot prove it, (as it is certain neither you nor any body else ever can) may I not hope to see you and your followers to give up that unscriptural practice, and be baptized indeed, in imitation, according to the command, and to the honour of so glorious an example, so loving a Saviour, and so wise a commander as the ever blessed Son of God?---“ But what will men say of *Mr. Wesley* then?---Let them say what they will, you will not I hope, be afraid nor ashamed to do your duty, and closely and constantly follow your Lord and Master Jesus.---They cannot say worse of *you* than they did of *him*. He hath a devil and is mad, why hear ye him? John x. 20. You have in one of your hymns said.

- “ Thy will is good and just,
- “ Shall I thy will withstand?
- “ If Jesus bids me lick the dust,
- “ I bow at his command,

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In these lines you seem to express such love to Christ, and such readiness to obey him, that you would with all willingness and cheerfulness do the very lowest and meanest office, if he did but give the word. Why sir, if you will condescend to give a fair hearing to what I have said, you must acknowledge that you ought to comply with that divine and heavenly institution. I will now proceed and take notice of what you have said upon Math. xxviii. 19.

I find you read that text as some others have done before you; "Go ye and disciple all nations."----- And in your *Note* you say, "Make them my disciples. This includes the whole design of Christ's commission; baptizing and teaching, you should have said teaching and baptizing "are the two grand branches of that general design." True sir. "And these were to be determined by the circumstances of things." Pray sir, who told you so? "Which made it necessary in baptizing adult Jews or Heathens, to teach them before they were baptized" Very right sir. "But in discipling their children to baptize them before they were taught, as the Jewish children in all ages were first circumcised and after taught to do all things God had commanded them."

"The Jewish children in all ages were (say you) first circumcised and after taught."---Pray sir, why did not you distinguish between their males and females? The latter were not circumcised before they were taught. And there are some people so ignorant of circumcision, not knowing any thing at all of it, that they would readily conclude from your indefinite expression, that all Jewish children were circumcised. But why were the Jewish male children first circumcised and afterward taught? Was it not because God had commanded it? Most certainly. And when you have shewn me a command from God's dear and only-begotten Son, first to baptize children and after that

that to teach them; I will immediately comply with it; but till then, I must take the liberty to act more consistently with the commission he gave to his apostles; first to teach and afterwards to baptize them. But you say, "In discipling their children to baptize them before they were taught." Why sir, is not this a strange way of talking? Was there ever a disciple in the world who had never *learned*? Is it possible to make a disciple without teaching? Are not discipling and teaching synonymous terms? Some very learned men have taught me so. Either therefore they are mistaken or you. I think you are sir. Pray sir, let me ask you very seriously, what do you mean by discipling children? Do you mean making them disciples?---How sir? By baptizing them? I deny it. Baptism does not make a person a disciple, but presupposes him already made one. Shew me a person who was made a disciple before he was taught and instructed, and I will shew you a person who was made a christian before he believed, or knew, or heard of Christ.

You say, "It was necessary in baptizing adult Jews or Heathens to teach them before they were baptized." And I readily acknowledge it. And is it not equally as necessary in baptizing all other adult persons to teach them also before they are baptized? Undoubtedly it is. But what was it that made it necessary first to teach grown persons before they were baptized? Was it not Christ's authority and commission which he gave to his apostles so to do? It was.----- All men every where to whom the gospel is preached, as well in England as any other nation, are now commanded to repent and believe it, and then to be baptized, Acts xvii. 30, Mark i. 5, Acts ii. 38. It is therefore exactly scriptural that *all sinners* should first be taught the necessity of repentance and faith before they are baptized; but we no where read that *all*

all men every where are first to be baptized, and then to be taught to repent and believe the gospel.

But to return, "Go ye and disciple all nations." That is, say you, "make them my disciples." So you suppose our Lord to mean; and truly I suppose so too. But who? Why "adult Jews and Heathens, and their children." All very right and just. We are very well agreed. Only there ariseth a question about *their children*, whether we are to understand their children to be such who were arrived to mature years and capable of knowing and believing in Christ as well as themselves, or only infants of a few days old? I say the former only; you say both. Here begins our dispute again; but I will cut it short by just observing that, if the apostles had a commission to disciple all nations, and that baptizing is discipling, they did not understand their commission; or if they did understand it, then, that which was much worse, they did not execute it. For we no where read in the New-Testament that they ever baptized any persons before they taught them to know and believe in Jesus Christ; and therefore we no where read of so much as one untaught infant baptized.

But sir, if the apostles were first to baptize and afterward to teach some, they were to do so to all, for their commission contains in it no such distinction, but reaches to all alike without any difference. If they were first to baptize children and afterward to teach them, they were first to baptize adults and afterwards to teach *them* also. You can never prove by the commission, that the apostles were first to teach one sort of persons and afterwards to baptize them, and first to baptize another sort of persons and afterward to teach them. This, I say sir, you can never prove by the commission which Christ gave to his apostles, Math. xxviii. 19. Nor by any other part of the New-Testament. Do this, and I may venture to say, you will do more than any man has ever done yet. Had our blessed Lord said,  
Go

Go ye therefore and baptize all nations, teaching them, &c. I know not who would so much as once have opened his mouth against infants baptism. But the contrary is most evident, and must appear so, one would think, to every person that can read his bible and is capable of understanding what he reads. And though it is very true that infants are parts of nations, yet it is equally as true, that they are not such parts as are included in the commission; for if they are, it is certain, the apostles acted most preposterously, always beginning at the wrong end of their work; for all those whom they baptized, were by them first taught. And we are very sure that as they were faithful in executing their Lord's commission; so are we no less sure, that they would have baptized infants, had they known that they were included in the commission, Math. xxviii. 19.

But after all, if you will have infants included in the above commission, you must also have them included in that contained in Mark xvi. 15. which is of the same import, though in different words. *Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.* Now sir, infants are creatures, and if they are included in these words, evident it is, that the gospel must be preached to *them*. But alas! whither would this lead us?----- Now, though infants are creatures and parts of nations, yet, it is most certain, they are not such creatures and parts of nations, that can with any propriety be included in the commission contained either in Matthew or Mark as above mentioned. The reasons are so obvious, that it would be a palpable affront, thrown upon your learning and knowledge were I to mention them.

Instead of which I will only observe, that, though we have an account of many thousands both of men and women who were baptized, yet we have not the least hint of so much as one *infant* baptized. We read  
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in Acts ii. 41. that *about three thousand were baptized and added to the church*; and chap. v. 14. *Believers were the more added to the church, multitudes both of men and women.* But among all these not an infant named. What do you think were the reason fir? I think, yea I am fully persuaded and do firmly believe, it were because no infant in those days were baptized and added to the church. Do not you think so too fir? Had infants in those days been baptized and received as members of the christian church, we should undoubtedly have been told of it as well as of men and women.\*

What

\* In your Note on these words, *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned,* Mark xvi. 16. You write thus.—*And is baptized*—“In token thereof. Every one that believed, was baptized.” *But he that believeth not*—“Whether baptized or unbaptized shall perish everlastingly.”

Remark. If every one that believed was *baptized*, then none were *rantized*. Pray fir, were any baptized who did not believe? If not, where, or upon what, do you ground *infants* baptism? Now fir, as you assert that “every one who believed was baptized,” which is a very great and valuable truth; be so good as to give me an instance of but ONE person who did not believe. and yet was *baptized* and made a member of the christian church.

When you say upon these words — *But he that believeth not*—“Whether baptized or unbaptized shall perish everlastingly,” you seem to imply that some who *believed not*, might possibly in some age and nation or other be baptized. But who fir? Infants and little children? If there were any in the apostles days who *believed not*, and yet were baptized, they must certainly be such; for they would not, we are sure, baptize men and women who *believed not*. Therefore you do by this way of speaking plainly imply that little children must perish everlastingly; for they are certainly all unbelievers, whether baptized or unbaptized. Now fir, although you make baptism necessary to their being made members of Christ, children of God and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven; consequently, necessary to their salvation, yet you do here

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What can possibly be the reason that the scriptures every where are intirely silent about *infants baptism*, and yet so full and explicit in declaring the *baptism of men and women*? I doubt not but you know the reason very well sir, if you would but speak out. Come Mr. Wesley out with it.--- Never fear.--- You have a most glorious Master: Act to his honour: Keep no longer back from *his Ordinance*. However, upon the whole, if there be nothing in the commision which our Lord gave to his apostles to authorize them to baptize little children, and if they never did baptize any, as it is plain they did not, then it is also as plain, they are not by virtue of the commision to be baptized. Consequently, not to be baptized at all.

I shall now proceed to observe and reply to what you have said upon 1 Cor. x. 1, 2, where we read--- *All our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed thro' the sea, and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.* I think you have sadly defaced, if not quite spoiled, the real beauty of that figurative baptism of the *Israelites*. For in your Note upon the words *baptized in the cloud and in the sea*, you say, "Perhaps sprinkled here and there with drops of water from the sea or cloud." Perhaps not sir. And who knows but there is as much reason for my *perhaps* as for yours. As to being sprinkled from the *cloud*, I can see no probability at all for that, considering the uses it was for. If it was as you say, "an eminent token

at one stroke cut them off *from salvation*. Therefore talk no more of baptizing infants, for by your own words, it is plain, that baptism or no baptism are both alike to them, because they are such who *believe not*. If unbelievers, whether baptized or unbaptized must perish everlastingly, all dying infants must necessarily perish; which is most shocking and horrible to think of. I hope sir, you will either retract or amend what you have so inadvertently written, and so contrary to the design of *infants baptism*.

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of God's gracious presence, which screened them from the heat of the Sun by day and to give them light by night," which is undoubtedly true, one can hardly think they were sprinkled with drops of water from it. *You* make but a *perhaps* of it, and as that can be no proof, so it must stand only for a *perhaps* still. But who can tell that it was a watry cloud? I do not know that it ever rained upon the Israelites in any of their journeys through the wilderness, nor is there the least hint of its raining upon them as they passed through the sea.\* And if it did not, how could they be sprinkled with drops of water from it

As to their being sprinkled from the sea, that is a *perhaps* equally as improbable as the other; for the water was made to stand on a heap on either side of them like a wall, fast and firm. How you can think the Israelites were sprinkled with drops of water from the cloud or sea, as they passed through it, all circumstances considered, is somewhat difficult to account for. But only indeed when I call to mind your prodigious fondness to have sprinkling accounted baptism, and that you are for drawing in every thing you can think of to make it favour your notion, it is not to be quite so much wondered at. For if it was not to support such a tottering fabrick, neither you nor any other person would have racked and tortured this and several other scriptures in that lamentable manner they have done. But you add,

“By which” (that is by the Israelites being sprinkled from the cloud or sea) “baptism might be the more

\* We are told that *the pillar of the cloud came between the Egyptians and the camp of Israel, that it was a cloud and darkness to the former, but it gave light by night to the latter*, Exo. xiv. 19. 20. And in verse the 24th it is called a pillar of fire. For it is said *the LORD looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud*. Therefore if it was fire, it was not water. Consequently, they were not sprinkled with drops of water falling from it.

more evidently signified." When you have proved two things, what you here say, will be evident to all. 1. That sprinkling is baptizing. And 2. That the Israelites were sprinkled with drops of water from the cloud or sea. Then sir, but not till then, will it be evident that their being sprinkled did the more evidently signify christian baptism.

You will give me leave to farther observe, and desire you to observe it also. ----- The Israelites were under the cloud, and were all baptized in the cloud and in the sea. The cloud was a covering above, the watry walls were on their right and left hands below, so that they were surrounded or encompassed between the cloud and the sea. Therefore it was on this consideration that St. Paul called their passage through the sea a being baptized, because it bore some resemblance or likeness to it; which is a being covered, surrounded or encompassed on all sides with water. And I believe it is very evident that the Israelites being baptized in the cloud and in the sea, did very evidently signify or represent christian baptism in water. But I cannot forbear observing that you say, "sprinkled from the sea OR cloud." You should have said AND, instead of OR. The apostle did not say baptized in the cloud OR in the sea, but baptized in the cloud AND in the sea. Not in either of them singly, but in *both* of them together. And indeed their figurative baptism could never truly, rightly and properly represent and signify the true, literal christian baptism without joining the cloud and sea together. But not at all so by *sprinkling* either singly or jointly. Though any body may see by what I have observed, that their baptism in the cloud and in the sea, exhibits a very beautiful and pleasing representation of our christian baptism.

I come now to observe what you say upon Col. ii. 12. "The antient manner of baptizing by immersion is (say

(say you) as manifestly alluded to here, as the other manner of baptizing by sprinkling is, Heb. x. 22." Baptizing by sprinkling! 'Tis wrong, very wrong sir. There is no such thing. Never were, and never can be, as I have fully demonstrated. But let us examine. You say "baptizing by sprinkling is manifestly alluded to in this text. I am surprized at your assertion sir. Let us read the text. *Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.* Pray sir, what is there in this text which manifestly alludes to baptizing by sprinkling? Is it *having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience*? Surely nothing can be more foreign from any such thing. In your note upon it you do not give us the least hint of it; but explain the words, *having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience*, "so as to condemn us no longer." One would have thought considering what you had said upon Colof. ii. 12. referring to this text, that when you came to it, you would have very manifestly made it appear, that the apostle did manifestly allude to baptizing by sprinkling; but there is nothing less. It is far more manifest and evident that he alluded to the legal sprinklings among the Jews, than to christian baptism by sprinkling; and if he alluded to christian baptism at all, it is in the next words---*and our bodies washed in pure water*, which may be very manifest; but the other allusion which you assert, is most dark and confused, yea absolutely false and untrue.

But to return to Colof. ii. 12. *Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him.*--- You say upon these words, "The antient manner of baptizing by immersion is manifestly alluded to here." And upon Rom. vi. 4. *We are buried with him by baptism into death*----- You say, "Alluding to the antient manner of baptizing by immersion." Sir, I give you my very  
 hearty

hearty thanks, you need say no more, for you have now said enough to destroy for ever your practice of rantizing or sprinkling. If immersion be the antient manner of baptizing, then sprinkling is not the antient manner of baptism.

Dear sir, how strangely you talk. One while you speak of sprinkling as the manner of baptizing, another while you speak of immersion as being the manner of baptizing; but you give the preference to *immersion*, as being the *ancient* manner. Pray sir, why did not you give *sprinkling* that honourable title of *antient*? If what you have said upon Math. iii. 6. be true, you might have very justly and properly have done so. But I have proved that sprinkling is so far from being the manner of baptizing, much less the *antient* manner, that it is no manner of baptism at all. Yet according to you sir, sprinkling is as ancient a manner of baptizing as immersion, and thus we have discovered two ancient manners of baptizing. Well then, upon this extraordinary discovery, let me ask, who was it, or who were they that used both these vastly different manners of baptism? Did John the Baptist? Did the apostles? If either he or they did, for what reason did he or they do it? Why would not one of them have done as well as both? Why were some persons dipped and others only sprinkled?

Ah! Dear Mr. Wesley, you are certainly on the wrong side of the question. No man can give any just reason why some persons were dipped and others only sprinkled. If sprinkling be as truly and as properly baptism as dipping is, and as fully answers all the ends and designs of it as dipping does, there need have been no other. Dipping must be quite superfluous. And *vice versa*. I add.

If sprinkling be as truly and properly baptism, and as much and as fully answers all the ends and designs of it, why did not you sprinkle Mr. *Causton's* child when

when you was in *Georgia*? Was it merely because it was certified to you it was able to bear dipping, and that you must of necessity comply with the letter of the *Rubric*? If so, where shall we find a greater shew of *bigotry*, and one more tenacious of a mere opinion than *Mr. Wesley*? But dear sir, if sprinkling be as truly baptism as dipping, you ought I think to have sprinkled it. Why therefore did you so strenuously insist upon dipping it? It seems you thought then, that even the *mode* or *manner* of baptism was necessary to something, for before you would sprinkle that child, as much as you esteem sprinkling to be baptism, you would not baptize it at all. 'Tis true, had you baptized it, you would have baptized a wrong subject.

But to return. With what propriety can it be said *St. Paul* alluded to the antient manner of baptizing? Baptism in his time could not be said to be antient, for *John* was the first baptist whom God sent into the world with his authority to baptize. Therefore *St. Paul* did not allude to an antient but to a modern practice, the practice of his own time and his own practice too. 'Tis now indeed an antient practice, but baptizing by sprinkling was never practised to this day, nor is it possible it ever should, for there is no such thing in nature.\*

But let us now follow the *Eunuch* and take a view of his baptism. You told me sir, "that it could not be proved that he was dipped." You said "His going down into the water and coming up again out of it, might

\* Let it be here observed, that *Mr. Wesley* makes two manners or ways of baptizing, both extremely different from each other. One way or manner of baptizing he makes to be performed by sprinkling; the other manner of baptizing to be performed by immersion or dipping; but the latter he says is the *antient* manner of baptizing. And as he makes two different manners or ways of baptizing, so he makes two baptisms (though *St. Paul* speaks only of *one*, *Ephes. iv. 5.*) as extremely different from each other as he makes the manners

might be referred to his going down hill, or down out of his chariot and coming up again into it." Dear sir, what wretched quibbling is this, and how very dishonourable to a person of your learning and abilities, to talk at this rate. The words in the text are as plain as words can be. --- *They went down both into the water, both Philip and the Eunuch, and he baptized him; and when they were come up out of the water, the spirit of the Lord caught away Philip,* Acts viii. 38, 39. In your note upon the words, you say, They both went down to, instead of *into* the water. And you do not only alter the word *into* here, that it may speak more favourably for your opinion and practice, but in Mark i. 9. you have changed the word *in* for *at*. You read this text --- Jesus --- was baptized *at* Jordan instead of *in* Jordan. But in Math. iii. 6. you read *in* Jordan; why did not you alter it there also? ----- It is something strange you did not read, he [the Eunuch] came *from* the water, it would have stood much better connected with his going *to* the water than with what you have written. For you have written thus. "When they were come *up out of the water.*" How is this sir? One would think you had forgotten yourself. "Went *to* the water and yet come up *out of the water.* 'Tis a mistake sure. If they came *up out of the water,* they certainly first went down *into it.* Went into it, for what? To be dipped, not sprinkled, this would have been quite needless. You have therefore quite lost your cause. In order to have proped it up as well and as long as you could, you should have

ners or ways of performing them to be; for he allows *sprinkling* to be baptism, that's one; and immersion or *dipping* to be the other. --- So that sprinkling and dipping are the *two baptisms*, and at the same time are the two manners of baptism. All which is a mere heap of confusion, a downright absurdity, an absolute impossibility, and therefore an absolute falshood. I refer the reader to what I have said before concerning the mode of baptism.



have done here as you did in Math. iii. 16. and Mark i. 10. You have written those two texts thus. And Jesus when he was baptized went up straightway *from* the water, instead of *out* of the water. The same in Mark. Coming up *from*, instead of *out* of the water. So that it is evident you have made a gross mistake somewhere. If you are right in Acts viii. 39. you must be sadly wrong in the other two places. Pray sir, why must the original be translated *out of* in one place and not in the other two? How strangely inconsistent are you with yourself. What! only *go* to the water and yet come *out of it*! How can this be? Had you wrote *into*, as you should have done, all would have been just and right. But you have quite ruined the just connection of the words.

Retract, retract, dear Mr. Wesley, retract your fond error of sprinkling. You know that no one is ever said to come *out* of a place he never was *in*. How therefore could the Eunuch come *out* of the water, if he had never went *into* it? Thus one may clearly see how liable the patrons of error are to betray themselves, notwithstanding their great parts and learning. And this evidently appears to be your case sir, and which will further appear presently.

In your note upon verse 38. you say. "It does not follow that he" [the Eunuch] "was baptized by immersion. The text neither affirms nor intimates any thing concerning it." Though the text not only does intimate but affirms that he was baptized, and that is enough, till you can prove that he was only sprinkled. However, that is what neither you nor any body else can do; for the text neither affirms nor intimates any thing concerning it. What then did Philip do to the Eunuch if he did not dip or baptize him? But once more.

If it cannot be proved that neither our Lord nor the eunuch were dipped, then it cannot be proved that any others

others were dipped. What then is become of the ancient manner of baptizing by Immerfion or dipping? I am fure it cannot be proved that they or any others were fprinkled, for that is neither affirmed nor intimated in any part of the New-Testament. It muft therefore follow according to this kind of reasoning, that neither they nor any other perfons were ever baptized, no nor fprinkled neither. Ay there fir! Now what muft we do?-----Nay, what muft you do? You are the perfon concerned and ought to clear up the point. You are therefore brought to this dilemma, either to prove our Lord and the Eunuch were fprinkled, or entirely to give it up as unscriptural. But if the Eunuch was not immerfed or dipped for this only reason, viz. "because" the text neither affirms nor intimates any thing concerning it," I want to know how you will prove he was baptized at all. You cannot prove he was fprinkled, for your own reason ftands as ftroingly againft *that*, as it does againft his being baptized, immerfed or dipped.

Why fir, are we not all a company of poor, ignorant, weak-headed creatures, to pretend to be baptized, or even fo much as to talk of it; to talk of its being a christian duty? For if what you fay be true, that it cannot be proved our Lord nor the Eunuch were dipped, I am fure that what I fay is equally, nay much more true, that it can never be proved that they nor any others ever were fprinkled. Confequently there never was fuch a thing as baptifm instituted and practifed in the christian church. And therefore we muft look upon ourfelves to have been amused only with words and founds.

Now fir, which way will you go to work to prove there ever were fuch a thing as baptifm practifed by John or by the apoftles, if it cannot be proved that he and they immerfed or dipt thofe who were faid to be baptized? You can never prove that they fprink-

led them, and therefore whatever becomes of baptism, you can never prove there ever was any such thing. What a miserable piece of work is this! But who made it? Why Mr. *Wesley* has had a hand in it, who ever began it.

But upon the whole, we often read of John the Baptist and of our Lord's apostles baptizing great numbers of persons, but we no where read of their sprinkling them, how then must we certainly know what they did to them when they baptized them, if they did not dip them? And now sir, is not this another puzzling question? I greatly fear it is.-----

I have now finished my intended remarks on some passages in your notes on the New-Testament, but before I take leave of the subject, I cannot help remarking, that, I find in the *Rubric* before public baptism, it is ordered that "the *Font* be filled with pure water." What is this for, pray sir? Not for the use of sprinkling surely. Why what then? Why for the children to be baptized or dipped into it. Which evidently appears from the prayer used immediately before baptism. Part of which is, "sanctify this water to the mystical washing away of sin, and grant that this child now to be baptized *therein*" (not with a little taken out of a basin) "may receive the fulness of thy grace." - - - And again, "If it be certified that a child may well endure it, the priest shall wisely and discreetly *dip* it into the water." But why dip it? What necessity can there possibly be for that? Why will not sprinkling do as well? ----- As therefore your church allows of dipping, why are we so frequently and so much reproached and despised, for dipping all those who come to us to be baptized? But you allow that sprinkling is baptism too, 'tis here we differ. But if sprinkling be baptism, why does the *Rubric* order dipping at all? Why would it not always have done at one time as well as at another? And also for one person as well as for another? Why should the  
the

the strong and healthful children be striped and diped any more than the weak and feeble ones; seeing it makes them no more christians than sprinkling makes the other children christians? -----

But sir, your *Fonts* stand this day as so many incontestable witnesses against your present practice, for instead of their being now *filled with pure water*, as formerly, you make a little in a *Basin* to serve the purpose. ----- The truth is, you have cast away baptism out of your church, why do you not cast away the *Fonts* after it, and not let them stand from year to year to condemn your present practice? I know it is a common excuse which many make in our days "the climate is so cold." But is it any colder now than it was when the *Fonts* were first erected? Not at all so.

But what do you think of one of your own followers sir, who was a preacher, and one whom I knew very well, and from whose mouth I received the following account? In that very hard frosty winter, now about thirty years ago, he had a child, and instead of having it sprinkled, he would needs have it diped. The priest for some time refused it, and would not do it, and both he and his Neighbours did all that they could to deter him from it but without success; for he continued inflexible, and nothing less than dipping it would satisfy him. Accordingly the *Font* was filled with water, and that the priest might do (as perhaps he thought) his work effectually) he diped the child *three times* into the water; yet it received not the least hurt. I say, sir, what do you think of this? I do not question but you know what I say is really fact, or I would give you his name and place where he lived, for the man is now dead.

But whether the priest diped the child *three times*, thinking he ought so to do, according to the custom of the *Greek church*, or whether he did it to deter all others from giving him the like trouble for the future, I will not determine. But so it was.

The grave and great *Doctor Whitby* in his Annotations on Rom. vi. 4. saith " It being so expressly declared here, and Colof. ii. 12. *that we are buried with Christ in baptism*, by being buried under water; and the argument to oblige us to a conformity to his death by dying to sin, being taken hence, and this *immersion* being religiously observed by all christians for thirteen centuries, and approved by our church, and the change of it unto sprinkling, even without any allowance from the *Author* of this institution, or any licence from any council of the church, being that which the *Romanist* still urgeth to justify his refusal of the *Cup to the Laity*; it were to be wished that this custom might be again of general use." And you cannot but know sir, that many very eminent and learned men of your own church, have wrote as fully and as clearly for dipping, as we can do for ourselves; though at the same time, they all continued in the practice of sprinkling; which indeed quite confounds and astonishes one, to think that such brave and worthy men, both bishops and clergy, should write so much and so well as some of them have done, in favour of the true and right baptism, and yet continue to practise quite contrary to it! However, it carries this plain, evident proof with it, viz. that we are right and you are wrong. For how can two things which are directly opposite to one another, and which bear no manner of resemblance to each other, equally and exactly answer one and the same end and design? And such are dipping and sprinkling. Therefore, though you call them two different *Modes* of baptism, I have fully proved it is a palpable mistake, and that neither of them are so; except baptism, that is dipping, be a mode of dipping, which you know is a very absurd speech. But for a conclusion, I cannot help observing, that,

Your

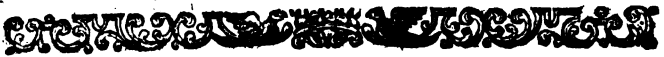
Your own catechism which you so much approve of, and pretend so strictly to adhere to, stands directly opposite to your present practice of sprinkling, and remains, like your *Rubric* and *Fonts*, an undeniable witness against you all, that you are gone back from Christ's Ordinance of Baptism and have not kept it. For it is asked "What is the outward visible sign or form in baptism? Answer, Water, *wherein* the person is baptized. ----- Now every body knows how contrary your practice is to this. Water *wherein* the person is baptized! When and where sir? Once at---- as above. How many more such instances do you know sir? I do not know of another.

When your catechism was composed, you had, I doubt not, right baptism performed, though upon a wrong subject; but now you have neither, or but very rarely. I am very sorry for it. Cannot both of them be restored and settled as they ought to be? Why not sir? What hinders? The same power that removed them can replace them. I should be glad to see that day.

May God hasten the time when that, and every other precious truth of the gospel shall be every where received and practised, maintained and defended among all professing christians. When all divisions, schisms, strifes and contentions shall for ever cease; and virtue, goodness and piety; love, peace and unity ever abound to the glory of God; the honour and exaltation of our ever-glorious Lord, and every man's salvation. AMEN,



A SERIOUS



A S E R I O U S  
R E P L Y  
T O

What has been objected against the Necessity  
and Importance of that divine and heavenly  
Ordinance

B A P T I S M;

By the People called *METHODISTS*  
in general, and more especially by those whom  
I have conversed, and with whom I am ac-  
quainted, viz.

I. BAPTISM is only an outward thing, a  
little thing; it is not worth while to spend ten  
Words about it.

To which I answer.

I. **I**S baptism but a little thing? ----- Then so much  
the more ungrateful and undutiful are you all  
to him who hath appointed it in not complying with  
it. What my friends, *Naaman* like! *If the Lord*  
*Jesus had bidden you do some great thing, would you not*  
*have done it? How much rather then when he saith to*  
*you by his apostle Peter, 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 ii. 38.*

I know

I know indeed that many of you say, you have received remission of sins, and the Holy Ghost too. But you will give me leave to tell you that, saying and proving are too vastly different things. Pray my friends, in what way, after what manner, according to what rule, under what promise, or in what doing, have you received remission of sins? How do you know you have? Who told you so? Have you received remission of sins in the right way, order and method, and according to the rule and under the promise contained in the gospel? Or in a way of your *own devising*, according to the rule of your *own warm imagination*? In the *former* I am sure you have not, in the *latter*, I am sure you cannot. How you dare venture to say you are sure and confident (as some of you have said) that you have received remission of sins and the Holy Ghost, though not in the way and order of the gospel, is to me very strange and unaccountable. But some of you are, I know, very positive and peremptory, and do not scruple to say, "We know as well when we receive the Holy Ghost, as when a leg or an arm is cut off." A strange kind of speech indeed to come out of the mouth of a christian! Some also pretend to tell us where, when and how they receive remission of sins; and that he who does not know (I suppose they mean in their pretended way of knowing) his sins forgiven, is in a state of damnation. *But to the law and to the testimony: If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them, Isa. viii. 20.* Pray my friends, has Christ departed from his own invariable word and rule, by, or according to which, he hath declared and promised remission of sins?---How prove you that?---But

II. Is baptism but a little thing, not worth while to spend ten words about it? (as I have heard some of your preachers say) Then if so, you will all say it is

not



not worth while to do it. But who could have once imagined that such a word should ever have proceeded out of the mouth of a christian and a preacher too, one who pretended to be a lover of Jesus Christ! I am sure that great lover of Christ and famous champion for truth, differed very widely from you all when he said, *Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ*. And so did *they* whom at that time he so much commended, when he said, *Now I praise you brethren that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances as I delivered them to you*, 1 Cor. xi. 1, 2. This was the brave and honourable *St. Paul*, that fervent lover and faithful follower of Jesus. What think you my friends; do you follow Christ as *Paul* did? Do you keep the ordinances as they are delivered in the holy scriptures? You do not, and you may know you do not if you diligently search them, and compare your own present method and conduct with them. I hope you are not all so prejudiced against Christ's holy ordinance of baptism, as some among you that I have known, who would neither read nor suffer those passages in scripture where it is mentioned, to be read in their presence and hearing. Pray what spirit do you think such people are of?

But whatever some of you would or would not do, I must tell you, that I think it worth my while, and would with pleasure, spend ten thousand words about so sacred and honourable an ordinance as baptism is, whenever there is occasion for me so to do; and it is you who give me the occasion of speaking about it now. I wish there never had been such an occasion given. Therefore as little worth as it is in your esteem, I speak of it; and must and will speak of it to the honour and glory of my Lord and master Jesus Christ, who hath instituted nothing in vain and to answer no good end. And while I am now speaking of this matter, I speak of it with the most sincere and cordial

dial affection, with a most hearty and tender concern for you all. Therefore

III. As trifling, mean and paltry, as low, base and dishonourable thoughts as some of you entertain of it; yet I must tell you, that HE by whom you must all be saved, if you are saved at all, (which God of his rich mercy grant to every one of you) did not think and look upon it in that contemptible manner which you seem to do. He did not say it was not worth his while to spend ten words about it; for though he needed it not, yet he obeyed. He submitted to it, and spent more than ten words with John the Dipper about it; John very well knew who he was, and that he needed no forgiveness of sins in that, nor in any other prescribed way, and therefore he *forbad him*, and said to him, *I have need to be baptized of thee*: But our Lord reasoned the case with him, and said unto him, *suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus when he was baptized went up straightway out of the water.*-----Math. iii. 13, 14, 15, 16. As much as if our blessed Lord had said, "'Tis true, John, I have no spot nor stain to be washed away in baptism; yet I know it is a commandment of my Father, and that as I am his son, I ought to obey it. For I came not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me. My purity and innocence do not exempt me from obedience. Nay, was I not to be baptized, I should therein be disobedient."--- Then John baptized him.

O my friends! I hope you have now a clearer sight of the necessity of this divine ordinance of our most gracious Lord and sovereign King. Could not he himself have *fulfilled all righteousness*, except he had been baptized?--- How will you? Does it not as much become you who profess yourselves to be his subjects, as it did him whom you pretend to own as your King?

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Shall your king himself thus condescend to set you so glorious an example, and will you not obey and follow him? You see what stress he laid upon it as a part of that *righteousness* which must be fulfilled. He would not be silenced and turned aside from it by all that John could say.

Had he not given you such an example of obedience to baptism in his own person, you would have triumphed over all arguments that perhaps could have been laid before you, but surely his example joined to his command, must stop all your mouths at once, and bring you speedily and cheerfully to comply with, and yield to his divine will and sovereign authority.

I therefore add, If baptism was such a little, trifling, insignificant thing as some men pretend it is, how can we think that so divine, so illustrious, so glorious a personage as the ever blessed Son of God would have taken any notice of it? But he not only complied with it himself, but commanded all his friends and followers, one as well as another to be baptized also. And therefore he actually insisted upon John's baptizing him, and gave a very cogent reason for it, such a one as none of you all can or dare give against it. For who dare say, it does not *become him to fulfill all righteousness*? I must therefore insist upon it also, that Christ Jesus your Lord has therein left you a bright and shining example, and that you all ought to follow his steps, 1 Pet. ii. 21. Not a step or two, or some few only, but all of them. *For he that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk even as he walked*, 1 John ii. 6. Do you hear my friends? You must walk as your Master walked before you. Do you do so? You know you do not. How will you answer for such neglect to him? There is then this one very material step you have not taken yet. You have not yet walked down into the water as he did; neither have you been baptized as he was.

was. And to this day you seem unwilling to obey and take this step after the most excellent example that ever was exhibited to the view of mankind, and designed to answer the most salutary and beneficent ends and purposes to all who sincerely and faithfully imitate and follow him. Here you leave him and chuse another road.---Come my friends, turn back again; do not think it too much trouble to follow him who is gone before you. Why are you so unwilling to walk as Christ walked?---Do you still say "baptism is only an outward thing, a little thing. But why should you think it less than Christ thought it to be? He did not think it too little to deserve his obedience, why should you? Are you greater than he? No. Behold! a greater than you all has done it! And you can never prove yourselves his hearty friends and faithful followers, (say what you will) if you do not follow him in *this* as well as in all other parts of duty. Come, now for a proof of your sincere love to your most loving lord. Come now and give a public testimony of it by your obedience to your once dying, but now ever-living Jesus. Do your duty and glorify your Saviour. But

IV. Remember my friends what you say, and consider well the consequence that directly follows your calling Baptism but an outward thing, a little thing. For you arraign the wisdom of Christ at your own bar. Did not he know what baptism is as well as you? Does he speak of it in such diminutive, such contemptible language as some of you have done? Does he any where call it an outward thing, a little thing? Do any of his apostles call it so? How dare you? Did he give such strict charge to his apostles to *Go and Teach all nations and Baptize them*; and will you say baptism is a little thing? Do you think he did not know what he was doing of when he gave them such a charge?-----And must I after all be forced to go  
to

to my Master full of grief and concern; and complain against you all. And say

Oh! my Lord, my most dear and honoured Master, I have done as thou hast bid me, but lo! they will not comply. They say that, *that baptism* wherewith thou thyself great Lord wast baptized, and which thou hast so strictly enjoined upon all thy followers, is only an outward thing, a little thing, that is not worth while to spend ten words about it. They make *light of it* and will not obey thee. Though thou hast invited them in the most endearing manner, yet still they will not come. *They refuse to hearken, they pluck away their shoulder, they stop their ears, they will not bear. Yea their words are stout against thee,* Zeck. vii. 11. Mal. iii. 13. They say thou hast baptized them with thy spirit, and they need no other.----- What do you think my friends, our glorious Lord and King Jesus would say to this, were you to speak thus to his face (for you shall all see him one day) what you have (many of you) several times said to me? Let us for once conceive something like this, viz.

“ Who are ye, and from whence came ye, you  
 “ bold imperious men? What! do you say my or-  
 “ dinance of baptism is a little thing, that it is not  
 “ worth while to spend ten words about it? *Who are*  
 “ *these that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?*  
 “ *Bring forth your strong reasons, for I will demand of*  
 “ *you, and answer you me,* Job. xxxviii. 2, 3. Isa. xli. 21.  
 “ Wherein is *that baptism* wherewith *I your Lord*  
 “ was baptized, and which I have made to be your  
 “ duty to observe as well as all the rest of my com-  
 “ mands, wherein I say is it of no worth? You call  
 “ it little.---How little is it?---Measure the pattern  
 “ and shew me the size. You call it an outward thing.  
 “ And what then? Wherein is it the worse for that?  
 “ Who gave you a toleration to disobey it? Are not  
 “ my ordinances of prayer, preaching and hearing my  
 “ gospel

“ gospel outward things? Likewise are not eating and  
 “ drinking at my table in remembrance of me, alms-  
 “ giving and fasting outward things?-----But what  
 “ do you mean when you call my baptism an outward  
 “ thing, a little thing? Is it not to cast contempt up-  
 “ on it as a thing unworthy of your notice? If not,  
 “ why do you not obey me who commanded it? Is  
 “ this the love you have for me? Am I a hard Mas-  
 “ ter, -do I reap where I have not sowed? Are any  
 “ of my commands intolerable and not fit to be ob-  
 “ served and done?---Which?---Is baptism so?---  
 “ Wherein?---By your own confession it is little, yea  
 “ so little, that you think it not worth your while to  
 “ spend ten words about it; and yet before you will  
 “ comply with it, you will spend ten thousand words  
 “ about it.---You say it is little, therefore out of  
 “ your own mouths will I judge you, ye slothful ser-  
 “ vants. For if it be little, it is the easier done.  
 “ Herein my love to you is made manifest. . I have  
 “ not put a yoke upon you which you cannot wear,  
 “ neither loaded you with a burden you cannot bear.”  
 “ But do you know what you say, when you call  
 “ my ordinance but a little thing, not worth while to  
 “ spend ten words about it?---How dare you thus im-  
 “ peach my wisdom? Am I not King over and Law-  
 “ giver to my church? And are not all my laws to be  
 “ kept sacred and inviolable? What sort of men are  
 “ they who dare so boldly intrench upon them and  
 “ infringe the prerogative of my crown? Did I not  
 “ know what laws to give and how to rule my  
 “ people? Will you teach me wisdom, and give me  
 “ counsel and understanding? Do you think I gave  
 “ my commands with such indifferency as to make it  
 “ the *same thing* whether they were obeyed or dis-  
 “ obeyed? When did I ever appear so indifferent?  
 “ *Declare if thou hast understanding.* If not, dis-  
 “ pute my laws no longer, but obey; for they are  
 still

“ still in full force, and remain unrepealed to this very day. And those who are yet so hardy as to say my baptism is only an outward thing, a little thing, and that cast contempt upon it, and will not comply with it, shall lie down in sorrow: *And all the churches shall know that I am he who searcheth the reins and the heart. And I will give to every one of you according to his works, Jsa. l. 11. Rev. ii. 23.*”

I. What think you my friends of such an answer as this? Is it not what may be justly expected? However our Lord does say, *Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and teach men so, he shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven, Math. v. 19.* Now supposing baptism to be a lesser commandment, yet it is plain, that he who breaks it, and teaches others to break it, shall be accounted least in the kingdom of heaven, by which means he will become a considerable loser. *But he that shall do and teach, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.* Such a one shall be a considerable gainer. Now he that said, *Take eat, this is my body which is given for you: This do in remembrance of me, Mark xiv. 22. Luke xxii. 19.* said also to the very same persons, *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. Math. xxviii. 19, 20.*

Now my friends, though you eat bread in remembrance of Christ, yet if you will not be baptized in the name and according to the command of Christ, you do certainly make yourselves transgressors; only your preachers are greater transgressors than you, because they not only disobey it themselves, but teach you to disobey it also.

Surely you do not rightly understand or not duly consider what great dishonour it reflects on our blessed

bleſſed Lord, who is the legiſlator and governor of the goſpel church, to ſpeak of baptiſm in ſuch a ſlight and careleſs manner as you do. If you properly underſtood and conſidered the authority commanding it to be done, you would never dare to open your mouths againſt it. But this you leave out, and look upon baptiſm only as the act of man, which is indeed very readily acknowledged to be (conſidered in itſelf, barely as an action) but a little thing, a thing that is very ſoon, and very eaſily done; and this makes your fault ſo much the greater, becauſe it requires but little time and little labour to do it. But that which greatens your crime is, that this thing [baptiſm] little as it is in itſelf, is to be done in the higheſt and moſt ſacred names of *the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt*, Math. xxviii. 19. This is what you do not conſider and reflect upon with that ſeriousneſs and attention which you ought to do.

What! my friends, is doing that in the moſt venerable names of the Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt to be ſpoken of with ſuch diſreſpect as you take the liberty to ſpeak of it? Will you ſay that an act which always is to be performed by the higheſt commanding power and authority is a little thing, not worth while to ſpend ten words about it? Is not this a very bold and preſumptuous ſpeech? Do you ſtand in no more fear and reverence of God, than thus to let looſe your tongues againſt an ordinance of his ſovereign appointment? But as little as baptiſm is in itſelf, the applying or fixing thoſe moſt awful and honourable names to it, or in other words, its being done by the uncontrollable authority of heaven, muſt make it a great, important and honourable action. How can you think that the moſt holy Trinity would have their moſt reverend names affixed to a little, frivolous and inſignificant thing? Beſides, you ought not to look upon the thing done [baptiſm] as ſeparate and diſtinct from,  
but



but in strict connexion with the *Will* of him who hath commanded it, and with its designed ends and uses ; all which you seem to entirely forget, or not to understand.

II. Some of you have said, " You have no trouble or uneasiness in your consciences about your not being baptized." But what doth this prove ? Not that baptism is not a christian duty. There are others, who, undoubtedly have said the same concerning their never receiving the Lord's supper, but what then ? --- Does it follow that, that ordinance is not a christian duty, and that it is of no use to believers, that they are under no obligation to receive it, or pay any regard to it ? By no means.

Suppose a *Deist* was to tell you he had no trouble or uneasiness in his conscience on account of his not receiving the scripture as a divine revelation, would you think it a sufficient argument to prove he was under no obligation to receive it as such ? You would not. And you may easily perceive your own is no better.

III. Others of you have said, " If it be the Lord's will you should be baptized, you hope he will shew it you, --- will convince you of it by his spirit." Why my friends, do you expect a *new* revelation to be sent from heaven on purpose for you ? You do not. Why then believe and make use of the *old one*, for there it is written, and there God has shewn it you, and there you may see it. Do you expect to be convinced that it is your duty to be baptized by some extraordinary impulse, some remarkably deep and strong impression made in your minds by the spirit of God ? If you do, you may perhaps expect it as long as you live, and not have it at last. Why should you expect the Spirit to do more for you in this case than he does for others ? He has long since caused it to be recorded and made plain in the New-Testament for your use as well as for others, and what can you wish for or desire

fire more? Are not *the holy scriptures* able to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus, as well as other people? Are they not given by inspiration of God? And are they not profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that you as well as others may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works? They are. 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16, 17. Therefore if you will not believe Moses and the prophets, Christ and his apostles, I know not of any other means you have to expect that shall convince you of this, or any other christian duty.

IV. I have also heard some of you say, that, "If baptism would make you any better, you would be baptized to-morrow." And why not to-day? *Behold now is the accepted time, behold now is the day of salvation*, 2 Cor. vi. 2. *Therefore to-day, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts*, Heb. iii. 7, 8. But what do you mean by being made better? Is not baptism a command of our Lord Jesus Christ? If it is, is it not much better to obey than to disobey it? *Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice*. — 1 Sam. xv. 22. Is not obedience to God's commands more acceptable to him, and more useful and profitable to us than disobedience? Does it not make us much more easy, quiet and satisfied in our own minds? Does it not make our state more safe, pleasant and comfortable? Is it not a plain evidence of our being the children of God? I therefore appeal to you all to decide this question. Whether is it not ten thousand times better to live in a chearful and universal, a sincere and hearty obedience to all God's commandments, than to live in disobedience to any one of them? I know that all of you who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity, will answer in the affirmative. Each of you will readily say with the royal Psalmist, *Then shall I not be ashamed when I have respect to all thy commandments*, Psal. cxix. 6. *Then*. — Not only at that time, when I shew and manifest before men that I have respect to all God's

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commandments, when I prove by my life and conduct, that *I esteem all his precepts concerning all things to be right, and that I hate every false way*, verse 128. But also at *that time*, when I shall stand before his judgment seat, even *then* shall I not be ashamed. -----

No: *Shall not be ashamed before Christ at his coming, but shall stand with boldness before the Son of man*, 1 John ii. 28. Luke xxii. 36. Then will our great Lord and Master most honourably distinguish his faithful and obedient servants, then will he confer everlasting honours and rewards upon them all. Therefore do not think my friends that our blessed Lord commands any one thing to be done by us, that when done will make nothing better, or if left undone will make nothing worse. Such a thought greatly disparages his wisdom and goodness, his honour and authority. Let it therefore have no entertainment in your minds, but honour your Lord by a speedy and chearful compliance with his blessed will in this ordinance of baptism, as well as in every other part of duty. Remember what God said of old. --- *Them that honour me, I will honour; and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed*, 1 Sam. ii. 30.

Yet this is your plea, "what good will baptism do us? What better will it make us? Why, what good will eating and drinking at the Lord's table do you? What better will that make you? This is what some other people say as well as you, who under the notion of being led by the spirit, have thrown away both baptism and the supper of the Lord. And you are about to throw away the former under the same wrong notion with them. But what spirit do you call that which teaches you to disobey a plain and positive institution of the Son of God? Pray my friends what good will *faith* do you? None at all, if it be alone. It will profit you nothing, though by it you could remove mountains, if it be not joined with good works and the love of God, 1 Cor. xiii. 2. *Faith without works is dead.*

James

James ii. 17, 26. The most orthodox faith in the world stands for nothing without obedience.

Be pleased to consider well what I have said concerning the ends of baptism, and you will, I think, ask no more what good will baptism do us? What better will it make us? But come, let us for once suppose our blessed Lord was now upon earth, *going through every city and village preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God*, Luke viii. 1. As once he did in the land of *Judea*, and saying *Repent ye and believe the gospel*, Mark i. 14, 15. And giving orders to his disciples to baptize all such who did repent and believe, and you were to hear and see it done, would you not blush and be ashamed, yea greatly afraid to ask him what good will baptism do us? What better will it make us? Certainly you would never presume to ask him such questions. If not, what do you mean by asking such questions now? Is it not a full proof that you do very lightly esteem it? But how can you say you love him, if you refuse to obey him? Do not you know that he *made and baptized more disciples than John*? John iv. 1. And when he was gone to heaven, and his apostles began to preach and to shew the glad tidings of the kingdom of God, as he had done before them, and authorized them to do the same, do not you know that it is said --- *Then they that gladly received his word* (the word which Peter spake) *were baptized*? --- Acts ii. 41. And ought not all at all times who gladly receive the word of the gospel to be baptized, as well as those above-mentioned? Undoubtedly. For is it not equally as necessary and useful for all believers to obey Christ in that ordinance now as it was then? And as none disputed nor so much as scrupled complying with it *then*, none ought to neglect obedience to it *now*.

Remember my friends, we are not to look so much at the *thing* commanded as to the authority commanding. Therefore the same divine authority that com-

manded and made baptism necessary for all who gladly received the word of the gospel from the apostles, makes it equally necessary that all such who believe and gladly receive the same word should be baptized now. For Christ our Lord and Lawgiver has neither changed nor lost any part of his authority to command, it is unquestionably the very same it was; and consequently the obedience of believers ought still to be the same as it was in all those who first believed the gospel, because it is also the very same it was from the beginning. And it deserves to be particularly remarked, that in the early days, and throughout the whole time of the apostles preaching, all persons so soon as they believed, were, the very first convenient opportunity that offered, also baptized. *Saul* (afterwards *Paul*) to whom *Ananias* was sent to tell him what he must do, among other things, told him he must be baptized, seems to have been the only person who delayed a little, not that he expressed or shewed any indifference about it, much less spake against it as unnecessary, and of no use or value. However it is plain that *Ananias* was in haste to have him baptized, for he said, *And now why tarriest thou? arise and be baptized.* --- Acts xxii. 16.

It is probable *Saul* did not at that time know the design and use of baptism so well as *Ananias* did, nor so well as he himself afterwards did. Perhaps he neither knew nor thought of his sins being washed away at that time, or that he was to be fully and freely pardoned in the use of that ordinance. But it is plain from the words of *Ananias* to him, that it were to be so; he were to receive the remission of all his sins, and ever after to call upon the name of the Lord. He was to acknowledge the authority and submit to and obey the governing power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And now my friends, let me ask you all, why do you tarry? Why do you not *arise and be baptized and wash away your sins*, and acknowledge the authority and

and obey the command of your divine Master the Lord Jesus Christ? Pray do not *laugh* at that truly scriptural phrase, *and wash away thy sins*, as some ignorant people do. Do not make a jest of it and say, your sins are forgiven, are washed away, and that you stand in no need of baptism to any such end or purpose. Where does the scripture tell you so? You must bring a proof from scripture, not from your feelings, fancies, or imaginations; not from presumption or confident assertion, no; but *to the law and to the testimony*; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them, Isa. viii 20. Let me tell you therefore in all love and sincerity, it is a great *affront* which you cast upon your Saviour and Lord, a base piece of *ingratitude*, a contempt of his *authority*, an undervaluing of his *wisdom*, and a high aggravation of your crime, to ask what good will baptism do you? What better will it make you?

Remember my friends, you and I must one day appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, and then it will be known what sort of persons he will accept and approve of as good and faithful servants--- Pray have a care you are not like the proud and haughty *Pharisees and Lawyers, who rejected the counsel of God against themselves, not being baptized with the baptism of John*, Luke vii. 30. Baptism is therefore the counsel of God. St Paul when he was a preacher said, *he had not shunned to declare ALL the counsel of God*, Acts xx. 27. Therefore he did not shun to declare that baptism is every believers duty; for if he had, he had not declared *all the counsel of God*. But this, if he may be believed, he certainly did. Why do your Preachers shun to declare to all men wherever they go, this part of the *counsel of God*? Though you should eat and drink ever so often in remembrance of Christ, yet if you will not be baptized, you transgress the rule and commandment of Christ: You *reject the counsel of God*. Do you hear?--- It is the counsel of the  
great

great, the almighty, the most glorious God, I wonder what you all mean, I am astonished to think that any of you dare reject the counsel of that most admirable, most powerful and tremendous Being! What, will you never think and act with more reverence? Are you resolved, come what will come, to boldly face it out against Omnipotence itself? Do you think that he will receive you if you reject his counsel, his commandment, his divine and uncontrollable authority?---Do stop a-while, and pause a little here----- How will your preachers be found faithful stewards if they keep back from the people this part of *the counsel of God*? And how will they answer the neglect of it, when they shall stand before God at the last great and most terrible day, when all secrets shall be disclosed? I intreat you to consider these things very seriously, for they are not to be trifled with, think what you will of them.

V. Some of you have said, "I would fain have you all to be baptized." (one of your preachers in contempt, called it swalled) You say right, it is very true, I will not deny it; and so I would have all who know and believe in Jesus Christ, baptized as well as you. But why, or for what reason, think you?----- For the sake of augmenting our company?----- Not so; but for the honour of Christ and your own benefit. If it were the enlargement of our company we aimed at, we should undoubtedly chuse another different method, much more likely to do it than this. It is particularly on account of our steady maintaining and defending, our endeavouring to propagate and establish this glorious truth, that we are so much laughed at and reproached. Were we to fall in and comply with the prevailing mode and custom of the age and nation in which we live, we should soon lose all that odium which for a long time hath been cast upon us, But we are willing to take up the *cross* and follow our Master; willing to bear *all manner of evil that men shall say*

say against us falsely for his sake, Math. v. 11. To be accounted as the filth of the world, and the off-scouring of all things; to be defamed and reviled for our close attachment to him, 1 Cor. iv. 13.

It is our insisting upon having all believers baptized, that is the very cause and reason why our number is so small. There have been many who would very willingly have joined with us in communion without being baptized, but we dare not admit them, because we must be faithful to our Lord, We may not, must not take to ourselves the power of receiving into his church whom we please, without authority from him. No; we dare not be guilty of such usurpation. For which reason, we have been often called a narrow-spirited and uncharitable, a conceited and opiniated people. If we would give up this precious truth, this divine ordinance, we should soon see an increasing company; but we cannot, dare not do it, though all the world would join with us.

If our design were to win and draw over to us as many as we could, merely to increase our number for any worldly advantage, we must be looked upon to be a very weak and silly people indeed, seeing the method we pursue (it being exactly scriptural and according to the mind which was in Christ) is so very unlikely to effect it.--- Thus our honesty and integrity, our faithfulness and uprightness before God and men do most evidently appear. We have no hypocritical, artful or delusive tricks among us to gain profelytes; it is well known how we live and act, and how or after what manner we receive persons into our church as members with us. We are neither ashamed nor afraid to let it be known that we baptize none but such who profess to repent and believe the gospel. Therefore whosoever despiseth baptism, despiseth him who hath instituted and commanded it.

Do you think that men cannot be brought to holy tempers and holy lives as well in Christ's own instituted way



way as in yours. Is the baptizing of infants, (supposing you did baptize them, which you do not) and after ten, twenty, or thirty years teaching them the great doctrines of repentance and faith, a better way than that which Christ has directed us to and commanded to be done? Wherein? May we not at this day expect to receive remission of sins and every spiritual blessing in the same way, or in using the same means, as they were wont to do in the days of the apostles? Why not? Do you know of any man who lived in the apostles days that received remission of sins, &c. before he repented, believed and was baptized? Or can you shew me any promise that God has made that it ever should be so in any age of the world? If not, what reason have you to think it is so now? Have a care you are not led by an *enthusiastic, Spirit*.

Again, VI. Others of you have said. "If Mr. *Wesley* would be baptized, or would baptize us, then we would be baptized." Would you so? And why not now, Jesus Christ bids you be baptized? Hath Mr. *Wesley* gained a greater ascendancy over your minds and consciences. your will and affections than Jesus Christ, the Lord of life and glory? Will you take more notice of, and pay a greater regard to what Mr. *Wesley* says and does, than to what Christ, who is the king and head of the gospel church and kingdom hath said and done? Is it HE or Mr. *Wesley* that hath made baptism your duty? It is certain, if baptism be a christian duty, it were so before Mr. *Wesley* was born. His being or not being baptized, his baptizing or not baptizing you, makes it neither more nor less than what it is; makes it neither more nor less your duty. If Christ has not made it so, it is not he that can; and if he has, it is not he that can annul it and dissolve your obligation to it. For if Christ has commanded it, it is both his duty and yours to yield a sincere and speedy obedience to it,

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But I cannot help farther observing upon this unguarded speech, that you do too plainly make it appear, you fix your faith in this point at least, rather on *Mr. Wesley* than on Jesus Christ. If *Mr. Wesley* would be baptized, so would you; if he would baptize you, then you would be baptized. Yes, so it seems; without any regard to the commanding authority, rule and dominion of our Lord and Lawgiver, but because *Mr. Wesley* would do it and have you do it. Thus you *de throne* the Lord Jesus Christ and *exalt Mr. Wesley*! Now if he be that humble, holy and good man you say and believe he is, such a speech must needs very much disoblige and offend him. But

VII. It is I know very true, you are not all of this mind, you do not all say the same things which some say, and have said concerning baptism. For some of you have confessed "that baptism is a sacred ordinance of Jesus Christ, and in no wise to be set light by, either for the matter or the manner of it." And some of your preachers have taken much pains in searching the scriptures, and have acknowledged "that baptism is a christian duty and ought to be performed." Another hath said, "As to the sacrament of baptism, I desire to think and speak of it with due reverence, but dare not lean upon it more than any other outward ordinance. *Neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love.*" But alas! though you were all to acknowledge and confess the same, and think and speak ever so honourably of baptism, but would not observe it, what would your acknowledging, thinking and speaking of it with the highest applause amount to? Even nothing at all. If therefore baptism deserves to be thought and spoke of with due reverence, it must equally deserve due performance. It is certainly as much a commanded duty as any other, and as positively expressed and enjoined on all penitent believers: If therefore my

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friends,

friends, you all are such, it is as indispensably your duty to be baptized, as it is to receive the Lord's supper. And I am free to tell you all, that none of you have any right to the latter before you have done the former. This is allowed even by the church of England herself; for she will admit none to communicate with her except they have been sprinkled, which you all call being baptized, though it is indeed no such thing, as I have evidently proved in the preceding sheets. You have indeed the *name*, but you are very far from having the *thing*, which is like having the shell without the kernel, or the shadow without the substance. It is strange that you who say you have received the Holy Ghost, should be so fond of a mere human invention. Does the word of God direct you to it? No; nor the spirit of God neither. For if he did, I am sure his own inditings would; but in *them*, no man ever found it yet, and never can; consequently it cannot be the working of the spirit of God in you, to believe and practice infant-sprinkling. I have known many of you who have loudly enough spoken against it (as well as against the baptism of penitent believers) as a thing of no use or significance, and yet (as strange as it may seem) you will have it done.

But it is added, "I dare not lean upon it." No, my friends, (for I speak to you all) nor I neither; nor on any other duty, no, nor on all duties exclusive of Christ. For there is nothing short of *him*, that may be safely relied on for salvation. I do not make baptism a Saviour as some of you have said I do. No, it is the Lord Jesus Christ, the blessed Son of God, whom I own and acknowledge, adore and honour as my Saviour, and him alone; because God hath made him so. I believe that *there is salvation in no other; that there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved*, Acts iv. 12. I believe *there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself*

*himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time, 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6.* Therefore I make none but Jesus Christ to be my Saviour and Mediator. I expect no salvation but by him. I set up nothing in the room or stead of him on which I rely for my acceptance with God and eternal life. It is therefore a great mistake in every one who says, or shall say, I make baptism necessary to salvation, \* I make it no more necessary to salvation than I do the Lord's supper. In short, as I have said before, *I make it nothing.* He who made it is the Lord, and whatever ends and purposes it is designed to serve and promote, or whatever it is necessary to, it is the Lord Christ has made it so. I have no design to set it either higher or lower, or any where else than where Christ hath set it. I would always have it kept in its proper place that it may answer its designed use and end. And therefore though you dare not lean on it, (as it is worded) yet, you may, and ought to make that use of it which your Lord appointed it for, or else I am sure you do very wrong. If any of you do not know the ends and uses of baptism, read and compare what I have written with the holy scriptures, and who knows but you may know them. And knowing them, I hope you will be so wise for yourselves, and so faithful and honourable to your Lord, as to dispute no longer whether you should obey him and be baptized. Evident it is, that whatsoever he hath commanded, we ought to obey, and in the way of humble duty, rely on him for salvation.

Let us therefore learn to put things rightly together, and when we have done so, to use our joint endeavours to have them all kept in their proper places, ready and rightly fitted for their proper uses. Let us be

\* If baptism were necessary to salvation, no dying infant could be saved without it. But this is no part of the doctrine I have received. But it evidently appears to be yours by what I have observed before to Mr. Wesley.

very

very careful we do not remove any thing out of that place our blessed Lord has assigned for it ; that we do not substitute something of our own instead of what he has commanded ; and let us be very mindful that we throw nothing away.

But it is farther added, " I dare not lean upon it more than any other outward ordinance." Why my friends, who desires you ? I still speak to you all. But to be quite free and plain with you, I will venture to tell you, you are so far from leaning upon baptism *more* than any other outward ordinance, that you do not lean upon it at all, neither can you, because you have it not to lean upon. You know not its usefulness *by experience*, nor can you until you have tried it, and who knows but if you all were to put on Christ by baptism, Gal. iii. 27. but you might find it equally as pleasing and profitable as the *Ethiopian Eunuch* did, Acts viii. 39.

However, I am glad to hear that some of you are desirous to think and speak of baptism with *DUE* reverence, though I must needs say, I should still be much more glad to hear and see that they give so much reverence to it, as duly to perform it. And I cannot but live in hopes that such persons sooner or later, who think and speak of baptism with due reverence, will, with the same reverence duly perform it ; for it is a much greater honour to Christ to do well, than to think and speak of well doing. Yea, it is honouring and reverencing him so much the more ; as it is a true following and a right imitating his own most admirable and condescending example. It will be a proof of your love to him, and shew you have a real desire *to fulfill all righteousness* in the same way he himself did, Math. iii. 15. A proof you are neither ashamed or afraid to take up this part of the Cross of Christ, (if so it may be called) which at this day, and for a long time has been so much despised and contemned, and his faithful followers for their close and steady adherence

adherence to this part of duty, reproached, ridiculed, bantered and sometimes even laughed to scorn.-----

But, come my friends, let not your hearts be troubled, neither be you at all afraid. You believe in Christ, believe also in his whole doctrine; and diligently observe and do all he has taught and commanded you, and he will always be with you, Math. xxviii. 20. If you are sincere for Christ, he will certainly bless you, and carry you safe through all dangers and difficulties; through all trials and tribulations, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. *But do I now persuade men or God? Or do I seek to please men? If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ,* Gal. i. 10.

It is probable some will be displeased with me for what I have now written, but if they are, I cannot help it. I hope I shall never seek to please men in their errors and mistakes, and if they will be displeased, and even count me their enemy, because I do honestly, faithfully, lovingly, plainly and sincerely tell them the truth as it is in Jesus; I shall however, have the comfort of so far doing my duty, and be clear of their blood, and clear my own conscience too. And therefore whoever are displeased, I cannot forbear in real love and tenderness to the souls of my fellow-creatures, to declare my willingness to do them all the good service I am by divine assistance enabled to do, whether they will receive it from me or not. I say, I cannot forbear to speak in defence of the glorious truths of the gospel, so far as I know them, let the consequence be what it will. I come not in my own name; I speak not from my own authority, but in the name and by the authority of my Lord and Master Jesus Christ; who is *head over all things to the church.* To whom be glory and honour for ever. Amen.

But it is said, *In Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh*

worketh by love. Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth any thing but a new creature, Gal. v. 6. and vi, 15. Yes, it is very true; I know it is so said; and it is equally as true that it is also said, *Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the Commandments of God*, 1 Cor. vii. 19. But what do either or all these texts prove? Not that baptism is nothing; not that it availeth nothing. For if so, why did our Lord command it? But it is not baptism that is named, there is not a word about it in the texts; but quite another vastly different thing. I have often known both those texts in *Galatians* made use of by some of your preachers and others, as if they designed to insinuate that baptism and no-baptism are alike, just as circumcision and uncircumcision are to us christians. But it is indeed a very great mistake. For instance; Suppose a Jew converted to christianity, yet is he no better for having been circumcised. It profits him nothing *in Christ*; now he is become a christian. And suppose a *Gentile* converted to christianity, it is the very same, he is no better for being exempted from that painful ordinance, as to his spiritual state. Neither is he the worse for not being circumcised.-----

Circumcision! it is quite cast off, and utterly excluded with the rest of those antiquated things comprehended in those words of St. Paul. *Old things are past away, behold all things are become new*, 2 Cor. v. 17. In this new-creature state, or being *created a-new in Christ Jesus*, there is no such thing as any one being made better, or being more acceptable to God for being circumcised.

But surely nobody who calls himself a christian, will say the case is the same with respect to christian baptism, (except the *Quakers*, who say the same of the Lord's supper) for what doth it make Christ to be, who hath commanded it? Do you think he commanded such a trifling, insignificant thing, which nobody

body is neither better nor worse for doing or not doing of? Do you really believe he is such an unskilful Lawgiver?

But, though circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, yet keeping the commandments of God is something; yea, the very thing we are all concerned in, and obliged under pain of his displeasure to do and perform. Pray observe, it is *keeping the commandments*; not some, but all of them; not such only as we please; such as may suit our worldly circumstances, be agreeable to our profit or reputation among men; but all and every one of them as they stand recorded in the New-Testament. And to excite and encourage every man to a ready, chearful and universal obedience thereunto, our blessed Lord tells us by his beloved apostle John, that, *Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right in virtue of his promise, to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the celestial city above,* Rev. xxii. 14,

But it is added, *Faith which worketh by love.* Yes; my friends, this is the true and right faith; it is a working, not an idle, dull, sluggish faith; a living, not a dead faith. A faith that changes and purifies the heart and life. It worketh by love to him who is the author and the finisher of it, and will at last be the rewarder of it too. For it is *the faith of God's elect*, Titus i. 1. *The true precious faith*, 2 Pet. i. 1. *The faith which was once delivered to the saints*, Jude 3. *The most holy faith*, verse 20. And therefore to receive, to live and act according to this faith, is to be a christian indeed. It is our highest honour and our greatest glory on this side heaven, to be obedient to our most dear and highly honoured Lord; for we know the more we do this, the more we are like him who is also our grand pattern and exemplar; whose steps we do as delightfully, as we do carefully and constantly follow. Is there not therefore *One* step you



you have not taken yet ? But will you not take it ?--- How then can you say, *Lord we will follow thee whithersoever thou goest* ? Math. viii. 19. Do not you know that it is and will be said of some, to their eternal honour, *These are they that follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes* ? Rev. xiv. 4. Ought you not well to look about you, and carefully examine your steps ? No longer stand hesitating and doubting what to do in such a case as this, but speedily arise and *follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes*. A more wise and faithful, a more safe and sure guide you cannot have. I do not desire any one of you to follow *me* one step farther or otherwise than I follow Christ ; one step farther or otherwise than we have his command or example for. Why will you therefore be as those who turn aside by the little flocks of them who are the despised, because *baptized* christians ?

Indeed there are those among you who are fully convinced of their mistake concerning baptism, as well as some other wrong things, yet will not follow the convictions of their own consciences, and act according to that light they have received. But sure I am, if you ought to *contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints*, you ought earnestly to contend for baptism, for it is a part of that faith which is contained in the gospel. And just as it is delivered to us therein, so it is to be received and kept, and earnestly contended for. We must make no change or alteration in any part of it, but as it is transmitted to us in the holy scriptures, so must we take it and use it. And it is well worth your while, to seriously think upon, and make those sacred and unerring, those standing and invariable oracles of the truths of God; the constant and perpetual rule of all your doctrines and practices relative to your salvation.

O that we may all be so wise as to take heed to our ways, that we may in all things live and act by rule, and never at random. So long as we have a plain,  
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easy and safe rule to walk by, let us receive it with all thankfulness; practise it with all cheerfulness; and contend for it with all earnestness. O that we may all be of the same good temper, and equally as true, honest and faithful, as that good man of old, *Caleb* was, and manifest the same truly, brave and noble spirit he did; and so like him follow the Lord fully, Numb. xiv. 24. When ten of the spies brought up an evil report of the good land, he and *Joshua* undauntedly stood up against them and courageously and successfully confuted their false reports. So let every one of us stand up for the Lord Jesus, and bravely exert ourselves for his honour, in endeavouring to propagate and defend his divine ordinances, and confute all false and evil reports that may at any time be brought against them. Let us fear no man in the faithful discharge of our duty. Do this my friends, and all shall be well. Get firmly grounded in the whole faith of the ever blessed gospel of truth and salvation, and then you and I shall never fall out about words and ceremonies. --- But stay, --- hold a little, --- let us take care and mind what we say. Let us take heed we do not speak lightly and slightly of Christ's *ordinances* under the name of ceremonies; which I fear many have done and still do, and so look upon baptism only as a little, indifferent, ceremonious thing, as if it were not worth having any thing to do with. But what a bold and daring contempt is this of his divine and sovereign authority, as has been above observed.

How often have some of you spoken of baptism on purpose to depreciate and lessen it, to shew your low esteem for, and high dislike to it, and that you make no account of it; thinking it may either be done or left undone, just as your own humours or fancies lead you; that it is of no importance or necessity at all. And yet who can forbear observing that even you yourselves, will run in great haste to the *parson* when you

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fear

fear your new-born child is in danger of death, to get him to come and give it a *name*, and *sprinkle* a little water on its face, &c. and thereby make it as you think a *christian*, and fit for heaven! For he tells you by his common-prayer book, (not by the New-Testament) that the poor babe is then regenerated or born again, is become a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." Most wonderful all! What a fine easy way some men have found out to make a christian! But surely if you be christians, you must know that to be regenerated or born again, and so to be christians indeed, is quite another thing, and consists of very different matter than that of water sprinkled upon the face, and being called either John, James, Peter or Paul.

What an extraordinary method some people have devised, by which it seems they think, if their children die at that time, they go directly to heaven. But whither would they have went had they died without being sprinkled and without a name? Who can tell that?---To hell?---Who dare say so? Why then to heaven to be sure. I believe it. What then are they sprinkled for?-----But if those children who are sprinkled live, as thousands and ten thousands do, they must, strange as it may seem, I say, they must be regenerated! Now let us suppose a child born to-day, and to-morrow he is dying, but by sprinkling he is born again! Marvellous indeed! Born of the flesh one day, and born of the spirit the next day! Did our Lord ever work a greater miracle?-----Yet these new-born-born-again souls must, if ever they become inheritors of the kingdom of heaven, be again born again. But the truth of the matter is, there is no such thing as infant-regeneration. 'Tis a thing impossible.

There is certainly much more need of regeneration or being born again when persons are arrived at such an age as to become actual sinners; having violated  
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the law of God, and done evil in his sight, than when they were only a few days old. How can any serious, knowing, thinking person, so much as once imagine, much less believe, that a child of a few days old is capable of being regenerated? May it not with much greater *surprize* to every intelligent mind, than that which *Nicodemus* fell into, be asked, *How can these things be?* John iii. 9. That which our blessed Lord taught and told him, was certainly true; but all the men in the world who know any thing of regeneration, can never demonstrate or prove that young children, such as I have mentioned, are capable of it. Their own experience of the whole of that work, is, and ever will be a lasting testimony, an indisputable proof of the contrary. Such persons know nothing of, and never did know any thing of their childhood regeneration; but their manhood regeneration they know very well. And if none of you know any more of regeneration now, than that you were said to have in your childhood, I may truly say, and you will give me leave to say without being angry, you know nothing of it at all. What a sad thing it is that persons should be amused, yea deceived with words and sounds; that they should be imposed upon with *names* instead of knowing and having the *things* themselves. Do not you see? Cannot you see the absurdity of infant-regeneration and infant-sprinkling? --- Why then you compel me to say, you must wilfully shut your eyes, and blind yourselves because you will be blind.

VIII. But if you will continue to say, "I make more ado about baptism than I need." I answer. I neither do nor can make such ado about baptism as you and thousands do about sprinkling. Consider this first; and secondly, if you are resolved still to continue to make such ado about an error, may not I have the same liberty to make the same ado (as it is called) about an absolute and certain truth? Yea, I am resolved with God's help and permission, and will

so long as he shall be pleased to spare my life, speak, vindicate, and as much as in me lies, endeavour to promote the spreading and establishing this precious and glorious truth, as well as all others, so far as I know them, to the honour and glory of my ever blessed and glorious Lord and Master Jesus Christ; tho' all men should set themselves with the greatest force and violence against both it and me.

What, though you call it an outward ordinance, it is Christ's ordinance, and would it not look much better, nay, but would not Christ himself take it much better, when he knows we speak of his ordinances among men with a real design to honour him so much the more? Undoubtedly he would.---

But, come my friends, think a little with yourselves about this matter. Is baptism to be rejected for its being an outward ordinance? No. But sprinkling ought to be rejected, not because it is an outward thing, but because it is not an *ordinance of Christ*, and because it is a mere human invention; and is set up instead of the Lord's baptism, which he has expressly enjoined upon us by his authoritative command.

But are not your love-feasts, kisses of charity, singing and sprinkling outward things? They are. Is not the holy communion an outward thing too, as well as holy baptism? And must it be rejected and thrown away because it is an outward thing? You will not consent to that; and I will never consent to the other; do not you neither, but bravely exert yourselves, and be valiant for the truth; be not afraid, neither dismayed; for that Jesus, whom, if you love and obey, and truly and faithfully honour, will crown you at last for all your faithful labour. It shall not be in vain, 1 Cor. xv 58.

But if you will still go on in your own self-chosen way, you will never be able to justify yourselves in so doing, nor to make the least excuse in your own favour, when you shall stand before the judge of the whole

whole earth, *who will give to every one of you according to his works*, Rev. ii. 23. Who will then vindicate his own authority; the equity and justice of his own laws; and the wisdom and goodness of his own ordinances which he has instituted. Let us take care we do not play upon sacred things; let us not presume to put one out of its place, and put another in that is profane. I wish you would every one of you examine these things coolly and deliberately, with the reason and understanding of a man, with the meekness and wisdom of a christian.

When men give hard words, call ill names, throw out railing and reviling language against others; what good can it do? What is it a proof of? Truly, to me, it proves nothing more plain than a bad man and a bad cause. It is directly imitating the *devil*, who ceaseth not to rail against, and *accuse the brethren*. *Michael the archangel when at a certain time he contended with him and disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said the Lord rebuke thee*, Jude 9. Not because he was afraid of him, but because it is contrary to the angelic nature to rage and rail even against an enemy; and contrary to the will of God that they should do so. They are all mild, meek, pure spirits.---So are all good christians meek and mild, gentle and easy to be intreated; having learnt of their meek and lowly Master. Therefore not headstrong, boisterous, furious.

And it is my desire, and shall be my constant endeavour, always to breathe the sweet, the pure, the meek, the peaceable, the lovely, and loving temper of him who is all perfection. I hate giving men foul and scurrilous language; throwing out virulent and opprobrious invectives against them. Nor have I any notion of soothing, flattering, beguiling and deceiving people with fine words and fair speeches. But would always speak the truth in love and sincerity. But

IX. If

IX. If after all that hath been said, it still appears to you that baptism is but a little thing, &c. I will add a few things more, which I hope will prove beyond all dispute, that the commands of God, be they ever so little, must, notwithstanding that, be punctually obeyed. That the contrary is highly displeasing to God; that no pretences nor excuses can be made to exempt men from that obedience he requires of them.

In order therefore to silence all cavils and objections (if that be possible) that can be made against baptism or any other command of God or Christ, under the notion of its being an outward thing, a little thing, &c. I do affirm that when the great God giveth a command to his creatures, let it be of what kind soever he expects they should therewith comply without disputing. I will therefore lay before you quite plain and express instances, such as we all know to be real matters of fact; and which are disputed or doubted by none who believe the scriptures. The

First instance shall be old father *Adam*. Some look upon the prohibition of the fruit of one tree only to have been but a little and an easy command; and indeed we must none of us say it was a hard one. He certainly had power to have kept it, yet did not. But it is equally as certain, that it was his duty, and therefore that he ought to have kept it. Now this negative command in regard to the matter of it, was only an outward thing, and in itself, but a little thing; yet *Adam's* disobeying of it, was a great sin, as we all find by what we feel of the sad effects of it, even to this day.

From this first instance of disobedience to a little command and the effects of it, we may learn how careful we all ought to be to obey God. even when he commands but little things, whether positive or negative.

But had *Adam* nothing to say for himself whereby he might think of extenuating his sin? Yes he had, and did say something; but not that God's command

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was only an outward, little thing, this seems to have never reached his thoughts. *He said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat,* Gen. iii. 12. But poor Adam found no relief by what he said. God would by no means accept his plea, and acquit him from guilt. He must, notwithstanding what he had to say for himself, suffer the threatned punishment. But if the smallness of a command be a sufficient reason for not obeying it, Adam might have pleaded for an exemption from punishment. But alas! there is no pleading excuses for sin and disobedience; God will never allow it.

Let the sons of Adam take care how they live and act; take care how they make excuses for their sin and disobedience. Yet have we all in a greater or less degree imitated him; and how have, and still do very many of his children endeavour to find some excuse or other for their sins; and like him are very ready to lay the blame on this or that person, saying if you had not enticed or persuaded me---I had never done thus or thus:-----

O that we may all take warning from the fall of our first father; take all possible care that we do not disobey one of God's least commandments. And let all those who are by grace become the adopted children of God, take special care that they never dishonour their most holy Father. And let none under a profession of the *pure religion* of Jesus Christ, (the best religion in the world,) ever presume to say of any one of his commands, it is only an outward, little thing, and make that for an excuse for their disobedience thereto; for it will no more be accepted with God than Adam's was.--- But

Secondly, *Remember Lot's wife.* She was immediately turned into a fixed and immoveable pillar of salt, for no other fault than looking behind her as she was fleeing for her life, and yet for her disobedience to that little  
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command, *not to look back*, she lost it, Gen. xix. 17, 26. You see by this terrible instance, the dismal fruit of disobedience to a very little command. But God stands upon little things, Our Lord you know bid his disciples remember Lot's wife, Luke xvii. 32. Indeed there is much to be learned from it.

Thirdly, Call to mind the case of *Nadab and Abihu*, who only took other fire than that which God had commanded, and it cost them their lives, although the *strange* fire as it is called was not expressly forbidden, Lev. x. 1. Indeed you may see various instances of God's displeasure against the *Jews*, (notwithstanding his having chosen them for his own peculiar people) when they transgressed his commandments, how little soever they might be accounted by some. And he is the same jealous God still, and changeth not.

Fourthly, The sad and frightful overthrow of *Korah* and his company is a standing monument of God's anger against rebellion, though but in a little matter as some perhaps would call it. They spake diminutively against *Moses* and *Aaron*; but because they were the servants of the Lord, he took it as against himself. See Numbers chap. xvi. This shews that he will have his faithful servants honoured. You know our blessed Lord said to his disciples, *He that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me*, Luke x. 16. Now what is it to despise God, for there it terminates? Is it not plainly this; viz. disobeying his commands? His commands I say, the *least* as well as the greatest. He that will not obey the least command, despiseth it; and it directly follows he despises God. Apply this to the case in hand, and see if your speaking so diminutively, and to this day rejecting the ordinance of baptism, which the Lord hath commanded, is not at least, to say no worse of it, a plain indication that you despise it?

Do you again wonder that I should so strenuously insist upon this divine ordinance? --- Why my friends

do

do not harden yourselves against it because I insist so much upon it. I insist upon it only because it is a *divine ordinance*. If Christ had not enjoined it, and promised his presence to be with those whom he raises up and sends to teach mankind his own most admirable and excellent doctrines, you would never have heard a tittle of it from me; I should have been intirely and for ever silent about it. By this time I hope you may cease to wonder why I am so urgent to have you and all penitent believers baptized.--- Because he who is Lord and Lawgiver, King and Ruler of the gospel church and kingdom, has commanded it. Therefore speak no longer against it, lest you should be ranked amongst those who despise it; and lest it should go ill with you for rejecting this sacred institution. But I add.

Fifthly, That which befel the man for gathering sticks on the Sabbath-day. This would be looked upon by many as a very small crime. What harm could there be in that?---But it was a breach of the law of the sabbath, which God would not dispense with, and therefore the criminal must be stoned, Numb. xv. 32 to 36.

Sixthly, It is like *Saul* thought it no great crime to spare *Agag* and the best of the sheep and oxen, though God had commanded him to destroy them all. But he lost his kingdom for it. Nay, he pretended at his first meeting with *Samuel* that he had done as he was commanded; but *Samuel* soon convinced him of the contrary, and he was forced to acknowledge that he had sinned. He pretended the sheep and oxen were for sacrifice, but that would not excuse him. He also (like Adam) was for transferring the blame from himself to the people, but neither would that do. Now whatever slight thoughts he might have at first of the littleness of his crime, and how great soever his opinion might be of his pretences as sufficient arguments to corroborate the just-

ness of his actions and conduct in the whole affair; it is plain, he had sinned, and thereby highly offended God. Though some might think, as *Saul* seems to have thought, that it was but a little command, and therefore the fault not great. But let no pretences or opinions of your own or any other persons, hinder you from doing your duty as God hath commanded you.

*Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of Rams,* 1 Sam. xv. 9 to 23. It is plain therefore by this instance of *Saul*, that, not to hearken to the word of the Lord and obey his command, is highly displeasing to him. Let us beware. His pretence of preserving the best of the sheep and oxen for sacrifice, seems to have been designed to cover his sin of covetousness; therefore he could not prosper. Those men are most certainly in a wretched condition, who go about to hide one sin with another. May we all learn to be more wise, and fear and obey that God, whose commands are all wise, and just and right.

Seventhly, The error of *Uzzab*, for so it is called, 2 Sam. vi. 7. Though some perhaps may think it none at all, or but a very little one; yet the Lord slew him immediately for it. And what was his error? Truly no more than endeavouring to keep the Ark from falling when *the oxen stumbled and shook it*, as we read verse the 6th. His error or mistake therefore was this, *be laid hold of the Ark*, which neither he nor any other person ought to have done but the *Levites* only. See Num. iv. 15. compared with 1 Chron. xv. 11. to 15. In these verses we have an account of *David's* calling the *Levites* together to bear the Ark of the Lord, which was their peculiar work and business, because the Lord had appointed them, and them only to do it. And therefore those persons, whoever they were, did quite wrong when they *set the Ark upon a new cart*; for it was what they should not have done. And *Uzzab's* taking hold of it when the oxen stumbled

was what he should not have done. For which error the Lord smote him, and he died by the Ark of the Lord, 2 Sam. vi. 7. as above. This is the *Breach* which David says the Lord made upon them, and it was because they sought him not after the due manner; that is, not according to his command and appointment. Had the Levites carried it according to God's commandment, as they ought to have done, and had not set it on the Cart, the oxen had not *stumbled and shook it*; Uzzab had not *took bold of it*; and then Uzzab had not *died* at that time. But one error seldom goes alone. It is not at all improbable but this poor man had a very honest and good design in what he did, it was the care he had for the *Ark's safety*, that made him *put forth his hand to take bold of it*, lest it should have fallen; yet what he did displeased God, because it was contrary to his command, and therefore what he should not have done. Evident it is, whatever some men may think of it, that even a good design, an honest intention, a sincere meaning, will not excuse us when we *do that* which we should *not do*, and also when we *do not that* which we should *do*. There is much to be learned from this instance, but I leave it to you to make the application.

Eighthly, The sad slaughter made among the *Bethshemites* for only *looking* into the Ark, when the *Philistines* had sent it out of their country, is another standing instance of God's displeasure against those who presume to do what they ought not. This is a kin to the instance of *Uzzab*, 1 Sam. vi. 19. See *Exod. xix. 21*.

Ninthly, The sad disaster that happened unto the prophet whom God sent to *prophecy against the altar at Bethel*, 1 Kings, chap. xiii. From whence I

1 Observe. The prophet was *neither to eat bread nor drink water* there. 2. Nor to *turn back by the same way he went*. But in these little things (for surely they cannot be called great ones) was to be strictly

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punctual

punctual and obedient. Each minute circumstance was to be carefully and exactly observed and complied with. All which he did observe, (for he was returning home some other way) till another old prophet rode after him and overtook him, finding him sitting under an oak; and persuaded him to go back with him, and to eat and drink. Which when he had done he foretold him what would befall him, his *carcase should not come unto the sepulchre of his fathers.*

Now what a famous lesson of instruction here is for you and every one. For *whatsoever was written aforetime was written for our learning.* But what are we to learn? Why 1. That the *old prophet* was a deceiver. 2. That it is not impossible for a true prophet to be deceived. 3. That the true prophet ought to have kept to the word of the Lord, which he had heard, received and knew to be from the Lord, let any man have said what he would, though under the most specious pretences. For 4. He knew that the word of the *old prophet* contradicted the word of the Lord which he had received from the Lord. 5. That it is the way of *deceivers* to gloss over their ill designs with fine words and fair speeches, by which they often deceive the hearts of the simple and well-meaning. The true prophet had repulsed the *king* with this argument alone, viz. *it was charged me by the word of the Lord.* He remained inflexible. Yea, he told the *king* that *if he would give him half his house he would not eat bread in that place.* Thus bravely he withstood and prevailed against the invitation even of a *king*. The same argument he also made use of to the *old prophet*, but he would not be so easily silenced. By which it appears that lyars and deceivers, when they find one method will not succeed, have recourse to another, and to another; till, if it be possible, they find one that will serve their evil designs. Thus the *old prophet*, when he came at last to tell the other that he himself also was a *prophet*, and that an *angel had spoken to him*

*him by the word of the Lord*, he makes no farther resistance, but away he goes, not knowing that it was for his life. 6. We learn that it is a sin to disobey God in the smallest matters. But is there no excuse to be made for the prophet for breaking such little commands? There are some perhaps, who would be ready enough to say. "What harm could there be in eating and drinking in *Bethel* more than in any other place, when it was only for refreshment; especially, being *invited to it by a king*? --- Nay, would it not be a very high affront to refuse such an invitation from so great a personage? ----- And what hurt could there be in going back by the same way he went? --- These are very trifles indeed, not worth any body's while to spend ten words about; and must argue a man more whimsical and conceited than any thing else. Or what *religion* was there in being so curious about such small frivolous things? But the event shewed what harm there was in not doing what the Lord commanded, how small and frivolous soever his commands may be accounted.

Give me leave my friends to apply it thus. There are those who come to you, who do not bring with them the whole doctrine of Christ, only a part of it, how great and excellent a part soever it is, yet it is but a part. These you receive into your houses, and *bid them God speed*. They teach you to believe that baptism is only an outward little thing, &c. But surely both they and you forget that it is a plain, positive and express command of our most holy and blessed Jesus, and calls as loudly for your obedience as any other does. Suppose these men should tell you they are prophets of the Lord, faithful servants of Jesus Christ; yea, that an Angel had spoken to them by the word of the Lord, that baptism is only an outward, little, empty thing, of no use or benefit, but quite trifling and insignificant; are you to believe them? No. You are neither to believe them, nor

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an *angel* from heaven should one actually come and tell you so. For what says *St. Paul*? Why he says *let him be accursed*, Gal i. 8. How exceedingly awful and alarming is this!

But I do not think that the men whom you receive are such who go about the country with a *design to deceive*: No, my friends, I think no such thing. I really believe they are honest, well-meaning men; that they live in the fear of God, and that what they do, they do from pure love to the souls of men. If I am mistaken, I am. I know it is no more impossible for me to be mistaken in such a case than it was for the true prophet to be deceived by the old prophet as abovementioned. 'Tis true, there have, you know yourselves, been deceivers among you, but I am very far from charging you all as such. There have been deceivers in all ages, and probably among all denominations of christians, one time or other. But this I may venture to say, I hope without offence to you or your preachers, that they are egregiously mistaken in the point I am now upon; and by their mistaken notions, they do certainly deceive both themselves and you. For no man though he be ever so honest, and means ever so well, neither is, or can be a sufficient proof he is not mistaken. *Therefore take heed that no man deceive you.* This advice our Lord gave to his *apostles*, Math. xxiv 4. If once you depart from the word of the Lord in the scriptures, you know not whither you may be led, and how far you may wander out of the way of truth. The word of the Lord in the scriptures, is a most *sure word of prophecy, unto which you do well, if you take heed, as unto a light which shineth in a dark place*, 2 Pet. i. 19.

You know the devil has many ways by which he deceives poor mortals. Sometimes making them believe all is safe and right, and as well as it can be; their salvation is sure and certain, they can never lose it; and just then, perhaps, they are so much the  
nearer

nearer their fall. He can raise in their minds certain false joys which they may and sometimes perhaps do mistake for the *joy of the Holy Ghost*. He can represent some seeming pleasures to them on purpose to keep them where they are. He is so subtil, yea and bold too, that he will if he can, set up his post by *God's Post*. He can devise and frame a religion which in some respects may possibly have some similarity to the religion of Christ, and that which may be wanting of what is real and true, he may endeavour to supply with *names* instead of *things*; with *pretences* instead of *performances*; and with *shows* and *appearances* instead of *substance and solidity*. And here, alas! he too frequently holds them fast. Very often filling their minds] with a wonderful conceit of themselves and their false way; with a prodigious assurance that they stand very high in the favour of God; that they have vast incomes from the *Spirit*; that scarcely any are farther, if so far advanced in the knowledge and experience of the things of God as themselves; fills them with much pride and high-mindedness, which make them look on others with much contempt and disdain: and that which is still worse, upon the *Ordinances* of Jesus Christ, as little, mean, outward and carnal things. And it is very evident that there have been, and still are certain men, who, under a pretence of being more spiritual, and living above them (and therefore, as they think, need them not,) have with one stroke, at once cut off both *baptism and the supper of the Lord*. Have a care my friends, you are not caught in this snare.

You have thrown away baptism under a pretence of being more spiritual, having been as you think *baptized with the Holy Ghost*. (Though many of you I doubt, do not know the meaning of the phrase) And when you have thrown away the other ordinance, you may then join with those who have done so before you.  
Call



Call over the instances I have presented to your view of God's displeasure against those who presumed to break what some will call but little commands, and consider well what befel them: and after that, if you can, you may still live in the neglect and contempt of that little, trifling, insignificant thing, *baptism*.

But as little as it is, pray let me seriously ask you, (and do you as seriously answer the questions to your own consciences) Is *baptism* less than any thing God ever commanded before? Or if it is, yet if it be a command, is it not your duty to obey it? Is it less than eating and drinking at the Lord's Table? Wherein? Is it less than circumcision was among the Jews? Not at all so. But is indeed, as might easily be made appear, much greater; and here let it be seriously observed, that God (probably by an angel) *met Moses by the way* (as he was going from *Midian to Egypt* on the business he sent him) *in the inn and sought to kill him*, *Exod. iv. 24.* And what for? Why for delaying and neglecting to have his son *circumcised*, as it seems, to please his Wife. And was God so displeased with *Moses* that *man of God*, for his negligence to perform that little outward thing *circumcision*, that *he sought to kill him*? He was. Have a care my friends what you say of, and how you live in, the neglect of baptism.-----But is it less than *sprinkling*? Of which, some of you are very zealous. I say my friends, is baptism less than *rantism*? Shew me wherein. *Rantism* is so little, that as an *ordinance, of the gospel*, it was never yet seen, nor *as such*, can it ever be seen. Once more. Is baptism a less command than that which God gave to the prophet, not to eat and drink in *Bethel*? *No surely.* How then will you be able to stand and justify your neglect of baptism, when the prophet lost his life for a much less thing, and even *Moses* had like to have lost his for his negligence to observe a thing no greater--- But the question is, whether ought any of God's commands to be called little, in such

in such a sense as to allow ourselves in the careless neglect of them? If not, I repeat it, take heed what you call and say of baptism.

How easily might the prophet have pleaded for and excused himself if he had had the same notions as some of you have in the breach of a command.-----  
 “ Lord, it was but a little thing, an outward thing, a thing which concerned my body only. I only eat and drank a little for my refreshment, and I had not done it neither, if I had not been deceived by one who pretended to come in thy name, who told me that thou hadst spoken to him by an angel. He said that he also was a prophet as I was. How could I tell that he spake falsely? How could I know that he came with a design to deceive! And must I Lord! must I die for not obeying such a little command, such an outward little thing? O how severe!-----But it is certain no excuse or plea can be made to satisfy for the breach of any command of God. Make a close application of this to yourselves, my friends, and consider well, whether your neglect of baptism will be better taken and more kindly received at the hands of God, than the conduct of the prophet was.

I hope therefore from the whole, it very evidently appears that what I undertook, I have fully proved. viz. The smallness of a command is no reason why it may be disobeyed. What God enjoins, whether to Do or leave UNDONE, ought always to be complied with, by all on whom the injunction is laid.

But before I conclude, it may not perhaps be altogether unprofitable and useless, to take into our consideration the case of *Naaman the Syrian* leper. There appears to be in it (at least to me) something similar to yours. His conduct and behaviour seems in some things to run parallel with yours and many others, when applied spiritually, or to things pertaining to christianity.

Let us therefore take a short view of it as it stands recorded in the scripture. --- We find he was by the express order of that holy man of God, *Elisha*, to go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again unto thee, and thou shalt be clean, said the prophet, See 2 Kings, chap. v. from the first to the fifteenth verse. But when *Naaman* heard this, he grew very angry, and spake very diminutively of that river and of all the waters of Israel, and turned and went away in a rage.

Poor man! However his haughty spirit came down, after he heard and considered what his servants said to him. --- For he went and dipped himself seven times according to the order of the prophet, and he was clean: which we all know, if he had not done, he must have went home again just as he came: never the better. But let us now enquire into his conduct and behaviour, and trace it step by step from the beginning to the end, that we may receive some instruction thereby. And

1. He thought he was to be cured in a quite different manner from what he was. So some men think of being cured of that worst kind of leprosy, SIN, in a quite different manner from what God has declared and promised. Indeed it ought to be observed, that in order to his being quite cured and freed from his disease, he *himself* was to be active, he must do something that it might be effected; he did not therefore send his servants to fetch some of the water to him and sprinkle it upon him, but he went and dipped himself into the river: so must we be active, and do all that which our great prophet Jesus Christ has ordered and directed us to do, in order to our being freed from all our sins; viz. in order to our receiving a full pardon or remission of them. Which has been clearly shewn over and over already.

2. *Naaman* had laid out the method himself, in which he thought and expected he was to be cured and freed from

from his very sore disorder. So likewise have some men laid out a *method of their own*, in which they think and expect to receive remission of sins. But let such remember it is *Christ's* not *their method* that must be observed in order to receive forgiveness of sins.

3. He was disappointed of his expectation and grew angry, because the prophet did not do as he expected. So do some men now grow angry, because they are not received into Christ's church according to the scheme or method they have devised and laid out for themselves.

4. He spake very diminutively of all the waters of *Israel* or *Judea*, and preferred his own country waters above them all. So do some men now speak very diminutively of the ways of Christ, and prefer their own above or before them.

5. And as he had such a high conceit of his own country rivers above those in the land of *Judea*, his pride prompted him to despise and contemn them. He looked upon it as a very mean, low, pitiful thing, far below a man of his character, rank and dignity, to make that use of them which the prophet had ordered and appointed.

Just thus standeth the case with many in another sense. They have in their pride such a high conceit, such a fond opinion of their own ways, &c. above the ways of Christ, that they even despise and contemn them, looking upon them as mean, low, pitiful things, and will have nothing to do with them.

6. The prophet ordered and appointed but *one way* for *Naaman's* cure, not ten, no not two, and so left it to him to choose which he would. So has Jesus our great prophet, Lord and lawgiver, ordered and appointed but *one way*, in, or by which *we must be saved*, Acts iv. 12. Not ten, no not two, and left it to us to chuse which we please.

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7. That *very thing* which *Naaman* despised, (viz. the dipping himself in the water of *Jordan*) was the way or means by which he was to be cured. It must be the water of *Jordan* and no other, not *Abana* or *Pbarpar* how excellent soever they were in his esteem; no matter for that, he must away to *Jordan*. So has *Christ* made that *very thing* which is so much despised by many, viz. *baptism in water*, the way, the only way by which penitent believers are to enter into his church and become Members thereof; for they are the persons who have the promise of remission of sins, &c. as has been often enough proved already. Therefore not the inventions of men, how excellent soever they are accounted and esteemed; no matter for that, they must be baptized.

8. *Naaman* was to observe exactly the order which the prophet gave him, he was to make no change or alteration at all, but punctually perform what he ordered him to do. He was to wash or dip himself *seven* times. Not once, twice or thrice only, but *seven* times. If he had dipped himself fewer times than *seven*, he had not been cured, and there needed no more to cure him of his leprosy. So likewise must the rules, orders and directions of the great *Lord of all*, Acts x. 36. be exactly observed, in forming, fashioning, gathering and governing his church and kingdom. There must be no diminution; and there needs no addition, no alteration, no emendation. He that does not come up to, and walk by the gospel rule, has no promise of *Christ's* approbation.

9. As *Naaman* at last consented and went and did according to the prophet's order and appointment, and was thereby perfectly cured of his *leprosy*; so shall all those who consent and obey the *Lord Jesus Christ*, and cheerfully enter into his church and become members thereof, receive the full remission of all their past sins to that very instant. This *St. Peter* positively declared

declared to the *Jews*, Acts ii. 38. As hath been very often observed.

10. *Naaman* finding himself cured by observing the prophet's directions, according as he had declared and promised to him; he returned back again with great humility and respect, and offered him a reward which he called a blessing. So likewise all true penitent, baptized believers, who according to the promise abovementioned, receive remission of sins, &c. are truly humble and truly thankful for such a blessing.

Thus my well-beloved friends, I have drawn out these ten lessons as well for your instruction as my own; and sincerely wish and pray they may, together with the whole preceeding work, be as useful to you all as to myself. You plainly see that even *little things*, how much soever they are despised before trial, when rightly used according to the directions given, do not fail of success, in answering the end for which they were appointed. Nothing can be a more evident proof of this, than the above instance of *Naaman*. And it is as evidently true in spirituals as in temporals. The commands of God how little and insignificant soever some men may account some of them to be, yet, if they are not strictly observed and complied with, that great and almighty Being who enjoined them, who is the sovereign ruler and governor over all in earth and heaven, will, as you may see by the instances which I have laid before you, be highly displeased, and therefore may justly punish all those who dare to disobey him.

Upon the whole therefore, I may, I think, without erring, safely conclude, that all these things put together, must amount to a demonstrative and incontestible proof, that God will have his least commands obeyed as well as his greatest. And for any man to say such, or such a command of God is "only an outward

ward.

ward thing, a little thing, that it is not worth while to spend ten words about it," is not only very weak, but very bold and presumptuous: and sure I am, and you may all be equally as sure, that such a way of talking can never be the least reason, nor indeed any reason at all, why it should *not be obeyed*. If therefore, you conclude with me, that I have sufficiently proved and confirmed the *truth* by what I have advanced, I hope you will do Christ that *honour* and yourselves that *service*, as to speedily comply with it; and thereby give a public testimony to all men, that you are christians; fervent lovers and faithful followers of the Lord Jesus. And that you will use your utmost endeavours to teach others and persuade them to be *followers of the Lamb whithersoever he goes*, Rev. xiv. 4. This hath the applause of heaven! This will be to your everlasting honour and glory. Amen.

I have taken the liberty to speak plainly and freely to you all without reserve, that you may know my meaning and design as fully as I know it myself. I have said nothing ambiguously; nothing with the least intention to serve a turn, except it be a turn out of error into truth nothing with a design to deceive, as you and every one may clearly see. I have endeavoured to make every thing so clear and plain, that he that runs may read.

You will easily perceive there is throughout the whole, neither art nor craft, cunning or subtilty; but all honest, plain and simple; agreeable to the best enlightened reason and the certain truth of holy scripture; and I am well satisfied that it will bear the strictest examination by that sacred touchstone. And I heartily wish it may be advanced to that honour, that the truth (for it is that, and that only, which I desire earnestly to contend for) may be by you and all men more fully known, received and practised. ---

And

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And may God grant that you may be successful instruments in his hands to propagate the same both far and wide. Which is the sincere prayer of

Your very faithful friend,

and very ready servant

to my power,

G. BOYCE.









P O S T S C R I P T .

T H E

TRUE CHURCH.

**W**HEN Jesus bid his chosen servants go \*  
And teach the nations the true God to know, †  
And know him too as Son of God and man,  
And man's Redeemer, Lord and Sovereign ;  
And also know that he alone can save,  
Their souls from hell,---their bodies from the grave.  
Well pleas'd, his message they received, and went  
And told a guilty world that God had sent  
His only Son, to raise them from their fall ;  
To offer grace and pardon to them all :  
To all without exception who believe,  
And gladly do his offered grace receive.

One certain rule and method Jesus gave,  
To his apostles all, that all might have  
In ev'ry place and nation where they came,  
Order and government, invariably the same :  
That all contention, strife and anarchy,  
Should be shut out from each society.

This was the end designed by Christ our Lord, }  
That all should live and act with one accord, }  
Conformably unto his holy word. }

\* *Math.* xxviii. 19. † *Mark* xvi. 15.

That

That truth and peace eternally might reign  
Among them all who truth and peace maintain.

When therefore his apostles taught mankind,  
In all their teachings we can never find  
Their *own* with *his* commands they ever join'd.  
Ne'er chang'd his rule, tho' often chang'd their place ;  
Would not by their own schemes their Lord disgrace.  
But with exactness him they still obey'd,  
And punctually performed whate'er he said.  
With resolution brave, they march'd along,  
Nor feard the threat'nings of the frowning throng.  
Faithful to him they stood,--firm to his laws ;  
And rather chose to die, than quit his cause.

Now thus it was.

Jesus our Lord, before he took his leave \*  
Of his disciples, unto them did give  
Commission, and authority to preach ; †  
And all he taught them, they mankind must teach.  
All men must *first* be taught, ere they can know  
What they are to believe, and what to do.  
This is most rational, as all will own ;  
And is what Christ commanded to be done.  
And all who do believe from what they know,  
Being *first taught*, must be baptized too :  
This is Christ's method, and it must be so.  
By this he will have all believers brought,  
Into his church, for only this he taught ;  
And only this, the apostles did practise,  
For none e'er prov'd they acted otherwise ;  
And only this must be observed still,  
As only corresponding with his will.

That company of persons therefore, who  
Repent, believe and are baptized too ;  
A *church* of Christ we very rightly call,  
Which none denies, but is confess'd by all.

\* *Math.* xxviii. 19. † *Mark* xvi. 15-

It is indeed a blest community,  
 Who live in love, and peace, and unity,  
 Join'd in one body,---in one spirit join'd,\*  
 And think and speak the same with one pure mind,  
 No guile, deceit, hypocrisy or pride,  
 Nor envy, hatred, malice, can abide  
 Or entertainment have 'mong those who are  
 His chosen ones, for they are all sincere;  
 Faithful and upright, holy, humble, meek;  
 Friendly and kind.---each others good they seek.  
 No sinister self-ends do they pursue,  
 True to each other, and to all men true:  
 Seeking God's glory,---whatfo'er they do. †

Their *light so shines*, that all may clearly see †  
 In them, *good works* with faith keep company.  
 Faith and *good works* united always are  
 In Christ's pure church, which make her very fair.  
 Faith leads the way, attended still with love,  
*Good works* go hand in hand with both, and prove  
 Who are Christ's church, in ev'ry age and nation;  
 And ever will do to her consummation, §  
 In bliss most perfect; in the realms above,  
 Where all is endless peace, and endless love!  
 'Tis Christ who is the only true *foundation*,  
 On which his people build for their salvation.  
 None other must,---*none other can be laid*  
 Acceptable to God, as *Paul* hath said. ||  
 Christ is the *sure*, the *precious corner stone*,\*\*  
 On him the structure stands, and him alone. ††  
 None other name, none other Lord but he,  
 Hath God appointed unto us to be  
 A *Prophet*, and a *Priest*, and *King* also;  
 Whose just commands his people gladly do.

\* *Ephes.* iv. 4, 5 † *Corinth.* x. 31. † *Matthew* v. 16:  
 § *Rev.* xxii. 14. || *1 Cor.* iii. 11. \*\* *Isa.* xxviii. 18 .and  
 † *Pet.* ii. 6. †† *Acts* iv. 12.

To build on Christ aright for our salvation,  
Is still to keep upon that sure foundation,  
And him our pattern make for imitation.

All those therefore, who make the Lord their guide,  
And in his doctrine constantly abide,  
Who ne'er depart from his pure gospel-way,  
*Such are his church, we all may truly say.*

F I N I S .





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