THE OPINION OF THE

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ON THE

SACRAMENT OF

BAPTISM,

AS SET FORTH IN A TREATISE ON THAT SUBJECT.

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A

TREATISE

ON

BAPTISM.

Concerning Baptism I shall enquire *What* it is: What *benefits* we receive by it: Whether our Saviour designed it to remain *always* in his church: And who are the proper *subjects* of it?

I. 1. What it is. It is the initiatory sacrament, which enters us into covenant with God. It was instituted by Christ, who alone has power to institute a proper sacrament, a sign, seal, pledge, and means of grace, perpetually obligatory on all Christians. We know not indeed the exact time of its institution: but we know it was long before our Lord's Ascension. And it was instituted in the room of circumcision. For as that was a sign and seal of God's covenant, so is this.

2. The *matter* of this sacrament is water; which as it has a natural power of cleansing, is the more fit for this symbolical use. Baptism is performed by *washing*,

dipping, or *sprinkling* the person, in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who is hereby devoted to the ever blessed Trinity. I say by *washing*, *dipping*, or *sprinkling*; because it is not determined in scripture, in which of these ways it shall be done, neither by any express precept, nor by any such example as clearly proves it; nor by the force or meaning of the word, *baptize*.

3. That there is no express precept all calm men allow. Neither is there any conclusive example. John's baptism in some things agreed with Christ's, in others differed from it. But it cannot be certainly proved from Scripture, that even John's was performed by dipping. It is true, he baptized *in* Enon, *near* Salim, 'where there was much water.' But this might refer to breadth rather than depth; since a narrow place would not have been sufficient for so great a multitude. Nor can it be proved, that the baptism of our Saviour, or that administered by his disciples was by immersion. No, nor that of the eunuch baptized by Philip; though they both went down to the water:' for that *going down* may relate to the chariot, and implies no determinate depth of water. It might be up to their knees, it might not be above their ancles.

4. And as nothing can be determined from Scripture precept or example, so neither from the force or meaning of the word. For the words baptize and baptism do not necessarily imply *dipping*, but are used in other senses in several places. Thus we read, that the Jews 'were all baptized in the cloud and in the sea.' (1 Cor. x. 2.) but they were not *plunged* in either. They could, therefore, be only *sprinkled* by drops of the sea-water,

and refreshing dews from the cloud: probably intimated in that, 'Thou sentest a gracious rain upon thine inheritance, and refreshedest it when it was weary:' (Psalm lxviii. 9.) Again Christ said to his disciples, 'Ye shall be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with,' (Mark x. 38.) but neither he nor they were dipt, but only sprinkled or washed with their own blood. Again we read, Mark vii. 4. of *the baptism*, (so it is in the original,) of pots and cups, and tables or beds. Now pots and cups are not necessarily dipped when they are washed. Nay, the Pharisees washed the outsides of them only. And as for tables or beds, none will suppose they could be dipped: here then the word baptism in its natural sense, is not taken for dipping, but for washing or cleansing. And, that this is the true meaning of the word baptize, is testified by the greatest scholars and most proper judges in this matter. It is true, we read of being 'buried with Christ in baptism.' But nothing can be inferred from such a figurative expression. Nay if it held exactly, it would make as much for sprinkling as for plunging: since in burying, the body is not plunged through the substance of the earth, but rather earth is *poured* or *sprinkled* upon it.

5. And as there is no clear proof of dipping in Scripture, so there is very probable proof of the contrary. It is highly probable, the apostles themselves baptized great numbers not by dipping, but by washing, sprinkling, or pouring water. This clearly represented the cleansing from sin, which is figured by baptism. And the quantity of water used was not material: no more than the quantity of bread and wine in the Lord's supper. The jailor,

and all his house were baptized in the prison: Cornelius with his friends, (and so several households,) at home. Now is it likely, that all these had ponds or rivers, in or near their houses, sufficient to plunge them all? Every unprejudiced person must allow, the contrary is far more probable. Again, three thousand at one time and five thousand at another, were converted and baptized by St. Peter at Jerusalem; where they had none but the gentle waters of Siloma, according to the observation of Mr. Fuller, "There were no water-mills in Jerusalem, because there was no stream large enough to drive them." The place, therefore, as well as the number, makes it highly probable that all these were baptized by sprinkling, or pouring, and not by immersion. To sum up all, the manner of baptizing (whether by dipping or sprinkling) is not determined in Scripture. There is no command for one rather than the other. There is no example from which we can conclude for dipping rather than sprinkling. There are probable examples of both; and both are equally contained in the natural meaning of the word.

II. 1. What are the *Benefits* we receive by Baptism is the next point to be considered. And the first of these is, the washing away the guilt of original sin, by the application of the merits of Christ's death. That we are all born under the guilt of Adam's sin, and that all sin deserves eternal misery, was the unanimous sense of the ancient church, as it is expressed in the ninth article of our own. And the Scripture plainly asserts, that we were 'shapen in iniquity, and in sin did our mother conceive us. That we were all by nature children of wrath,

and dead in trespasses and sins;' 'that in Adam all died.' that 'by one man's disobedience all were made sinners:' that 'by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin: which came upon all men; because all had sinned.' This plainly includes infants; for they too *die*: therefore, *they have sinned*. But not by actual sin: therefore, by original: else what need have they of the death of Christ? Yea, 'Death reigned from Adam to Moses even over those who had not sinned' (actually) 'according to the similitude of Adam's transgression.' This, which can relate to infants only, is a clear proof that the whole race of mankind, are obnoxious both to the guilt and punishment of Adam's transgression.' But 'as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, so by the righteousness of one, the free-gift came upon all men, to justification of life.' And in virtue of this free-gift, the merits of Christ's life and death, are applied to us in baptism. 'He gave himself for the church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water, by the word,' (Eph. v. 25, 26;) namely, in baptism the ordinary instrument of our justification. Agreeably to this our church prays in the baptismal office, that the person to be baptized may be 'washed and sanctified by the Holy Ghost, and being delivered from God's wrath, receive remission of sins, and enjoy the everlasting benediction of his heavenly washing:' and declares in the rubric at the end of the office, 'It is certain, by God's word, that children who are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin, are saved.' And this is agreeable to the unanimous judgment of all the ancient fathers.

2. By baptism we enter into covenant with God; into that everlasting covenant, which he hath commanded for ever, (Psal. cix. 11.) That new covenant, which he promised to make with the spiritual Israel; even to 'give them a new heart and a new spirit, to sprinkle clean water upon them,' (of which the baptismal is only a figure) 'and to remember their sins and iniquities no more:' in a word, 'to be their God,' as he promised to Abraham, in the evangelical covenant, which he made with him, and all his spiritual offspring, (Gen. xvii. 7, 8.) And as circumcision was then the way of entering into this covenant, so baptism is now: which is therefore styled by the apostles, (so many good interpreters render his words,) The *stipulation, contract,* or *covenant* of a good conscience with God.

3. By baptism we are admitted into the church, and consequently made members with Christ, its head. The Jews were admitted into the church by circumcision, so are the Christians by baptism. For 'as many as are baptized into Christ,' in his name, 'have' thereby 'put on Christ,' (Gal. iii. 27.) That is, are mystically *united* to Christ, and made *one* with him. For, 'by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body,' (1 Cor. xii. 13.) Namely, 'the church, the body of Christ,' (Eph. iv. 12.) From which spiritual, vital union with him, proceeds the influence of his grace on those that are baptized; as from our union with the church, a share in all its privileges, and in all the promises Christ has made to it.

4. By baptism we who were by nature children of wrath,' are made the children of God. And this regeneration which our church in so many places ascribes to

baptism is more than barely being admitted into the church, though commonly connected therewith; being 'grafted into the body of Christ's church, we are made the children of God by adoption and grace.' This is grounded on the plain words of our Lord, John iii. 5, 'Except a man be born again of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' By water then, as a mean, the water of baptism, we are regenerated or born again; whence it is also called by the apostle, 'The washing of regeneration.' Our church, therefore, ascribes no greater virtue to baptism, than Christ himself has done. Nor does she ascribe it to the outward washing, but to the inward grace, which added thereto, makes it a sacrament. Herein a principle of grace is infused, which will not be wholly taken away, unless we quench the Holy Spirit of God, by long-continued wickedness.

5. In consequence of our being made children of God we are heirs of the kingdom of heaven, 'If children,' (as the apostle observes) 'then heirs, heirs with God, and joint-heirs with Christ.' Herein we receive a title to, and an earnest of, 'a kingdom which cannot be moved.' 'Baptism doth now save us,' if we live answerable thereto, if we repent, believe, and obey the gospel. Supposing this, as it admits us into the church here, so into glory hereafter.

III. 1. But did our Saviour design this should remain *always* in his church? This is the third thing we are to consider. And this may be dispatched in a few words, since there can be no reasonable doubt, but it was intended to last as long as the church into which it is the

appointed means of entering. In the *ordinary* way there is no other means of entering into the church or into heaven.

2. In all ages the outward baptism is a *means* of the *inward;* as outward circumcision was, of the circumcision of the heart. Nor would it have availed a Jew to say, I have the inward circumcision, and therefore do not need the outward too: that soul was to be cut off from his people. He had despised, he had broken God's everlasting covenant, by despising the seal of it, (Gen. xvii. 14.) Now the seal of circumcision was to last among the Jews as long as the law lasted, to which it obliged them. By plain parity of reason, baptism which came in its room, must last among Christians, as long as the gospel covenant into which it admits, and whereunto it obliges all nations.

3. This appears also from the original commission which our Lord gave to his apostles, 'Go, disciple all nations, baptizing in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them'—'And, lo I am with you always even unto the end of the world.' Now as long as this commission lasted, as long as Christ promised to be with them in the execution of it, so long doubtless were they to execute it, and to baptize as well as to teach. But Christ hath promised to be with them, that is by his Spirit, in their successors, to the end of the world. So long therefore without dispute, it was his design, that baptism should remain in his church.

IV. 1. But the grand question is, Who are the proper subjects of baptism? Grown persons only, or infants also? In order to answer this fully, I shall, first, Lay down the

ground of infant-baptism, taken from Scripture, reason, and primitive, universal practice; and, secondly, answer the objection against it.

2. As to the grounds of it; if infants are guilty of original sin, then they are proper subjects of baptism: seeing in the ordinary way, they cannot be saved, unless this be washed away by baptism. It has been already proved, that this original stain cleaves to every child of man; and that hereby they are children of wrath, and liable to eternal damnation. It is true, the Second Adam has found a remedy for the disease which came upon all by the offence of the first. But the benefit of this, is to be received through the means which he hath appointed: through baptism in particular, which is the ordinary means he hath appointed for that purpose: and to which God hath *tied us*, though he may not have tied *himself*. Indeed where it cannot be had, the case is different: but extraordinary cases do not make void a standing rule. This, therefore, is our first ground: infants need to be washed from original sin: therefore they are proper subjects of baptism.

3. Secondly, If infants are capable of making a covenant, and were and still are under the evangelical covenant, then they have a right to baptism, which is the entering seal thereof. But infants are capable of making a covenant, and were and still are under the evangelical covenant.

The custom of nations and common reason of mankind, prove that infants may enter into a covenant, and may be obliged by compacts made by others in their names, and receive advantage by them. But we have

stronger proof than this, even God's own word, (Deut. xxix. 10, 11, 12.) 'Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord—your captains, with all the men of Israel; your little ones, your wives and the stranger—that thou shouldest enter into covenant with the Lord thy God.' Now God would never have made a covenant with little ones, if they had not been capable of it. It is not said *children* only, but *little children*, the Hebrew word properly signifying infants. And these may be still, as they were of old, obliged to perform in after-time, what they are not capable of performing at the time of their entering into that obligation.

4. That infants of believers, the true children of faithful Abraham, always were under the gospel covenant. They were included in it, they had a right to it, and to the seal of it: as an infant heir has a right to his estate, though he cannot yet have actual possession. The covenant with Abraham was a gospel covenant, the condition the same, namely, faith: which the apostle observes was 'imputed unto him for righteousness.' The inseparable fruit of this faith was obedience; for by faith he left his country, and offered his son. The benefits were the same; for God promised, 'I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed after thee: and he can promise no more to any creature; for this includes all blessing, temporal and eternal. The Mediator is the same; for it was *in his seed*, that is, in *Christ*, (Gen. xxii. 18. Gal. iii. 16.) that all nations were to be blessed: on which very account the apostle says, 'The gospel was preached unto Abraham,' (Gal. iii. 8.) Now the same promise that was made to him, the same covenant that was made with

him, was made 'with his children after him,' (Gen. xvii. 7. Gal. iii. 7.) And upon that account it is called 'an everlasting covenant.' In this covenant children were also obliged to what they knew not, to the same faith and obedience with Abraham. And so they are still: as they are still equally entitled to all the benefits and promises of it.

5. Circumcision was then the seal of the covenant; which is itself therefore figuratively termed, *The Covenant*, (Acts vii. 8.) Hereby the children of those who professed the true religion, were then admitted into it, and obliged to the conditions of it, and 'when the law was added,' to the observance of that also. And when the old seal of circumcision was taken off, this of baptism was added in its room: our Lord appointing one positive institution to succeed another. A new seal was set to Abraham's covenant: the seals differed, but the deed was the same; only that part was struck off which was political or ceremonial. That baptism came in the room of circumcision, appears as well from the clear reason of the thing, as from the apostle's argument, where, after circumcision, he mentions baptism, as that wherein God had 'forgiven us our trespasses:' to which he adds, the 'blotting out the hand writing of ordinances,' plainly relating to circumcision and other Jewish rites: which as fairly implies, that baptism came in the room of circumcision, as our Saviour's styling the other sacrament, the *passover*, (Col. ii. 11, 12, 13. Luke xxii. 15.) shews that it was instituted in the place of it. Nor is it any proof that baptism did not succeed circumcision, because it differs in some circumstances, any more than

it proves the Lord's supper did not succeed the passover, because in several circumstances it differs from it. This then is a second ground. Infants are capable of entering into covenant with God. As they always were, so they still are under the evangelical covenant. Therefore they have a right to baptism, which is now the entering seal thereof.

6. Thirdly, If infants ought to *come to* Christ, if they are capable of admission into the church of God, and consequently of solemn sacramental dedication to him, then they are proper subjects of baptism. But infants are capable of coming to Christ, of admission into the church, and solemn dedication to God.

That infants ought to *come to* Christ appears from his own words. 'They brought little children to Christ, and the disciples rebuked them. And Jesus said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven,' (Matt. xix. 13, 14.) St. Luke expresses it still more strongly, (chap. xviii. 15.) 'They brought unto him even infants, that he might touch them.' These children were so little, 'that they were brought to him.' Yet he says, 'Suffer them to come unto me;' so little that 'he took them up in his arms;' yet he rebukes those who would have hindered their coming to him. And his command respected the future as well as the present. Therefore his disciples or ministers are still to suffer infants to come, that is to be brought unto Christ. But they cannot now come to him, unless by being brought into the church: which cannot be but by baptism. Yea, and 'of such,' says our Lord, 'is the kingdom of heaven;' not of such

only, as were like these infants. For if they themselves were not fit to be subjects of that kingdom, how could others be so, because they were like them? Infants therefore, are capable of being admitted into the church and have a right thereto. Even under the Old Testament they were admitted into it by circumcision. And can we suppose they are in a worse condition under the gospel, than they were under the law? And that our Lord would take away any privileges which they then enjoyed? Would he not rather make additions to them? This then is a third ground. Infants ought *to come to Christ*, and no man ought to *forbid* them. They are capable of admission into the church of God. Therefore they are proper subjects of baptism.

7. Fourthly, If the apostles baptized infants, then are they proper subjects of baptism. But the apostles baptized infants, as is plain from the following consideration. The Jews constantly baptized as well as circumcised all infant-proselytes. Our Lord therefore commanded his apostles, to *proselyte* or *disciple* all nations by *baptizing* them, and not forbidding them to receive infants as well as others, they must needs baptize children also.

That the Jews admitted proselytes by baptism as well as by circumcision, even whole families together, parents and children, we have the unanimous testimony of their most ancient, learned and authentic writers. The males they received by baptism and circumcision; the women by baptism only. Consequently the apostles, unless our Lord had expressly forbidden it, would of course do the same thing.

Indeed the consequence would hold from circumcision

only. For if it was the custom of the Jews, when they gathered proselytes out of all nations, to admit children into the church by circumcision, though they could not actually believe the law or obey it; then the apostles, making proselytes to Christianity by baptism, could never think of excluding children, whom the Jews always admitted (the reason for their admission being the same) unless our Lord had expressly forbidden it. It follows, the apostles baptized infants. Therefore they are proper subjects of baptism.

8. If it be objected, there is no express mention in Scripture of any infants whom the apostles baptized; I would ask, Suppose no mention had been made in *the Acts* of those two women baptized by the apostles, yet might we not fairly conclude, that when so many thousands, so many entire households were baptized, women were not excluded? Especially since it was the known custom of the Jews to baptize them? The same holds of children: Nay more strongly, on account of circumcision. Three thousand were baptized by the apostles in one day, and five thousand in another. And can it be reasonably supposed, that there were no children among such vast numbers? Again, the apostles baptized many families; nay, we hardly read of one master of a family, who was converted and baptized, but his whole family, (as was before the custom among the Jews,) were baptized with him. Thus the 'jailor's household,' 'he and all his:' 'the household of Caius,' of 'Stephanus,' of 'Crispus.' And can we suppose, that in all these households, which, we read, were without exception baptized, there should not be so much as one

child, or infant? But to go one step further. St Peter says to the multitude, Acts ii. 38, 'Repent and be baptized every one of you, for the remission of sin. For the promise is to you and to your children.' Indeed the answer is made directly, to those who asked, 'What shall we do?' But it reaches farther than to those who asked the question. And though children could not actually repent, yet they might be baptized. And that they are included appears, 1. Because the apostles addresses himself to *every one* of them, and in *every one*, children must be contained; 2. They are expressly mentioned, 'The promise is to you and to your children.'

9. Lastly, If to baptize infants has been the general practice of the Christian church in all places and in all ages, then this must have been the practice of the apostles, and consequently the mind of Christ. But to baptize infants has been the general practice of the Christian church, in all places and in all ages. Of this we have unexceptionable witnesses. St. Austin for the Latin church, (who flourished before the year 400,) and Origen for the Greek, (born in the second century,) both declaring, not only that the whole church of Christ did then baptize infants, but likewise that they received this practice from the apostles themselves. (*August. de Genesi, Lib.* 10. *c.* 23. *Orig. in Rom.* 6.) St. Cyprian likewise is express for it, and a whole council with him. *(Epis. ad Fidum.)* If need were we might cite likewise Athanasius, Chrysostom, and a cloud of witnesses. Nor is there one instance to be found in all antiquity, of any orthodox Christian who denied baptism to children, when brought to be baptized: nor any one of the fathers or

ancient writers, for the first eight hundred years at least, who held it unlawful. And that it has been the practice of all regular churches ever since is clear and manifest. Not only our own ancestors when first converted to Christianity, not only all the European Churches, but the African too and the Asiatic, even those of St. Thomas in the Indies, do and ever did baptize their children. The fact being thus cleared, that infant-baptism has been the general practice of the Christian church in all places and in all ages, that it has continued without interruption in the church of God for about seventeen hundred years, we may safely conclude, it was handed down from the apostles, who best knew the mind of Christ.

10. To sum up the evidence; if outward baptism be generally, in an ordinary way necessary to salvation, and infants may be saved as well as adults, now ought we to neglect any means of saving them: if our Lord commands such to *come*, to be *brought* unto him, and declares, 'of such is the kingdom of heaven:' if infants are capable of making a covenant, or having a covenant made for them by others, being included in Abraham's covenant, (which was a covenant of faith, an evangelical covenant) and never excluded by Christ: if they have a right to be members of the church, and were accordingly members of the Jewish: if, suppose our Lord had designed to exclude them from baptism, he must have expressly forbidden his apostles to baptize them (which none dares to affirm he did) since otherwise they would do it of course, according to the universal practice of their nation: if it is highly probable they did so, even from the letter of Scripture, because

they frequently baptized whole households, and it would be strange, if there were no children among them: if the whole church of Christ for seventeen hundred years together baptized infants, and were never opposed till the last century but one, by some not very holy men in Germany: Lastly, If there are such inestimable benefits conferred in baptism, the washing away the guilt of original sin, the ingrafting us into Christ, by making us members of his church, and thereby giving us a right to all the blessings of the gospel: it follows, that infants may, yea, ought to be baptized, and that none ought to hinder them.

I am, in the last place, to answer those objections, which are commonly brought against infant-baptism. 1. The chief of these is: "Our Lord said to his apostles (Matt. xxviii. 19.) 'Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the father, the son, and the Holy Ghost.' Here Christ himself put *teaching* before *baptizing*. Therefore infants being incapable of being *taught* are incapable of being *baptized*."

I answer, 1. The order of words in Scripture, is no certain rule for the order of things. We read in St. Mark i. 4. 'John baptized in the wilderness, and preached the baptism of repentance.' And, ver. 5. 'They were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.' Now either the order of words in Scripture does not always imply the same order of things; or it follows, that John baptized before his hearers either confessed or repented. But, 2. the words are manifestly mistranslated. For if we read, 'Go and teach all nations, baptizing them—teaching them to observe all things, it

makes plain tautology, vain and senseless repetition. It ought to be translated (which is the literal meaning of the words) *Go and make disciples of all nations, by baptizing them.* That infants are capable of being made proselytes or disciples, has been already proved. Therefore this text, rightly translated, is no valid objection against infant baptism.

2. Their next objection is "The Scripture says, 'Repent and be baptized;' 'Believe and be baptized.' Therefore repentance and faith ought to go before baptism. But infants are incapable of these. Therefore they are incapable of baptism."

I answer, repentance and faith were to go before circumcision, as well as before baptism. Therefore, if this argument held, it would prove just as well, that infants were incapable of circumcision. But we know God himself determined to the contrary, commanding them to be circumcised at eight days old. Now if infants were capable of being circumcised, notwithstanding that repentance and faith, were to go before circumcision in grown persons, they are just as capable of being baptized; notwithstanding that repentance and faith are in grown persons to go before baptism. This objection, therefore, is of no force: for it is as strong against the circumcision of infants as infant baptism.

3. It is objected, thirdly, "There is no command for it in Scripture. Now God was angry with his own people, because they did that, which he said, 'I commanded them not,' (Jer. vii. 31.) One plain text would end all dispute."

I answer, 1. We have reason to fear it would not.

It is as positively commanded in a very plain text of Scripture, that we should 'teach and admonish one another with psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing to the Lord with grace in our hearts,' (Eph. v. 14,) as it is to honour our father and mother. But does this put an end to all dispute? Do not these very persons absolutely refuse to do it, notwithstanding a plain text, an express command?

I answer, 2. They themselves practice what there is neither express command, nor clear example for in Scripture. They have no express command for baptizing women. They said indeed, "Women are implied in all nations." They are, and so are infants too: but the command is not express for either. And for admitting women to the Lord's supper, they have neither express command, nor clear example. Yet they do it continually, without either one or the other: And they are justified therein by the plain reason of the thing. This also justifies us, in baptizing infants, though without express command, or clear example.

If it be said. "But there is a command, (1 Cor. xi. 28.) 'Let a man, ἀνθρωπος, examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread:' the word for man in the original signifying indifferently either men or women." I grant it does in other places, but here the word *himself* immediately following, confines it to men only. "But women are implied in it, though not expressed." Certainly: and so are infants in all nations.

"But we have scripture example for it: for it is said in the Acts, 'The apostles continued in prayer and supplication with the women.'" True, in prayer and sup-

plication; but it is not said, in communicating. Nor have we one clear example of it in the bible.

Since then they admit women to the communion, without any express command or example, but only by consequence from Scripture, they can never shew reason why infants should not be admitted to baptism, when there are so many scriptures which by fair consequence sweh they have a right to it, and are capable of it.

As for the texts wherein God reproves his people for doing 'what he commanded them not:' that phrase evidently means, what he had forbidden; particularly in that passage of Jeremiah. The whole verse is, 'They have built the high places of Tophet, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I commanded them not.' Now God had expressly forbidden them to do this; and that on pain of death. But surely there is a difference between the Jews offering their sons and daughters to devils, and Christians offering their sons to God.

On the whole, therefore, it is not only lawful and innocent, but meet, right, and our bounden duty, in conformity to the uninterrupted practice of the whole church of Christ from the earliest ages, to consecrate our children to God by baptism, as the Jewish church were commanded to do by circumcision.

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