

infancy, not being descended from Jewish parents, but none concluded from thence that adult age was the proper time or that infant circumcision was improper. See Josh. v. 7.

Adult baptism is admissible in the same cases, but it does not appear that any person who sprang from Christian parents, was baptized in adult years by the Apostles, the reason of which is obvious: Christian parents were not less disposed to claim God's promise for their seed, than Old Testament believers, but considered their infants entitled to this ordinance; hence adult baptism was (and ought to be) used exclusively for Proselytes to Christianity under the New Testament as adult circumcision was for proselytes to Judaism under the Old Testament, compare the institution, and its variety of consequent circumstances, Gen. xvii. 9, 23, 27.

We have often been told that saving faith must precede water baptism; but on what authority such an assertion rests I know not, as I cannot find it in Scripture; for the utmost requisition made by the Apostles was an acknowledgment that Jesus was the Messiah, and that related *only* to adult persons who as Jews or Heathens had denied him.

It must be admitted, that the Holy Spirit baptizes infants with his cleansing grace or they could not be admitted to the pure society of the glorified family above; and where is the Christian who, with his Bible in his hand, would doom the whole multitude of dying infants to perdition, as therefore the atonement of Christ provides full satisfaction for their original guilt, and the Holy Spirit baptizes them with his influence, there must be a manifest inconsistency in refusing them the emblem of water baptism.

There is no truth in the whole range of theology more plain to me than that the initiating ordinance of the Church of God in all ages belongs to infants, and in whatever form or manner that ordinance is administered, its proper subjects must continue the same until they are excluded by the same authority which appointed them, and I do not know of one sentence in the sacred volume which suggests such an exclusion, or militates in the least degree against the practice of baptizing infants. On the contrary it appears to me obvious that God has commanded, that his people should dedicate their infant seed to him by an ordinance of his own appointing, and has never revoked that command, also that the ordinance he appointed for that purpose is the very same in Spirit and design under both the Old and New Testament dispensations: so that it is surprising it should ever have been a subject of controversy. Should it be objected that infants cannot understand the nature of a divine ordinance, and therefore ought not to participate in it, such an objection amounts to an impeachment of divine wisdom, and sets divine authority at defiance; for infants could no more understand the nature of this ordinance when God gave them a right to it under the Old Testament form than they can now. There are indeed several portions in the New Testament which (by a perverted interpretation) have become stumbling blocks to young Christians, and appear to support the contracted system which rejects both the proper subjects and mode of baptism. The baptism of Christ by John is brought forward in this way, but not the shadow of evidence is found, either that Jesus was immersed, or that he abrogated the divine command relative to the ordinance, but on the contrary his express design was (to use his own words) "to fulfil all righteousness;" that is to finish and close up John's ministry with his divine sanction.

The Apostle's phraseology is also among the commonly perverted texts on this subject, "Buried with him in baptism." Now this expression can have no reference to water baptism, but points exclusively to the baptism of the Holy Ghost, which separates us from the world as those who are dead to it. But even if it did refer to water baptism it should be observed that the Redeemer