

incidentally. "Baptism," it says, "is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible Church, till they profess their faith in Christ, and obedience to Him," etc. Our book of Forms, following the Catechism, says, p. 39, "The members of a congregation entitled to all Church privileges are those who, upon profession of faith in Christ and obedience to Him, have been received by the Session into full communion." We have only to ascertain what the Catechism and the Book of Forms mean by "Faith in Christ and obedience to Him," in order to learn the terms of communion in the Presbyterian Church. Does the Presbyterian Church demand a profession of vital religion and a radical change of heart, or, is it satisfied with a correct creed and a moral life? We have no doubt that what these terms cover is a profession, as Edwards would put it, of that wherein vital religion essentially consists. Where the applicant makes an intelligent profession, that he has experienced all that is essential to vital piety, and there is nothing in his life to cast discredit on that profession, the Church accepts him as, in the judgment of charity, being in reality what he professes to be, a living Christian. This, we take it, is what the Church seeks under the profession of "faith in Christ and obedience to Him." It has, indeed, been affirmed that "belief is an assent of the intellect to certain propositions, and is regulated by the amount and nature of the evidence offered in their support." To define faith as a mere intellectual assent to propositions, is consistent with a purely Pelagian conception of personal religion, but it has no affinity for the teachings of our Standards. It leaves it open for us to seek additional evidence, but it renders any subjective work of the Holy Spirit entirely inconceivable in the production of faith in Christ. The Confession, ch. xiv. 1-2, presents a very different idea of faith. "The grace of faith, whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls, is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts, and is ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the Word; by which also, and by the administration of the sacraments, and prayer, it is increased and strengthened. By this faith a Christian believeth to be true, whatsoever is revealed in the Word, for the authority of God Himself speaking therein; and acteth differently upon that which each particular passage thereof containeth; yielding obedience to the commands, trem-