

to the school of Christ, where the Spirit may impart to them so that the right of property may become the right of possession by an act of personal faith. In the case of adults, baptism is a "present" seal, and in the case of infants it is a "prospective" seal, of the Covenant.

Our reasons for their baptism in addition to the representative principle referred to are these :—

1. The Church of the two Testaments is one, even as the Covenant on which it rests is one, and as children were given a place in it from the beginning, and were included in the Old Testament covenant they must be included in the New Testament, unless excluded by some express enactment. But none such is to be found, therefore they are members of the Church still, and entitled to baptism which recognises this membership.

2. The unit of the Church is the "family" a lamb for a house. Ex. xii. 3.—and our religion is to be household religion; "as for me and my house," etc. Josh. xxiv. 15.

3. God's covenanted dealings with respect to spiritual blessings have included children as well as parents, and the welfare of the Church depends on their Christian training.

4. The children of believers can receive, and often do receive, the very blessings of the Covenant—justification and sanctification—and are therefore entitled to its sign and seal.

5. There is a "federal" holiness distinguished from personal holiness attaching to children in the New Testament as well as in the Old Testament. 1 Cor. vii. 14.

6. That children are members of the Church is seen from the weighty commands given concerning them in the word of God: Teach them diligently. Deut. vi. 7. Bring them up in the nurture. Ep. vi. 4. Children obey, etc. Ep. vi. 1.

8. What Christ "said" about little children is a proof of the same thing. He affirmed that they were members of His kingdom. Matt. xix. 14.

9. What Christ did to little children, taking them into his bosom; setting a child in the midst and saying. Matt. xviii. 2.

10. From the command given. "Feed my lambs," as part of the flock in the fold. And when Peter said: "The promise is to you," and to your children, Jewish parents could put only one meaning upon these words. They would never suppose that the New Testament Church was to be narrower than the Old had been, and that while they were to be received within the Church their little ones were to be left outside.

11. The way the command to baptise was carried out in the baptism of households. As far as the New Testament shows us, wherever the head of a house was baptised, all the household was baptised together, without a single exception. e.g. Lydia, the jailor, Stephanus, Cornelius, Crispus, etc.

12. What is Christian nurture as distin-

guished from nurture that is not Christian. The latter looks to the future, trains for the future, and hopes sometime they may be converted and join the Church; while Christian nurture regards infants as the Lord's seed now, trains and teaches them as such, and expects them to grow up within the fold, and, as the seed of the righteous, to belong to the Lord all their days; all that distinguishes them in their later years as believers having its roots in their childhood.

Children have a right to baptism because of their birth in a Christian home and not on the ground of a profession of faith made by their parents, who simply profess their own faith, and promise to perform their own duties. They do not make a vicarious profession of faith nor enter into a covenant in the name of the child. The Lord deals directly with it, and it gives to it the seal of his promise.

The baptism of children declares it is the Divine purpose in general that the children of believers should be believers themselves, that he has made provision for this, and will not be wanting on his part.

V. ITS PRACTICAL USES.

1. Baptism is a memorial of "fundamental truths," declaring our natural impurity and our need of washing through the regeneration of the Holy Spirit. It is our recognition as members in the visible Church and our engagement to the Lord's, and our taking hold of the benefits of the Covenant of grace.

2. It is a remembrance of "important duties." Our children are the Lord's and we must bring them up for Him. We must treat them as the lambs of His flock. No parent can make his child a Christian, but he can use the means, and to this baptism pledges him.

3. Infant baptism meets a deep yearning of Christian parents' hearts. Abraham's prayer: "O that Ishmael may live before Thee," is the prayer of every parent for his child; that his offspring be made partaker with himself in the same benefits of the Covenant. He longs to dedicate his children to God, and baptism meets this longing. Through this ordinance he brings his children with him within the bonds of the Covenant to receive its sign and seal. Parents and children, not separated, but standing together within the visible Church.

4. It is an instrument of family and church discipline; what Matthew Henry calls "A handle for Christian appeal." We must bring the law of God's house to bear upon them to train them in the way they should go. It was said the children would ask the meaning of the passover, and parents were commanded to tell them. Ex. xii. 26-27. So our children's curiosity may be aroused and led to enquire what is meant by baptism and the Supper. And we are to tell them that they