

tolerance, as it turns the merciful spirit of Christ into rage and demoniac cruelty, and stands revealed with the stains of its past blood shedding upon its hands.

We come now to our last proposition—that for which the two thus far considered have prepared—that which is to complete the argument for the importance of our distinctive principles. We remark, then, finally,

III. That the Baptist position is the only, as it is the perfect, security of the church against these evils which have been shown to exist germinally in the very nature of pedobaptism.

Need it be said that it is impossible for true Baptists to fall into these errors? What are their peculiar doctrines but the direct denial of the first two of them? Is not their fundamental position the assertion that the ordinances have no efficacy in themselves, and are only signs of what is effected independently of them? Hence a belief in baptismal regeneration in any of its forms is a direct rejection of the chief doctrine which constitutes them Baptists. Believing thus, that baptism is a sign and declaration of a saving work already done, and holding also that none but the baptized are entitled to church membership, the true idea of a spiritual regenerate church must necessarily be preserved.

With this idea of a church, there can be no reason from its constitution that it should be allied with the state—the world—but every reason against it. Holding that no mechanical act is of any value, but only the voluntary submission and obedience of the soul to Christ, the use of force in religion becomes not only a useless folly, but a positive outrage. Neither do they have any practice which can only be upheld by making the church identical with the commonwealth of Israel, and, therefore, which requires them to punish all schism in the former as it was in the latter, or else be inconsistent with their own fundamental position. So we find that it is through no mere chance that the Baptists have ever been free