

thereby destroy the use and end of water baptism, or any other ordinance in its place; for water baptism is a means to increase grace, and in it and by it sanctification is forwarded, and remission of sins more cleared and witnessed; yet the giving graces, and regenerating and renewing, is the Holy Spirit's peculiar. Consider Tit. iii. 5: "By the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;" baptism being the outward sign of the inward graces, wrought by the Spirit, a representation or figure, as in 1 Pet. iii. 21. "The like figure whereunto baptism doth now also save us, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ," not excluding water baptism; but shewing, that the spiritual part is chiefly to be looked at; though such as slight water baptism, as the Pharisees and lawyers did (Luke vii. 30), reject the counsel of God against themselves, not being baptized; and such as would set water baptism in the Spirit's place, exalt a duty against the deity and dignity of the Spirit, and do give the glory due unto him, as God blessed for ever, unto a duty.

By which mistake of setting up water baptism in the Spirit's place, and assigning it a work which was never appointed unto it; of forming the body of Christ, either in general, as in 1 Cor. xii. 13; Eph. iv. 5, or as to particular churches of Christ, we may see, the fruit, that instead of being the means of uniting as the spirit doth, that it hath not only rent his seamless coat, but divided his body which he hath purchased with his own blood, and opposed that great design of Father, Son, and Spirit, in uniting poor saints, thereby pulling in pieces what the Spirit hath put together. "Him that is weak in the faith receive you, for God hath received him; being such as the Spirit had baptized and admitted of the body of Christ, he would have his churches receive them also; whose baptism is the only baptism and so is called the one baptism. Therefore consider, whether such a practice hath a command or an example, that persons must be joined into Church fellowship by water baptism; for John baptized many, yet he did not baptize some into one church, and some into another, nor all into one church (as the church of Rome doth;) and into what church did Philip baptize the eunuch, or the apostle, the jailor and his house? And all the rest they baptized, were they not left free to join themselves for their convenience and edification? All which I leave to consideration. I might have named some inconveniences, if not absurdities that would follow the assertion: As to father the mistakes of the baptizers on the Spirit's act, who is not mistaken in any he baptized; no false brethren creep in unawares into the mystical body by him; and also how this manner of forming churches would suit a country, where many are converted, and willing to be baptized; but there being no church to be baptized into, how shall such a church state begin? The first must be baptized into no church, and the rest into him as the Church, or the work stand still for want of a church.

Objection. "But God is a God of order, and hath ordained order in all the churches of Christ; and for to receive one that holds the baptism he had in his infancy, there is no command nor example for, and by the same rule children will be brought in to be church members.

Answer. That God is a God of order, and hath ordained orders in all the churches of Christ, is true; and that this is one of the orders, to receive him that is weak in the faith, is as true. And though there be no example or command, in so many words—receive such an one that holds the baptism he had in his infancy, nor to reject such an one—but there is a command to receive him that is weak in the faith, without limitation; and it is like this might not be a doubt in those days, and so not spoken of in particular.

But the Lord provides a remedy for all times in the text, "Him that is weak in the faith, receive you; for else receiving would not be upon the account of saintship, but upon knowing and doing all things according to rule and order; and that must be perfectly, else for to deny any thing, or to affirm too much is disorderly, and would hinder receiving; but the Lord deals not so with his people, but accounts love the fulfilling of the law, though they be ignorant in many things both as to knowing and doing; and receives them into communion and fellowship with himself, and would have others do the same also; and if he would have so much in bearing apostles' days, when they had infallible helps to expound truths unto them, much more now, the church hath been so long in the wilderness and in captivity, and not that his people should be driven away in the dark day, though they are sick and weak. And that it should be supposed such tenderness would bring in children in age to be church members; yea, and welcome, if any body could prove them in the faith, though never so weak; for the text is, "Him that is weak in the faith receive you;" it is not he, and his wife, and children, unless it can be proved they are in the faith.

INTER-COMMUNION THROUGHOUT EVANGELICAL CHRISTENDOM.

As all alliances that unite Christians in one body, ever appear highly interesting, and increasingly so the further they carry the body in unbroken columns into the enemy's country; and as the greater the victories become, and the more sweeping the world-saving results of these alliances, monopolizing the admiration of the good and the rage of the impious, the more, the greater, the deeper, and the wider must be the bewildering astonishment of all on seeing the unity of this body utterly broken and lost every time an approach is made to the table of their common Lord, by the development of repelling principles among the membership,—principles generally latent, but then sure to burst forth, scattering the body into fragments!!!

Believing that these repelling principles should be searched out and eradicated as soon as possible, from the camp of the Lord's host, that the power of the army may no longer be broken and wasted by their influence; the subject will occupy a prominent place in the *Tribune*, till it is generally understood, and the principles known by which it is conceived to be clearly established that all Christians should meet as one family at the table of their Lord and Master, irrespective of all the multitudinous differences, great and small, that obtain among them.

In prosecuting this object, care will be taken not to offend against any of the generation of God's people. The fact will not be concealed, that the turning away of the pious from their Lord's table, even by the most exclusive Christians, is not productive of pleasure to them, but of positive pain, which is often intense and crushing in its pungency, showing that, in such cases at least, the exclusion of their brethren is obviously no matter of choice with them, but a necessary duty, which the Scriptures, in their judgment, bind upon their consciences and in which judgment many declare that they would rejoice to find themselves mistaken, if such really is the case, as the discovery would release them from the further observance of what they have ever regarded as a truly painful duty.