

without ordinances as with them, or perhaps better, and due attention to them is stigmatised as formalism, but if we will not simply sit at the feet of Jesus, and humbly submit to His teaching, our boasted wisdom will be found to have been folly, in that day when we shall see all things as they are. People talk of the "sacramental system" as something very dreadful, without understanding the meaning of their words. If they mean a system, in which the doctrine of the *opus operatum* is held, in which the sacraments are put in the place of Christ, they cannot too sharply condemn it, but they often ignorantly thus denounce the very truth of the gospel, from which we deduce the doctrine expressed in the 25th Article,* that "sacraments ordained of Christ be not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather they be certain sure witnessses and effectual signs of grace, by the which God doth work invisibly in us." Such persons admit that prayer, and preaching, and the reading of God's word, are means through which spiritual blessings are conveyed to man, but, strange to say, they will not allow an equally high position to the special ordinances of the new covenant. If the latter are forms, so are the former, if the latter have been abused, so have the former. We may respect the feeling to which this jealousy of the use of ordinances may often be attributed, but we must not the less endeavor to remove those prejudices, and to shew to those who are in error the more excellent way. If the sacraments be in any way interposed between us and Christ, so as even in the least degree to obscure the view of the Saviour, they are misapplied; but if rightly regarded and employed, they are the means by which life is imparted, and union with Christ maintained, beyond all others. So far are they from clashing with the doctrine of the efficacy of faith that they imply it, and are only made effectual through its exercise. The cure of the woman who touched the border of the Lord's garment was attributed to her faith, but her faith would not have procured for her the blessing, if she had not used the means of communication whereby virtue was conveyed

St. Augustine says, 'the sacraments of the New Testament give salvation, whereas those of the Old Testament only promised a Saviour.' Upon which the present Bishop of Ely observes, 'Here we have the view of Evangelical Sacraments, which pervades all Christian antiquity, viz.: that they differ from the ordinances of the old law in this, the ordinances of the old law were but pledges of future blessings, not means to convey them, but the sacraments of the gospel not only promise Christ, but to those who receive them in faith they are means whereby God gives Christ to the soul.'—*Brownie on Art.* xxx.