

## SALVATION OF INFANTS.

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"He justly claims them for his own,  
Who bought them with a price;"

and, being his, they are safe.

Surely these instances of our Lord's special regard, tenderness, and love, for children afford a strong encouragement as to their eternal salvation. If he claimed them on earth, will he disown them in heaven? If here he encouraged them to come unto him, will he hereafter forbid them coming? If on earth he blessed them, in heaven will he curse them? Forbid the thought. Jesus, our Elder Brother, has still the same great tender loving heart as in the days when he rejoiced in the praises of the "little ones," invited them to come unto him, took them up in his arms, and blessed them.

3. *Children, according to Christ's own declaration, belong to the family of God.*

In a passage already quoted he gives as a reason why children ought not to be hindered from coming unto him that "of such is the Kingdom of God." The meaning of this expression, according to the great majority of the best commentators, is, that "of such"—of infants—heaven is in a great measure made up. John Newton says, "In these words our Lord informs us of a fact, that the number of infants who are effectually redeemed to God by His blood, so greatly exceeds the aggregate of adult believers, that, comparatively, His kingdom may be said to consist of little children."

Such, I believe, is the true meaning of this precious passage.—The disciples thought these "little ones" beneath their Master's notice, but not so the Master himself. The presence of the children reminds him of his Father's house,—the heaven from which he came, and he says "of such is the kingdom of heaven."

If it be said that the expression, "kingdom of God," or "kingdom of heaven," means the Church of Christ on earth, still the passage bears with scarcely any less force on the salvation of infants. For then we have here Christ's warrant for regarding children as members of his visible church, and the question comes to this,—Does not Christ's recognition of children as members of his church on earth imply that he will recognize them as members of his church in heaven? Men may mistake as to those who are entitled to the privileges of Christ's church. But Christ himself cannot. And therefore, I believe he will not exclude from the church in heaven those to whom he has assigned a place in the church on earth.

In whichever sense, then, we take the expression, "Kingdom of God," the fact that "little children," as such, belong to the family of God seems clearly revealed. I say little children, as