

We *confirm* our covenant, and are *confirmed*, or strengthened.

2. Origin. The Jews had a similar ceremony when a boy reached 12 years of age. We also find confirmation mentioned in Acts viii. 14-17; Acts xix. 1-6; Heb. vi. 1-2. In the first two passages notice four particulars: *a.* The Minister, an Apostle. *b.* The candidates, baptised persons. *c.* The act, laying on of hands. *d.* The result, a gift of the Holy Spirit. Turn to the Prayer Book, and you will find these four notes respecting the officer, the candidates, the act and the result. In the last passage St. Paul speaks of certain "principles" of the "doctrine" of Christ. Mark how beautifully they succeed each other—Repentance and Faith, Baptism and Laying on of Hands, Resurrection and Eternal Judgment. All are equally principles. We have no right to reject "laying on of hands" any more than "Faith." Two refer to the beginning of grace in the soul—we must repent and believe. Two refer to the beginning of the Christian life—we must be *baptized* and *confirmed*. Two refer to the future life of glory—we must live in expectation of the *resurrection* and prepare for *eternal judgment*.

Confirmation is not a Sacrament, though having an outward sign and an inward gift, because instituted by the Apostles, and not by Christ. The Holy Ghost, which is given in the Rite, was not sent till after Christ's Ascension.

*The Preface.* This gives the design of the office, "Mouth and consent." The first is external; the second expressive of inward resolve. "Openly before the Lord," the bap-

tized are to come forward and swear allegiance to the Lord.

Then the Bishop puts the solemn question: "In the presence of God and of this congregation." How solemn should be the thoughts of the candidates before such witnesses to his vows?

"And every one shall audibly answer I do." "Audibly," so as to be heard. He must answer distinctly, or else the whole of the preparation will be thrown away. I *do* renounce, I *do* believe, I *do* resolve to obey. We must confess Christ with the mouth. Then follow the versicles. The candidates are reminded at the very outset where their true strength lies: "Our help is in the name of the Lord." Never pretend to trust in your own strength to keep such vows as these. Put your trust alone in God. Then follows a Prayer before the Imposition of Hands. The assertion that God has forgiven the candidates all their sins proceeds upon the hypothesis (which runs all through the Prayer Book) that the ordinance is approached in Repentance and Faith. Prayer is made that God would strengthen the baptized with the Holy Ghost. The "manifold gifts of grace" are taken from Isaiah the xi. 2, that we may be wise and apprehensive, prudent and courageous, discreet in our choice, devout in our duties, and pious in our lives."

"*Lay his hand upon the head.*"—One of the most ancient ceremonies in the world. Witness Jacob (Gen. 48.14), Numbers 27.18, the example of the Saviour and the Apostles, and many other examples.

"*Everlasting Kingdom.*" The person has already come to the Church, the Kingdom of Grace, now he needs