

but they are *part* of it, and the external sign of their membership is Baptism." Parents should secure for them the "outward sign" of their *gracious state*. Parents are under solemn obligation so to do; but the guilty lack of the parents, in neglecting *their* duty, alters *in no wise* the covenant relation of the children, as accepted in Christ; since *before* as well as *after*, and *with* or *without* Baptism, it is ever true, "Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." I quote in place here the following sensible remarks from Dr. Wood, of Andover, U. S.—"It can never be consistent to regard infant children as members of the church, in the peculiar sense in which adult believers are members; *for of this relation they are manifestly incapable*. Nor can it be implied, that baptized children can ever become members of the church in this sense, on *any lower terms* than those which are presented to others. They can be admitted to sustain this peculiar relation only on the condition of their exhibiting the character of real piety. Still it is clear that baptized children bear a real and very endearing relation to the church. And although they are not at present *capable of being members* of the church (the visible church), they will at length, *unless their own wickedness prevent*, become active and faithful members. Such is the design of the economy under which they are placed; and such we may hope will, through the Divine mercy, ordinarily be the happy result." Dr. W. adds—"Thus the relation of baptized children to the church is not an imaginary or unintelligible relation, but one which is real and obvious; securing to them the privileges of that gracious dispensation under which they are placed, and giving them a special prospect of obtaining its spiritual and eternal blessings." This is the true and scriptural relationship of children, of all children, to the Church of God—a relationship including every necessary good; and exactly suited to their present unconscious state and manifest incapacity. Where the authority, then, contrary to reason and common sense, for regarding infants members of an active, repenting, believing, self-denying, working church? Where? Nowhere but in the mere imaginings of men.

We are now come to a very important part of the subject. Dr. R. instructs us, that children are "*admitted*" members of the *visible church* by Baptism; that one of the privileges of baptized persons is, that they are *made members of the visible church*; and that "each child baptized by the church is *thereby* enfranchised with the rights and privileges of the visible church."

Mark these words:—Baptism "admits," Baptism "enfranchises," Baptism "makes" little children "members of the visible