

God has given to make men wise and holy, and supply their place by some contrivances of our own? Are we to say of God's laws, that they have been tested by a trial sufficiently long, and have been found wanting; that the world has advanced so far before the attainments of apostolical times that we must have regulations adapted to our improved state? No! let us endeavor to enter into the spirit of those ordinances which God has appointed, and we shall soon see the characteristics of primitive times revive amongst us.

The following observations are designed to set before christians the nature of that divine service, by which infants are recognised as members of the visible church, that, by their understanding it they may be led to discharge those duties which devolve upon them.

Baptism is a sacrament, But what is a sacrament? An answer to this cannot be wrought of the name, which is of latin origin, and was unknown to the writers of the New Testament. The apostles never employed any generic term to express these two ordinances; they called the one simply baptism, and the other, the Lord's supper. We must look at the ordinances themselves that we may understand what a sacrament means.

In those ordinances called sacraments, there are employed certain sensible signs, bread, wine and water. It must be evident that these "elements" can have no virtue connected with the salvation of the soul. Men's sins cannot be washed away by water, nor their souls edified by material food, by whomsoever applied. Even the Roman Catholics seem to be aware of this, for they transubstantiate the bread and the wine into the real body and blood of Christ; but after all, this is a poor contrivance; for it does not appear how eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ, which are material, could do any thing for the soul, more than the eating of bread and drinking of wine which are also material. Souls do not eat flesh any more than they eat bread.

The elements in the sacrament are signs, and when understood, they represent to the mind some truths, the knowledge and belief of which is advantageous to the soul. The using of the sign, by washing or eating and drinking, has no efficiency on the soul, but the believing in what is represented by these signs has. What is signified by baptism will be stated by and by, at present it may be remarked, that in the Lord's supper the bread and the wine represent the body and the blood of Christ; the breaking of the bread and the pouring out of the wine represents the body of Christ broken and his blood shed. In that ordinance, therefore, the thing set before the church is the death of Christ as a propitiation for sin; and eating and drinking by believers, symbolizes their appropriating of Christ by faith. This appropriation increases their confidence, awakens love and promotes holiness and joy.

A sacrament is therefore, simply, the exhibition to the church of important truths and privileges by means of outward or "sensible signs." The truths or facts and privileges which have been selected to be sacramentally