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"GO . . . SPEAK . . . TO THE PEOPLE ALL THE WORDS OF THIS LIFE."

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The Canadian Evangelist

Is devoted to the furtherance of the Gospel of Christ, and pleads for the union of all believers in the Lord Jesus in harmony with His own prayer recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John, and on the basis set forth by the Apostle Paul in the following terms: "I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love; giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all."—Eph. iv. 1-6.

This paper, while not claiming to be what is styled an "organ," may be taken as fairly representing the people known as Disciples of Christ in this country.

The Commission vs. Denominationalism.

XV.

T. B. KNOWLES.

The testimony we have adduced from pedobaptist scholars against the practice of infant baptism, is the witness of their scholarship, rather than of their theology. But, as the party is always larger than the man who belongs to it, so denominationalism carries along with its tide of influence, and keeps within its lines, even men who are of too much honor to falsify unimpeachable facts for merely party practices. The jargon of creedism too often drowns the voice of truth, and men oft fail to see that their practice is not consistent with their words. On the question of infant baptism, 1. The creeds boldly assert that "the baptism of children is in any wise to be retained in the church as most agreeable with the instructions of Christ." See Book of Common Prayer. And the Discipline simply re-echoes, "The baptism of young children is to be retained in the church." The Shorter Catechism says, "but the infants of such as are members of the visible church are to be baptized." And in the "catechism for young children," and bearing the motto "Feed my Lambs," we find the following: "Who are to be baptized?" "Believers and their children." "Why should infants be baptized?" "Because they have a *sinful nature* and need a Saviour" (ital mine). These assertions could not be more bold and confident, of course, if infant baptism had been positively commanded by Jesus Christ, and had been clearly established by apostolic precept and example; instead of being *utterly ignored* by the New Testament. We will hear next what the "Catechism of the M. E. Church No. 3," and under "explanatory and practical questions," teaches: It asks the question, "What authority have we for baptizing infant children?" To which the most truthful answer would be, "The authority of the church of Rome." But, strange to say, an appeal is made to (1), "The practice of the apostles!" Well, the practice of the apostles with respect to infant baptism, settles it forever as not apostolic! For, they pass it by in perfect silence, and neither by precept nor example do they give the practice any authority whatever. They treat it as a

thing unknown to them and to the church! (2) "And the command of Christ wherein he says, 'Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of God.' Here, again, there is perfect silence with regard to baptism. There is neither precept nor example for the baptizing of any one in the language quoted, nor the slightest reference to the ordinance! If this had been taken as the "authority" for infant baptism, it would never have had an existence! Indeed, the catechism might have asked with equal propriety, "What authority have we for *clothing* infant children" (a more human question), and then quoted this language of Jesus, and the one would have been no more irrelevant, or irreverent, than the other.

But the truth declared by our Lord, that "of such is the Kingdom of God," most surely exposes the folly of the question asked in the catechism, as well as that of the practice of infant baptism. These precious words assure us of the purity and safety of all infant children. But the practice of infant baptism is a senseless effort to force upon them an institution (or rather a human substitute for it), appointed of God for believing, penitent sinners only, "for the remission of sins." But there is no charge of transgression nor warning of punishment hanging over the innocent babes! For sin is not imputed where there is no law, and where no law is, there is no transgression (Rom. v. 13 and iv. 15). It were well if men would learn to keep the hands of Romish tradition off the Ark of God.

2. The teaching of the creeds fills the Kingdom of God with infant sinners, and afterwards has them regenerated through infant baptism! Let the following utterances suffice to show this: JOHN CALVIN: "I ask, again, whence has it happened, that the fall of Adam has involved so many nations together with their infant children in eternal death without remedy, unless that it has so pleased God?" In this, Calvin simply followed ST. AUGUSTINE, who says: "We affirm that they (infants) will not be saved and have eternal life, except they be baptized in Christ." And in his theological tracts, where he attempts to refute the position taken by SERVETUS: "That certain salvation is said to await all at the final judgment, except those who have brought upon themselves the punishment eternal death by their personal sins." Calvin, speaking of this says: "From which it is also inferred that all who are taken from life while infants and young children are exempt from eternal death, although they are elsewhere called accursed." And the Shorter Catechism follows Calvin in its teaching, thus: "All mankind by their fall lost communion with God, are under his wrath and curse, and so made liable to all the miseries in this life, to death itself and to the pains of hell forever." Infants are included of course! Again, the answer given to "Q. 16" says: "The covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself, but for his posterity, all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation sinned in him, and

fell with him in his transgression." And here is what is taught by the "catechism" for young children, being an introduction to the Shorter Catechism: "Q. Did Adam act for himself alone in the covenant of works?" "A. No, he represented all his posterity." "Q. What effect had the sin of Adam on all mankind?" "A. All mankind are born in a state of sin and misery." "Q. What is that sinful nature which we inherit from Adam called?" "A. Original sin." "Q. What does every sin deserve?" "A. The wrath and curse of God." Such is the teaching of the creeds, notwithstanding the Saviour's declaration, "Of such is the Kingdom of God!" But we must hear a few more of these very wise and reverential utterances of the creeds.

In the "analysis" given under "Q. and A. 17" of the Shorter Catechism, we read: "Who sinned in Adam and fell with him in his first transgression?" "All mankind." "That all but Jesus Christ are guilty and sinful in the sight of God." Infants included! And this is what the Discipline has to say under Art. VIII. "of original or birth sin." It says, "Original sin standeth not in following of Adam . . . but it is the corruption of the nature of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam." The same as is taught in Art. ix., "Common Book of Prayer." Again, in the "Catechism of the M. E. church No. 3," we find the following: "What does the Bible teach us respecting the fall and sinful state of man?" "Their sin not only injured themselves, but all their posterity, who were individually born in the image of fallen Adam, destitute of original righteousness, and under the wrath of God." Infants too! And yet, "of the kingdom of God." And the "Baptist Church Manual," Art. iii., speaks "of the fall of man," as follows: "In consequence of which all mankind are now sinners." It is easy to see that all these bold statements that so openly contradict the words of Jesus Christ, are but the natural fruits of a false theory, that of original sin, advanced by St. Augustine. Denominationalism simply re-echoes his ideas when it speaks of infants being "under the wrath of God," and exposed to "the pains of hell forever!" Augustine, having adopted the theory of infant sin and condemnation, sought for a remedy in another false theory, namely, that of baptismal regeneration; and affirmed, that they (infants) will not be saved and have eternal life, except they be baptized in Christ." He called an assembly, it is stated, "to enforce his theory of infant salvation by water." And also, that, "through his influence, an edict was issued against all who opposed infant baptism." "This led those persecuted to flee the cities and seek an asylum in the valley of Piedmont. The advocates of infant baptism, by a misapplication of Christ's words to Nicodemus, "except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," found supposed authority for their practice. On this, Dr. Wall quotes Pelagius, whose theory still obtains among pedobaptists. "Who," asks Pelagius, "is there so ignorant, who can be so impious as to

hinder infants from being baptized and born in Christ, and to make them miss the kingdom of heaven, since our Saviour has said that none can enter into the kingdom of heaven that is not born again of water and the Holy Spirit?" Thus, the false theory of original sin beget another, equally so, baptismal regeneration; and from these two sprung the practice of infant baptism, the off-spring of error, and tenderly cherished, alike, by the church of Rome and denominationalism.

3. The advocates of pedobaptism have fled for refuge to the patristic writings, and rely upon the so-called historical argument for support of their practice. Hence, persistent efforts have been made to find in the language of Justin Martyr, A. D. 165, allusions to infant baptism, and force him to teach what he does not teach. But, let it be mentioned, that in the writings of Justin Martyr is found, as Dr. Pendleton says, "The earliest passage in any patristic writer which is claimed by the advocates of infant baptism to make allusion to this practice." It will be well to give a little attention, then, to the words of this early writer, so confidently appealed to as supporting infant baptism. Justin Martyr says: "There were among Christians in his time many persons of both sexes, some sixty and some seventy years old, who had been made disciples of Christ from infancy (*ek paidoon*) and continued throughout their lives incorrupt." (1) We notice in the first place, the fact stated, that they were "made disciples," which shows that they were old enough to receive instruction, at the age designated by the phrase, "from infancy." This is what is required in the commission: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, teaching them to observe all things," etc. While the phrase, "made disciples," may include baptism, it must include teaching first. (2) The phrase, "from infancy," that has been interpreted to mean irresponsible babes, and then boldly advanced as proof, that infants were baptized as early as A. D. 100 (splendid conclusion!), cannot be shown to have any such meaning whatever, as will be demonstrated shortly. But first, let it be remembered, that even if it could be proved that infant baptism was practiced as early as 100 A. D., it would still be of no divine authority unless it can be unmistakably shown to have apostolic authority. It must be shown that they authorized it, either by precept or example, before it can be accepted as a divinely authorized institution. It cannot be proved, however, that Justin Martyr, by the phrase *ek paidoon*, meant speechless babes. The word *paid* is applied in the New Testament to persons of twelve, fifteen, or more, years of age. Thus, in Luke ii. 43, Christ himself is called "the child Jesus" (*paid*). And the same is applied to the daughter of Jairus in the viii. chap., who was "about twelve." In Acts iv. 27, 30, the word *paid* is applied to Jesus when over 33 years of age. And in Acts xx. 12, Eutychus, "the young man" whom Paul restored, is called *paida*. It is certain, therefore, that this word cannot be restricted to mean irresponsible babes only; nor do the words of Justin Martyr furnish any support for the practice of pedobaptism,

whatever. Tertullian, A. D. 200, is the first writer who makes mention of infant baptism; and he speaks of it with disapproval! He says, "Let them come, therefore, when they are grown up; let them come when they can learn; when they can be taught whither it is they come. Let them be made Christians when they can know Christ. What need their innocent age make such haste to the forgiveness of sin?" There is no comfort for the advocates of pedobaptism in his writings, nor in the writings of any other up to A. D. 200. And we have seen that, "nearly all the errors of popery were hatched before" that date. In what light, then, can the practice of infant baptism be judged by the teaching of God's word, except that of want of faith in the words of Jesus Christ? And how close to taking "the name of the Lord thy God in vain," does a preacher come, when he sprinkles a little water upon an irresponsible infant; an act nowhere authorized in the New Testament, and purely an institution of the church of Rome—"in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit?" St. Thomas, Ont.

What is our Duty on the Question of Christian Union?

JAMES LEDIARD.

As Disciples of Christ our interest in the question of Christian union is, as it ought to be, a constantly growing one; and every true Disciple will rejoice and count it amongst his blessings that he lives in a time when the important matter of a closer, if not a perfect, union is likely to be realized, and the question with which this paper is to deal is perhaps the most weighty which the Disciples of to-day have to consider, next to that of saving souls. What then is our duty—our present day duty—in connection with this movement?

Allow me a simple illustration: A party of travellers bound for a distant city had unfortunately lost their road; they had in their possession a carefully prepared chart of the journey, but had grown negligent of its directions; they often referred to it, but generally to learn of the blessings that would be theirs at the journey's end, and sometimes to learn their duty in this or that particular case, and occasionally, just occasionally, to prove each other wrong in some matter of interpretation, or to sustain some position they held, or to give a reason why they should not walk together; the result was, of course, the travellers were divided, the company sadly weakened, and worse than all, the King's highway lost. So through the low lying marshes they travelled, impeded by many an obstruction; wandering here and there, exposing themselves to dangers and difficulties which might have been avoided had they kept their course as shown on their chart.

There were, however, those who said, "Let us sit down right here, consult the chart, and whatever may be the cost, let us walk by this and this alone; taking no step till we can trace it there. So step by step, not without mistakes, not without stumbling, not without