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SPECIAL NOTICE.

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BAPTISM.

In preceding articles attention has been called to the nature and importance of Christian baptism. The Christian world it has been shown differ in their conception and appreciation of these phases of the ordinance, but not more widely than upon the action and design of this divine rite.

Not one in ten professors of Christianity, we venture to say, if asked: "What is the design of baptism?" would give a definite answer. Why is this? might well be asked. Why is it that the professed followers of Christ differ so widely upon the nature and importance, action and design of this feature of the Christian system?

The apostles were an unit upon this subject and so were the early Christians until by human dogmas their minds were corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. This confusion we well know has not arisen from a lack of perspicuity in New Testament teaching, but from the errors and intricacies of speculative theology. The only sure remedy is a return from the bondage of human creeds and confessions to the simplicity of New Testament teaching.

The design of baptism should be well understood because it is suggestive of both the subject and action. If we learn as we should and as every honest person would if freed from the trammels of false teaching, that there is now but one baptism, and that it is designed for the remission of past sins and as a pledge of pardon to the penitent believer through the blood of Jesus Christ, it would appear evident that the subject of baptism should not only be guilty of past sins but a penitent believer also. The baptism of any other kind of a subject is unauthorized by the Word of God, and is a solemn mockery. That baptism is for the remission of sins is to the unprejudiced mind evident from the following scriptures:—"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."—Mark 16: 16. "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins."—Acts 2: 38. "Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins calling upon the name of the Lord."—Acts 22: 16.

Baptism is not for the remission of sins because of any virtue in the act of itself, but it is "the obedience of faith," and God has ordained that by it we enter into Christ, who is able to cleanse our souls and purify our hearts. That such is the teaching of scripture is evident from the following—"Know you not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death."—Rom. 6: 3. "For we are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."—Gal. 3: 26, 27.

The teaching of the Westminster Confession of Faith is in our judgement not far astray upon this feature of the subject. This is what it says—

"Baptism is a Sacrament of the New Testament ordained by Jesus Christ, not only for the solemn admission of the party baptized into the visible church; but also to be unto him a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, of his ingrafting into Christ, of regeneration, of remission of sins, and of his giving up unto God, through Jesus Christ, to walk in newness of life," chap. 28. Sec. 1.

This is all very well when applied to a proper subject, but how does it comport with the baptism of an infant? Is it a "sign and seal of regeneration, of remission of sins, and of giving up unto God," in the case of an infant? If it is the "sign" of anything it is that the administrator is ignorant of the teaching of Scripture upon this subject and that he is in bondage to the authority of men. Baptism cannot, it is evident, be a "sign and seal of remission of sins and of giving up unto God," to an innocent and irresponsible babe. The ordinance then in such a case is an empty ceremony, but as it is done in the name of Jesus Christ, without his authority, it is a presumptuous act and an infringement upon the divine prerogative.

Baptism is designed for the remission of sins because it is designed to bring us into Christ. Baptism into Christ implies transition. It then implies activity, for the change is real and voluntary. This transition from one state or condition to another is effected by being "buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so, we also should walk in newness of life."—Rom. 6: 4.

The design of this holy ordinance then implies not only that the proper subject is a responsible person but that he should be buried by baptism. When a few drops of water were sprinkled on you were you buried? Were you planted in the likeness of his death? Certainly not. You were only baptized and there is no command in the Bible for that.

HELP THE YOUNG MEN.

The urgent call for preachers from so many quarters is a very encouraging sign, but when we remember that it is difficult to secure desirable men for the work the conviction forces itself upon us that the churches have not been sufficiently alive to the highest and best interests of the Cause.

Where are all our boys? How many of them have become preachers? We are ashamed to tell. Large numbers of them have found their way into other professions, many of whom would have been to-day, no doubt, able proclaimers of the gospel if they had received even a little encouragement. Whose fault is it?

We write this not to find fault with the past but to call attention to the matter for the present and future.

There are young men in all our churches who need only the proper influence—the inciting and inspiring influence which every church should create—to enlist them in the work. A church which does not stimulate its young men to make sacrifices for the cause and fill them with a desire to become champions for the truth is living below its privileges. It may be sound. It may be hawk-eyed in spying innovations even from afar, yet its condition is not to be envied, for though it has a name to live it is dead.

The Cause needs men—young men—strong and willing. We have the material. Let us call them out. Give them advice. If they are the right kind it will not be given in vain. Let us help them to pay their board bill while at College. Give them employment—remunerative employment—during their vacation, and then witness how the Lord will bless both us and the Cause.

THE WESTMINSTER CONFSSION OF FAITH.

This old document—this standard of Presbyterianism—has been receiving vigorous handling of late from various quarters. Its utterances are losing force; its authority is waning. This is a kind of scepticism in which we rejoice. We rejoice because the cause of this scepticism is the result of a growing reverence for the Word of God. It is remarkable that an enlightened and intelligent people could be bound hand and foot so long by the dogmas of fallible men.

It is high time that this relic of a proscriptive age should be considered upon its true merits and treated accordingly.

The following is from Toronto Saturday Night. It will be of interest to our readers to see what is being said upon this subject in a secular paper:—

The excitement in Presbyterian circles over the proposed revision of the Westminster Confession of Faith has a more than sectarian meaning. It seems to me to be a revolt against the assumption that a clerical council can define the orbit in which a man's mind may revolve without resulting in the damnation of his soul. The Northern Assembly of the Presbyterians of the United States are sending out questions (1) "Do you favor a revision of the Confession of Faith?" (2) "If so in what respects, and to what extent?" If I were sending out these questions I would add a third inquiry (3) "Why" and would proceed to answer them thus.

First, "I desire a revision of the Confession of Faith." Second, "In every respect and to the extent of abolishing it." Third, for the following reasons: It was composed by human and uninspired minds. It is unscriptural, and is in many respects the most inhuman, unjustifiable and horrible conception of divinity which has been evolved by any mind in any century, in the darkness of any age or by the heaviest pagans of the most blood-thirsty code. I unhesitatingly state that if it were incumbent upon me to accept the Westminster Confession of Faith in its entirety or abandon the Bible, without a moment's consideration I would accept the latter alternative. But I deny that any such alternative can be forced upon me, for I deny the Westminster Confession while adhering to what I esteem a soul-saving faith in God the Father, in his son Jesus Christ, and everlasting life through Him. No human being possessed of the slightest idea of justice or love can subscribe to the third article, viz:—

By the decree of God for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestinated to everlasting life and others foreordained to everlasting death; nor can any one who has ever known the instincts which prompt men to honor or hold them fast to justice subscribe to No. 4:

These angels and men predestinated and foreordained are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished.

Also No. 5:
V. Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to His eternal and immutable purpose and the secret counsel and good pleasure of His will, hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory, out of his mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions, or causes moving him thereunto, and all to the praise of His glorious grace.

Or No. 6:
VI. As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath He, by the eternal and most free purpose of His will, foreordained all the means thereunto. Wherefore they who are elected being fallen in Adam are redeemed by Christ: are effectually called into faith in Christ by His Spirit working in due season; are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by His powers through faith unto salvation. Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified and saved but the elect only.

Or of all things ever written by Christian or pagan, No. 7:

VII. The rest of mankind, God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of His own will, whereby His extendeth or withholdeth mercy as He pleaseth for the glory of His sovereign power over His creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, and to the praise of His glorious justice.

Note, brethren and friends, the last line of No. 7 "to the praise of His glorious justice." If I had been born in order to be sent to hell "by the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glorious justice" for something I could not do or could not help doing, I feel justified in saying I would pound upon the sooty doors of my infernal prison and make the blackened and gloomy caverns of hell re-echo with my shrieks of: "unjust! unjust!" And it does not diminish the force of these words if they were originated by the greatest infidel who now lives. It is such doctrines as this which produce infidelity. It is such creeds as this which drive men from Christianity into the darkness and doubt of unbelief. I believe the Westminster Confession of Faith has driven many men into agnosticism than all the books of Voltaire and Paine, all the lectures of Ingersoll or the insidious attacks of such historians as Froude. I hold that these articles are nothing but blasphemy, that the conception of a God which would do such things, who would damn a man before time began and permit him to suffer through the countless cycles of eternity, is more horrible than the creed which leads mothers to throw their babies into the arms of a blazing Moloch or prompts the bloody sacrifice beneath the wheels of Juggernaut. When a mother gives up her child to the fire of sacrifice she believes she ensures its eternal salvation and assists in her own, but when a man subscribes to a creed which says that his fellow man was born to be damned and to suffer time without end, he has but intensified a million fold the pagan idea that God glories in blood, revels in death, and delights in destruction.

NOTES.

Be sure to read the article Westminster Confession of Faith. Those who read it will likely re-read it.

Bro. Brown of Warton has been very sick, but last reports informs us that he has taken a change for the better.

Bro. Henry Hoover is preaching at Williams-ville, N. Y., for the summer months. He returns to Bethany College this fall.—The Church Voice.

Contribution from Ontario to Foreign Missions since last report:
Mr. and Mrs. Currie, Belwood... \$10 00

Rev. Geo. Munro, Mrs. and children, left Monday morning on a three weeks visit to the county of Kent, their native homes. Guelph Mercury.

Bro. Harris called at Everton on his return from Minto, where he held an interesting and successful meeting, and preached for us once. He has gone to Muskoka to help Bro. Crewson for a few weeks. He then returns to Bethany.

BARCLAY—The death of Prof. E. D. Barclay is a sad surprise to many. It was not generally known that he had been in failing health. Bro. Barclay was a Canadian but labored principally in the States where his labors were appreciated and where he accomplished much for the Master. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the sorrowing friends.

Said Charles Kingsley:—"We cannot safely combat the errors of any man or system, without first giving them credit for whatever excellence they may retain."

Very True. The Apostle Paul acted upon that principle when, addressing the Jews from the castle stairs in Jerusalem, he acknowledged that they were zealous toward God.

APPOINTED PROFESSOR.—Thos. L. Fowler, M. A., of Everton, has been appointed and has accepted the chair of Hebrew and Creek Exegesis in Fairfield College, Nebraska. Mr. Fowler has served the Church of the Disciples in Everton for six years and received a most unanimous invitation to continue for the seventh year. They gave him up reluctantly, but under the circumstances they could not consistently insist upon him remaining. Guelph Mercury.

The simple reading of the Bible, accompanied with a thoughtful and careful study of the meaning of its words, without any effort to be wise above what is written, is the best possible mode of passing our thoughts in the spirit realm, and apprehending what is real there. One who does this will find his mind greatly relieved, and will be content to wait till death comes for the fuller and larger disclosure of the things unseen and eternal. He will see enough to be an ample guide to his practice.—The Independent.

And no doubt we have here the explanation of the fact that so many humble Christians who have never taken a course in the evidences of Christianity feel quite sure that the Bible is God's book. It finds them as no other book does.

CO-OPERATION NOTES.

The activity of the Manitoba brethren, judging from Bro. Lemon's letter in another column, is refreshing.

The church in Mosca desire to engage a man to labor for them in the Gospel. We have been asked to assist them in securing a suitable man. Several other churches are asking for men. This is a hopeful sign.

Owing to my anticipated departure all communications pertaining to the Co-operation should be addressed for the mean time to Hugh Black, Rockwood. Let all make a note of this.

In the receipts published in this column there may be some mistakes. The names and pledges came in so fast at the Annual meeting that a few pledges may have been marked paid which were not paid. If you notice any such mistake please notify Bro. Black.

We are glad to learn that there is a band of Disciples in East Toronto and that they feel like making an attempt to build up the Cause in that important part of the city. If I am not incorrectly informed, Bro. D. Sterling is living there. He will be of great service to them in this most commendable enterprise.

Bro. John McKinnon, Everton, Treasurer for the Co-operation is now in Brandon, Manitoba. He is expected back before the Board meeting in September. We might get along without the Cor. Sec. or even if the President were absent, but we would make poor headway without the Treasurer. However the Cor. Sec. should not complain since he has access to the file in his absence.

It has been our aim to appoint an active brother or sister in every church in the Province to canvass the brethren in the interest of Home Missions.

To assist in the matter blank forms have been prepared and sent to all the churches. If any have not received them please notify us at once. There will be a full Board meeting in Toronto about the middle of this month, and it is desirable that the churches should be canvassed and the forms returned before that time.

There are several brethren in the town of Aylmer. This is an active and growing place. Bro. Campbell, who preaches for the Dorchester church, has been preaching for them for some time. They have purchased a meeting house for about \$900. About half of this must be paid this fall. The church in Dorchester, in addition to paying Bro. Campbell's salary, has promised them aid. They will need more however. The building up of the Cause in the town of Aylmer is a wise move. They need help. Let us give them all we can.

The following has been received since the beginning of the current Co-operation year:—

John Hamilton, Walkerton	.....	\$10 00
J. E. Toronto	.....	10 00
J. B. Lister, Winger	.....	1 00
R. W. Ballah, Aylmer	.....	2 00
Mrs. Shrum, Gainsboro	.....	1 00
Mrs. S. T. Martin, Chatham	.....	0 35
John Henry, Oshawa, (Life Membership)	.....	5 00
D. Ostrander, St. Thomas	.....	5 00
L. K. Murtin, Oshawa	.....	5 00
Miss C. Whitehead, Walkerton	.....	20 00
Mrs. D. W. Clendenan, West Toronto Junction	.....	20 00
G. Wells, Acton	.....	2 50
Miss Tena McVicar, St. Thomas	.....	5 00
C. H. Norworthy, St. Thomas (Ann. Mem.)	.....	1 00
Miss C. Whitehead, Walkerton	.....	1 00
D. Munro, Toronto	.....	1 00
Miss Annie McPhedran, Nassagaweya	.....	1 00
Miss Lizzie McPhedran	.....	1 00
Jno. McGill, Walkerton	.....	1 00
H. N. Hoover, Bethany	.....	1 00
John D. Thomson, St. Thomas	.....	1 00
Wm. Fowler,	.....	1 00
P. T. Kilgour, Cincinnati	.....	1 00
W. H. Swayze, Winger	.....	2 00

The following are the receipts for Hamilton Church:—

L. K. Murtin, Oshawa	.....	\$10 00
Miss Thomson	.....	2 00
Mr. D. W. Clendenan, West Toronto Junction	.....	10 00
Mrs. James Smyth	.....	1 00
Mrs. Jno. Swayze	.....	1 00
Mrs. Wm. Angle	.....	1 00
Mrs. J. D. McCoig, Mull	.....	1 00
Mrs. Geo. Munro, Erin	.....	1 00
Mary McDiarmid	.....	1 00
Mrs. E. Campbell	.....	5 00
R. W. McDonnell, Galt	.....	1 00
Mrs. Morrison	.....	2 00
A. Friend, Ridgeway	.....	5 00
Mrs. D. McGill, Erin	.....	1 00
Mrs. A. B. Green	.....	2 00
Miss Olyphant, London	.....	1 00
Mrs. Daves, Woodstock	.....	4 00

T. L. FOWLER, Cor. Sec.