

their number, although they may have received christian baptism before, by aspersion either in infancy or at adult age, is the strongest possible proof. But can the quantity of water more or less avail any thing to the salvation of the soul? or must all be lost for ever who are not baptized by immersion? Do all remain unbaptized whose whole bodies have not been put under the water. These are curious problems in divinity! And do the men who thus oppose their opinions to the christian world, exceed all other men in sound learning, extensive information, and exalted piety? Certainly not. But there is one qualification which some of them possess in a high degree, namely a certain degree of temerarious boldness that can set at defiance, scripture, reason and common sense, or set all these together by the ears, through an entire ignorance of all. For this qualifies them to assert boldly, and when their contradictions and errors are exposed, they shift their ground and deny as boldly, and thus they are proof against all conviction, and think themselves wiser than seven men who can render a reason. And the awful consequence must be, that many souls for whom Christ died, are destroyed. I judge no man rashly, nor do I form an uncharitable opinion of any; but I know that every cause must produce its proper effect. Can the rush grow without mire, Job 8. 11, 13. It cannot be denied that error leads from God, darkens the understanding and hardens the heart. To apply these observations to the case before us, can we expect those persons to repent of sin, and turn from it who utterly condemn repenting? Or those to believe who condemn believing? Or those to seek the Lord who condemn all seeking? Or those to aspire after holiness and perfect love, who say it is wrong at any time, nay even when about to launch into eternity to speak of such things; or those to avoid sin who say they cannot be damned for committing it, &c. Do not such opinions dishonor God in the highest degree, and are they not calculated to overturn and destroy every thing sacred and moral in society. Were such opinions generally received, (thank God they are not) what awful consequences would immediately follow. By the past we may judge what the future would be. See Dr. Robertson's account of the Anabaptists, to whom the present Baptists have a strong resemblance in many things. "Soon after Luther's appearance, says the Doctor, in his history of Charles V. the rashness or ignorance of some of his disciples led them to publish tenets no less absurd than pernicious, which being proposed to men extremely illiterate, but fond of novelty, and at a time when their minds were turned wholly to religious speculations, gained too easy credit and authority among them.—The most remarkable of their religious tenets related to the sacrament of baptism, which, as they contended, ought to be administered only to persons grown up to years of understanding, and should be performed, not by sprinkling them with water, but by dipping them into it. For this reason they condemned the baptism of infants, and re-baptizing all
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