

either case is a real faith upon the promise of God.

Here is the promise: "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." Notice, there are two parts in this promise, but we must believe that they are equally true. Individual faith in the first half of that promise engrafts the believer into Christ, gives him a right to all the benefits of the Covenant of Grace, and necessarily implies his engagement to be the Lord's. Baptism, which signifies and seals these three things, is evidently the right thing.

Parental faith in the last half of the promise binds God's faithfulness to engraft the whole household into Christ, giving that whole household a right to all the benefits of the Covenant of Grace, and the making of them willing in the day of His power to yield themselves wholly over to be the Lord's. Is not baptism, which signifies and seals these three things the right thing in the case of such a household, and does it not mean for the household exactly what it meant to the individual? But if the ordinance is administered in either case without the faith taking hold of God's faithfulness, it is merely a form.

A parent so laying hold upon God's promise for his house, has the same right to count God's faithfulness pledged to engraft that whole house into Christ that he has to count himself engrafted into Christ. The only difference is this: His faith for himself engrafts him instantaneously into Christ, whereas his faith for his household may still leave the matter of time in God's hand. He may be kept waiting for the fulfilment of the promise "as those that watch for the morning." But he has a right to do his watching as those who watch for the morning do theirs, in the greatest confidence that it is coming, and not one moment behind time either. While he is watching for it, he can in faith count it his already. He can mingle his prayers, which are really rather reminders than petitions, with heartfelt thanksgivings for the answer that has not yet come, and so his joy and confidence will hallow God's name while he is watching.

The other most precious truth is this: A parent so laying hold upon God's promise for his household has the same right to lay hold of the Covenant of Grace for them that he has for himself. He can claim (not merely ask for) God's adequate mercy for his child's unrighteousness. He can plead, Thou art faithful and just to forgive this child and to "cleanse it from all unrighteousness." When he finds, as he surely will, his own utter inability to teach that child, saying, "Know the

Lord," he can rest joyfully down upon the second promise, "For all shall know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them." In that promise God Himself undertakes to do the teaching, and it shall be done. He can claim in behalf of his children the crowning promise of the whole Covenant, that God shall "put his laws into their mind and write them in their heart, that he will be to them a God, and they shall be to him a people."

The making them willing to be wholly the Lord's is involved both in their engrafting into Christ, and in their actually partaking of the benefits of the Covenant of Grace.

What then is the attitude of the believing parent in presenting his child in baptism? This is the attitude he has the right to take. He can look upon that ordinance as signifying to the child exactly what it would signify to himself, and sealing to the child exactly what it would seal to himself. He not only gives the child over to God as Hannah did, to be His in life and in death, but he accepts for the child, on God's promise, its engrafting into Christ, and a right to all the benefits of the Covenant of Grace.

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There are two steps that congregations are generally unwilling to take, to give up part of their membership to start a new cause, even where it may be needed, in a growing community, and, on the other hand, to unite where such union would plainly be for good. In the former case the congregation does not wish to weaken itself and assume larger burdens, and in the latter neither wishes to lose its identity.

In both cases the trouble arises from taking too low a view of why the Church exists, what it is for, the extension of Christ's Kingdom, the winning of men to righteousness, and not the glory or comfort or pleasure or strength of any congregation.

It is a token that a Church is breathing a higher life, realizing a nobler ideal, when she is willing, on the one hand, to sink her own identity in union with a sister congregation, or, on the other, to lessen her strength and standing in the eyes of men to form the nucleus of a new cause for Christ. Some happy unions have recently taken place in our Church, in Vancouver, far West, in Lachute, Que., in the East, and in other places. May the result be greater strength for the extension of Christ's Kingdom in our land.