

and more particular and explicit in their testimony." Let us also examine this statement. The writers here introduced commence with Justin Martyr.

Justin's First Apology for the Christians presented to the Roman government probably A.D. 138, contains a sentence in which mention is made of certain Christians, sixty and seventy years old, who had been disciples, or had been made disciples from their early youth, or childhood. This is the sentence on which dependence is placed as showing the existence of infant baptism in the time of Justin. Dr. Woods says, "It is, I think, altogether probable and beyond any reasonable doubt, that Justin meant in this place to speak of those who were made disciples, or introduced into the school of Christ by baptism, when they were infants."

Does *επαίδων* here mean *from infancy*? And does *επαθρησθησαν* involve the idea of baptism in the cases referred to? These questions, at least the first, must be affirmatively answered, in order that the passage may testify to the existence of infant baptism. An affirmative answer cannot be sustained. The truth is, the passage ought never to have been pressed to the service. The candor of modern scholars forbids them to regard it as testimony for infant baptism. As I will not even appear to speak at random, I insert here the views which two learned German writers have published. The first is C. Semisch, author of a critical Monograph on the Life and Works of Justin, and withal a Lutheran clergyman. I quote from his second volume, pp. 334, 345. "Whenever Justin refers to baptism, *adults* appear as the objects to whom the sacred rite is administered. Of an *infant baptism* he knows nothing. The traces of it, which some persons believe they have detected in his writings, are groundless fancies, artificially produced. In the words (Apol. I. 15.)—'Many men and many women, sixty and seventy years old, who, from children, have been disciples of Christ, preserve their continence.' Nothing more is said, than that many individuals of both sexes became disciples of Christ in early life. The idea of *μαθητεύεσθαι* does not necessarily include that of being baptized; it merely brings before our minds a chatechumenate. And even admitting that the baptismal rite was included in *μαθητεύεσθαι*, this by no means is decisive of a reference to infant baptism. *Ἐξ παιδων* contrasted with *ἐξηκουσοντας* and *εἰςδομηκουσοντας* may well denote the entrance on the period of youth." In a note, Semisch also quotes from Starck, "as a parallel, Lucian's language about the philosopher Demonax, 'that he loved philosophy.'" To this I might add the language of Basil, in his Exhortation to Baptism, as quoted by Matthias, "Thou yet delayest, though thou hast been instructed in the word [the gospel]." In a similar manner the apostle Paul writes to Timothy, 2 Tim.

iii, 15. From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures.

The other writer is C. Steph. Matthias, author of a prize essay, entitled *Baptismatis Expositio*, a work of great literary merit. On page 187, he thus says—"In the first two centuries no memorials [monuments] are found, by which it can be evidently established that infants then received baptism: it is rather probable that as far as to the end of the second century only those who had been instructed in the elements of Christian doctrine were admitted to baptism. But certain words of Justin Martyr, which are very often adduced in favour of the antiquity of infant baptism, seem to oppose this opinion. Justin says, that very many of each sex, sixty and seventy years old, who had been taught the doctrine of Christ from their childhood [a *παισιν*] remain continent. Though the formula *μαθητεύεσθαι* undeniably signifies *to be a disciple of such a one*, yet this signification by no means contains the idea that that disciple has been already baptized; for, though he has not yet received baptism, is eagerly learning the doctrine of Christ, and is therefore taught the gospel. It is this that Justin seems to have in mind. For he himself, in another place, giving an account of baptism, relates that only those who believe the things they are taught, so as to be persuaded that they can live in a Christian manner, are brought to baptism. It is thus evident, that in Justin's opinion baptism is to be given after believing in Christ. Nothing else, therefore, is contained in that saying of Justin's, than that many, instructed in the gospel from an early age [ab *incenta etate*] remain continent."

I might now pass to the next writer introduced by Dr. Woods. But as the historical question of baptism has no little interest, I wish here to extract from Justin Martyr the passage alluded to by Matthias. It so directly bears on the subject that it materially contributes to a proper understanding of the sentence which we have been considering, and which has been made a basis for so disproportionate a structure. It is the LXIst chapter, or section, of the same Apology, in which Justin commences his account of Christian practices and worship. I give the chapter entire, without stopping to notice any doctrinal misconceptions of its author. "In what manner we devote ourselves to God, having been made new by Christ, we will explain, lest by omitting this we should seem to give a dishonest account. As many as are persuaded and believe that those things are true which are taught and said by us, and engage to live accordingly, are instructed to pray and ask, with fasting, from God, the forgiveness of the sins they had before committed, we also praying and fasting with them. Then they are led by us [to a place] where is water, and receive the new birth, [are born

again] after the same manner of new birth in which we ourselves have been born again. For, in the name of the Father of all and Lord God, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, they then receive the bath [have the bathing done to themselves]. For Christ said, Except ye be born again, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of Heaven. But that it is impossible for those who have been once born to enter into their mothers' womb, is evident to all. And by Isaiah the prophet, as we have before written, it is said in what manner those who have sinned and repent shall escape from their sins. It is thus spoken—Wash ye, become clean, take away iniquity from your souls, &c. [Is. i. 16-20.] And in reference to this matter we have learned from the apostles this account. Since, being ignorant of our first birth, we were born by a necessity from the connubial intercourse of our parents, and were in corrupt customs and evil education, in order that we may not remain children of necessity and ignorance, but of choice and knowledge, and may obtain in the water remission of the sins we have formerly committed, the name of the Father of all and Lord God is called over the person who desires to be born again and who repents of his sins, he that leads to the laver the person to be bathed pronouncing over him this name only. For no one is able to mention a name for the ineffable God: should any one dare to say there is [a name], he would be guilty of utter madness. Moreover, this bath is called *illumination*, as those who learn these things are illuminated in their understanding. And the enlightened person is bathed in the name of Jesus Christ who was crucified in the time of Pontius Pilate, and in the name of the Holy Spirit, who, through the prophets, before proclaimed all the things pertaining to Jesus."

On a portion of this extract I am happy in the opportunity of presenting the views of Semisch in his work already mentioned, vol. ii, p. 305. "This passage distinguishes, undeniably, a twofold birth—a birth after the flesh, which results from the union of a child's parents—and a birth after the Spirit, of which baptism is the instrument. The first birth, in reference to the child born, is a matter of pure necessity; we are born physically, without our knowledge or co-operation: the other birth, on the contrary, depends on our individual, self-conscious freedom; we shall be born of the Spirit only if we wish it." Of this spiritual, intelligent, voluntary birth, baptism, according to Justin's representation, is the instrument. Is this consistent with the idea of baptism administered to unconscious infants?

In the other parts of this extract, it is interesting to observe the successive steps presented by Justin. First in order is, being made new by Christ; next, cordially believing the instructions of the Christian