

do his own good pleasure. (Phil. 2, 13.) It is he that perfects praise from the mouth of babes and sucklings. (Mat. 21, 16.) It is he that teaches all our children and pours out his Spirit upon them. (Isa 54, 13: Isa. 44 3-5.) If the Lord could not so teach and influence the youngest infant by his Spirit, do you not perceive that such an infant dying could not be fit for heaven?

But God has graciously made this point sure as eternal truth can make it in his New Testament, (Luke 1, 15 41-44,) as well as in his Old Testament, (Psalm 127, 3: Jer. 1, 5.) Could there possibly be any stronger language to prove that infants are capable of the influence of God's Holy Spirit?

The truth is this: God does not confine the influence of his Spirit to believers and their children, but pours it freely forth into all souls, Christian and heathen, young and old, good and bad, in so far as they do not resist or profane it. (1 Cor. 15, 22: Acts 2, 17, 39: John 1, 9.) Wicked and worldly men and women resist it; but all infants receive it in some degree, passively indeed at first, but it soon begins to shine forth actively as infantile TRUST and LOVE. Now these are the very germs of regeneration in the infant heart. Infantile TRUST and LOVE contain the precious rudiments of FAITH and CHARITY from the Lord. (Mat. 18, 6: 1 John, 4, 7-16.) Indeed infantile TRUST and LOVE are just the miniature reflection of the divine image; for God is LIGHT and LOVE. (1 John, 1, 5, and 1 John 4, 16.) We receive his light and love by faith and charity, namely, by trust and love.

The Lord instils these divine principles into every infant heart, and therefore he declares, "Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name receiveth me." (Mark 9, 37.) Who then can refuse to receive such an one? What church can refuse to receive such an one in the Saviour's name? Nay: in receiving them in his name, the church receiveth Christ! Once only is it recorded that Christ was "much displeased," and that was because his disciples rebuked the parents who brought their infants to him. (Mark 10, 13, 14: Luke 18, 15.) "Suffer little children" (said the Saviour) "and forbid them not to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom

of heaven." (Mat. 19, 14.) I shall certainly remember this solemn charge; and truly I enjoy most sacred delight in receiving little children in Christ's name by baptism, knowing assuredly that in so doing, I receive Christ himself, as he has declared. (Mat. 18, 5.) And no less dear and sacred is my joy in feeding those lambs of Christ with the sincere milk of the Word. I know they are his lambs, because he himself says so, (Luke 18, 15: John 21, 15,) and I know it also from experience, because the little ones are more docile and devout in the trust and love of his lessons than adult Christians generally are. Reader, try this labour of faith and love; you shall certainly find it delightful, if you truly love the Saviour.

But although the Lord instils his divine influence into every infant heart, yet still the perverse nature of the old Adam lingers stubbornly on even in infants, (and in adult Christians too,) as you may see by experience when their evil passions are roused. Now one or other of these must prevail and drive out the weaker influence at last. Whether shall divine grace prevail in that particular infant, or shall the flesh, the world and the devil prevail? This is a most solemn and awful question. The answer must depend largely upon the conduct of the parents or guardians, and upon the child himself. If these parties do their duties blamelessly, then all is safe; for the Lord will certainly do his part infallibly. He puts it into the power of the parents or guardians and of the child himself to secure the salvation of that child. The Lord operates in them by his Spirit, and if they will but co-operate faithfully with him, he has pledged his word for their success, and he will be responsible for the happy result. He says to every parent, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and thy house." (Acts 16, 31.) "Provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." (Eph. 6, 4.) These two things are needful to complete the conversion of the children and to turn their infantile trust and love into an established state of confirmed faith working by charity; viz., (1st) the NURTURE of Divine Truth to enlighten their minds and make them wise unto salva-