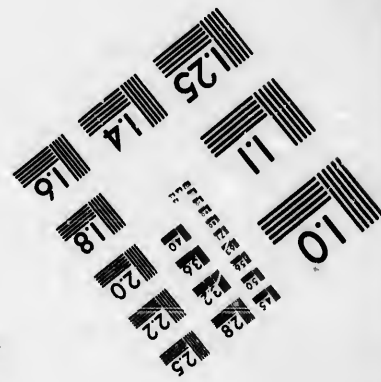
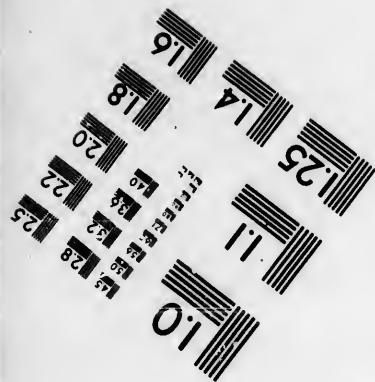
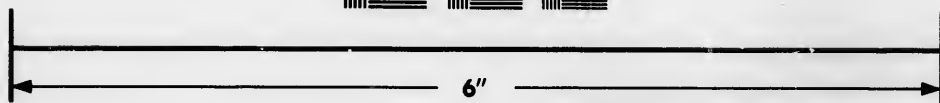
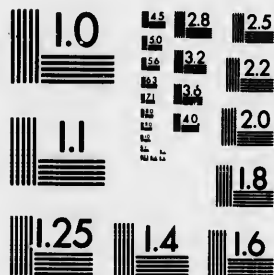


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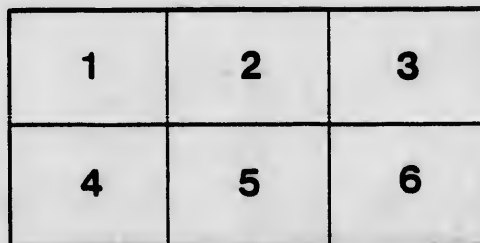
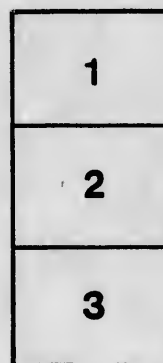
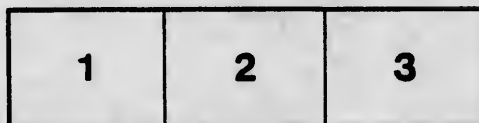
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e **REVIEW**

OF

EDMUND J. REIS'S

SHORT ACCOUNT

Rel.

OF

MICHAEL M'COMB, &c.

AND ALSO,

SHORT REFUTATION OF SOME OF THE ERRORS

OF THE

BAPTISTS.

By **JAMES KNOWLAN.**

*To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this
word, it is because there is no light in them—Isaiah 8, 20.
When any come unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him
not into your house, neither bid him God speed. For he that bid-
deth him, God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds—2 John, 10, 11.*



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A REVIEW, &c.

SOME time since I announced my intention of publishing A Review of EDMUND J. REIS's short account of the Life, Conversion, and Death of *Michael M'Comb*; but, before I enter upon that disagreeable task, I beg leave to lay before the public my motives for so doing.

That publication contains several falshoods respecting myself and my friends; but I am the principal object of the writers malignity.— Now, when a man is falsely accused, all must allow that it is his duty to defend himself, and that he owes that defence not only to himself, but also to his friends and the public, and to the cause which he has undertaken to support: This is one reason for my present undertaking, but a still greater one remains to be mentioned, namely, the cause of true religion,—for I assure the public, that however desirous I may be to justify myself, I feel (through grace) a still greater desire to defend, according to my ability, the doctrines of the Gospel. I also wish to guard the people against the rocks of fatalism, and the quicksands of antinomianism, which unhappily for civil and religious society abound so much in our day. I am fully persuaded that the cause of truth and the good of society requires that every possible barrier should be opposed to the overflowing of error and ungodliness. I therefore come forward in so good a cause, hoping, that by the blessing of God, my efforts shall be useful to all who may condescend to read the following pages, or at least to those who may have by a gracious Providence to the present escaped the antinomian mania. I regret that I cannot perform my duty in this instance without making some observations of a personal nature, but the misconduct of Mr. REIS, makes it necessary. If any thing severe escapes my pen, I crave the indulgence of a liberal and discerning public; and plead in my defence, not the provocations which I have received, for thank God, I can from my heart forgive all who have offended me; but, I plead in justification, not only zeal for the truth of the Gospel, and the preservation of pure morality, but likewise that laudable indignation which every man of character and good breeding must feel when the rules of decency and decorum are transgressed in his presence. I shall, however, endeavor to temper my
zeal

zeal with discretion, so that while I bear my testimony against error and vice, I hope to avoid every expression that might in the least offend the chaste and pious ear.

The latter part of this Pamphlet I intend to devote more particularly to the defence of Repentance and Faith, those blessed and comfortable doctrines, and to the refutation of some of the most popular errors among the Baptists.

Having premised as above, I now proceed to my remarks, upon this short account, &c. which "take it for all in all, we never hope to see the like again." Although I am not to write a criticism upon it, I may be allowed to say that it is an unmeaning and inconsistent production, and entirely discordant with its title. We expected an account of the unfortunate *M^r Comb*, not a libel upon individuals or upon religion. The public expected edification, and they had a right to expect it from the pompous title assumed by the author, "The Reverend EDMUND J. REIS." They were disappointed and disgusted. Instead of truth they found error, instead of light they found darkness, and instead of facts they found falsehoods. I do not hesitate to pronounce it as far as it goes, one of the most pernicious things I have seen for some time past. To support this assertion I have only to refer the reader, to what is therein said of Repenting and Believing, and to the evident evil tendency of the whole.

I do not presume to say any thing of the spiritual state of the unfortunate *M^r Comb*, who is now before his Judge. I have only to express my regret that his ashes should have been disturbed, or his name made use of for party purposes. To what extremes of folly and impropriety will not an ignorant mistaken zeal and a persecuting spirit sometimes lead mankind. The greatest evils with which the world has ever been afflicted, have arisen from those baneful, but fruitful sources. Wherefore did Cain slay his brother, but because he yielded to the influence of a malignant persecuting spirit. The same spirit still works in the carnal mind of man, and often works most strongly in those who make the greatest religious profession. Would to God that such an unchristian temper, was entirely unknown among us. Alas! this is not the case; for we have in the "short account" before us, one strong proof, and it has brought forth many other proofs of its existence in this City. And were it not that I am the object against which this evil temper is principally directed, I should speak of both with more freedom and indignation, than I now do. But I must observe, that from the spirit and conduct of the author, and his abettors, and from their violent temper, serious evils might be apprehended, were it not that the Providence of God, has given us in the laws, protection and security, which keeps within due bounds the madness of the people. For which protection I feel unfeignedly thankful to God, and look forward to better days, when the spirit of holy christian love, shall influence every human soul, and all shall know the Lord, from the
least

least even to the greatest. When there shall not be any *evil thing* to hurt or to destroy in all the holy mountain of the Lord. The spirit of persecution shall then no more assume the sanctimonious garb of piety and religious zeal; but shall forever cease! Lord hasten the happy time.

I cannot avoid noticing in this place, the display which the writer makes of his little wit, in an attempt to turn to ridicule *saying Prayers*, and lest it should not attract sufficient notice, it is printed in italics. That this has contributed greatly to the celebrity of his "short account," amongst a certain class of his readers, I have little doubt. But I would ask, may not a Christian with propriety use a written form of prayer in his addresses to the throne of grace, whether in public or private? Is it not better to do so than to offer to God, as too many do the sacrifice of *fools*? Some of the best men whom I have known have used forms of prayer; although they may not have always confined themselves to them. Nor has every Christian a gift to express himself with propriety without a form. It is also well known that Liturgies have been used in the service of God from time almost immemorial. But, perhaps this is one reason why these people so much dislike "*saying prayers*;" some of their errors being of modern date, they have of course a great aversion to good old principles and ancient usages, because those principles and usages condemn their erroneous and ungodly opinions and practices. But let no one infer from what I say, that I mean to insinuate that all the Baptists are like Mr. REYS, or that because they are mistaken, there are no sincere persons among them; God forbid! I know some of them who are, according to their knowledge, a well meaning and pious people. In a part of this Province where I was stationed for a considerable time, the Baptists were among my constant hearers, and I trust that their attendance upon my ministry was not altogether in vain. We lived in peace and friendship, and we parted in the same manner, and probably nothing to the contrary would have happened in St. John, had it not been for Mr. REYS, who has not ceased to declaim against the Methodists (and other religious denominations) since he came to this City. And not satisfied with this, as he could not provoke opposition in any other way, he published the falsehoods contained in his "short account," which has had the desired effect, the minds of the Baptists being now inflamed to no ordinary degree, as may be seen by the newspapers: God grant they may see their error and sin, and make that restitution to me and others, which it is their duty to do to persons, whom they have offended and *attempted* to injure.

In the fifth page, Mr. R. mentions the Episcopal Clergyman and the Methodist Speaker, and in the next page he introduces himself; but observe the contrast—the two former visited the prisoner, but the latter, at the *solicitation* of several friends, and by the *desire* of the prisoner who had heard of HIM!—I just notice this en passant.

to shew the extreme vanity of E. J. Rees, which by the bye is almost as conspicuous as is his hatred to the Methodists.

The Methodists, he says, "advised the prisoner to be busy with God, to agonize and do all he could, that God might have mercy upon him, pointing him to those scriptures which they think are calculated to make a sinner appear with some favour before God;" and at last an explanation of all this jargon, falshood and absurdity comes out; they exhorted him to repent and believe; and then he adds, that they suppose that *repenting* and *believing* are the conditions upon which a sinner is accepted with God—calls this an unscriptural idea, and most fervently prays to be delivered from it. Whether his prayer has been answered, God, his own heart; and those who know the falshoods he has published concerning me are judges. But he is consistent in this instance, neither his *repenting*, nor his *believing*, appear to have any thing to do with his religion.

Is not the above more dangerous than the most barefaced infidelity? For under the specious pretext of greater religious knowledge, it plucks up religion itself by the roots. For I ask, can any man have religion, who has not truly repented of his past sins, and unfeignedly believed in the Lord Jesus Christ? But, it is said by this casuist that he "does not utterly condemn repentance and faith, but has no desire to put them in the place of Christ,"—what a shuffle! Pray what methodist or christian of any denomination ever thought of putting the doctrines of Christ in the place of Christ? But I ask, does not that man speak against Christ, who speaks against his commands, or who attempts to weaken their force, or to lessen their obligation; Matthew, 5, 19—*Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do, and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.* Does not the word of God become in the hands of one so profoundly ignorant, a destructive weapon, with which he destroys himself and others. Let it not, however, be matter of surprise, that such false teachers are attended by numerous followers, for the word of God hath foretold it: 2d Timothy, 3d chap. 1 to 10 verse—*This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come: For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy: Without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good: Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than of God: Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away: For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts: Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now, as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly*

folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was. But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long suffering, charity, patience.—2d Peter, 2d chap. 1, 2; and 3 verses— But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not. Praise to God who ruleth in the heavens, and among the inhabitants of the earth, he will in due time overturn whatever opposes the spread of his Gospel, and cause his truth to flourish in every part of the world.

In reply to the senseless jargon quoted above, I can say that the Episcopalians and Methodists who visited the prisoner, exhorted him to redeem his time, and to pray fervently and perseveringly to God for mercy through Jesus Christ. They endeavoured to guard him against presumption, and also to prevent him from sinking into despair; for which purpose they directed him to those scriptures, which they know are given of God expressly for this purpose, to encourage a guilty sinner to hope for mercy and favour through the Saviour of men. They also exhorted him to repent of his transgressions, and to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time. They endeavoured to awaken his conscience to a sense of his state, by shewing him the damning nature and consequence of sin: and being deeply sensible that Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but that God alone can give the increase, they frequently and fervently prayed to God to open his blind eyes and to make him wise to salvation. And with what effect under the blessing of God, when allowed to proceed undisturbed in their duty may appear from Mr. REX's own words. He tells us, page 7, "that he went to Frederleton; during which time, the Methodists visited the prisoner, and when upon his return he went to see him, he found an alteration in his mind and looks, that his mind was fixed upon the precious word of God;" that he told him, "now I believe in Jesus, I thought I believed in him before, but I was wrong, &c." Thus we see Mr. REX is divided against himself, and that his short account is as contradictory as are his sermons, for in parts of it he holds up the Methodists to contempt, (if his word can do it,) whereas in this place he shews that their teaching had a very happy effect upon the prisoner. How difficult to suppress the truth!

It may be proper here to notice how lightly Mr. REX passed over the crime of murder in his conversation with the prisoner, putting him upon a level in point of guilt with other ordinary sinners, saying that all sinners were murderers, and quotes James 2, 10. I ask, are all sinners murderers in the same sense and degree as a man who wilfully

wilfully or wantonly takes away the life of another? Are there no degrees of guilt and consequent punishment? Luke, 12. 47, 48.— Is the sin of a momentary anger, as great in the sight of God, as the actual shedding of human blood, or does the place quoted above prove any such thing? By his own account he took no pains to lay before the prisoner the enormity of his guilt. What a miserable physician of souls!

In page 10, he says, "the prisoner was troubled about some persons, chiefly Methodists, who told him he was a deceiver, that the great men of the City wished him out of it, that he did not believe the whole Bible, preached wrong doctrines, and was leading people to hell, and then turned down some passages in the scripture for him." Who these persons were, he does not say, neither does he tell us what scriptures they turned down to prove the above propositions. However if the latter part of this sentence be true, it shows that some persons who visited *M'Comb*, were a little acquainted with Mr. Reis's creed, perhaps they had heard of him and his tenets, and wished to caution the prisoner against their evil tendency. Some of his tenets are now before the public, not in a verbal fleeting form, but in the substantial form of print, also many of his words on various points equally pernicious with the above are in the recollection of those who have heard him from time to time. But if we reject repentance and faith, whether such rejection shall lead to heaven or hell is not a matter of doubt; *for except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish.* Luke 13. 3, 5,—*and he that believeth not shall be damned,* Mark 16. 16.

Page 12, he says, "many consider out crying noise and hoidly agitation as infallible marks of religion;" but mentions no names; now, whether there are any people in this Province more under the influence of such passions than the Baptists, I leave the public to judge. He in the same place speaks of a "scheme" to move upon the passions of the prisoner which proved vain. The reader will no doubt be surprised to hear, that the scheme alluded to was a meeting for prayer in the cell of the prisoner, and if not acquainted with Mr. Reis's conduct in other instances, will be still more surprised, when informed of the very improper manner in which he behaved on the occasion. Several persons went to the cell of the prisoner to pray with him. We found Mr. R. in the cell, I put some questions to the prisoner, (my reason for so doing I shall hereafter explain,) but was interrupted by Mr. R. who pretended to make my words more plain to the prisoner, but in so doing explained their meaning away, as he had frequently done before with others. I told him I could convey my ideas correctly to the prisoner in my own words, and did not wish him to put his meaning on them. After this I conversed for some time with the unfortunate young man, we then sung a hymn and prayed. At the time of prayer all who were in the cell knelt down, excepting Mr. R. who while we were praying, disturbed us very much; sat down before we concluded, and in so doing made a great deal of noise with his chair; stirred up the
fire

fire, broke sticks, &c. &c. interrupting us as much as possible. And manifested not only the greatest contempt for the worship of God, but also a total disregard of all propriety of conduct, so much so that although I had heard of *him*, I was really astonished. While he behaved in this irreverent manner, nearly all in the cell were weeping, being deeply affected with a sense of the awful situation of the prisoner. When we rose up from prayer, Mr. R. was capable of *mocking* the tears which had been shed upon the occasion, and did so; among other things he said, "*I despise mock tears.*" One replied, how do you know when persons are praying and weep, that the tears which they shed are mock tears? To which he replied, "there was some thing in the voice, and a certain feeling which the children of God did feel by which he knew." Before I proceed, allow me to ask, was ever delusion stronger than that under which this man labors? A child of God! O precious, but much abused appellation; a child of God! would a child of God conduct himself as E. J. REIS did, at such a time, in such a place, and upon such an occasion. I do not hesitate to say, not only that I never witnessed such an instance of levity, impiety, and irreverence before, but that I never saw a man, except himself, who I believe would be capable of acting in the same manner. Let no one say I am too severe; can any language be too strong to express the abhorrence which such conduct ought to excite, especially when it was repeated; Yes, twice we went to prayer, and twice did E. J. REIS act in the same irreverent manner. Several persons saw his improper behaviour, and the prisoner having been informed of it next morning by the Jailer, ordered the trap door leading to the cell to be locked and that Mr. REIS should not be admitted. But he was not to be put off, and at the same time was determined, if possible, to prevent my visits; for which purpose among other things, he abused me in the prison, called me a liar, &c. in the presence of Mr. MANNING, Mr. GOSSET, Mr. RONGERS, and others, who can say how I bore his evil tongue upon that occasion. However, in consequence of the above mentioned abuse, I discontinued my visits to the prisoner, believing it altogether useless, while he was visited by a man who had manifested, not only the want of all religion, but also a total disregard of religious decorum, decency and good manners.

But it is a general enquiry, why did you visit the prisoner at all after he made choice of Mr. REIS? Upon this the Baptists lay great stress; and persons unacquainted with the particular circumstances of the affair have allowed it great weight. But it will vanish like smoke, when the public are informed that the prisoner *sent for me* repeatedly to visit him, I then went, but with great reluctance, for I had very little hope that he would come to repentance while visited by Mr. REIS, who I had no doubt strove to harden him against the truth of the Gospel. In addition to the above it is necessary to inform the public that the choice of Mr. REIS by the prisoner was not voluntary, for he was urged

urged to make it by a man who stood behind him in the Court House, and that he was heartily sorry for it afterwards, &c. &c. I do not wonder that Mr. REIS manifested the reluctance he did to have the iniquitous conduct of himself and his abettors enquired into and proved by witnesses.

I promised to explain the reasons why I asked the prisoner certain questions in the presence of Mr. REIS. Two gentlemen who are not Methodists, who had the salvation of the prisoner at heart accompanied me to see him on the Saturday which Mr. R. speaks of in page 10, when on our way, one of the gentlemen said we must endeavor to find out what these people say to the prisoner; in this I concurred, for a change for the worse was too visible in *M'Comb*, after Mr. REIS's return from Fredericton, and I was desirous to ascertain the cause. I believe we spent two or three hours with *M'Comb* and with great difficulty discovered that the deluded young man believed that his crime had taken place by the decree of God, &c. Our minds were shocked, and I am sure every pious man, although he may differ from us in the five controverted points, will nevertheless acknowledge the impropriety of impressing such a tenet upon the mind of an ignorant young man under sentence of death for the crime of murder. We wished to learn from him who taught him such a dangerous tenet, a tenet which all must allow overturns at one stroke, not only religion but morality also; indeed these must stand or fall together. We endeavored to remove the fatal impression, and to convince him that his own bad passions, and evil habits, and the temptations of the devil brought him into his present awful situation, and turned down some passages of Scripture for his instruction. We then expressed a wish to meet Mr. R. in the cell, that we might in his presence show the prisoner the evil tendency of such a tenet. We accordingly sent him word,* but he did not attend. Now, I ask if Mr. R. did not hold and teach the above mentioned dangerous tenet, why refuse to come? But, perhaps he did not think it a dangerous tenet, or only wished to elude discovery. However, his opinions are now pretty well known, and some of those who were formerly attached to him see by this time, that he has gone a step or two too far on those points.

I must not pass over what is said in the 10th page, "the mind of the prisoner was diverted by soldiers talking to him of a reprieve, and others of a new trial, among whom was Mr. K*****, Methodist Speaker, &c." The public should be informed that *some persons* encouraged the prisoner to expect a new trial. I found this expectation strong on his mind when I visited him; but instead of encouraging him in it, as Mr. REIS intimates, I took the utmost pains to convince him the thing was impossible, &c. and that therefore it was indispensably

* Note—The above is what Mr. REIS calls a challenge to dispute in public, than which nothing was farther from our thoughts. But he boldly asserts whatever may answer his purpose, without regard to truth.

indispensably necessary to prepare to meet his God, in whose presence he should soon appear.

I do not wish to say any more upon this disagreeable subject, it is painful to my feelings to have been under the necessity of saying so much. I have spoken of Mr. Rzis with a mildness he does not deserve; but I have done so out of respect to religion, to my readers, and to myself. To the *falsehoods* and *low wit* in the newspapers, I have made no reply, as the inhabitants of St. John are well acquainted with the affair, and it would enlarge this Pamphlet too much to expose the whole in detail for the information of others. Mr. Rzis is the first who ever took such improper liberties with me; but I could not expect wholly to escape calumny and persecution, which is more or less the common lot of all who oppose error and vice: enmity against the truth still continues, nor has the offence of the cross ceased.

Having fulfilled the first part of my engagement, I now turn to subjects more worthy our attention. The doctrines of Repentance and Faith first demand our most serious consideration, not merely because Mr. Rzis has had the temerity to draw his feeble pen against them, but because they are in themselves of the greatest importance to mankind. I have already made some remarks upon the paragraph wherein he condemns *repenting* and *believing*. I shall now proceed to make a few observations upon those *evangelical conditions* of our salvation. I say *conditions*, for they are commanded by Christ, and he is the author of eternal salvation to those (only) who obey him. Heb. 5. 9. That sinners are commanded by Christ to repent, appears from his own words, Luke 13. 3, 5; Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish, Matt. 9. 13, I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, &c. &c. And that the command is universal and perpetual appears from Luke 24. 47. *Repentance and remission of sins*, is to be preached in his name among all nations: Hence, St. Paul said, Acts 17. 30; *The times of ignorance God winked at, but now he commandeth all men every where to repent.* Therefore he testified both to Jews and Greeks, *repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ*, Acts 20. 21, *Who is exalted a prince and a Saviour to give repentance and the remission of sins*, Acts 5. 31. And the Apostle Peter exhorted his hearers saying, *repent and be converted that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord*, Acts 3. 19, &c. &c. And that sinners must not only repent, but also believe, is equally plain. John was sent to *prepare the way of the Lord, that all men might believe in him*, John 1. 7. Jesus himself said to the Jews *this is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent*, John 6. 29. Nor shall any receive the sanctifying spirit but they who believe in Jesus Christ, John 7. 38, 39. Hence we find that when sinners felt their sinful state by nature and by practice, (that is were truly penitent) and enquired the way of salvation, the Apostles uni-
formly

firmly directed them to *believe in the Lord Jesus Christ*, Acts 8. 36, 37 and 16: 30, 31, Rom. 10. 8, 9, 10, *For through him all that believe are justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses*, Acts 13. 39: Therefore they are accounted righteous, Rom. 3. 22 and 4. 11, 24; to such the promise is given, Gal. 3. 22: In them the power of God unto salvation is made known, Rom. 1. 16; Eph. 1. 19, and the word of God effectually works, 1 Thess. 2. 13: For faith cometh by hearing that blessed Gospel which declares, that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of all men, specially of those who believe, Tim. 4. 20. Therefore he that *believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him*, John 3. 3. *To him give all the Prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth on him shall receive the remission of sins*, John 10. 43. For God may now be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus, Rom. 3. 26. Yea, and those only are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time, 1 Peter 1. 5. *Whom having not seen they love, in whom though now they see him not, yet believing they rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory*, 1 Peter 1. 8.

How suitable is the Gospel plan of salvation to fallen, helpless, guilty sinners; such as we are, who have nothing to pay, no works, or merit, or righteousness of our own to bring to gain the favour of God—As we have sinned how necessary is repentance on our part, for having grieved so good and gracious a God: and how great is the divine mercy in extending pardon through his well beloved son to all guilty sinners who repent and believe in him. By repentance we call our past sins to remembrance with sorrow and anguish of mind, and also turn from every evil way: For when the spirit of God convicts a man of sin, if he does not resist that conviction (for it may be resisted as I intend hereafter to shew), his soul is deeply humbled before God, and he is filled with guilty woe, not merely because his sin exposes him to eternal punishment; but also because he has violated the divine law and has thereby dishonored and offended God, and also polluted his own soul; His grief is increased by a view of the love of God to him a guilty sinner in the gift of his son Jesus Christ, and is accompanied with a hatred to sin, a love to holiness, and a fixed determination to live to the glory of God for the time to come: These are the fruits of repentance. He has also an expectation of forgiveness for the sake of Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, Matt. 3. 1. Acts. 3. 19, 2. Cor. 7. 10: Thus repentance towards God prepares the sinner to exercise faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, for whose sake alone, pardon of sin and acceptance with God is to be obtained, Rom. 5. 1. and 8. 1: This is called justifying faith, and is wrought in the penitent sinner by the spirit of God enabling him to receive Christ as he is revealed in the Gospel to be his prophet, priest, and king, and to trust in and rely upon his atoning blood

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alone for justification and eternal life. But he is justified by faith, not formally as if it were his righteousness, or the meritorious cause of justification before God, (for faith hides pride from man and lays him in the dust at the feet of the Redeemer,) but he is justified by faith *instrumentally* and *relatively*, as it apprehends and applies to *himself* the *merit* and *blood* of Christ, which is, the sole meritorious cause of justification and salvation; which is the object of faith and which alone cleanses from all sin and renders us acceptable to God. Hence it is called the faith through which we are saved and without which we cannot be saved, Eph. 2. 8. Mark 16. 16; it is therefore a *condition* on our part whereby we become partakers of the blessings of the covenant of grace. This faith is an active principle, and produces in the heart love to God and man, and is therefore called the faith which works by love and purifies the heart, Gal. 5. 6. Acts 15. 9; it increases from one degree to another, Rom. 10. 17. being in some, firm and strong, Matt. 8. 10. in others, weak and languishing, Matt. 14. 31. It is the gift of God, for every good and perfect gift cometh down from the father of lights, by whose grace alone we can exercise it; and it is a faith which produces universal obedience to the whole law of God, James 2. 14. Rom. 6. Thus we see that obedience to those two great, evangelical commandments is of indispensable necessity, and that every sinner must himself repent and believe or he cannot be saved; they are therefore terms or conditions without which we cannot obtain the forgiveness of sins, or a title to everlasting happiness.

I know the Baptist will say, "we can do nothing, we are to do nothing, not even to repent and believe, Christ hath done all, and hath left nothing for us to do, the law sets men to work, but the Gospel binds us to do nothing at all, nor can we be damned for actual transgression; and a great deal more such profane and ungodly jargon. That Christ hath made a full perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world there can be no doubt; that he hath also received gifts for men, i. e. the gift of the Holy Spirit power to repent, &c. &c. is equally certain,—but I ask, hath he also *repented* and *believed* for the sinner?—Hath he given commands only to be trampled under foot? Is Christ become the Minister of sin? Does not such a dangerous scheme set aside all *personal holiness* and *obedience* to the will and word of God, and does it not open wide the flood gates of ungodliness? But it is as false as it is mischievous; Christ has given commands and they *must* be obeyed or the sinner *must* be lost. *Look unto me all you ends of the earth, and be ye saved, for I am God and there is none else*, Isaiah 45. 22. *ask and it shall be given you*, Matt. 7. *if you know these things, happy are ye if ye do them*, John 13. 17. *if you love me keep my commandments*, 14. 15. True we cannot repent, believe, pray, or obey in our own strength, for without Christ we can do nothing; but through his all sufficient grace we can do all things which he hath commanded, 2 Cor. 12. 9.

Then

Then says the Baptist "we are our own Saviour and may sing glory to ourselves! What! Is a man his own saviour because he does not continue to rebel against Christ, but submits to be saved by his grace in the obedience of faith and holiness! Is Christ divided against himself?" Is his word inconsistent and contradictory? Is not the plan of salvation *one consistent whole and uniform* in all its parts? Is not Christ the great foundation, and are not we by his grace through faith to build upon that foundation? Are we to make void the moral Law and Gospel too through faith, or are we not rather to establish them? Rom. 3. 31. Does any penitent sinner or obedient believer imagine that by obeying Christ, he makes atonement for his own sins, or becomes his own Saviour?

But in order to shew the part which God requires us to take in the pursuit of eternal happiness, let us recollect that he has commanded us to *labor for the meat which endureth unto everlasting life*, John 6. 27. and St. Paul says, let us *labor therefore to enter into that rest*. Heb. 4. 11. Christ gives a general exhortation to sinners. *Strive to enter in at the strait gate*, Luke 13. 24. St. Peter exhorts believers to *make their calling and election sure*? Pet. 1. 10. St. Paul says, *work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure*. Philip. 2. 12. 13. and St. James declares that, *whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful bearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed*, James 1. 25. In short it appears that every duty enjoined, and every command given, is founded upon this universal principle, that man by grace is rendered capable of obeying the voice of God, and that he disobeys not from a want of grace given, but through unfaithfulness to grace imparted.

I have said that the Spirit and grace of God may be resisted; and as the Baptists are continually crying up *irresistible* grace in a *senseless* and *unmeaning* manner, whereby they are misled themselves, and also mislead others; I think it necessary to say a word or two upon this point. If by *irresistible* grace, is meant that the voice of God in his Gospel and by his Spirit is, and must be heard by all men whether they will or no, I fully acquiesce in the idea; for the true light lightened every man that cometh into the world, and the Gospel comes with convincing power to the heart of every man that hears it; nor does this at all depend upon the will of man. But if by *irresistible* grace is meant that the voice of God thus heard, cannot afterwards be disobeyed; this I deny, because it is contrary to *reason, to scripture, and to matter of fact, in ten thousand thousand instances*; and I holdly assert that no man rightly instructed, will inculcate such a tenet.

From the word of God and the dictates of reason, it is undeniably clear, that man is a free, rational, moral and unaccountable creature. Hence we find that God always addresses him as such, giving him precepts

precepts and commands for the regulation of his moral conduct enforced by promises of reward and threatenings of punishment to be dispensed at the general judgment. But if men are incapable of obedience or disobedience, of yielding to, or resisting the good spirit of God, but are placed under the influence of a fatal necessity, I ask how can God judge the world in righteousness. The wise, pious and learned of every denomination, reject such a thought with abhorrence. Dismissed by them it has taken possession of the ignorant, and the vicious who cover their vices under it, and ascribe their sins to God; O fatal delusion! How contrary to thy nature and attributes, O thou God of truth, wisdom, purity and goodness! How contrary to the whole of thy most precious word! but especially how contrary to that amazing display of thy boundless grace in the gift of thy well beloved Son to a fallen world! Pardon thine enemies O Lord and teach them the truth of thy Gospel.

But a few quotations will make it quite plain that the spirit of God may be resisted, Gen. 6. 3. The Lord said, *my spirit shall not always strive with man: yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years*, during which time his day of grace lasted, and opportunity of repentance was afforded, for *the Lord is slow to anger and of great mercy*. Thus we find that Jezebel had space of repentance given her, but she repented not, Rev. 2. 21. Now most certainly during the time given her to repent, she might have repented yet she repented not. How awful are those words in Prov. 1, from verse 20 to the end, *Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets; She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates; in the city she uttereth her words, saying, how long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity, and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at my reproof; behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you. Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh. When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you; then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: They would none of my counsel; they despised all my reproof: Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil. Who can read such words without trembling! Again, Acts 7. 51. Stephen charges the Jews with this doing sin. *Ye stiff-necked, and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.* Of this David*

vid speaks in his 95 Psalm, verse 7 to the end, *To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness: when your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work. Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways: Unto whom I swear in my wrath, that they should not enter into my rest.* Which St. Paul quotes and applies in Heb. 3. 15, 19, and 4. 7, *While it is said, to-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt, by Moses. But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? And to whom swear he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that he believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief, &c.*— These places shew to what extent the spirit of God may be grieved by sinners, namely, to the utter exclusion of themselves from the promised rest.

But this appears, if possible, in a still stronger light from Ezk. 18. 24, *But when the righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.* Read the parable of the ten virgins, Matt. 25. 8, *And the foolish said unto the wise, give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.* How awful are the words of St. Peter upon the same subject, 2d Pet. 2. 20, 22, *For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.* But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, *The dog is turned to his own vomit, again; and, The sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire.* The Apostle Paul is equally if not still more pointed and impressive, and also applies his observations to those who had experienced a large measure of divine grace, Heb. 6. 4, 8, *For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.* For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: but that which beareth thorns and briars is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned. And lest any should mistake the Apostles meaning, he resumes the same subject, chap. 10. 29, *Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified,*

sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? And our Lord's lamentation over Jerusalem, fully establishes the awful truth we now enforce, *Matt. 23: 37, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!* O! ye who blaspheme the precious love of Christ, by saying "he dooms the unborn soul to hell, or damns him from his mother's womb;" come here and behold the streaming eyes of the compassionate Redeemer, weeping over a rebellious people who resisted his grace, and would not be gathered by him! Do not blaspheme his tears as you do his love; those tears which flowed from bowels of mercy and infinite compassion! Such love and sorrow never met before! How shall these men look him in the face when he shall sit upon the throne of judgment, who have represented him while upon earth as the greatest of hypocrites and the most cruel and unjust of beings? They may for a while blaspheme his name with impunity, but the hour of retribution draws near if they do not repent. Thus it appears that man may, and alas, does too frequently disobey the voice of God after having heard it, and grieve and quench the Spirit of God after having experienced much of his grace and goodness.

And that he must obey from the heart in a free and voluntary manner the calls of grace, or he cannot be saved, is equally plain; Paul was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, *Acts 26: 19*; the Gospel Ministry is established in the church for the obedience of the faithful among all nations, *Rom. 1: 5, 15, 16*; and the spirit is given for the same gracious purpose, *1. Pet. 1: 2*; therefore to obey is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams, *1. Sam. 15: 22*. Hence God says by Jeremiah, *Obey my voice and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people, and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you that it may be well with you, 7. c. 23, and 16. c. 13*. And St. Paul says, that Christ being made perfect, became the author of eternal salvation unto all who obey him. In the Gospel plan of salvation the grace of God appears most glorious, extending to all the fallen sons of men for a manifestation of the spirit (is) given to every man to profit withal, *1 Cor. 12: 17*: So that no man is left to himself, unassisted by divine grace. And this arises from the great love of God to sinners, *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life, John 3: 16*; and the Son by the grace of God tasted death for every man, *Heb. 2: 9*, giving himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time, *1 Tim. 2: 6*. For he willeth all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. Agreeably to which is the oath of Jehovah, *Ezek. 33: 11*; Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

But it will be said if Christ died for all, and willeth the salvation of all, why are not all saved? Can Christ die in vain, &c. These foolish and blasphemous objections have been often opposed to the word and oath of Jehovah, and have again and again been refuted, but I must give them a short reply. That Christ died for all men is positively asserted, and the contrary no where appears in the scriptures, Rom. 8. 32, 2 Peter. 3. 9, 2 Cor. 5. 14, 1 Tim. 2. 6. That he hath not died in vain appears from various scriptures, to refer to one place only, Rev. 7. And the reason why any sinners perish is given by our Lord himself, *ye will not come to me that ye may have life*; John 5. 4, those sinners reject the gracious counsel of God against themselves; and being unlearned and unstable, wrest the scriptures to their own destruction, 2 Pet. 3. 16. *Bringing in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them; and bring upon themselves swift destruction*; 2 Pet. 2. 1; &c. &c.

But some will say, how then can salvation be by grace which is sovereign, free, and irresistible? That the grace of God may be resisted I have proved from his word; that it is free, yea, free for all; I have also proved from the same word. But this the Baptists deny, for they limit that grace to a few (no doubt including themselves) and exclude the greater part of mankind. That it is sovereign I believe, that term being rightly understood; for the sovereignty of God cannot be exalted at the expence, or to the destruction of his other attributes. God is our Creator and our Governor; and these are no way inconsistent with each other, although they are totally different. As Creator he has acted in all things according to his sovereign will, here Justice can have no place, for nothing is due to what has no being, so that the creature cannot say to the Creator, why hast thou made me thus, a man for instance and not an angel; a man of a very limited capacity, not a Locke or a Newton; or why hast thou given me one talent only and not ten talents, &c. for none of these imply that the difference is so great in any case, as to necessitate one man to good, and another to evil. As Governor he does not, cannot act according to his sovereign will, but as he has expressly declared by the invariable rules of justice, mercy, and truth. Hence he is a *rewarder of them who diligently seek him*, Heb. 11. 6, having given to all grace to enable them so to do. But he cannot reward the sun for shining because it is not a free but a necessary agent. Therefore wherever God acts as a governor, a rewarder, or punisher, he acts, not as a mere sovereign, but as an impartial judge; guided in all things by invariable justice, tempered with mercy, so that although he may sometimes reward more; he will never punish more than strict justice requires. I cannot enlarge upon this point. O! what a pity that ignorant persons should pass by the plainest lessons of grace in the Bible, and puzzle and destroy themselves and others with subjects which they do not understand. Thank God every truth, the knowledge of which is essential to salvation, is sufficiently clear to all who are not willfully

fully blind; may these acknowledge and forsake their errors before it is too late, and devote themselves to him in the obedience of faith and good works.

No doubt it is expected that I shall say something upon Baptism; but I think it unnecessary to enter largely into the subject here, as there are many books written upon it, which will if consulted, give general satisfaction; however I shall say a few words upon it. On the subject of Baptism, the professors of religion may be divided into three parts: the first consists of those orthodox christians who follow the ancient usage of the Church in admitting infants to church-membership, by baptism, as they were admitted before the coming of Christ by circumcision; another class consists of those who reject water baptism altogether, and hold to the baptism of the spirit only; and the third are they who refuse baptism to children and administer the ordinance only to adults as the proper subjects, and only by immersion as the proper mode. The latter bear the name of Baptists; which is not a name given them by way of reproach, as Quaker, Methodist, &c. but professedly assumed and quite appropriate.

With the second class we have at present nothing to do. The first is orthodox in this point following the word of God and the universal practice of his church in admitting children to church-membership, a privilege more immediately granted them by the Abrahamic Covenant which remains unrepealed to the present day. That children were received into church-membership by that covenant cannot be disputed; Gen. 17: 7: Deut. 29. 10, 11, 12, the sign of which covenant before the coming of Christ was circumcision, Gen. 17. 10, and since his coming is baptism, Matt. 28. 19, 20. Hence the inference is plain, for as the covenant remains the same, all those who were comprehended in it at the first are still comprehended in it, and therefore entitled to the outward sign of that covenant, whether they be infants or adults. But it may be said if this be the case why have we not a positive institute for the baptism of children? There are various things done by christians, for which they have no positive institute; the observance of the christian sabbath, for instance; again, what positive institute would satisfy those who deny repenting and believing, and other parts of Gods word equally plain? But, as infants were received into church-membership from the first formation of the church, there was no necessity to renew a command of this nature, which was fully understood and of perpetual obligation; a change of the outward and visible sign, making no change whatever either as to the benefits of the covenant itself, or the privileges of its members. Now as children were originally comprehended in the covenant of grace and received to church-membership, I desire any one to shew a single scripture by which they are excluded. We know that Christ in express words received them as members of his kingdom i. e. his church; Mark 10. 14: and there can be nothing more plain than that the promises of God extend to them, as well as to their parents, Acts

2. 35, 39. Add to the above the accounts we have in the Acts of the Apostles of the Baptism of whole households; and it must be presumed to have been a remarkable coincidence of circumstances indeed, if there were no children in any of them: And when we recollect that the Apostles were converted Jews, who were well acquainted with the church-membership of infants, we can have no doubt upon our minds that if there were children in those households, they were received with their parents into the church by baptism. We are confirmed in this opinion when we read the commission given to the Apostles, Matt. 28. 19, 20; *go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.— Amen.* Do not children form a great part of the nations who have received the Gospel? In what sense must the Apostles have understood our Lord? Certainly that it was his design to disciple the Gentile nations, and gather them into his school and to put upon them and their children, the mark of discipleship, as he had formerly done with the Jewish people and their children. They also knew that the children of Gentile proselytes were received into the Jewish Church with their parents, and the Christian Church is a continuation of the same Church, but under a more glorious dispensation; and when we also find that this was the universal practice in the primitive age, as appears from the history of the Church, every doubt upon the subject is removed from the sincere and pious mind. For most certainly the immediate successors of the Apostles must have perfectly understood what was the Apostolic practice in this matter. But as the Baptists say, that the practice is not Apostolical, it is incumbent upon them to shew *when, where and how* it originated in the Church, if it is not coeval with it. They should also shew one or more instances of the baptism of the children of christian parents at mature age, for there is no mention of any such in the Bible. This would drive them to what they call “old musty History,” which they do not like, because it condemns their principles and practices in this and other things, as fully as the word of God does. They call *themselves* Baptists, that is, the *disciples* of John Baptist, and they preach John’s baptism:— This shews most clearly their total ignorance of the Gospel, for they stumble at the very threshold. When the first principles are wrong, every thing is wrong that follows. John was the forerunner of Christ, and was sent for the purpose of preparing his way; for he came in the spirit and power of Elias; he therefore preached the Baptism of repentance and faith in the Messiah who was to come, and while his dispensation continued, the people were bound to submit to his Baptism.— Hence the Pharisees are said to have rejected the counsel of God against themselves, by not submitting to the baptism of John. But as soon as Our Saviour had fully opened his ministry, the mission of John ceased, and since that time the Gospel is preached, which is the
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fast and most glorious dispensation of the grace of God to man, and shall continue as long as the sun and moon endureth.

That the dispensation of John was not to be perpetual, appears from his own words when speaking of Christ, "He must increase, but I must decrease, &c." And as a further proof of this, he sent his own disciples to Christ, see John 3. 26, also 1 chap. 15 to 37, and Matt. 3. And that his baptism was not to continue is evident from a remarkable circumstance recorded by St. Luke, Acts 19. 1 to 7, *And it came to pass, that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts, came to Ephesus; and finding certain disciples, he said unto them, have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, we have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, unto what then were ye baptized? And they said unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him; that is on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. And all the men were about twelve.* Thus we see that John's baptism was to give way to christian baptism, and was not to be confounded with or united to it. You say that John was the first Baptist—yes; and you are a Baptist—yes; and were baptized with John's Baptism—yes; then you are a disciple of John, and not the disciple of Christ, so that as the disciples of John mentioned above, were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, by a Christian Minister for the purpose of becoming Christians, so must you also, be baptized by a Christian Minister for the same purpose. It will avail nothing to say, "the name of the Trinity was used, when I was plunged into the water," for John gives no precedent or authority for so doing, and it does not appear that he ever used the name of the Trinity at all. Being therefore, by your own confession the disciple of John, the natural and necessary consequence is, that you cannot in the proper sense be the disciples of Jesus! !

What can we now say of those Churches (so called) which are founded upon such a platform? Are they christian Churches? Are those persons Christians, who renounce their Christian Baptism and submit to the Baptism of John? In fact, they no more understand the mission of that great forerunner of the Redeemer, than they do the Gospel, although they call themselves by his name; for they *mistake, misapply, and perpetuate* his short, but important dispensation: A dispensation which ceased the moment the Gospel dispensation commenced. I wish to know the ground upon which the Baptists pretend to unchurch all christian churches, and also upon what they found their own title to a Christian Church at all, much less to the only true Christian Church. From what Christian Church have they sprung, or what connexion have they with the primitive church?

Some

Some will probably say, O how uncharitable. What! is it uncharitable to draw conclusions from premises laid down by themselves? But you reply, their articles say nothing about John's baptism! Do you think their articles (parts of which are very erroneous as I may shew at another time) contain all that they believe and preach. Is there one word in them on the subject of John's baptism, which they continually preach? This they do either ignorantly, not being able to distinguish between the baptism of Christ and the baptism of John, or wilfully knowing better, but to give the more plausible appearance to their error in repelling children from baptism, whereby they are the better enabled to carry their point and to promote party divisions.

I am fully satisfied that the rejection of infants from baptism is neither founded upon the word of God, or the Apostolic or primitive practice, but is a departure from all these, and is now made use of for party purposes as it was among the Anabaptists in Germany, whereby the flock of Christ is not only more and more divided, but also scattered abroad. I know there are many well minded persons who are ignorantly led away by this error, thinking perhaps that it is in itself a matter of no great moment, and not considering that the people who hold this tenet, also hold other tenets equally erroneous and calculated to subvert both religion and morality. Thus these simple, upright, but misled people, who renounce their Christian baptism, and submit to the baptism of John, by so doing not only separate from the Church of Christ, but also unite with a people whose tenets are contrary to the word of God in many other essential points. And these are the people who wish forsooth to identify themselves with the Churches of England and Scotland! But I want to know when did those Churches renounce their Christian Baptism for the Baptism of John? I never heard of the event, and I am sure I never shall. It is really astonishing the deception that is practised in the above instance, and in many other instances by the supporters of the system we have now in review. True indeed there may be a few who know not the depths of satan, as others of them speak, who oppose Christ and his ministers through ignorance, rather than malice; these I trust, by grace, shall yet be delivered from the snare into which they are fallen, and experience the glorious Gospel liberty of christians. May they speedily see, and forsake their errors, and turn to the Lord Jesus, from whom many of them have grievously revolted. Indeed they boastingly say that Baptists do not often turn Churchmen, Methodists, &c. although these frequently turn Baptists. But they are not the first who gloried in what they ought to be ashamed of, for many join them who would not be retained by us; and why do not Baptists join christian Churches, the reasons are obvious, no system gives such allowance to sin as theirs does, and it is easy to lose one's christian virtue, but not so easy to recover from such a state.

But

But it may be necessary to reply to a common objection urged by the Baptists against infant baptism, namely, that children ought not to be baptized, because they cannot believe. But the same objection if admitted, would have overturned circumcision, which has given way to baptism in the Church. Why circumcise infants as they could not believe in the God of Abraham? Again, if this objection be good in one case it must be so in another. It is said, believe and be baptized, hence the Baptist argues none are to be baptized but believers. Now is it not also said, believe and be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned. But infants cannot believe; therefore according to the Baptist mode of reasoning, infants cannot be saved. What blasphemy! But if they are the descendants of a sect of the Waldenses who are said to have refused baptism to infants, because they believed them incapable of salvation, then they are consistent for once. O what a system! May the Lord pity and deliver all who are under its influence.

That baptism takes place of circumcision appears from the following considerations—Circumcision was the initiatory sign of the Covenant before Christ, by which members were admitted into the Church, but being abolished, either there is now no initiatory sign of the Covenant or baptism is that sign. The former taught the putting away of sin: so does the latter. The former was an emblem of purity: so is the latter, &c. &c. Hence the Apostle Paul speaks of them together in Colossians 2. 11, 12, by which it appears that baptism now answers every end in the Church that circumcision did formerly.

As to the mode of baptism, there is nothing in the Bible to authorize any man to say that immersion of the whole body is necessary to make baptism valid. The word Baptize being used in a variety of instances where it cannot possibly have any such meaning—and I call upon any person to shew if they can that it has that exclusive signification in the New Testament. In Mark 7. 4, we are told that *the Pharisees found fault when they saw the disciples eat with unwashen hands, for the Pharisees and all the Jews when they come from the market, except they wash (are baptised) eat not.* Here we see that those persons were baptized, although a part only of the body (the hands) was washed. It is added *many other things they have received, &c. such as the washing of pots and tables or couches upon which they reclined at meals.* Now did they immerse those tables or couches in order to baptize them. Did they not rather pour or sprinkle water upon them for that purpose. St. Paul says the Israelites were baptized in the cloud, (what! immersed in the cloud that was over their heads) and in the sea, (immersed in that too although its waters were divided, and formed a wall on either hand, so that the children of Israel passed over dry shod,) unless they were baptized from the cloud above by the pouring or sprinkling of water from it, this must have been a dry baptism.

Again

Again when we trace the origin of baptism, in the scriptures, which we are led to do by what St. Paul says on the subject, Heb. 9. 10, 13, 14, we find that the application of ashes, blood and water by sprinkling is called divers baptisms, i. e. baptism by divers substances or things. In Exodus 9. 8, baptism by the sprinkling of ashes is spoken of. Exodus 24. 8, baptism by the sprinkling of blood is spoken of. Leviticus 14. 16, 51, baptism by the sprinkling of oil, and Numbers 8. 7, baptism by the sprinkling of water of purification. Hence the Apostle reasons thus, *For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?* Heb. 9. 13, 14—it is therefore plain that the design of these divers baptisms, was to typify and inculcate purification from sin, by the precious blood of the Redeemer which was shed to sprinkle the nations. And we see that this end was answered by the sprinkling of a variety of substances upon the sinner, not by immersing him in them. This fixes the sense in a manner that cannot be disputed.—Who can believe that the three thousand mentioned, Acts 2, were baptized by immersion? When we consider the mode of baptism by sprinkling mentioned above, and that it was a very ancient usage, at least from the time of Moses, we have every reason to believe from general circumstances, and also from the narrative itself that baptism by sprinkling would be preferred and used on the occasion: Like the Levites Num. 8. 7, these converts were devoted to the Lord and sprinkled with water as a sign of their purification. This leads me to ask, how were great numbers baptized among the Jews? Certainly by sprinkling, Exodus 24. 8, and Moses took the blood and sprinkled it upon *all the people*, and said behold the blood of the Covenant; here is baptism by the *sprinkling of blood*—Again Num. 8. 6, 7, cleanse the Levites and thus shalt thou do to cleanse them, *sprinkle water* of purifying upon them, and let them shave all their flesh, and let them wash all their clothes, and so make themselves clean.—Here is baptism by sprinkling water. One baptism only is retained in the Church, which is baptism by water. Now when we consider that the Apostles were converted Jews, as mentioned before, and that baptism by sprinkling was commonly practised among them, and that there is not the shadow of a proof of its being administered in any other way upon this occasion, and when we also consider the circumstances of the infant church, at the time alluded to in the midst of their enemies, and the absolute impossibility of baptizing such a multitude by immersion under such circumstances, and that in fact no such thing is mentioned as having taken place, we are justified in concluding that the multitude of converts were baptized by sprinkling water upon them, which was a valid mode of baptism, and the most convenient and expeditious.

But

But they say the jailer, Acts 16. 33, was baptized by immersion. This also is mere assertion without proof. A common mode of arguing used by the Baptists. But let us for a moment examine the circumstance of this case, if it were for no other purpose but to excite our astonishment at their ingenuity and invention. In the 24th verse, we are told the jailer thrust Paul and Silas into the *inner* prison and made their feet fast in the stocks—When the earthquake awoke the jailer he was about to kill himself, supposing the prisoners had fled, the doors of the prison being open; but Paul prevented this rash act, upon which the jailer called for a light and sprang in (in where? into the inner prison) and came and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas and brought them out, (out of the inner prison) and enquired the way of salvation—When they directed him to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and he should be saved, &c. and he took them (not out as the Baptists read it,) the same hour of the night, washed their stripes and was baptized he and *all his*, straightway. Now is there one single circumstance in this case to found immersion upon—No mention of leaving the jail, or the jailer's apartment, or of going to a river for the purpose. Those who can believe that the jailer and all his were baptized by immersion, may with equal propriety believe any other foolish and absurd proposition.

In the case of Cornelius, Acts 10. 47, there is no mention of going to a river or to any water in order to his baptism, nor have we any reason to believe he was baptized by immersion, but quite the contrary. Was St. Paul baptized by immersion? Acts 9. 18. Did he go to any sea or river for the purpose? Was the Eunuch baptized by immersion? We read, Acts 8, that *the Eunuch and Philip went on their way and they came* (in the order of their journey) *to a certain water: and the Eunuch said, see, here is water; what doth hinder me from being baptized? and they went both down into the water, both Philip and the Eunuch; and he baptized him;* but here is not one word of plunging under the water, (for going down into the water and coming up out of it, proves just nothing to the purpose,) and every other case of this kind stands on the same foundation. The advocates for immersion, assert, beg the question, and take for granted what they cannot prove. But it is worthy of observation that although many baptisms are mentioned, none went from the place where they first offered themselves as candidates for baptism, (except in one instance of which I shall speak just now) to any river or other water, as our Baptists do to be baptized.

The instance to which I alluded above is in John 3. 23, John was baptizing in *Enon near Salem, because there was much water there.* This place contains the strength of their cause, for as they are Baptists, they think it as necessary now to believe in and submit to John's baptism, as it was before the Gospel was preached by our Saviour and his Apostles, whereas he was only sent to prepare the way of the Lord. Upon this I have made some observations in another place.

But

But

But these disciples of John who contend so strenuously for immersion, say with triumph, why did John baptize in Enon? because there was much water there. And for what purpose did he make choice of such a place? that he might immerse all who came to his baptism—but not quite so fast, what you now take for granted is the very thing to be proved; might not John have made choice of that place for other and quite different reasons, namely, that the great multitudes who attended upon his ministry might be accommodated with water to quench their thirst, &c. in so warm a climate? And indeed the words rendered much water, properly signify many waters, and may be understood of various rivulets or springs, none of which might have been deep enough for the purpose of immersion. And is it said that he immersed any person in those waters? not one word about it. Where would such multitudes find change of raiment, or were they baptized in a state of nudity? shocking to suppose! Immersion as practised by our Baptists is very unseemly, but delicacy forbids saying much about it. Indeed some are foolish enough to say that nothing but pride hinders people from becoming Baptists! If a sense of decency and modesty hinders any, I cannot but rejoice that there is so much decency and modesty remaining. That pride causes many to be immersed, I have little doubt. People are fond of ostentatious pharisaic parade, they wish to make a fair shew in the flesh, to do which this mode of baptism, affords a plausible opportunity, and flatters their religious vanity not a little. Indeed some think it an easy way to heaven; others, through ignorance or weakness fall into the snare. But I ask, is it pride which prevents a christian from renouncing the baptism of Christ, and submitting to the baptism of John. Is it not rather a knowledge of his Christian duty which teaches him that there is but *one baptism* under the Gospel, and that having once received christian baptism, it would be a profanation of that holy sacrament to repeat it. O christian stand fast in thy christian *duty* and *privileges* that no man take thy crown. That Baptists turned christians appears from Acts 19, by which step they found the way of salvation; but who can shew from the scriptures that any christian ever turned Baptist to find that way—O my God open the eyes of these deluded souls that they may see and forsake their many errors, and lead them in the way everlasting. Put a stop to the progress of false doctrine and teachers, who destroy their own souls and the souls of those who hear them.

Before I conclude this point, I ask if baptism is not held to be a saving ordinance, why is a mode of it so strenuously contended for, except it be to mislead the unwary and to promote the interests of a party? Indeed the Baptists contend for immersion as if their salvation depended upon it, and they sometimes discover their real sentiments and tell their hearers, "except you are plunged into this liquid element, you shall be plunged into the liquid flames of hell, &c. &c." Of which their *re-baptizing* by immersion, all whom they admit into their

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

" whom

"whom they admitted into their society, the sect came to be distin-
 "guished by the name of Anabaptist. To this peculiar notion they
 "added other principles of a most enthusiastic nature. By a mon-
 "strous and almost incredulous conjunction, voluptuousness was in-
 "grafted on religion, and dissolute riot accompanied the austerities
 "of fanatical devotion—Luther, who had testified against this fana-
 "tical spirit on its appearance, now deeply lamented its progress,
 "and exposed the delusion with great strength of argument, as well
 "as acrimony of style." See also Dr. Mather's account of the Swan-
 "zy Anabaptists, of whom he relates, "that they admitted into their
 "society, persons whom our churches had excommunicated for mo-
 "ral scandal, and employed them as administrators of the two sa-
 "craments;" the application is easy.

O ye who have hitherto by a gracious providence escaped the
 pernicious errors of these men, give God unfeigned thanksgiving and
 praise for this great mercy, and pray to him that you may still escape
 their awful delusions. Come not nigh unto them for their words
 eateth as doth a canker; and their ways are a deep pit! Pray also
 that you may see your sinful and fallen condition by nature and by
 practice, and consequently your great need of repentance towards
 that God against whom you have sinned, and faith in the Lord Jesus
 Christ, who alone can save from the guilt of sin here, and from the
 punishment of it hereafter. Remember, that without holiness no man
 shall see the Lord, and that it is the glorious privilege of Christians,
 to enjoy that perfect love which casteth out all tormenting fear, and
 also a well grounded hope of immortality. Stop not short of these
 attainments, for it is the will of God to impart every Gospel blessing
 to all those who seek his face and call upon him through his adorable
 son Jesus Christ; for he is no respecter of persons.

I cannot conclude without taking the liberty of addressing a word
 or two to those ministers of the Gospel into whose hands these im-
 perfect pages may happen to fall. I acknowledge that I cannot com-
 municate any information to your minds upon the doctrinal points
 glanced at in the preceding pages. With such topics you are much
 better acquainted than I am, as you also are with the whole Gospel
 of Christ. I should rejoice to lay at your feet and receive the truth
 from your lips and pens. Permit me however, to say that the pre-
 valence of erroneous opinion and irreligious practice calls upon you
 to be more than ever vigilant in the defence and promulgation of the
 truth as it is in Jesus. For fatalism and antinomianism, bare faced
 fatalism, and bare faced antinomianism, are at present fearlessly avow-
 ed, and have already done much mischief among us. It may be, you
 hold the propagators of error in contempt, which prevents your op-
 posing them. But you should consider, that what they owe to your
 forbearance, they are vain enough to ascribe to the goodness of their
 cause. You should also consider that they pursue their object with
 the most intemperate zeal, and that what they want in talents they
 strive

strive to make up in bold *effrontery* which cannot be abashed, no, not even when their ignorance is exposed. Call to mind that many imbibe their pernicious tenets; tenets which not only lay the axe to the root of christianity, piety, and morality, but cut them down at a stroke, and substitute in their stead, the dispensation and baptism of John, necessity and fate—Were it not that I fear it would be unbecoming in so obscure an individual as I am, I would call upon you all to exercise most zealously your superior talents and grace in opposing error, impiety and sin, and in preaching Christ in all his offices to the people. Cry aloud, spare not, many in your respective flocks will by faith and prayer hold up your hands in the good work, God will give you wisdom and strength, and your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord, for success more or less shall attend your persevering endeavors here below, and a crown of glory shall be your reward above. May the Lord inspire all your hearts with renewed zeal for his glory, and the salvation of precious souls; may his Gospel be more and more successful in your hands, and in the hands of all whom he has called, or shall call to that important work, until the universe is full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the face of the deep,



ERRATA—Page 7, line 15, for “the” read “Mr. REIS’s.”
Page 11, line 10, for “expote,” read “explain.”

F I N I S.

