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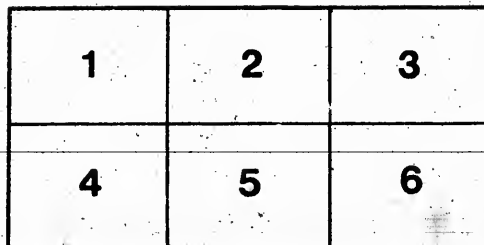
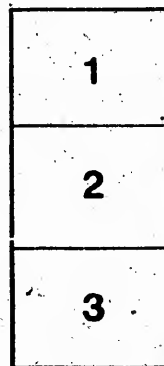
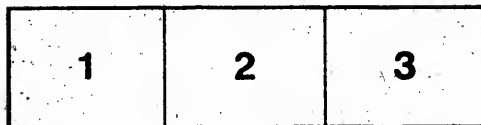
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BRIEF OUTLINE

*G6h
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(By way of question and answer)

OF

PRESBYTERIAN FAITH

AND

PRACTICE.

PRICE FIVE CENTS.

BY THE

REV. JOHN BAIN SCOTT,

LEAMINGTON, ONT.

LEAMINGTON, ONT.

1881.

G6h

Box 19

1731

A BRIEF OUTLINE OF
PRESBYTERIAN
FAITH AND PRACTICE.

For two reasons this outline is made public. First, some strange opinions are held and taught about Presbyterianism; secondly, one is sometimes told by people who make no profession of religion that they are perplexed to know what to believe, seeing there are so many different churches all claiming to be right. The question, What do you believe? is briefly answered in the following pages. For fuller information reference is made to the Catechisms, and Confession of Faith adopted by us.

JOHN BAIN SCOTT.

Leamington, Ont., 17th March, 1881.

What is the supreme standard of belief of the Presbyterian Church?

It is the inspired word of God, and that only, to which all final appeals about faith and practice are made. (Confession of Faith I, 9 10).

Do you not put the Confession of Faith in the room of the bible?

No: it like the Catechisms is but a subordinate standard, everything in it must be in accordance with the bible.

Why have you a subordinate standard?

• Because there are different Churches having different views on faith and practice, for this reason it is necessary that we present to the world a summary of what we believe. Every section of the church must have a creed be it written or not.

Have you any bible authority for adopting a Confession of Faith?

Yes: Christ asked from his disciples, as his newly constituted church, a confession of their faith in him. (MATT. xvi, 13-18.) Belief in it and consent to it was made a test of admission to the church. (ACTS viii, 37.)

Why not abide by this only as the confession of your faith?

Because heresies arose in the Church, and it was needful to state and defend the truth in opposition to each error. (ROM. vi, 17, where "form," means "system," of truth, 2 TIM. i, 13.)

Why call yourselves Presbyterians?

We are Christians because we adopt the religion of Christ, and Presbyterians because we adopt the form of Church government the apostles set up, which was done by the instruction of Christ himself, or under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. (ACTS i, 3; JOHN xvi, 13) We represent the Apostolic Church.

Will you explain that government?

The only office bearers in the Church are elders (in Greek, *Presbuteroi*) and deacons.

The elders are also called *Episcopoi*, that is bishops or overseers, (ACTS xx, 28; PHIL. i, 1; 1 PET. v, 1, 2): and are divided into, firstly, "ruling and teaching elders," and secondly, "ruling elders," (1 Tim, i, 17.) Teaching elders are never called "priests," but "ministers," (ROM. xv, 16;) "pastors," (EPH. iv, 11;) "evangelists," (2 TIM. iv, 5;) "preachers," (1 TIM. i, 7.) These titles are applied to only the apostles and those ordained to the ministry. There are none, save

Christ himself, superior to the teaching elders, (1 PET. v. 3; ~~MATT. xx, 25-27~~) who were formally called and ordained to the ministry of the Word, (MARK iii, 13, 14; JOHN xv, 16; 1 TIM. ii, 7; ACTS xiii, 2, 3.)

The deacons take charge of only the secular affairs of the church. (ACTS vi, 1, 4.)

Office bearers are elected by the congregation, and ordained by the ministry. (ACTS i, 23, 26; vi, 3-6; xiv, 23.)

The elders of a congregation meet in court, by us called a session, and have the spiritual oversight of the congregation. (ACTS xx, 28; 1 COR. v, 4, 5; MATT. xviii, 15-20.)

The Presbytery represents congregations, of which it has the charge, and ordains to the ministry. (ACTS xiii, 1-3; 1 TIM. iv, 14.)

Synods represent larger districts than Presbyteries, and make laws for the Church. (ACTS xv, 1-31; xvi, 4.)

General Assemblies represent the Presbyteries in a nation, and General Councils represent the Presbyterian Churches in nations. Any Church member may appeal from the decision of the Session to the Presbytery, thence to the Synod, thence to the General Assembly.

Of whom are the Church Courts composed?

Sessions are composed of the minister and all the ruling elders in the congregation. Presbyteries and Synods are composed of one minister and one elder from each congregation within their districts. General Assemblies are composed of delegates from the Presbyteries, and Councils of delegates from the Churches. With the exception of Sessions, all our Church Courts have an equal number of clergymen and laymen.

If there be any other traits in the character of Presbyterianism, please mention them.

It is monarchical, having Christ as its King; Aristocratic, being governed by a few; and Democratic, as

that few are chosen by the people. It is the model for the constitutional governments of free countries in our age. History testifies that those who, since the Reformation, were the first to struggle for civil and religious liberty, adopted this form of government in their Churches.

Did not Presbyterianism have its origin at the Reformation?

Not its origin; but it was revived at that time. The Waldensian and Vandois Churches were never subject to the Romish Hierarchy, and they are Presbyterian.* The Reformed Churches in France, Switzerland, Holland, Germany and Spain are Presbyterian, as well as that in Scotland. It is strong in Ireland, and in England, after the Westminster Assembly, it became the national form of Church Government for some years. The Reformers were regularly ordained to the ministry of the Christian religion in the Church they left. They did not set up a new ministry or form of Church Government, but returned to the Scriptural models of both.

What do you think is to be the future of Presbyterianism?

That being Apostolic, it will become the dominant, if not universal form of Church Government. (LUKE xii, 32.)

What do you believe respecting God?

That there is but one God, the Father, Creator, Upholder, and Governor of all things. (1 Cor. viii. 6.)

What do you believe respecting the Trinity?

That there are Three Persons in the one Godhead—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, the same in substance, equal in power and glory. (MATT. xxviii, 19; 1 JOHN v, 7.)

*These Churches, and the Lutheran, also the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists, sent representatives to the General Council of 1880.

What do you believe respecting the original state of man?

That God created man holy and happy, without any bias to sin, but with the liberty of doing it should he choose. (Ecc. vii, 29.)

What do you believe respecting the entrance of sin into the world?

That God tested Adam by a mutual covenant of obedience, with life as its reward, and death as its penalty; but that man broke the covenant and brought sin and death into the world. (GEN. iii; HOSEA vi, 7, margin.)

Do you believe that infants are born in a state of sinlessness?

No, sin is of two kinds, original and actual. They are born in original sin, and with a propensity to commit sin as soon as they begin to act for themselves. (Ps. li, 5; lviii, 3.)

What is original sin?

"It is the loss of the original habit of the will, and the presence of a positively unrighteous habit." This is the result of Adam's first sin. (ROM. iii, 10-19.)

How is this the result of Adam's first sin?

Because in that covenant he represented the whole human family, and by losing his original righteousness, his moral nature became corrupt; which corruption is transmitted to his posterity; Jesus Christ only excepted (ROM. vi, 12-14.)

Do Presbyterians believe in man's free will?

They do. Unless man be a free agent, he cannot be accountable for his actions. (JOHN v, 40; REV. xxii, 17.)

Is the believer free to sin or not to sin, as man was before the fall?

If he can live without sinning he is to do so; but he cannot. He may have the desire not to sin, but he has not the ability to keep himself free from it. (ROM. vii, 9-25.)

Although at justification one's sins are completely forgiven, saints are only growing in likeness to the perfect man; nor will they be delivered from the power of sin till they shall have been made perfectly blessed. (PHIL. iii, 12.)

What do you believe respecting the atonement?

That God, being just, cannot pass by sin unless punishment be endured according to its demerit; that both his nature and law permit a substitute to take the sinners' place, and endure punishment in their room (Is. liii); that the Second Person in the Godhead offered to be this substitute, which offer was accepted (HEB. x, 9, 10); that to be qualified, he required to take our nature in union with his own, which he did (HEB. ii, 14); and so perfectly fulfilled the law which man broke, and suffered the full punishment of our sins. (MATT. v, 18.) The merits of this righteousness are consequently imputed to "those given him by the Father," whilst the demerits of their sins are imputed to him. (GAL. ii, 16; ROM. iv, 24; ISA. liii, 6, 12,)

Do you believe that Christ died for all mankind in general, and each individual in particular?

No: for in that case each individual of the human race will be saved, or else that millions of the race unjustly perish. (JOHN x, 14-16; with MATT. xxvi, 31-33.)

Do you not believe that Christ died to make salvation possible for all mankind, but confers it only on those who believing on him seek forgiveness?

No, for in that case, all dying in infancy and idiocy would be lost. Besides, *he died to make Salvation not only possible, but certain for those given him by the Father.* (JOHN x, 15, 16, 27-29; vi, 37, 39; HEB. ii, 11-16.)

Are the merits of Christ's death not sufficient to atone for the sins of the whole world?

They are, being infinite in value, quite sufficient.

Why then are all not saved?

This is God's secret ; he has not revealed it. (DEUT. xxix, 29 ; JOHN vi, 39.)

Presbyterians, as Calvinists, believe in election ?

As believers in the bible we must believe it. (MARK xiii, 20 ; ROM. viii, 28-30 ; EP. i, 4-13.) Arminians also believe it, but with this difference—We say that election is by God, who out of his free grace has chosen some to salvation ; (ROM, ix, 15-18 ; xi, 5, 6) the others say that election depends on the faith and repentance of man.*

What is the difference between these views ?

The first permits the salvation of infants, and of those mentally incapable of exercising faith in Christ ; the second confines salvation to those who are capable of exercising "repentance toward God, and faith in Jesus Christ."

What do you believe respecting the work of the Holy Spirit ?

That he is Christ's representative on earth, and agent in carrying on the work of redemption among men (JOHN xvi, 12-15) ; that he convinces sinners of sin and misery (JOHN xv, 8), enlightens their minds in the knowledge of Christ (1 COR. ii, 10-12), renews their wills (EZEK. xxxvi, 27), and persuades and enables them to accept Jesus Christ as he is offered to them in the Gospel (JOHN vi, 44) ; that he adopts the forgiven into the family of God (ROM. viii, 15), renews them in the image of God (EPH. iv, 23, 24), and enables them to die to sin and live to righteousness. (ROM. vi, 4, 6.)

How do you explain the universal call of the gospel with the limited atonement ?

These are not contradictory. We do not explain them further than that the Head of the Church says, "Preach the gospel to every creature," also that "Many are called but few are chosen." (MARK xvi, 15 ; MATT. xx, 16.)

*See the first of the five points of Arminianism.

What is your doctrine respecting the salvation of infants?

We can do no more than form an opinion about it. The bible does not say that all who die in infancy are saved, nor does it say that any are lost. The opinion among us is that they are saved.

Do you believe that the elect will be saved, no matter how they live?

In the case of adults, election includes more than the deliverance of the soul from hell. It includes one's conviction of his sin, his repentance, and, in faith, turning to God for forgiveness. (ACTS ii, 37, 47.) No man who dies in his sin will be saved, but all the elect capable of repenting, will, in God's good time and way, be brought in faith and repentance to the Saviour. (ACTS xiii, 48; EP. ii, 8; 2 THES. ii, 13, 15; 2 TIM. ii, 25.)

It is said that Presbyterians believe that a man, if elected, will be saved whether he believes or not, is that true?

No: every one able to exercise faith in Christ, must do so before he can be saved. (JOHN iii, 36.)

Do you believe that men can fall from grace?

That depends on what is meant by "grace," and who those men are.

What then is meant by the word "Grace?"

It means—First, the free favor of God. (2 TIM. i, 9.)

Secondly, the gifts of God's love to man. (EP. i, 6.)

Thirdly, the Christian religion, or gospel of the grace of God. (COL. i, 5, 6; ROM. xi, 28.)

Fourthly, the state of being saved. (TITUS iii, 7.)

In the Christian Church are regenerated or converted persons, and unregenerated or unconverted persons. (2 PET. ii, 17.) The former only are in a state of grace, and can never fall from it; (1 PET. i, 5; JOHN x, 28, 29) the latter may, and sometimes do, fall from "the gospel of grace," by apostacy or self-righteousness. (1 JOHN, ii, 19; GAL. v, 3, 4.)

If a believer were left to himself, would he not fall from the state of grace?

He would, because the heart of every one on earth is inclined to sin. (ROM. vii, 18, 19.) A believer may backslide, or fall into sin, and for a time lose the favor of his heavenly Father, but he will be restored to it. (PSA. li; xxiii, 3.)

Why then do you say that none can fall away from the state of grace?

Because they are chosen to eternal salvation, (ROM. viii, 28-30) and God keeps them from falling, (JUDE 24.)

Do you teach that believers may be assured of their salvation?

We do. We say that the salvation of every believer is assured, although they may not feel that they are among the saved. (2 TIM. i, 12.) Their doubts will not make God let go his hold on them; but were their final salvation to depend on their hold on God, they could have no assurance of it, as they could not know the moment they might let go. (PS. cxxi, 1-4, with cxxvii, 1.)

Do you teach that believers will ever become perfect on earth?

No: their sanctification or holiness is progressive, and will be so till death frees the soul from the body. (PHIL. iii, 12-14; HEB. xiii, 23; 2 PET. iii, 18.) Besides, "perfection" means more than "sinlessness:" it includes the "being filled with all the graces of salvation." In heaven only can this be attained. (EP. iv, 19.)

What do you believe respecting the future of man?

That there are but two states after death,—that of happiness in the case of the saved, and of misery in the case of the lost. (DAN. xii, 2, 3.) Death fixes the future condition of the soul, which is unchangeable. (LUKE xvi, 19-26.) Also, that at the resurrection, souls and spiritual bodies, identified by the souls as those they formerly inhabited, will be reunited, and

so continue, the saved in heaven, the unsaved in hell. (MATT. xxv, 31-45; JOB xix, 26, 27.)

What are your views about baptism?

We believe that it, like the Lord's Supper, is a sign and seal of the Covenant of Grace, which secured to us the benefits of redemption. By it the name of Christ is formally put upon or given to the baptized, (GAL. iii, 27; ACTS ii, 38) so that by the Church they are recognized as Christians. (ACTS ii, 41.)

Why do you baptize children?

Because the Bible nowhere hints that they are not to be baptized: nowhere have we an instance of an apostle refusing to baptize them: those who refuse to baptize them have never proved that those households the apostles baptized were composed of adults only.

Is there any Scriptural reason why you baptize them?

Yes. We know that children for at least 2,000 years, (from the time of Abraham to the year 52 A. D.) were formally received into the Church, by a divinely appointed rite, and on the faith of their parents were thus consecrated to God. (GEN. xviii, 9-14.) Baptism is the only rite by which this can be done now.*

Also, adults made profession of the faith in Christ before they were baptized; but in the baptism of families by apostles, some were baptized without making this profession; therefore we conclude that they were incapable of doing it. (ACTS xvi, 15, 33, 34.)

Further; Jesus said, "Go * * * make disciples of all nations, baptizing them, * * * teaching them." We teach adults before baptizing them, and baptize

*That baptism was regarded as having come in the room of circumcision is evident, thus:—Justin Martyr, born in 103 A. D., says, "We who through Christ have access to God, have not received that circumcision which is in the flesh, but that spiritual circumcision which Enoch and others like him, observed. And this, because we have been sinners, we do, through the mercy of God receive by baptism."

children before teaching them, which complies with MATT. xxviii, 19, 20, and MARK xvi, 15, 16.

What reason have you for formally receiving children into Church membership?

First, the law relating to their Church membership has never been repealed.

Secondly, that law has been confirmed by Christ and his apostles. (MATT. xix, 13, 14; JOHN xxi, 15; ACTS ii, 39; 1 COR. vii, 14.)

Thirdly, there is not an instance of any child of a Christian parent having to wait till the adult state before being baptized.

What is the earliest known practice of the Church respecting infant baptism?

Origen, who was born of Christian parents in 185 A. D., says, "According to the usage of the Church baptism is given to even infants. * * * For this cause it was that the church received an order from the apostles to give baptism to even infants."

At the Council of Carthage, in 253 A. D., a member asked whether a child younger than eight days old might be baptized. The reply was, "that even newly-born infants might be baptized."

Pelagius says, "I never heard of any * * * who denied baptism to infants."

Augustine, in 415 A. D., says, "The custom of our mother, the Church, in baptizing infants, must not be disregarded, nor be accounted needless, nor believed to be anything else than an ordinance delivered to us by the apostles."

What are the earliest known instances of refusal to baptize infants?

One is that of Tertullian, about 198 A. D., who taught that baptism should be withheld till the young were able to make a profession of faith for themselves; but that infants, if not likely to live, should be baptized. This, however, was only private opinion.

Another is that of Peter de Bruys, in France, 1120 A.D., who taught that none can be saved unless they work out their salvation; and that as infants were incapable of doing this they, therefore, should not be baptized.

And another is that of the Anti-pædo-baptist sect, which arose in Germany in 1522, A.D.

From what do you draw reasons for baptizing by sprinkling?

Seeing Scripture does not explain the mode of baptism adopted by John and the disciples of Christ, we, therefore, draw them from the Scriptural meaning of the word "Baptizo." Also from the fact that both John the Baptist and Christ teach that baptism with water is a shadow or type of baptism with the Holy Spirit. (MATT. iii, 11; ACTS i, 5; xi, 15, 16.)

What are some of the meanings of "Baptizo*"?

Of all the passages where this word is found, not one necessarily means "immerse;" the most may or may not mean it—this proves nothing;—a few cannot mean it; but it means

SPRINKLE, in HEB. ix, 10, where it is translated "wash," and explained in verses 19, 21, by sprinkling.

POUR, in MARK vii, 4, where it is translated "wash," by *pouring water on the object washed*, according to Jewish custom.

POUR, as the outpouring or baptism of the Holy Spirit. (ACTS i, 5; with ii, 3, 4.)

Are there any cases rendering baptism by immersion improbable?

*In the Greek classics "Baptizo" means to "*pour*" or "*sprinkle*" water on an object which stands still,—as the sea "baptizing," that is "*drenching*," with waves or spray, the rocks on the shore; or to "*immerse*," but with the idea of leaving the object immersed in the water, as a "baptized," that is *sunken* ship, or as vegetables "baptized," that is *steeped*, in pickle.

Yes, for instance the baptism of the three thousand on Pentecost, at Jerusalem, where there is neither lake nor river. There is no reason to believe that they were baptized anywhere but in the place where they were converted. (ACTS ii, 37-41.)

Saul of Tarsus, in a state of great bodily weakness, was baptized in his bedroom. (ACTS ix, 17-19.)

In the house of Cornelius, some were converted and received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which led Peter to say, "Can any man *keep water back* that these should not be baptized?" (ACTS x, 22, 47.) They were baptized in the room. Had they been baptized in the sea, he would naturally have said, "Can any man *keep them back* that they should not go down into the water and be baptized?"

The jailer and his family were baptized at midnight, in the prison, (ACTS xvi, 33, 39) at the well or fountain there.

Are there any other arguments in favor of sprinkling as opposed to immersion, for being the proper way to baptize?

Yes, it is suited to all, everywhere, to even the invalid and dying.

Among the ruins of ancient Christian Churches, fonts have been found, in which it is impossible to immerse even a babe.

In the most ancient pictures descriptive of the baptism of the Eunuch by Philip, the parties are standing in the water, whilst the water is being poured on the head of the baptized.

What are your opinions respecting baptism by immersion, seeing you practise sprinkling?

We hold that immersion is not proved to be Scriptural, nor can it be the only mode of baptism. But we do not on that account say that those immersed are not baptized. A change from the original mode of administering a sacrament does not invalidate the or-

dinance itself. If it does, the Lord's Supper as presently administered is null and void ; for some kneel, others sit whilst they receive it, whereas Christ and his disciples reclined on couches, according to the Eastern custom of taking meals.

In what do you consider that the value of baptism consists ?

Not in the mode of administration, but in the name of him in whom one is baptized. This is proved from the case of those baptized according to John's baptism but were re-baptized in the name of Christ.* (ACTS xix, 1-7.)

What do Presbyterians regard as the Church ?

We say that "The universal Church consists of all those persons, in every nation, together with their children, who make profession of the holy religion of Christ and of submission to his laws."

We also say that "Saints, by profession, are bound to maintain an holy fellowship and communion, which communion, as God offereth opportunity, is to be extended unto all who in every place call upon the name of the Lord Jesus,"

No man or section of the Church is to set the Word of God aside for human opinion. His Word and that only is to be the standard of our faith and practice.

"Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."—ROM. xiv, 5,

"Prove all things ; hold fast that which is good."—1 THESS. v, 21.

"Search the Scriptures."—JOHN v, 39 ; 2 TIM. ii, 13.

"To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to these words it is because there is no light in them."—ISA. viii, 20.

*The mode of baptism adopted by John and Christ was the same, so that the re-baptism was not on that account. This shews that the "one baptism" of the Church is that in the name of the Trinity.

BAPTISM, AS REGARDED BY

1st, BAPTISTS, and

2nd, OTHER DENOMINATIONS.

I.

There is confession of faith on the part of the candidate.

I.

There is confession of faith on the part of the candidate, or the consecration to God of children by believing parents or persons representing them.

II.

The immersion in water of the body of the baptized, in the name of the Trinity.

II.

The sprinkling with water the body of the baptized, or its immersion in water, in the name of the Trinity.

III.

This baptism must be performed by none but a Baptist preacher, who himself has been immersed by another who was immersed.

Immersion performed by any other preacher is not baptism.

III.

This baptism to be performed by any ordained minister of the gospel.

IV.

None are regarded as belonging to the Church of Christ unless so baptized.

IV.

All baptized are regarded as belonging to the Church of Christ.

