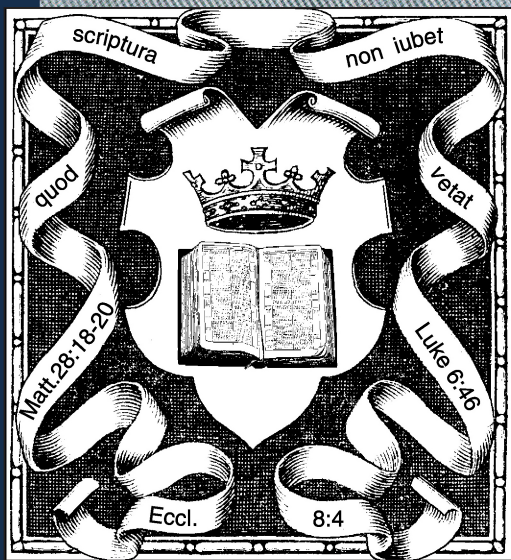


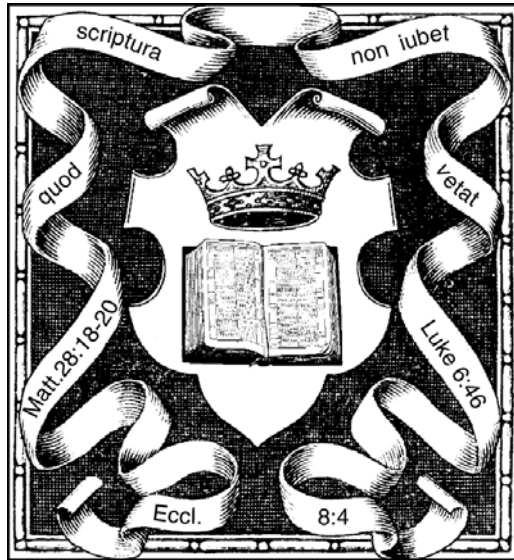
The Baptist Distinctives Series
Number 2



Paedobaptism Examined

Volume 1 of 3

Abraham Booth



Quod scriptura, non iubet velat

The Latin translates, “What is not commanded in scripture, is forbidden:”

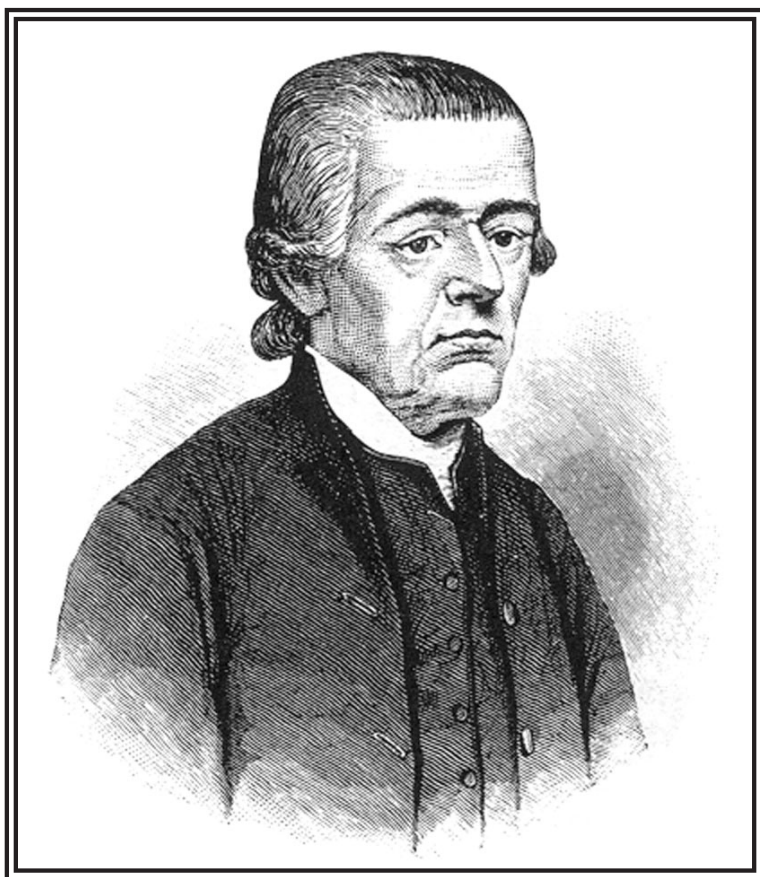
On the Cover: Baptists rejoice to hold in common with other evangelicals the main principles of the orthodox Christian faith. However, there are points of difference and these differences are significant. In fact, because these differences arise out of God’s revealed will, they are of vital importance. Hence, the barriers of separation between Baptists and others can hardly be considered a trifling matter. To suppose that Baptists are kept apart solely by their views on Baptism or the Lord’s Supper is a regrettable misunderstanding. Baptists hold views which distinguish them from Catholics, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Methodists, Pentecostals, and Presbyterians, and the differences are so great as not only to justify, but to demand, the separate denominational existence of Baptists. Some people think Baptists ought not teach and emphasize their differences but as E.J. Forrester stated in 1893, “Any denomination that has views which justify its separate existence, is bound to promulgate those views. If those views are of sufficient importance to justify a separate existence, they are important enough to create a duty for their promulgation ... the very same reasons which justify the separate existence of any denomination make it the duty of that denomination to teach the distinctive doctrines upon which its separate existence rests.” If Baptists have a right to a separate denominational life, it is their duty to propagate their distinctive principles, without which their separate life cannot be justified or maintained.

Many among today’s professing Baptists have an agenda to revise the Baptist distinctives and redefine what it means to be a Baptist. Others don’t understand why it even matters. The books being reproduced in the *Baptist Distinctives Series* are republished in order that Baptists from the past may state, explain and defend the primary Baptist distinctives as they understood them. It is hoped that this Series will provide a more thorough historical perspective on what it means to be distinctively Baptist.

The Lord Jesus Christ asked, “*And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?*” (Luke 6:46). The immediate context surrounding this question explains what it means to be a true disciple of Christ. Addressing the same issue, Christ’s question is meant to show that a confession of discipleship to the Lord Jesus Christ is inconsistent and untrue if it is not accompanied with a corresponding submission to His authoritative commands. Christ’s question teaches us that a true recognition of His authority as Lord inevitably includes a submission to the authority of His Word. Hence, with this question Christ has made it forever impossible to separate His authority as King from the authority of His Word. These two principles—the authority of Christ as King and the authority of His Word—are the two most fundamental Baptist distinctives. The first gives rise to the second and out of these two all the other Baptist distinctives emanate. As F.M. Jans wrote in 1894, “Loyalty to Christ as King, manifesting itself in a constant and unswerving obedience to His will as revealed in His written Word, is the real source of all the Baptist distinctives:” In the search for the *primary* Baptist distinctive many have settled on the Lordship of Christ as the most basic distinctive. Strangely, in doing this, some have attempted to separate Christ’s Lordship from the authority of Scripture, as if you could embrace Christ’s authority without submitting to what He commanded. However, while Christ’s Lordship and Kingly authority can be isolated and considered essentially for discussion’s sake, we see from Christ’s own words in Luke 6:46 that His Lordship is really inseparable from His Word and, with regard to real Christian discipleship, there can be no practical submission to the one without a practical submission to the other.

In the symbol above the Kingly Crown and the Open Bible represent the inseparable truths of Christ’s Kingly and Biblical authority. The Crown and Bible graphics are supplemented by three Bible verses (Ecclesiastes 8:4, Matthew 28:18-20, and Luke 6:46) that reiterate and reinforce the inextricable connection between the authority of Christ as King and the authority of His Word. The truths symbolized by these components are further emphasized by the Latin quotation - *quod scriptura, non iubet vetat*— *i.e.*, “What is not commanded in scripture, is forbidden:” This Latin quote has been considered historically as a summary statement of the regulative principle of Scripture. Together these various symbolic components converge to exhibit the two most foundational Baptist Distinctives out of which all the other Baptist Distinctives arise. Consequently, we have chosen this composite symbol as a logo to represent the primary truths set forth in the *Baptist Distinctives Series*.

**PÆDOBAPTISM
EXAMINED**



ABRAHAM BOOTH
1734-1806

PÆDOBAPTISM EXAMINED
ON THE
PRINCIPLES, CONCESSIONS, AND REASONINGS
OF THE
MOST LEARNED PÆDOBAPTISTS.

WITH
REPLIES
TO THE
ARGUMENTS and OBJECTIONS
OF
DR. WILLIAMS AND MR. PETER EDWARDS.

BY ABRAHAM BOOTH

With a Biographical Sketch of the Author by John Franklin Jones

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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Thou hast given a *standard* to them that fear thee;
that it may be displayed because of the truth.

-- *Psalms 60:4*

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and to Mr. EBENEZER PALMER, the publisher, who has spared no expense in rendering this Edition worthy the patronage of the public.

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LONDON,
November 26, 1828.

P R E F A C E.

HAVING observed, for a course of years, that many of the most learned and eminent Pædobaptists, when theological subjects are under discussion, frequently argue on such principles, admit of such facts, interpret various texts of scripture in such a manner, and make such concessions, as are greatly in favour of the Baptists; I extracted a number of passages from their publications, and made many references to others, which I thought might be fairly pleaded against infant sprinkling.* On reviewing these quotations and *memoranda*, I concluded, merely for my own private use, to employ some leisure hours in transcribing and arranging them, under different heads of the Pædobaptist controversy.

When I had made a considerable progress in the work of transcription and arrangement, Mr. Henry's Treatise on Baptism fell into my hands.† Prepossessed

* N. B. As the terms *infant sprinkling*, wherever they occur in this Treatise, are used merely by way of distinction, and not of contempt; so the expressions, *Pædo-baptism*, and *infant baptism*, are used in compliance with general custom; not because the author thinks an infant is *baptized*, on whom water has been solemnly poured or sprinkled.

† The Monthly Reviewers, after pronouncing this "the most popular defence of infant baptism and of the mode of sprinkling that hath appeared," very justly add; "Some reflections, however, which he casts on their [the Baptists] mode of baptism (which, perhaps, the editor might as well have omitted,)—are *scarcely consistent with that candour and liberality* which might have been expected from the author, and which, had he been now living, he would probably have discovered." Monthly Review, for April 1784, p. 313. My reader may see in what an illiberal manner Mr. Henry has reflected on the baptismal immersion, and some animadversions upon it, Vol. I. Chap. IV. Reflect. VII. p. 231, this edition.

of a high regard for the character of that worthy author, I perused the treatise with care. Not convinced, however, by any thing contained in it, that the sprinkling of infants is an appointment of Christ; and being fully persuaded that Mr. Henry had employed his learning and zeal in defence of an unscriptural ceremony; I determined to prosecute the subject with greater application, and to publish the result of my enquiries and thoughts concerning it. Such was the occasion of this publication.

The method of arguing here adopted, is far from being either novel or unfair: it has been used by the spirit of infallibility against Pagans;* by Christians against the Jews;† by the Reformed against Roman Catholics; and by Protestant Dissenters against our English Conformists.‡ It is, in a particular manner, employed and pursued by the author of Popery confuted by Papists; a book, indeed, which I had not seen, till the far greater part of these pages was composed. The following words of that anonymous writer may be justly applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to the present subject. “I will call the church of Rome for a witness to our cause; and if she do not plainly confess the antiquity of our tenets, and the novelty of her own; if she herself do not proclaim the universality of our faith; if she do not

* Acts xvii. 28; Titus i. 12.

† So Witsius, for instance, in his *Judæus Christianizans*, p. 276—402; and Hoornbeekius, *Contra Judæos*, l. ii. c. i.; l. iv. c. ii.

‡ A remarkable instance of this kind, is mentioned by Mr. Peirce, who having informed us, that Bp. Hoadly and Mr. Ollyfe wrote against Dr. Calamy, in defence of their own Conformity, adds; “It happened, as is very usual with our adversaries, that these two defended conformity upon different principles. Dr. Calamy, therefore, in his answer, set their arguments one against another, and so handsomely defended our cause—that the Dissenters looked upon themselves obliged, not only to the doctor for his defence, but to his antagonists, who gave him the occasion of writing.” *Vindicat. of Dissent.* part i. p. 282.

confess that we are both in the more certain and safe way in the Protestant church, I will neither refuse the name”*—of an *Anabaptist*, nor any part of that censure which is due to such a character.

Though I do not approve of every sentiment contained in the following quotations produced on behalf of the Baptists, yet, as the generality of those Pædobaptists, from whose writings the extracts were made, must be considered as persons of learning and eminence in the several communions to which they belonged; and as no small number of them were famous professors in Protestant universities, their declarations, in the *argumentum ad hominem*, cannot but have the utmost weight. Nor can their testimonies, concerning the signification of Greek terms, or the practice of the church in former ages, be hastily rejected, without incurring the imputation of gross ignorance, of enormous pride, or of shameful precipitancy. Considering the quotations adduced, and the characters of those writers from whom they were taken, it is presumed, that the leading ideas of another paragraph, in Popery confuted by Papists, may be here applied. “If these witnesses had been ignorant and unlearned men, or excommunicate persons in their own church—there might be some plea why their testimonies should not be admitted. But when the points in question are articles of their own creed; when they are witnessed by popes, by councils, by cardinals, by bishops, by learned doctors and schoolmen in their own church, on our behalf, and against their own tenets; I see no cause why I should not demand judgment in defence of our church, and trial of our cause. It is the law of God and man, ‘I will judge thee out of thine own mouth.’”† Thus also Mr. Claude, when confuting the Roman Catholics; “I will make their authors that are not suspected by them

* Popery confuted by Papists, sect. viii. p. 43.

† Ut supra, sect. x. p. 152.

to speak, whose passages I will faithfully translate, which they may see in the originals if they will take the pains."* To which I may add the following words of another Pædobaptist, which are considered by him as a kind of axiom. "The confessions of enemies, and circumstances favourable to any body of men, collected from the writings of their adversaries, are deserving of particular regard."† *Testimonium Adversarii contra se Validissimum.*

The reader will find, that our auxiliaries in this dispute are both numerous and respectable; for while a multitude of Pædobaptists reluctantly concede this, that, and the other, in support of immersion upon a profession of faith, those who may be justly esteemed impartial judges of the evidence produced on both sides of this debate, very cheerfully award the cause to us. Yes, those disinterested Friends, the people called Quakers, without so much as one exception occurring to observation, pour in their attestations on our behalf, and treat infant sprinkling as a merely human invention.

Though I am not conscious of having misrepresented the meaning of any Pædobaptist, whose testimony is produced, yet, as the quotations are very numerous, and as many of them are translated from the Latin, it is possible that mistakes may be discovered, by those readers who accurately compare my quotations with the writers from whom they were taken. Such mistakes, it is hoped, however, will be found comparatively few, and of trifling importance. I am persuaded,

* Defence of Reformation, part ii. p. 127.

† Dr. Priestley's Letters to Dr. Horsley, p. 137. "What," says the learned Chamier, "can be a more convincing proof, than that which arises from the confession of an adversary?" Panstrat. tom. iv. l. viii. c. ix. § 4. Conformably to which, Mr. Travis, when speaking of a particular fact, says: It "is proved by the best testimony possible, the acknowledgment of an adversary." Letters to Mr. Gibbon, lett. iii. edit. 2nd.

therefore, that the judicious and candid will impute them to inadvertency, or ignorance, rather than to a disingenuous intention.

A learned foreigner has justly observed, that while all Christians deservedly acknowledge the Bible as a divine revelation, it has fallen out, that every one desires to find in that sacred volume whatever in his own imagination seems divine; and that men are so wonderfully happy in this respect, as hardly ever to complain of being disappointed, or of having lost their labour, in searching the sacred records for what they wanted; but all, in the language of self-gratulation, repeat the old *ἔυρηκα* of Archimedes, *I have found it! I have found it!**—“It is but too frequently,” says Mr. Placette, “that we see truth clashing with our temporal interests, with the secret bias of our hearts, with our most violent passions, and with other things which we make the ordinary measures of our conduct. Whenever this happens, we ought to despise these vain interests, to stifle these inclinations, to repress these criminal motions, and in all our proceedings to stick close to the unalterable rule of truth. But we cannot bring ourselves to such a resolution: on the quite contrary, we endeavour to ply and bend this rule; and instead of conforming ourselves to it, would have it conform to ourselves. Not being able to change it, because it is really constant and perpetual, our next attempt is to change our own judgment about it. We try to persuade ourselves out of its directions; and, with much pains and labour, we come at length to succeed in our design. No man can, indeed, be ignorant of that mighty sway which the heart bears over the understanding. According to the order of nature, and the intention of its divine Author, it is the understanding that ought to guide the heart, and to be set up as its faithful lamp and light; but in common experience we see the reverse of this.

* Werenfelsii Opuscula, p. 376; 377.

The heart draws aside the understanding that way to which itself inclines; and if it fail to do this immediately, and by absolute command, it carries its point by time and stratagem.—It hinders the intellective power from attending to such reasons as are disagreeable to itself, and keeps it perpetually busied about the opposite arguments.—It makes us look on the former with a secret desire, that they may prove false; and on the latter, with a most unjust wish that we may find them true: and then, no wonder if it be successful in its arts, and if it effectually lead us into error.”*

Very important is that declaration of our Lord; “If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself:” with which the following direction of Bp. Taylor agrees: “If a man enquires after truth earnestly, as after things of great concernment; if he prays to God to assist, and uses those means which are in his hand, and are his best for the finding it; if he be indifferent to any proposition, and loves it not for any consideration, but because he thinks it true; if he will quit any interest rather than lose a truth; if he dares own what he hath found and believed; and if he loves it so much the more, by how much he believes it more conducing to piety and the honour of God; he hath done what a good and wise man should do: he needs not regard what any man threatens, nor fear God’s anger when a man of another sect threatens him with damnation. For he that heartily endeavours to please God, and searches what his will is, that he may obey it, certainly loves God; and nothing that loves God can perish.”†—Such is the rule of our duty in this respect; but as we are far from being insensible of our liability to be influenced by prejudices and corrupt affections in our enquiries after the mind of God

* Christian Casuist, b. ii. chap. xxiii.

† Ductor Dubitant. p. 755. See Mr. Locke’s Conduct of the Understanding, sect. xi.

respecting the ordinance of baptism, it is no small satisfaction to find, that our most learned and eminent opposers have said so much in favour of immersion, upon a profession of faith, as the appointment of Jesus Christ. For, as Dr. Owen observes, "Truth and good company will give a modest man confidence."*

In proportion as I have become acquainted with the Popish controversy, and with that between our English Episcopalians and Protestant Dissenters, the more have I been convinced, that there is a remarkable similarity between the arguments used by Roman Catholics in defence of Popery; by our Conformists, in support of their Establishment; and by Pædobaptists in general, in favour of infant sprinkling. It gives me, therefore, peculiar pleasure to find, that the general principles on which I oppose Pædobaptism, are the very same with those upon which the Reformed have always proceeded, in confuting the Papal system, and upon which Protestant Dissenters argue against the constitution, government, and unscriptural rites of the English church. By these considerations, I am the more confirmed in my disapprobation of infant sprinkling. Agreeable to which are the following words of Dr. Calamy, when speaking of the persecuted Nonconformists, and of their leading principles: "They were the more confirmed in their adherence to these principles, by finding the most eminent divines of the church forced to make use of the very same in their noble defence of the Reformation against the Romanists; and, indeed, it seemed to them remarkable, that those which were reckoned by the clergy the most successful weapons against the Dissenters, should be the same that are used by the Papists against the Protestant Reformation."†

In the course of my reflections on the language and

* Vindication against Sherlock, p. 41.

† Nonconformist's Memorial, Introduct. p. 53.

arguments of some Pædobaptists, the reader will meet with a few strokes of pleasantry. It is presumed, however, that he will have no reason to complain of *ill temper*, or of a want of benevolence to any from whom I conscientiously differ. For though it appears, from several quotations, that the harshest things have been said of the Baptists by some of their opposers;* and though it must be acknowledged the Baptists have sometimes retorted in an unbecoming manner; yet, as every one must confess, that “the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God,” so it may be observed of the cause that is here pleaded,

Non tali auxilio, nec defensoribus istis.

Some persons, to avoid the labour of thinking, and to keep their consciences easy in a compliance with prevailing custom, pronounce baptism *a controverted point*; and then infer, that all disputes about the mode and subjects of the ordinance, are not only stale and unimportant, but unworthy the character of any who profess a warm regard for the interests of moral virtue, or for the person, the atonement, and the grace of Jesus Christ. That baptism has been the subject of much controversy must be allowed; but then I will say, with Bp. Hurd; “Show me the question in religion, or even in common morals, about which learned men have not disagreed; nay, show me a single text of scripture, though ever so plain and precise, which the perverseness or ingenuity of interpreters has not drawn into different, and often contrary meanings. What then shall we conclude? that there is no truth in religion, no certainty in morals, no authority in sacred scripture? If such conclusions as these be carried to their utmost length, in what else can

* Dr. Featley acknowledges that, when writing against the Baptists, “he could hardly dip his pen in any other liquor than the juice of gall.” In Crossby’s *Hist. Bap.* vol. i. Pref. p. 5. See Backus’s *Church Hist. of New Eng.* vol. ii. p. 323, 324.

they terminate, but absolute universal scepticism?"* I may add, in the words of Dr. Waterland, "As long as religion [or any particular branch of it,] is held in any value or esteem, and meets with opposers, it must occasion warm disputes. Who would wish that it should not? What remedy is there for it, while men are men, which is not infinitely worse than the disease? A total contempt of religion, [or an universal and absolute indifference for any particular article in it,] might end all disputes about it; nothing else will."†

It must, indeed, be acknowledged, that positive rites, forms of worship, and ecclesiastical order, are not of equal importance with doctrines that immediately respect the object of our worship, as rational creatures; the ground of our hope, as criminals deserving to perish; or the source of our blessedness, as intended for an immortal existence. Nor is the most punctual performance of a ritual service, detached from faith in Christ and benevolence to man, worthy of being compared with truly devotional principles and virtuous tempers, though attended with much ignorance relating to the positive parts of divine worship. But is this a sufficient reason for treating the law of baptism as of little or no importance — as if it were obsolete, or as if our great Legislator had no meaning when he enacted it? That mutilation of the sacred supper, which is practised in the Romish communion, has been sharply opposed and loudly condemned by all denominations of Protestants: and is it not lawful, is it not matter of duty, to oppose and condemn such an outrage on divine authority and primitive example? Are we not required to *contend earnestly*, but with virtuous dispositions, *for every branch of that faith which was once delivered to the saints*? If, therefore, infants be solemnly sprinkled by divine right, it must be the indispensable duty of Pædobaptists to

* *Introduct. to Study of Prophecies*, serm. viii.

† *Importance of Doct. of Trinity*, p. 206.

contend for it ; but if, on the contrary, infant sprinkling be a human invention, the Baptists are equally bound to oppose it, as deserving to be banished from the worship of God, where it has long usurped the place of a divine institution. If Christ be the only Lord and Lawgiver in his own kingdom, then certainly it is far from being a matter of indifference whether the laws which he enacted be regarded or not : for, with equal reason, might any one question, whether our Saviour should be *believed*, in what he declares ; as whether he should be *obeyed*, in what he commands. Under the fair pretext of charity, forbearance, and catholicism, we might, with Melancthon and other adiaphorists in the sixteenth century, consider the doctrine of justification by faith alone, the number of the sacraments, the jurisdiction claimed by the pope, extreme unction, the observation of Popish festivals, and several superstitious rites, as things *indifferent* :* or, with others, we might assert the innocence of mental error in matters of doctrine and of worship ; and so, by unavoidable consequence, render the Bible itself of little worth.

It has been often asserted, both by ancients and moderns, that the followers of Christ should never seek for peace at the expense of truth, nor of religious duty. Thus, for example, Hilary, bishop of Poitiers : “ The name of *peace* is, indeed, very specious, and the mere appearance of *unity* has something splendid in it ; but who knows not, that the church and the gospel acknowledge no other peace than that which comes from Jesus Christ, that which he gave to his apostles before the glory of his passion, and that which he left in trust with them by his eternal command, when he was about to leave them ? ” † — Dr. Owen : “ We are not engaged in an enquiry merely after

* See Mosheim's *Eccles. Hist.* cent. xvi. sect. iii. part. ii. § 28. Venemæ *Hist. Eccles.* secul. xvi. § 156.

† In Claude's *Defence of Reformation*, part iii. p. 3.

peace, but after peace with *truth*. Yea, to lay aside the consideration of truth, in a disquisition after peace and agreement, in and about spiritual things, is to exclude a regard unto God and his authority, and to provide only for ourselves. . . . The rule of unity, as it is supposed to comprise all church communion, falls under many restrictions. For herein the special commands of Christ, and institutions of the gospel committed unto our care and observance, falling under consideration, our practice is precisely limited unto those commands, and by the nature of those institutions. . . . We are not obliged to accommodate any of the ways or truths of Christ unto the sins and ignorance of men.”*—J. A. Turretin: “There ought to be no charity without truth; no charity that is an injury to truth; no charity which causes us to offend against the truth. . . . For this ought not to be called *charity*, but a confederation and a conspiracy of error. ‘We wish,’ says Jerome, ‘for peace; and we not only wish, but also pray for it: but it is the peace of Christ, true peace, peace in which no war is involved.’ Otherwise, as Nazianzen teaches, ‘war is more eligible than that peace which separates us from God.’”†—Mr. Henry: “The method of our prayer must be, first for truth, and then for peace; for such is the method of the wisdom that is from above; it is *first pure, then peaceable*.”‡ With this both prophets and apostles agree; for their language is, *Love the truth, and peace—Speaking the truth in love*.§

The folly and impiety of pleading for charity and peace, at the expense of divine truth and of religious duty, are well represented and properly chastised by a Pædobaptist author, in the following manner: “A considerable succedaneum for the Christian unity, is the Catholic charity; which is like the charity commended

* Discourse on Evangelical Love and Peace, p. 17, 24, 233.

† Oratio de Theologo Veritatis et Pacis Studioso.

‡ Exposit. on Rom. xv. 5.

§ Zech. viii. 19; Eph. iv. 15.

by Paul, in only this one instance, that it *groweth exceedingly*.—Among the stricter sort, it goes under the name of *forbearance*. We shall be much mistaken if we think that, by this soft and agreeable word, is chiefly meant the tenderness and compassion inculcated by the precepts of Jesus Christ and his apostles. It strictly means an agreement to differ quietly about the doctrines and commandments of the gospel, without interruption of visible fellowship. They distinguish carefully between *fundamentals*, or things necessary to be believed and practised; and *circumstantials*, or things that are indifferent. Now, whatever foundation there may be for such a distinction in human systems of religion, it certainly looks very ill-becoming in the churches of Christ, to question how far HE is to be believed and obeyed. Our modern churches . . . have nearly agreed to hold all those things indifferent which would be inconvenient and disreputable; and to have communion together, in observing somewhat like the customs of their forefathers. Many of the plainest sayings of Jesus Christ and the apostles are treated with high contempt, by the advocates of this forbearance.—The common people are persuaded to believe, that all the ancient institutions of Christianity were merely local and temporary, excepting such as the learned have agreed to be suitable to these times; or, which have been customarily observed by their predecessors. But it would well become the doctors in divinity to show, by what authority any injunction of God can be revoked, besides *his own*; or, how any man's conscience can be lawfully released by custom, example, or human authority, from observing such things as were instituted by the apostles of Christ in his name. . . . This corrupt forbearance had no allowed place in the primitive churches. The apostle, in the Epistle to the Ephesians, required of them, to adorn their vocation 'with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another, IN LOVE.' But had they dispensed

with the laws of Christ, for convenience and ease, it had been forbearing one another in hatred; for those laws were expressions of his love; the most fervent love that was ever shown among men, directed by infallible wisdom. Whosoever, therefore, would obliterate them, or any how attempt to change them, must either suppose himself wiser than Jesus Christ, or a greater friend to mankind. He must be moved, either by an enormous self-conceit, or by the spirit of malevolence. . . . The more thinking part of religious men, observing what great mischiefs have arisen from contentions about truth,—have found it most desirable to let truth alone, and to concern themselves chiefly about living profitably in civil society. To be of some religion, is but decent; and the interests of human life require that it be popular and compliant. If men have different notions of Jesus Christ, his divinity, his sacrifice, his kingdom, and the customs of his religion, even from what the apostles seemed to have; charity demands that we think well of their religious characters, notwithstanding this. It is unbecoming the modesty of wise men to be confident on any side; and *contending earnestly* for opinions, injures the peace of the Christian church. Thus kind and humble is modern charity! Instead of rejoicing in or with *the truth*, it rejoiceth in contemplating the admirable piety that may be produced from so many different, yea, opposite principles. . . . The Christians of old time were taught, not to dispute about the institutions of their LORD, but to observe them thankfully; and hereby they expressed their affection to him and to each other. If that affection be granted to be more important than the tokens of it, it would be unjust to infer that the latter have no obligation; which would imply, that Christ and the apostles meant nothing by their precepts. The Methodists have not, indeed, gone so far as their spiritual Brethren [the Quakers] have done, in rejecting all external ceremonies; but they are taught to believe, that all con-

cern about the ancient order and customs of the Christians is mere party-spirit, and injurious to the devout exercises of the heart. Thus the modern charity vaunts itself, in answering better purposes than could be accomplished by keeping the words of Christ. It produces a more extensive and generous communion, and animates the devotion of men, without perplexing them by uncertain doctrines or rigorous self-denial. . . . Although it supposes some revelation from God, and some honour due to Jesus Christ, it claims a right to dispense with both—to choose what, in his doctrine and religion, is fit to be believed and observed.”*

While, however, we think it our duty with a resolute perseverance to maintain the purity and importance of baptism, as a divine institution; we are far from considering ourselves as the only disciples of Christ, or our own communities as the only Christian churches. Nor is an idea of that kind justly inferable from our denying communion at the Lord’s table to Pædobaptists.† Respecting this particular, Dr. Owen says; “There is no necessity that any should deny all them to be true churches, from whom they may have just reason to withdraw their communion. . . . When we judge of our own communion with them, it is not upon this question, Whether they are true churches, or not? as though the determination of our practice did depend solely thereon. For as we are not called to judge of the being of their constitution, as to the substance of it, unless they are openly judged in the scripture, as in the case of idolatry and persecution persisted in; so a determination of the truth of their constitution, or that they are true churches, will not presently resolve us in our duty, as to communion with them. . . . It is most unwarrantable rashness

* *Strictures upon Modern Simony*, p. 48—55. Luther, in his vehement manner, says; “*Maledicta sit charitas quæ servatur cum jactura doctrinæ fidei, cui omnia cedere debent, charitas, apostolus, angelus e cælo.*” *Comment. in Epist. ad Galat.*

† See my *Anology* for the Bantists.

and presumption, yea, an evident fruit of ignorance, or want of love, or secular private interest, when, upon lesser differences, men judge churches to be no true churches, and their ministers to be no true ministers.”* The same excellent author says; “There is nothing more clear and certain, than that our Lord Christ. . . . never joined with [the Jews] in the observance of their own traditions and pharisaical impositions, but warned all his disciples to avoid them and refuse them; whose example we desire to follow: for, concerning all such observances in the church, he pronounced that sentence, ‘Every plant that my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up.’”†

It is against what the author considers as an error in sentiment, and a corruption of worship, that the following Examination of Pædobaptism makes its appearance: *errors*, not *persons*, are here opposed. He thinks, with Mr. Leigh, that we should “distinguish between loving of men’s persons and their errors;”‡ and, with Bp. Burnet, that “whatever moderation or charity we may owe to men’s persons, we owe none at all to their errors, and to that frame which is built on and supported by them.”§ Nay, as Dr. Waterland in another case observes, “While we are of a contrary judgment, it cannot but be guilty practice and conduct in us, and very great too, to smother our sentiments, or not to bear our testimony in such a way as Christ has appointed, against all notorious corruptions, either of faith, or worship, or doctrine.”||

Should this Examination of Pædobaptism have the honour of being regarded as deserving an answer, and

* Discourse on Evangelical Love and Church-Peace, p. 82, 83, 84. See Plain Reasons for Dissenting from the Church of England, part i. reason i.; and Stapferi Theolog. Polem. tom. i. p. 518.

† Enquiry into Orig. and Nature of Churches, p. 253.

‡ Treatise on Relig. and Learning, b. i. chap vii.

§ In Mr. Robinson’s Plan of Lectures, Motto.

|| Importance of Doct. of Trinity, p. 135.

should any of our opposers write against me, it will not avail to refute some particular parts of the work, detached from the general principles on which I proceed. No; the *data*, the *principal grounds* of reasoning, which are adopted from Pædobaptists themselves, must be constantly kept in view, or nothing to the honour of infant sprinkling will be effected. For as the grand principles on which my argumentation proceeds, and whence my general conclusions are drawn, are those of Protestants when contending with Papists, and those of Nonconformists when disputing with English Episcopalians; it will be incumbent on such opposer to show, either that the principles themselves are false, or that my reasoning upon them is inconclusive. Now, as I do not perceive how any Protestant can give up those principles, without virtually admitting the superstitions of Popery; nor how they can be deserted by any Dissenter, without implicitly renouncing his Nonconformity; so I conclude, that the whole force of any opponent must be employed in endeavouring to prove, that I have reasoned inconsequentially from those principles. That this might be easily proved, I am not at present convinced; and whether any of our Pædobaptist Brethren will consider this publication as of sufficient importance to excite such an attempt, is to me uncertain.

To the conclusions inferred from those very numerous concessions which our opposers have made, (and my reader will find that many of the greatest eminence among them have been the most free in making concessions,) it may, perhaps, be objected: "Notwithstanding all their concessions, they continued in the profession and practice of infant baptism." Granted; but then it should be considered, that this objection is quite futile; because I professedly argue against Pædobaptism, on the principles, reasonings, and concessions of *Pædobaptists*. Besides, though such an exception to my conclusions expresses a fact, yet it pays the consistency of

the authors concerned but a poor compliment. In this light similar concessions from Roman Catholics have always been viewed by Protestants; of which the reader will meet with various instances in the course of this work.*

Being fully persuaded, that I appear in defence of a divine institution and of apostolic practice, I earnestly commend this publication to the blessing of that sublime Being, who “worketh all things after the counsel of his will.” Sincerely praying, that evangelical truth and experimental religion, that purity of worship and the practice of holiness, may flourish among all denominations of Christians, I conclude in the following words of Lord Bacon: “Read, not to contradict or confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider.”†

A. BOOTH.

GOODMAN'S FIELDS,
Aug. 8, 1787.

* See particularly Vol. I. p. 268, 269, this edition.

† In Dr. Edwards's Discourse concerning Truth and Error, p. 456.

E R R A T A.

Vol. I.	p. 28. l. 24,	<i>for</i> superscription,	<i>read</i> superscription.
	48, l. 22,	— <i>έαντου,</i>	— <i>έαντον.</i>
Vol. II.	p. 25, l. 7,	— childishy,	— childishly.
	105, l. 18,	— <i>μαθητευειν,</i>	— <i>μαθητευειν.</i>
	142, l. 2,	— parishoners,	— parishioners.
	451, l. 29,	— destitue,	— destitute.
Vol. III. p.	156, l. 30,	— <i>σoματα,</i>	— <i>σoματα.</i>
	175, l. 5,	— fortels,	— foretells.
	189, l. 5,	— <i>πνευατι,</i>	— <i>πνευματι.</i>
	256, l. 10,	— proxility,	— prolixity.
	246, l. 24,	— essence,	— essence.
	351, l. 34,	— ominious,	— omñious.

GENERAL CONTENTS.

VOL. I.

PÆDOBAPTISM EXAMINED.

PART I.

The Mode of Administration.

	Page
CHAPTER I.—Concerning the Nature, Obligation, and Importance of Positive Institutions in Religion - - -	1—39
CHAP. II.—Concerning the Signification of the Terms, Baptize and Baptism - - - - -	40—131
CHAP. III.—The Design of Baptism; or, the Facts and Blessings represented by it, both in regard to our Lord and his Disciples - - - - -	132—170
CHAP. IV.—The Practice of John the Baptist, of the Apostles, and of the Church in succeeding Ages, in regard to the Manner of administering the Ordinance of Baptism -	171—238
CHAP. V.—The present Practice of the Greek and Oriental Churches, in regard to the Mode of Administration -	239—244
CHAP. VI.—The Design of Baptism more fully expressed by Immersion, than by Pouring or Sprinkling - - -	245—252
CHAP. VII.—The Reasons, Rise, and Prevalence of Pouring or of Sprinkling, instead of Immersion - - - -	253—300

PART II.

The proper Subjects.

CHAPTER I.—No Express Precept nor Plain Example for Pædobaptism, in the New Testament - - - -	303—367
CHAP. II.—No Evidence of Pædobaptism, before the latter End of the Second, or the Beginning of the Third Century -	368—411
CHAP. III.—The high Opinion of the Fathers concerning the Utility of Baptism, and the Grounds on which they proceeded in administering that Ordinance to Infants, when Pædobaptism became a prevailing Practice - - - - -	412

VOL. II.

	Page
CHAP. IV.—Concerning the Modern Grounds of Pædobaptism; namely, Jewish Proselyte Baptism—External Covenant Relation—Jewish Circumcision—Particular Passages of Scripture—and Apostolic Tradition.	
SECTION 1.—Jewish Proselyte Baptism - - - -	1—33

	Page
SECT. 2.—External Covenant Relation - - - - -	33—68
SECT. 3.—Jewish Circumcision - - - - -	68—97
SECT. 4.—Particular Passages of Scripture: viz.	
§ 1.—Matt. xxviii. 19 - - - - -	97—134
§ 2.—Gen. xvii. 7 - - - - -	134—152
§ 3.—Ezek. xvi. 20, 21 - - - - -	153—157
§ 4.—Matt. xix. 14 - - - - -	157—164
§ 5.—John iii. 5 - - - - -	164—170
§ 6.—Acts ii. 39 - - - - -	170—177
§ 7.—Acts xvi. 15, 33; 1 Cor. i. 16 - - - - -	177—185
§ 8.—Rom. xi. 16 - - - - -	186—189
§ 9.—1 Cor. vii. 14 - - - - -	189—231
SECT. 5.—Apostolic Tradition, and the Impracticability of pointing out the Time when Pædobaptism commenced - - -	231—251
CHAP. V.—Infant Baptism and Infant Communion introduced about the same Time, and supported by similar Arguments - - - - -	252—279
General Remarks - - - - -	279—342

PART III.

REPLY TO DR. WILLIAMS.

CHAP. I.—Concerning the Title of Dr. Williams's Book, his Professions, and his Conduct, relative to this Controversy, 353—395	
CHAP. II.—On the little Regard Dr. Williams pays to Quotations produced from Pædobaptists; and on his Disposition to extort Concessions from the Baptists - - - - -	396—406
CHAP. III.—On Dr. W.'s Pretence, that his Book includes a full Reply to my Pædobaptism Examined - - - - -	407—454

VOL. III.

	Page
CHAPTER IV.—Concerning Positive Institutions and Analogical Reasoning - - - - -	1—119
CHAP. V.—On the Meaning of the Words Baptize and Baptism, as represented by Dr. W. - - - - -	120—236
CHAP. VI.—The General Principles on which Dr. W. founds the Right of Infants to Baptism - - - - -	237—325
CHAP. VII.—Infant Communion and Infant Baptism compared - - - - -	326—344
CHAP. VIII.—On the Utility and Importance of Baptism, as represented by Dr. W. - - - - -	345—366

PART IV.

REPLY TO MR. PETER EDWARDS.

MR. DORE'S PREFACE - - - - -	369—388
THE REPLY - - - - -	389—460

“REASONS WHY BAPTISTS OUGHT TO TEACH THEIR DISTINCTIVE VIEWS . . . First, it is a duty we owe to ourselves. We must teach these views in order to be consistent in holding them. Because of these we stand apart from other Christians, in separate organizations. . . We have no right thus to stand apart unless the matters of difference have real importance; and if they are really important, we certainly ought to teach them.”

JOHN A. BROADUS

The Duty of Baptists To Teach Their Distinctive Views.
(Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1881).

“No religious denomination has a moral right to a separate existence unless it differs essentially from others. Ecclesiastical differences ought always to spring from profound doctrinal differences. *To divide Christians, except for reasons of gravest import, is criminal schism.* Separate religious denominations are justifiable only for matters of conscience growing out of clear scriptural precept.”

J. L. M. CURRY

A Baptist Church Radically Different From Paedobaptist Churches.
(Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1889).

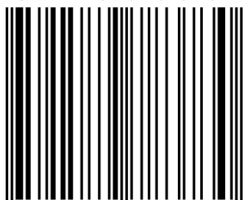
“There is something distinctive in the principles of Baptists. They differ from all other denominations; and the difference is so great as not only to justify, but to demand, their separate existence as a people . . . What distinctive mission have the Baptists, if this is not their mission? - to present the truth in love on the matters wherein they differ from Pedobaptists. What is there but this that justifies their separate denominational existence and saves them from the reproach of being schismatics? *If they have a right to denominational life, it is their duty to propagate their distinctive principles, without which that life cannot be justified or maintained.*”

J. M. PENDLETON

Distinctive Principles of Baptists.
(Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1882).

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