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SERMONS AND TRACTS OF JOHN GILL

BAPTISM: A PROFESSION OF THE FAITH OF THE GOSPEL

Antipaedobaptism; Or, Infant-Baptism An Innovation

by John Gill

(London: George Keith, 1753)

Thou hast given a standard to them that fear thee;
that it may be displayed because of the truth
— Psalm 60:4

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SERMON 66

ANTIPAEDOBAPTISM;

OR,

INFANT-BAPTISM, AN INNOVATION

BEING A REPLY

To A Late Pamphlet, Intitled, ***`PAEDOBAPTISM; Or,***

A Defence of Infant-baptism, in point of Antiquity, etc.'

A Pamphlet being published some time ago by a nameless author, intitled, *The Baptism of Infants A Reasonable Service,* etc. ***I wrote an answer to it, chiefly relating to the antiquity of infant-baptism,*** called, *The Argument from Apostolic Tradition, in Favor of Infant-baptism, etc. considered.* ***Of late another anonymous writer has started up in defense of the antiquity of it, from the exceptions made by me to it;*** for it seems it is not the same author, but another who has engaged in this controversy; but be he who he will, it does not greatly concern me to know; though methinks, if they judge they are embarked in a good cause, they should not be ashamed of it, or of their names, and of letting the world know who they are, and what share they have in the defense of it: but just as they please, it gives me no uneasiness; they are welcome to take what method they judge most agreeable, provided truth and righteousness are attended to.

In my answer, I observed that apostolic tradition at most and best is a very uncertain and precarious thing, not to be depended upon; of which I give an instance so early as the second century, which yet even then could not be settled; and that it is doubtful whether there is any such thing as apostolic tradition, not delivered in the sacred writings; ***and I demand of the Gentleman, whose performance was before me, to give me one single instance of it; and if infant-baptism is of this kind, to name the apostle or apostles by whom it was delivered, and to whom, when, and where;*** to all

which no answer is returned; only I observe a deep silence as to *undoubted apostolic tradition*, so much boasted of before.

The state of the controversy between us and the Paedobaptists, with respect to the antiquity of infant-baptism, lies here; and ***the question is, whether there is any evidence of its being practiced before the third century; or before the times of Tertullian.*** We allow it began in the third century, and was then practiced in the African churches, where we apprehend it was first moved; but deny there was any mention or practice of it before that age; and affirm that Tertullian is the first person known that spoke of it, and who speaks against it: I have therefore required of any of our learned Paedobaptists to produce a single passage out of any authentic writer before Tertullian, in which infant-baptism is expressly mentioned, or clearly hinted at, or plainly supposed, or manifestly referred to: if this is not done, the controversy must remain just in the same state where it was, and infant-baptism carried not a moment higher that it was before; and whatever else is done below this date, is all to no purpose. How far this Gentleman, who has engaged in this controversy, has succeeded, is our next business to inquire.

The only Christian writers of the First century, any of whose writings are extant, are Barnabas, Clemens Romanus, Hermas, Polycarp, and Ignatius; nothing out of Barnabas, Polycarp, and Ignatius, in favor of infant-baptism, is pretended to.

> "The most ancient writer that we have (says this Gentleman, in the words of Mr Bingham) is Clemens Romanus, who lived in the time of the apostles; and he, though he doth not directly mention infant-baptism, yet says a thing that by consequence proves it; for he makes infants liable to original sin, which is in effect to say that they have need of baptism to purge it away, etc."

The passage or passages in Clemens, in which he says this thing, are not produced; I suppose they are the same that are quoted by Dr Wall, in neither of which does he say any such thing; it is true, in the first of them he makes mention of a passage in [1840]Job 14:4. according to the Greek version, no man is *free from pollution, no not though his life is but of one day*; which might be brought indeed to prove original sin, but is not brought by Clemens for any such purpose, but as a self-accusation of Job; shewing, that though he had the character of a good man, yet he was not free from sin: and the other only speaks of men coming into the world as

out of a grave and darkness, meaning out of their mother's womb; and seem, not to refer to any moral death and darkness men are under, or to the sinful state of men as they come into the world: but be it so, that in these passages Clemens does speak of original sin, what is this to infant-baptism, or the necessity of it? is there no other way to purge away original sin, but baptism? nay, is there any such virtue in baptism as to purge it away? there is not; it is the blood of Christ, and that only, that purges away sin, whether original or actual. Should it be said that this was the sense of the ancients in some after-ages, who did ascribe such a virtue to baptism, and did affirm it was necessary to be administered, and did administer it to infants for that purpose, what is this to Clemens? what, because some persons in some after-ages gave into this stupid notion, that baptism took away original sin, and was necessary to infants, and ought to be given them for that reason, does it follow that Clemens was of that mind? or is there the least hint of it in his letter? What though he held the doctrine of original sin, does it follow therefore that he was for infant-baptism? how many Antipaedobaptists are there who profess the same doctrine? will any man from hence conclude that they are for and in the practice of infant-baptism? It follows in the words of the same writer;

> "*Hermes pastor* (Hermas I suppose it should be) lived about the same time with Clemens; and hath several passages to shew the general necessity of water, that is, baptism, to save men:"

the passages referred to are those Dr Wall has produced. Hermas had a vision of a tower built on *water*; inquiring the reason of it, he is told, it was "because your life is, and will be saved by water:" and in another place,

> "before any one receives the name of the Son of God, he is liable to death; but when he receives that seal, he is delivered from death, and is assigned to life; and that seal is water."

Now by *water* Hermas is supposed to mean baptism; but surely he could not mean real material water, or the proper ordinance of water-baptism, since he speaks of the patriarchs coming up through this water, and being sealed with this seal after they were dead, and so entering into the kingdom of God: but how disembodied spirits could be baptized in real water, is not easy to conceive; it must surely design something mystical; and what it is, I must leave to those who better understand these visionary things: but be it so, that baptism in water is meant, salvation by it may be understood in the same sense as the apostle Peter ascribes salvation to it, when he says, that

baptism saves by the resurrection of Christ from the dead; that is, by directing the baptized person to Christ for salvation, who was delivered for his offenses, and rose again for his justification; of which resurrection baptism by immersion is a lively emblem; and Hermas is only speaking of adult persons, and not of infants, or of their baptism, or of the necessity of it to their salvation: in another place indeed he speaks of some that were as infants without malice, and so more honorable than others; and, adds he, all infants, are honored with the Lord, and accounted of first of all; that is, all such infants as before described: but be it that infants in age are meant, they may be valued and loved by the Lord; he may shew mercy to them, choose, redeem, regenerate, and save them, and yet not order them to be baptized; nor has he ordered it: however Hermas has not a word about the baptism of them, and therefore these passages are impertinently referred to.

Now these are all the passages of the writers of the first century brought into this controversy; in which there is so far from being any express mention of infant-baptism, that it is not in the least hinted at, nor referred unto; nor is any thing of this kind pretended to, till we come to the middle of the next age; and yet our author upon the above passages concludes after this manner: “thus — we have traced up the *practice* of infant baptism to the time of the apostles;” when those writers give not the least hint of infant-baptism, or have any reference to it, or the practice of it. It is amazing what a *face* some men have! proceed we now to

The Second century. The book of *Recognitions*, this writer seems to be at a loss where to place it, whether after or before Justin; however, Mr. Bingham tells him, “it is an ancient writing of the same age with Justiin Martyr, mentioned by Origen in his *Philocalia*, and by some ascribed to Bardesanes Syrus, who lived about the middle of the second century.” It is indeed mentioned by Origen, though not under that name, and is by him ascribed to Clemens, as it has been commonly done; and if so, might have been placed among the testimonies of the *first* century; but this Gentleman’s author says it is ascribed by some to Bardesanes Syrus: it is true, there is inserted in it a fragment out of a dialogue of his concerning fate, against Abydas an astrologer; but then it should rather be concluded from hence, as Fabricius observes, [f1] that the author of the Recognitions, is a later writer than Bardesanes: but be it so that it is him, who is this Bardesanes? an arch-heretic, one that first fell into the Valentinian herersy; and though he seemed afterwards to change his mind, he was not wholly free, as Eusebius says, [f2] from his old heresy; and he became the author of a

new sect, called after his name Bardesanists; who held that the devil was not a creature of God; that Christ did not assume human flesh; and that the body rises not. [f3] The book of *Recognitions*, ascribed to him, is urged by the Papists, as Mr James observes [f4] to prove the power of exorcists, free-will, faith alone insufficient, the chrysm in baptism, and Peter's succession; though the better sort of writers among them are ashamed of it. Sixtus Senensis says [f5] that

> "most things in it are uncertain, many fabulous, and some contrary to doctrines generally received."

And Baronius [f6] has these words concerning it:

> "Away with such monstrous lies and mad dotages, which are brought out of the said filthy ditch of the *Recognitions*, which go under the name of Clemens:" but all this is no matter, if infant-baptism can be proved out it; but how? "This author speaks of the necessity of baptism in the same stile as Justin Martyr did — was undeniably an assertor of the general necessity of baptism to salvation:"

wherever this wretched tenet, this false notion of the absolute necessity of baptism to salvation is met with, the Paedobaptists presently smell out infant-baptism, one falsehood following upon another; and true it is, that one error leads on to another; and this false doctrine paved the way for infant-baptism; but then the mystery of iniquity worked by degrees; as soon as it was broached infant-baptism did not immediately commence: it does not follow, because that heretic asserted this notion, that therefore he was for or in the practice of infant-baptism; besides this book, be the author of it who will, is not made mention of before the third century, if so soon; for the work referred to by Origen has another title, and was in another form; he calls it the *circuits of Peter*, an apocryphal, fabulous and romantic writing; and though the passage he quotes is in the Recognitions, which makes some learned men conclude it to be the same with that; yet so it might be, and not be the same with it. But I pass on to a more authentic and approved writer of the second century:

Justin Martyr, who lived about the year 150; and the first passage produced from him is this: [f7]

> "We bring them (namely, the new converts) to some place where there is water, and they are regenerated by the same way of

> regeneration by which we were regenerated; for they are washed with water in the name of God the Father and Lord of all things, and of our Savior Jesus Christ, and of the holy Spirit."

In this passage, it is owned,

> "Justin is describing the manner of adult baptism only; having no occasion to descend to any farther particulars; nor is it alledged, it is said, as a proof of infant-baptism directly; but only to shew, that this ancient writer used the word *regeneration* so as to connote *baptism* — yet his words cannot be thought to exclude the baptism of infants in these days:"

but if infant-baptism had been practiced in those days, it is not consistent with that sincerity and impartiality which Justin sets out with, when he proposed to give the Roman Emperor an account of christian baptism, not to make any mention of that; for he introduces it thus:

> "We will declare after what manner, when we were renewed by Christ, we devoted ourselves unto God, lest omitting this we should seem to act a bad part (prevaricate or deal unfairly) in this declaration;"

whereas it was not dealing fairly with the Emperor, and not giving him a full and fair account of the administration of the ordinance of baptism to all its proper subjects, if infants had used to be baptized; which he could easily have introduced the mention of, and one would think could not have omitted it: betides, as Dr Gale [f8] observes, he had an occasion to speak of it, and to descend to this particular, had it been used; since the christians were charged with using their infants barbarously; which he might have removed, had this been the case, by observing the great regard they had to them in devoting them to God in baptism, and thereby initiating them into their religion, and providing for the salvation of their souls: but Justin is so far from saying any thing of this kind, that he leaves the Emperor and every body else to conclude that infants were not the subjects of baptism in this early age; for as the above writer observes, immediately follow such words as directly oppose infant-baptism; they are these:

> "And we have been taught by the apostles this reason for this thing; because we being ignorant of our first birth, were generated by necessity, etc. that we should not continue children of that necessity

> and ignorance, but of will (or choice) and knowledge; and should obtain forgiveness of the sins in which we have lived, by water:"

so that in order to obtain these things by water or baptism, which Justin speaks of, there must be free choice and knowledge, which infants are not capable of: but it seems the main thing this passage is brought to prove, is, that the words *regenerated* and *regeneration* are used for *baptized* and *baptism*; and this agreeing with the words of Christ in John 3:5 shews that this construction of them then obtained, that baptism is necessary to salvation. Now, it should be observed, that the persons Justin speaks of are not represented by him as regenerated by baptism, because they are spoken of before as converted persons and believers; and it is as clear and plain that their baptism is distinguished from their regeneration, and is not the same thing; for Justin uses the former as an argument of the latter; which if the same, his sense must be, they were baptized because they were baptized; whereas his sense, consistent with himself, and the practice of the primitive churches, is; that there persons, when brought to the water, having made a profession of their regeneration, were owned and declared regenerated persons; as was manifest from their being admitted to the ordinance of water-baptism; and from hence it appears, that, then no such construction of John 3:5 obtained, that baptism is necessary to salvation: and this now seems to be the passage referred to, in which Justin is said to speak of the necessity of baptism, in a stile the author of the *Recognitions* agreed with him in; but without any reason.

The next passage out of Justin is in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew; where he says that

> "concerning the influence and effect of Adam's sin upon mankind, which the ancient writers represent as the ground and reason of infant-baptism —"

The words, as cited by Dr Wall, to whom our author refers us, are there: Justin, speaking of the birth, baptism, and crucifixion of Christ, says [f9]

> "he did this for mankind, which by Adam was fallen under death, and under the guile of the serpent; beside the particular cause which each man had of sinning."

Now, allowing that this is spoken of original sin, as it seems to be, what is this to infant-baptism? I have already exposed the folly of arguing from

persons holding the one, to the practice of the other. It is added by our author,

> "in the same book, he (Justin) speaks of baptism being to christians in the room of circumcision, and so points out the analogy between those two initiatory rites."

The passage referred to is this: [f10]

> "We also who by him have had access to God, have not received this carnal circumcision, but the spiritual circumcision, which Enoch, and those like him, have observed; and we have received it by baptism by the mercy of God, because we were sinners; and it is enjoined to all persons to receive it the same way."

Now let be observed, that this spiritual circumcision, whatever Justin means by it, can never design baptism; since the patriarch Enoch, and others like him, observed it: and since christians are said to receive it by *baptism*, and therefore must be different from baptism itself: nor does Justin say any thing of the analogy between baptism and circumcision, or of the one being in the room of the other; but opposes the spiritual circumcision to carnal circumcision; and speaks not one word of infants, only of the duty of adult persons, as he supposes it to be. The last passage, and on which this Gentleman intends to dwell awhile, is this: [f11] "Several persons (says Justin) among us of both sexes, of sixty and seventy years of age, οι εκ παιδων εμαθητευθη σαν τω Χρισω, "who were discipled to Christ in their childhood, etc." which I have observed should be rendered, "who from their childhood were instructed in Christ;" and which I have confirmed by several passages in Justin, in which he uses the word in the sense of instruction; and from whom can we better learn his meaning than from himself? all which this author takes no notice of; but puts me off with a passage out of Plutarch, where Antiphon the son of Sophilus, according to his version, is said to be *discipled* or *proselyted* to his father: I leave him to enjoy his own sense; for I do not understand it; and should have thought that μαθητευσας δε τω πατρι, might have been rendered more intelligibly, as well as more truly, "instructed by his father;" since, as it follows, his father was an orator. He thinks he has catched me off of my guard, and that I suppose the word *disciple* includes baptism; because in my commentary on Acts 19:3 I say,

> "the apostle takes it for granted that they were *baptized*, since they were not only believers, but *disciples*;"

but had he read on, or transcribed what follows, my sense would clearly appear; "such as not only believed with the heart, but had made a profession of their faith, and were followers of Christ:" nor is the sense of the word *disciple*, as including the idea of baptism, confirmed by Acts 14:21 where it is said, *when they had preached the gospel to that city*, κὶ μαθητευσαντες, "and taught many, or made them disciples;" which may be interpreted without tautology, and yet not include the idea of baptism; since the first word, *preached*, expresses the bare external ministry of the word; and the latter, *taught*, or made disciples, the influence and effect of it upon the minds of men; the former may be where the latter is not; and both, where baptism is not as yet administered. The reason why εκπαιδων must be rendered *in*, and not *from* their childhood, because the baptism of any persons being not a continued, but one single transient act, to speak of their being baptized from their childhood would be improper, is merry indeed; when Justin is not speaking of the baptism of any person at all; but of their being trained up in the knowledge of Christ, and the christian religion from their childhood, in which they had persevered to the years mentioned. Upon the whole, in all there passages of Justin quoted, there is no express mention of infant-baptism, nor any hint given of it, nor any reference unto it. Proceed we now to the next writer in this century, brought into this controversy:

Irenaeus; who lived towards the close of it, and wrote about the year 180; the only passage in him, and which has been the subject of debate a hundred years past, is this; speaking of Christ, he says, [f12] "he came to save all, all I say, *qui per eum renascuntur in Deum*, "who by him are *born again* unto God;" infants, and little ones, and children, and young men, and old men." Now not to insist upon the works of Irenaeus we have being mostly a translation, and a very poor one, complained of by learned men; nor upon this chapter wherein this passage is, being reckoned spurious by others; which weaken the force of this testimony, and will have their weight with considering persons; I shall only take notice of the sense of the phrase, born again unto God; and the injury done to the character of Irenaeus, to make it signify baptism, or any thing else but the grace of regeneration. Our author begins his defense of this passage in favor of infant-baptism, with a remark of the learned Feuardentius, as he calls him; "that by the name of regeneration, according to the phrase of Christ: and

his apostles, he (Irenaeus) understands *baptism*, clearly confirming the apostolical tradition concerning the baptism of infants." As for the learning of this monk, I cannot discern it, unless his lies and impudence against the reformers, which run through his notes, are to be so called. Whether our author is a junior or senior man, I know not; by his writing he seems to be the former, but the advice of *Rivet*, who was without doubt a man of learning, is good; only, says he, [f13]

> "I would have the younger, that shall light on the works of Irenaeus advised, to beware of those editions, which that most impudent monk Feuardentius, a man of large assurance, and uncommon boldness, and of no faith nor faithfulness, has in many things foully corrupted and defiled with impious and lying annotations:"

and a false gloss this of his is, which is quoted; for Christ and his apostles no where call baptism by the name of the new birth. I have observed, that as yet, that is, in Irenaeus's time, it had not obtained among the ancients, to use the words *regenerated* or *regeneration* for *baptized* or *baptism*; nor is this author able to prove it. The passage in Justin before-mentioned falls short of it, as has been shewn; and the passages in Tertullian and Clemens of Alexandria, concerning being born in water, and begotten of the womb of water, are too late; and beside, the one is to be interpreted of the grace of God compared to water; this is clearly Tertullian's sense; for he adds [f14] "nor are we otherwise safe or saved, than by remaining in water;" which surely can never be understood literally of the water of baptism and as for Clemens, [f15] he is speaking not of regeneration, but of the natural generation of man, as he comes out of his mother's womb, naked, and free from sin, as he supposes; and as such, converted persons ought to be.

To have recourse to heathens to ascertain the name of christian baptism, is monstrous; though this, it is said, there is no need of,

> "since *several* christian writers, who lived *with* or *before* Irenaeus, speak the same language, as will be seen hereafter:"

and yet none are produced but Barnabas and Justin; the latter of which has been considered already, and found not to the purpose; and his reasoning upon the former is beyond my comprehension; for whatever may be said for the giving of milk and honey to persons just baptized, being a symbol of their being born again, it can be no proof of the words *regeneration* and *regenerated* being used for *baptism* and *baptized*; when there words

neither the one nor the other are mentioned by Barnabas; so that I have no reason to retract what I have said on that point. And now we are returned to Irenaeus himself; and two passages from him are produced in proof of the sense of the word contended for; and one is where he thus speaks [f16] "and again giving the power of regeneration unto God to his disciples, he said unto them, *Go and teach all nations, baptizing them, etc*." By which power or commission is meant, not the commission of baptizing, but more plainly the commission of teaching the doctrine of regeneration by the Spirit of God, and the necessity of that to salvation, and in order to baptism; and which was the first and principal part of the apostles commission, as the order of the words shew; and it is molt reasonable to think, that he should so call the commission, not from its more remote and less principal part, but from the first and more principal one. The other passage is where Irenaeus mentions [f17] by name "*the baptism of regeneration to God*:" but this rather proves the contrary, that baptism and regeneration are two different things, and not the same; just as the scriptural phrase, the *baptism of repentance*, and which seems to have led the ancients to such a way of speaking, means something different from repentance, and not the same: baptism is so called, because repentance is a prerequisite to it, in the subjects of it; and for the same reason it is called the *baptism of regeneration*, because regeneration is absolutely necessary in order to it: to all which I only add, that Irenaeus not only uses the word *regeneration* in a different sense from baptism elsewhere, [f18] but most clearly uses it in another sense in this very passage; since he says, Christ came to save all who *by him* are born again unto God; who are regenerated by Christ, and not by baptism; and which is explained both before and after by his *sanctifying* all sorts of persons, infants, little ones, young men, and old men; which cannot be understood of his baptizing them, for he baptized none; and therefore they cannot be said to be regenerated by him in that sense: and I say again, to understand Irenaeus as speaking of baptism, is to make him speak what is absolutely false; that Christ came to save all and only such who are baptized unto God. It seems LeClerc is of the same sentiment with me, an author I am a stranger to; whom this writer lets pass without any reasoning against him, only with this chastizement; "he should have understood (being an *ecclesiastical historian*) the sentiments and language of the primitive fathers better;" but what their language and sentiments were, we have seen already; and let them be what they will, Irenaeus must express a downright falsehood, if he is to be understood in the sense contended for: on the one hand, it cannot be true that Christ

came to save all that are baptized; no doubt but Judas was baptized, as well as the other apostles, and yet it will not be said Christ came to save him; Simon Magus was certainly baptised, and yet was in the *gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity*, and by all the accounts of him continued so till death; there were many members of the church at Corinth, who doubtless were baptized, and yet were unworthy receivers of the Lord's supper, and eat and drank damnation to themselves, for which reason there were many weak, sickly, and asleep; [f19] and it is to be feared, without any breach of charity, that this has been the case of thousands besides: and on the other hand, it cannot be with truth suggested, that Christ came to save only such as are baptized; he came to die for the transgressions that were under the First Testament, or to save persons under that dispensation, who never received Christian baptism; he said to one and to another, unbaptized persons, *thy sins are forgiven thee*; (<4009>Matthew 9:5, <4748>Luke 7:48) and no doubt there are many saved, and whom Christ came to save, who never were baptized in water; and the Paedobaptists themselves will stand a bad chance for salvation, if this was true; for they will find it a hard task to prove that any one of them, only sprinkled in infancy, was ever truly baptized; and yet as uncharitable as we are said to be, we have so much charity to believe that every good man among them, though unbaptized, shall be saved. And now since the words of Irenaeus taken in this sense contain a manifest falshood, and they are capable of another sense, agreeable to truth, without straining them; as that thrift: came to save all that are regenerated by himself, by his spirit and grace, we ought in a judgment of charity to believe that this latter sense is his, and not the former; and the rather, since his words in their proper and literal sense have this meaning; and since they are expressed with so much caution; lest it should be thought it was his meaning that Christ came to save *all* men, good and bad, he describes the patrons he came to save, not by their baptism, which is a precarious and uncertain evidence of salvation, but by their regeneration, which is a sure proof of it; and since this sense of his words is agreeable to his use of the phrase elsewhere, and to the context likewise, and is suited to all sorts of persons of every age here mentioned; and indeed to depart from this clear literal sense of his words, which establishes a well-known truth, and fix a figurative, improper one upon them, which makes him to say a notorious untruth, to serve an hypothesis, is *cruel* usage of the good old father, and is contrary to all the *rules* of *honor, justice, truth*, and *charity*. To put our Lord's words in <4166>Mark 16:16 upon a level with the false sense of Irenaeus, is mean and stupid;

they need no qualifying sense; the meaning is plain and easy; that every baptized believer shall be saved, and leave no room to suggest that unbaptized believers shall not; but that every unbeliever, be he who he will, baptized or unbaptized, shall be damned. And now what a wretched cause must the cause of infant-baptism be, that requires such managing as this to maintain it? what a wretched cause is it, that at its first setting out, according to the account of the advocates of it; for Dr Wall says, [f20] "this is the first express mention that we have met with of infants "baptized?" I say again, what a wretched cause must this be, that is connected with lies and falsehood at its first appearance, as pleaded for; is established upon downright injustice to a good man's character, and supported by real injury to it? and yet notwithstanding all this, our author has the *front* to say,

> "so much then for the testimony, the *plain, unexceptionable* testimony, of Irenaeus, for the practice of infant-baptism."

And now we are come to the close of the second century; but before we pass to the next, we must stop a little, and consider a passage our author, after Dr Wall, has produced out of Clemens of Alexandria, who lived at the latter end of this century, about the year 190; and it is this: speaking of rings worn on the fingers, and the seals upon them, advises against every thing idolatrous and lascivious, and to what is innocent and useful; "let our seals," says he, [f21]

> "be a dove, or a fish, or a ship running with the wind, or a musical harp — or a mariner's anchor, — and if any one is a fisherman, Αποσολου μεμνησεται κὶ ταν εξ υδατος ανασπωμενων παιδιων, let him remember the apostle, and the children drawn out of the water."

This passage was sent by two Gentlemen from different places to Dr Wall, after he had published two editions of his history; and he seems to have been ashamed of himself for not having observed it, and fancies that this refers to the baptizing of a child, and the taking, drawing, and lifting it out of the water. Now, though I do not pretend to support my conjecture by any manuscript or printed copy, nor do I think it worth while to search and inquire after it, whether there is any various reading or no, but shall leave it to others who have more leisure and opportunity; yet I persuade myself my conjecture will not be condemned as a groundless one by any man of sense and learning, especially out of this controversy: my conjecture then is, that it should be read not παιδιων, "children," but ιχθυων, "fishes;" for who

ever heard of a *draught of children*; when a *draught of fishes* is common? and why should a fisherman, more than any other, remember an apostle and a draught of children? surely a draught of fishes is more proper to him: the words I think therefore should be read, “let him remember the apostle, and the fishes drawn out of the water;” and the sense is, let him remember the apostle Peter, and the draught of fishes taken by him, recorded either in <42H506>Luke 5:6, 9 or in <43H2106>John 21:6, 8, 11; for the words manifestly refer to some particular and remarkable fact, which should be called to mind, and not to a thing that was done every day; which must be the case, if infant-baptism now obtained: besides, the word used cannot with any decency and propriety be applied to the baptizing of a child; a wide difference there is in the expression, between taking and lifting a child out of the font, and a drawing or dragging it out of the water; the word is expressive of strength and force necessary to an action, (<42H1405>Luke 14:15, <44H1110>Acts 11:10) and well agrees with the drawing or dragging of a net full of fishes. However, if this instance is continued to be urged, I hope it will be allowed that baptism in those early times was performed by immersion; since these children are said to be drawn out of the water, and therefore must have been in it: moreover, let it be what it will that Clemens refers unto, it must be something that was not common to every man, but peculiar to a fisherman; as he afterwards says, a sword or a bow are not proper for those that pursue peace; nor cups for temperate persons; and I insist upon it, that it be said what that is which is peculiar to such a one, except it be that which I have suggested: and after all, he must have a warm brain, a heated imagination, and a mind prepossessed, that can believe that infant-baptism is here referred to. Upon the whole, it does not appear from any authentic writer of the second century, that there is any express mention of infant-baptism in it, nor any clear hint of it, or manifest reference to it; and therefore it must be an innovation in the church, whenever it afterwards took place. I proceed now to

The Third century, *at the beginning of which Tertullian lived; who is the first person that ever gave any hint of infant-baptism, or referred unto it, or made express mention of it, that is known; and he argued against it,* and that very strongly, from the more usual delay of the administration of it, according to every one’s age, condition, and disposition; from the danger sureties might be brought into by engaging for infants; from the necessity of first knowing and understanding what they were about; from their innocent age, as it comparatively is, not being yet conscious of sin,

standing in no need of the application of pardoning grace, which the ordinance of baptism leads adult believers to; from the propriety of their first asking for it; and from a different method being taken in worldly affairs: his words are these, and as they are translated by Dr Wall himself;

> "therefore according to every one's condition and disposition, and also their age, the delaying of baptism is more profitable, especially in the case of little children; for what need is there that the godfathers should be brought into danger? because they may either fail of their promises by death, or they may be mistaken by a child's proving of a wicked disposition. Our Lord says indeed, *Do not forbid them to come to me*: therefore let them come when they are grown up: let them come when they understand: when they are instructed whither it is that they come: let them be made christians when they can know Christ; what need their guiltless age make such haste to the forgiveness of sins? Men will proceed more warily in worldly things; and he that should not have earthly goods committed to him, yet shall have heavenly. Let them know how to desire this salvation, that you may appear to have given to one that asketh." [f22]

It is observed by our author, after Dr Wall, that in the clause about sponsors, in the older editions, there words come in, *si non tam necesse*, which are rendered, *except in case of necessity*. But these *older editions* are but one Gagnaeus, whose reading is rejected by Rigaltius as a foolish repetition; censured by Grotius, as affording no tolerable sense; [f23] received by Pamelius for no other reason that he gives, but because it softens the opinion of the author about the delaying of baptism to infants; [f24] and it is for this reason it is catched at by the Paedobaptists; and yet they do not seem to be quite easy with it, because of the nonsense and impertinence of it; "*what need is there, except there is a need*?" wherefore our author attempts an emendation, and proposes to read *tamen* for *tam*, which does not make it a whit the better, but rather increases the nonsense;

> "what need is there, except notwithstanding there is need?"

but what is of more importance is, it is said,

> "these words of Tertullian seem fairly to imply that infant baptism was not only moved for, but actually practiced in his time:"

to which I answer, that they neither do imply, nor *seem* to imply any such thing, at least not necessarily; for supposing the baptism of infants moved for, and sureties promised to be engaged for them, which seems likely to be the case as soon as mentioned, the better to get it received; Tertullian might say all that he does, though as yet not one infant had ever been baptized, or any sureties made use of: and indeed it would have been very strange, if nothing of this kind had been said previous to the observance of them; the bare motion of these things was sufficient to bring our the arguments against them: and what though Tertullian might have some odd notions and singular opinions, about which he talked wrong and weakly, does it follow that therefore he so did about these points? Nor is there any reason to interpret his words of the infants of infidels, since he makes no distinction in the passage, nor gives the least hint of any; and what he elsewhere says of the children of believers being holy, he explains of their being *designed for holiness*; [f25] and says men are not *born*, but *made* christians: [f26] nor does he any where allow of the baptism of infants, in case of necessity, which is only established upon that impertinent reading before-mentioned: and with respect to his notion of the necessity of baptism to salvation, it is sufficient to observe what he says; "if any understand the importance of baptism, they will rather fear the having it, than the delaying it: true faith is secure of salvation." [f27] And the reason why he does not produce infant-baptism among his unwritten customs, is very easy to observe, because as yet no such custom had obtained, and as yet the apostolical tradition of it had never been heard of: the first that speaks of that, if he does at all, is the following person;

Origen, who flourished about the year 230, and comes next under consideration: and three passages are usually cited out of him in favor of infant-baptism; shewing not only that infants should be baptized; but that this was an ancient usage of the church, and a tradition of the apostles. Now there things are only to be met with in the Latin translations of this ancient writer; and though there is much of his still extant in Greek, yet in these his genuine works there is not the least hint of infant-baptism, nor any reference to it; and much less any express mention of it; and still less any thing said of it, being a custom of the church, and an apostolical tradition: This has justly raised a suspicion, that he has not been fairly used in the translations of him by Ruffinus and Jerom: and upon inquiry, this is found to be the truth of the matter; and it is not only Erasmus, whom Dr Wall is pleased to represent as angrily saying, that a reader is uncertain

whether he reads Origen or Ruffinus; for Scutetus [f28] says the same thing; and it is the observation of many others, that it was the common custom of Ruffinus to interpolate whatever he translated. The learned Huctius, who has given us a good edition of all Origen's commentaries of the scripture in Greek, and who was as conversant with his writings, and understood them as well as any man whatever, was very sensible of the foul play he has met with, and often complains of the perfidy and impudence of Ruffinus; he says of him, that whatever he undertook to translate, he interpolated; that he so distressed and corrupted the writings of Origen by additions and detractions, that one is at a loss to find Origen in Origen: that whereas he undertook to translate his commentary on the Romans, at the instance of Heraclius, yet he asks, with what faithfulness did he do it? namely, with his own, that is, which is the worst; and when Huetius produces any thing out of there translations, it is always with diffidence, as not to be depended upon and sometimes he adds when he has done, "but let us remember again the perfidy of Ruffinus;" and speaking particularly of his commentaries on the Romans, he says;

> "Let the learned reader remember that Origen is not so much to be thought the author of them, as Ruffinus, by whom they are not so much interpreted, as *new coined* and *interpolated*." [f29]

But what need I produce these testimonies? Ruffinus himself owns, not only that he used great freedom in translating the homilies on Leviticus, and added much of his own to them, as I have observed; but also in his translation of the commentary on the Romans, he grants the charge against him, "that he added some things, supplied what was wanting, and shortened what were too long;" [f30] and it is from there two pieces that the two principal passages which assert infant-baptism to be the custom of the church, and an apostolical tradition, are taken: and now of what use is this Gentleman's quotation from Marshall? it is good for nothing. The other passage, which stands in Jerom's translation of Origen's homilies on Luke, speaks indeed of the baptism of infants, and the necessity of it; but not a word of its being a custom of the church, and an apostolical tradition, as in the other; and betide, his translations being no more exact than Ruffinus's, and which appears by his other versions; in which he takes the same liberty as Ruffinus did, are no more to be depended upon than his. And now, where is his highest *probability* and *moral certainty*, that there are no additions and interpolations in Origen? I appeal to the whole world, whether such fort of writings as there, so manifestly corrupted, so

confessedly interpolated, would be admitted an evidence in any civil affair in any court of judicature whatever; and if not, then surely these ought not to be admitted as an evidence in religious affairs, respecting an ordinance of our Lord Jesus Christ. But it is said,

> "supposing all this, what does it signify in the present case, unless it could be proved that the particular passages under consideration were additions or interpolations?"

To which I answer; since the whole is so *interpolated*, and so deformed, that it can scarcely be known, as has been observed, what dependence can there be on any part of it? I have observed, that the passage in the homilies on Leviticus, is by Vossius thought to be of the greater authority against the Pelagians, because of the interpolations of Ruffinus. This Gentleman says, I have *unluckily* observed this; I do not see any *unluckiness* in it; it is *lucky* on my side, that Vossius, a Paedobaptist, should suggest that this passage is interpolated, however unlucky Ruffinus was in doing it; and it is no. unusual thing for a writer to infect that in his works, which makes or may be improved against himself: beside, what makes these very passages suspected of interpolation, is, not only that no cotemporary of Origen's, nor any writer before him, nor any after him, till the times of Ruffius and Jerom, ever speak of infant-baptism as a custom of the church, or an apostolic tradition; but neither Cyprian who came after him, and pleaded for infant-baptism, ever refers to Origen as saying these things, or uses such language as he is said to do; nor does Austin, who made such a bluster about infant-baptism being an apostolical tradition, ever appeal to Origen's testimony of it; which one would think he would have done, had there been any such testimony: our author, because I have said that many things may be observed from the Greek of Origen in favor of adult-baptism, hectors most manfully; "the assertion, he says, is either *false*, or very *impertinent*;" but surely he must be a little too premature to pass such a censure before the things are produced. I greatly question whether he has ever read the writings of Origen, either the Latin translations of him, or his works in Greek; and indeed there are scarce any of his quotations of the fathers throughout his whole work, but what seem to be taken at second hand from Dr Wall, or others: I say more than I should have chose to have said, through his insulting language. I am quite content he should have all the credit his performance will admit of; only such a writer, who knows his own weakness, ought not to be so *pert* and *insolent*: however, to stop the mouth of this *swaggering blade*, whoever he is, I will give him an instance

or two out of the Greek of Origen, in favor of adult-baptism, to the exclusion of infant-baptism, and as manifestly against it. Now, not to take notice of Origen's [f31] interpretation of <4019> Matthew 19:14 as not of infants literally, but metaphorically; which, according to his sense, destroys the argument of the Paedobaptists from thence, in favor of infant-baptism:

> "It is to be observed, says Origen, that the four evangelists saying that John confessed he came to baptize in water, only Matthew adds *unto repentance*; teaching, that he has the profit of baptism who "is baptized of his own will and choice:"

Now if the profit of baptism is tied to "a person baptized of his own will and choice,' according to Origen, then baptism mutt: be unprofitable and insignificant to infants, because they are not baptized of their own will and choice: and a little after he says;

> "The laver by the water is a symbol of the purification of the soul washed from all the filth of wickedness; nevertheless also of itself it is the beginning and fountain of divine gifts, because of the power of the invocation of the adorable Trinity, "to him that gives up himself to God;" [f32]

which last clause excludes infants, since they do not and cannot give up themselves to God in that ordinance. Let this Gentleman, if he can, produce any thing out of those writings of Origen, in favor of infant-baptism; the passage Dr Wall [f33] refers to has not a syllable of it, nor any reference to it; and though he supposes Jerom must some where or other have read it in his writings, what Jerom says [f34] supposes no such thing; since the passage only speaks of Origen's opinion of sins in a pre-existent state, being forgiven in baptism, but not a word of the baptism of infants, or of their sins being forgiven them in their baptism: and now where is the clear testimony of the great Origen, not only for the practice of infant-baptism in his own days, but for the continual use of it all along from the time of the apostles? and where is our author's vaunt of the superior antiquity of infant-baptism to infant-communion? which, as we shall see presently, began together.

Cyprian is the next, and the only remaining writer of this century, quoted in favor of infant-baptism; who lived about the middle of it, and is the first pleader for it that we know of. We allow it was practised in his time in the African churches, where it was first moved; and at the same time infant-

communion was practiced also, of which we have undoubted and incontestable evidence; and it is but reasonable that if infants have a right to one ordinance, they should be admitted to the other; and if antiquity is of any weight in the matter, it is as early for the one as for the other: but though infant-baptism now began to be practiced, it appears to be a novel business; not only the time of its administration, being undetermined; which made Fidus, a country bishop, who had a doubt about administering it before the eighth day, apply to the council under Cyprian for the resolution of it; but the exceeding weakness of the arguments then made use of for baptizing new-born infants, of which the present Paedobaptists must be ashamed, shew that Paedobaptism was then in its *infant-state*: the arguments used by Cyprian, and his brethren for it, were taken from the grace of God being given to all men; and from the equality of the gift to all; and this proved from the spiritual equality of the bodies of infants and adult persons; and both from the prophet Elisha's stretching himself on the Shunamite's child; they argue the admission of all to baptism from the words of Peter, who says he was shewn, that *nothing is to be called common or unclean*; and reason, that infants ought to be more easily admitted than grown persons, because they have less guilt; and their weeping and crying are to be interpreted praying; yea, they suggest that baptism gives grace, and that a person is lost without it: but that it may appear I do not wrong them, I will transcribe their own words; and that as they are translated by Dr Wall, so far as they relate to this matter:

> "All of us judged that the grace and mercy of God is to be denied to no person that is born; for whereas our Lord in his gospel says, *the Son of Man came not to destroy mens souls*, (or lives) but to save them; as far as lies in us, no soul, if possible, is to be lost. The scripture gives us to understand the equality of the divine gift on all, whether infants or grown persons: Elisha, in his prayer to God, stretched himself on the infant-son of the Shunamite woman, that lay dead, in such manner, that his head, and face, and limbs, and feet, were applied to the head, face, limbs, and feet of the child; which, if it he understood according to the quality of our body and nature, the infant would not hold measure with that grown man, nor his limbs fit to reach to his great ones; but in that place a spiritual equality, and such as is in the esteem of God, is intimated to us by which persons that are once made by God are alike and equal; and our growth of body by age, makes a difference in the

sense of the world, but not of God; unless you will think that the grace itself which is given to baptized persons, is greater or less according to the age of those that receive it; whereas the holy Spirit is given, not by different measures, but with a fatherly affection and kindness, equal to all; for God, as he accepts no one person, so not his age; but with a just equality shews himself a Father to all, for their obtaining the heavenly grace — so that we judge that no person is to be hindered from the obtaining the grace by the law that is now appointed; and that the spiritual circumcision ought not to be restrained by the circumcision that was according to the flesh; but that all are to be admitted to the grace of Christ; since Peter, speaking in the *Acts of the Apostles*, says, *the Lord has shewn me, that no person is to be called common or unclean*. If any thing could be an obstacle to persons against their obtaining the grace, the adult, and grown, and elder men, would be rather hindered by their more grievous sins. If then the graceless offender, and those that have grievously sinned against God before, have, when they afterwards come to believe, forgiveness of their sins; and no person is kept off from baptism and the grace; how much less reason is there to refuse an infant, who, being newly born, has no sin, save the being descended from Adam according to the flesh: he has from his very birth contracted the contagion of the death anciently threatened; who comes, for this reason, more easily to receive forgiveness of sins, because they are not his own, but others sins that are forgiven him. This therefore, dear brother, was our opinion in the assembly, that it is not for us to hinder any man from baptism and the grace of God, who is merciful and kind and affectionate to all; which rule, as it holds for all, so we think it more especially to be observed in reference to infants, and persons newly born; to whom our help, and the divine mercy, is rather to be granted; because by their weeping and wailing, at their first entrance into the world, they do intimate nothing so much as that they implore compassion." [f35]

Every one that compares what Cyprian and his collegues say for infant-baptism, and what Tertullian says against it, as before related, will easily see a difference between them, between Tertullian the Antipaedobaptist, and Cyprian the Paedobaptist; how manly and nervous the one! how mean and weak the other! no doubt, as is known, being raised about infant-

baptism at this time, or any objection made to it, does not prove it then to be an ancient custom; since the same observation, which may be made, would prove infant-communion to be equally the same. Now as we allow that henceforward infant-baptism was practiced in the African churches, and prevailed in

The Fourth century, here the controversy might stop: and indeed all that we contend for in this century, is only that there were some persons that did call it in question and oppose it; and if this will not be allowed, we are not very anxious about it, and shall not think it worth while to contest it. This writer would have it observed, that I have given up the greatest lights of the church in this century as vouchers for infant-baptism, and particularly St Jerom, Ruffinus, and Augustin; they are welcome to them; they have need of them to enlighten them in this dark affair: we do not envy their having them, especially that persidious interpolater Ruffinus; nor that arch-heretic Pelagius, whom this Gentleman takes much pains to retain, as ignorant as he either was, or would be, or is thought to be; as that he never heard that any one whatever denied baptism to infants, and promised the kingdom of heaven without the redemption of Christ, or refused that unto them. This ignorance of his was either affected or pretended, in order to clear himself from the charge of those things against him; as men generally do run into high strains and extravagant expressions, when they are at such work; or it was real ignorance, and who can help that? It does not follow that therefore none had, because he had never heard of it; one would think his meaning rather was, that he had never heard of any that denied the kingdom of heaven and the common redemption to infants, who *think* they ought to be baptized, *dum putat*, while he is of opinion, that in baptism they are regenerated in Christ; but about this I shall not contend; truth does not depend upon his hearing and knowledge, judgment and observation. I think *it is not insisted upon that Austin should say, he never heard or read of any catholic, heretic, or schismatic, that denied infant-baptism; however, it seems he could say it if he did not, and that notwithstanding the reasons I alledged; as,*

1. Austin must know that Tertullian had opposed it. Here our author quibbles about the terms *opposing* and *denying*, and distinguishes between them; and observes, that whatever Tertullian said *against* it, he did not properly deny it. He may say the same of me, or any other writer against infant-baptism, that though we speak against it, contradict and oppose it, and use arguments against it, yet we do not deny it. Dr Wall indeed thinks

neither Austin nor Pelagius had seen Tertullian's book of baptism, or they could not have said what he thinks they did.

2. Austin presided at the council of Carthage, when a canon was made that anathematized those who denied baptism to new-born infants; and therefore mull know there were some that denied it. This Gentleman says, it is demonstrably certain, that this canon was not made against persons that denied infant-baptism, because it was made against Pelagius and Celesius. It is true, the latter part of the canon was made against them; but the former part respected a notion or tenet of some other persons, who denied baptism to new-born infants. Dr Wall saw this, and says, this canon mentions the baptism of infants, condemning two errors about it; the one respecting the baptism of new-born infants; the other the doctrine of original sin, and the baptism of infants for forgiveness of sins, denied by the Pelagians; but the former he supposes was the opinion of Fidus, embraced by some persons now, which he had vented a hundred and fifty years before, that infants should not be baptized till they were eight days old; whereas Fidus is represented as having been alone in his opinion; and if he retained it, which is doubtful, it does not appear he had any followers; nor is there any evidence of there being any of his sentiment in this age; [f36] and were there, it is unreasonable to imagine, that a council of all the bishops in Africa should agree to anathematize them, because they thought proper to defer the baptizing of infants a few days longer than they did; and besides, infants only eight days old may be properly called newly-born infants; and therefore such could not be said to deny baptism to them; and it would have been a marvellous thing, had they been anathematized for it: though this writer says, wonder who will; a council, consisting of all the bishops of Africa, did in fact agree to anathematize their own brethren, who were in the same opinion and practice of. infant-baptism with themselves." It is true, they did anathematize the Pelagians, who were in the same opinion and practice of infant-baptism with themselves in general; though I question whether they reckoned them *their own brethren*; but then not on account of any difference about the time of baptism, a few days odds between them, the thing to be wondered at; but their denial of original sin, and the baptism of infants to be on account of that: and now since the Pelagians are distinct from those in the canon that denied baptism to new-born infants; and it is unreasonable to suppose any who were of the sentiments of Fidus are intended; it remains, that there must be some

persons different both from the one and the other, who denied baptism to babes, and are by this canon anathematized for it, which Austin must know.

3. It is observed by me, that Austin himself makes mention of some that argued against it, from the unprofitableness of it to infants; since for the most part they die before they have any knowledge of it. These men our author does not know what to make of; sometimes it is questionable whether they were christians, and suggests that they were men of atheistical principles; and then again they are supposed to be Christians, and even might be Paedobaptists, notwithstanding this their manner of arguing. I am content he should reckon them what he pleases; but one would think they could not be any good friends to infant-baptism, that questioned the profitableness of baptism to infants, and brought so strong an objection to it.

4. It is further observed by me, that according to Austin the Pelagians denied baptism to the infants of believers, because they were holy. This is represented by this Gentleman as a mistake of mine, understanding what was spoken *hypothetically*, to be *absolutely* spoken. I have looked over the passage again, and am not convinced upon a second reading of it, nor by what this writer has advanced, of a mistake: the words are absolutely expressed and reasoned upon;

> "but, says the apostle, your children would be unclean, but now they are holy; therefore, say they (the Pelagians) the children of believers ought not now to be baptized."

The observation our author makes, though he does not insist upon it, is very impertinent; that not infants but children are mentioned, and so may include the adult children of believers, and consequently make as much against adult-baptism as infant-baptism; since children in the text, on which the argument is grounded, are always by themselves understood of infants. Austin wonders that the Pelagians should talk after this manner, that holiness is derived from parents, and reasons upon it, when they deny that sin is originally derived from Adam: it is true, indeed, he presses them with an argument this Gentleman calls *ad hominem*, taken from their shutting up the kingdom of God to unbaptized infants; for though they believed that unbaptized infants would not perish, but have everlasting life, yet not enter the kingdom of God; absurdly distinguishing between the *kingdom of God*, and *eternal life*. What they were able to answer, or did answer to this, it is not easy to say;

> "it is a disadvantage, as our author says, that we have none of their writings entire, only scraps and quotations from them:"

Perhaps as they had a singular notion, that the infants of believers ought not to be baptized, though the infants of others should; they would, in answer to the above argument, say, that the infants of believers unbaptized enter the kingdom, though the unbaptized infants of others do not. I only guess this might be their answer, consistent with their principles: however, if I am mistaken in this matter, as I think I am not, it is in company with men of learning I am not ashamed to be among. The learned Daneus says [f37] "the Pelagians deny that baptism is to be administered to the children of *believers*," having plainly in view this passage of Austin's; and the very learned Forbesius [f38] brings in this as an objection to his sense of 1 Corinthians 7:14,

> "the Pelagians abused this saying of the apostle, that they might say, that the infants of believers ought not to be baptized, as we read in Augustin." [f39]

5. The words quoted by me out of Jerom, I own, are spoken by way of supposition; but then they suppose a case that had been, was, and might be again; and it should be observed, that the supposition Jerom makes, is not a *neglect* of the baptism of infants, as this Gentleman suggests, but a denial of it to them, a *refusing* to give it to them; which is expressive of a rejection of it, and of an opposition to it. So that from all these instances put together, we cannot but conclude that there were some persons that did oppose and reject infant-baptism in those times, and think it may be allowed, which is all we contend for; however, as I have said before, we are not very anxious about it. Mr Marshall [f40] a favorite writer of our author's, says, some in those times questioned it (infant-baptism) as Augustin grants in his sermons *de verbis Apostol*, but does not refer us to the particular place; it seems to be his fourteenth sermon on that subject, intitled, *Concerning the baptism of infants, against the Pelagians*; where Austin tells us how he was led to the subject; and though he had no doubt about it,

> "yet some men raised disputes, which were now become frequent, and endeavored to subvert the minds of many;" [f41]

by whom he seems to mean persons distinct from the Pelagians, since he represents them as having no doubt about it: and this is further confirmed by a passage out of the same discourse;

> "that infants are to be baptized, *let no one doubt* (which is an address to others, and implies, that either they did doubt of infant-baptism, or were in danger of it) since they doubt not, who in some respect contradict it;"

which our author has placed as a motto in his title-page.

Austin, we allow, in this age, frequently speaks of infant-baptism as an ancient usage of the church, and as an apostolical tradition; but what proof does he give of it? what testimonies does he produce? does he produce any higher testimony than Cyprian? not one; who, it is owned, speaks of infant-baptism, but not as an apostolical tradition; Cyprian uses no such language: those phrases, which were understood and believed *from the beginning*, and what the church *always thought*, or anciently, held, are Austin's words, and not Cyrian's; and only express what Austin inferred and concluded from him: and besides, his testimony is appealed to, not so much for infant-baptism, the thing itself, as for the reason of it, original sin, which gave rise unto it in Cyprian's time: and it is for the proof of this, and not infant-baptism, that Austin himself refers to the *manifest faith of an apostle*; namely, to shew that not the flesh only, but the soul would be lost, and be brought into condemnation through the offense of Adam, if not quickened by the grace of Christ, for which he refers to <4518>Romans 5:18 and yet our author insinuates, that by this he did not consider the baptism of infants for original sin as a novel thing in Cyprian's time, but refers it to the authority of an apostle: and by the way, since Cyprian, the only witness produced by Austin, speaks not of infant-baptism as an ancient usage of the church, or an apostolic tradition, there is no agreement between his language and that of Origen, he is made to speak in his Latin translations, as this author elsewhere suggests; and it confirms the proof of his having been dealt unfairly with, since Cyprian, coming after him, uses no such language, nor does Austin himself ever refer unto him.

I have observed that there are many other things, which by Austin, and other ancient writers, are called apostolic traditions; such as infant-communion, the sign of the cross in baptism, the form of renouncing the devil and all his works, exorcism, trine immersion, the consecration of the water, anointing with oil in baptism, and giving a mixture of milk and

honey to the baptized persons: and, ***Therefore if infant-baptism is received on this foot, these ought likewise; since there is as early and clear proof of them from antiquity, as of that:*** and my further view in mentioning these, was to observe, not only how *early*, but how *easily* these corruptions got into the church, as infant-baptism did.

This writer has thought fit to take notice only of one of these particulars, namely, infant-communion; and the evidence of this, he says, is not so full and so early as that of infant-baptism. Now, let it. be observed, that there is no proof of infant-baptism being practiced before Cyprian's time; nor does Austin refer to any higher testimony than his for the practice of it for original sin; and in his time infant-communion was in use beyond all contradiction: there is an instance of it given by himself, which I have referred to; and that is more than is or can be given of infant-baptism, which can only be deduced by consequences from that instance, and from Cyprian and his collegues' reasoning about the necessity of the administration of it to new-born children, he suggests that Austin expresses himself differently, when he is speaking of the one and of the other as an apostolic tradition; but if he does, it is in higher strains of infant-communion; for thus begin the passages,

> "if they pay any regard to the *apostolic authority*, or rather to the *Lord and Master of the apostles*, etc. and no man that remembers that he is a christian, and of the catholic faith, *denies* or *doubts* that infants, without eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, have no life in them, etc:"

The *Punici Christiani*, which Austin speaks of, are not to be restrained, as they are by our author, to the christians of Carthage, but take in other African christians, particularly at Hippo, where Austin was bishop, and where they spoke the Punic language, and in many other places: and surely if Austin is a good witness for an apostolical tradition, who lived at the latter end of the *fourth* century; he must know what was the sense of the African Christians in his time, among whom he lived, and upon what they grounded their practise of infant-communion; which he says was upon an ancient and apostolic tradition.

The other rites and usages, he says, I make mention of, are spoken of by Basil as *unwritten traditions*; and infant-baptism is not mentioned among them, and so was considered as standing upon a better evidence and testimony: now, not to observe that I produce earlier authorities than Basil,

for there apostolical traditions so called, even as early as Tertullian, the first man that spoke of infant-baptism; neither are infant-communion, sponsors at baptism, exorcism in it, and giving milk and honey at that time, mentioned by Basil among them; does it therefore follow that they stand upon a better foot than the rest? besides, since Apostolic tradition is distinguished from Scripture, by the author of *The Baptism of Infants A Reasonable Service*, with whom I had to do; it can be considered in the controversy between us, no other than as an *unwritten tradition*. This writer further observes, that it does not appear that there unwritten traditions were ever put to the test, and stood the trial, particularly in the Pelagian controversy, as infant-baptism: it is manifest that the exorcisms and exsufflations used in baptism, and the argument from them, as much pinched, puzzled, and confounded the Pelagians, as ever infant-baptism did: and it is notorious, that signing with the sign of the cross has stood the test in all ages, from the beginning of it, and is continued to this day; and prevails not only among the Papists, but among Protestant churches. ***Upon the whole then, it is clear there is no express mention of infant-baptism in the two first centuries,*** no nor any *plain hint* of it, nor any *manifest reference* to it; ***and that there is no evidence of its being practised till the third century;*** and that it is owned, it prevailed in the *fourth*: and so rests the state of the controversy.

FOOTNOTES

ft1 Bibliothec. Graec. I. 5. c. 1. f. 12. p. 36.

ft2 Eccl. Hist. 1. 4. c. 30.

ft3 Ittigius de Heresiarchis, sect, z. c. 6. p. 133. Vid. Epiphan. Haeres. 56. August. de Hares. c. 35.

ft4 Corruption of the Father, part I. p. 6.

ft5 Apud Rivet. Critic. Sacr. 1. I. c. 7. p. 130.

ft6 Ibid.

ft7 Apolog. 2. p. 93, 94.

ft8 Reflections, etc. p. 455.

ft9 Dialog. cum Trypho p. 316. Ed. Paris.

ft10 Ib. p. 261,

ft11 Ib. Apolog. p. 62.

ft12 Adv. Haeres. 1. 2. c. 39.

ft13 Juniores qui in opera Irenaei incident monitos volo, at cavcant ab illis editionibus quas impudenitimus ille monachus Feuardentius, homo projectae audaciae, & nullias fidei, faede in multis corrupit & annotationibus impiis & mendacibus conspurcavit, Rivet. Critic. Sacr. 1. 2. c. 6. p. 188, 189.

ft14 Nos pisciculi in aqua nascimur. Nec aliter quam in aqua permanendo salvi sumus, Tertullian, de baptismo, c 1.

ft15 Stromat 1. 4. p. 538. Ed. Paris.

ft16 Adv. Haeres. 1. 3. c. 19.

ft17 Ibid. 1. 1. c. 18.

ft18 Vid. 1. 4. c. 59. and 1. 5. c. 15.

ft19 <6129>1 Corinthians 11:29, 30.

ft20 History of Infant-baptim, part I, c. 3. § 6.

ft21 Paedagog. l.. 3. c. 11. p. 246, 24.7.

ft22 Tertullian. de baptismo, c. 18.

ft23 See Dr Gale's Reflections, etc. p. 511.

ft24 Ex eodem Gagnaeo iterum adjicio, si non tam necesse; nam illud mitigat auctoris opinionem, etc Pamelii. adnot, p. 348.

ft25 Designatos sanctitati, Tertull. de anima, c. 39.

ft26 Fiunt, non nascuntur christiani, Apologet. c. 18.

ft27 Si qui pondus intelligant baptismi, magis timebunt consecutionem qaam dilationem: sides integra lecura est de salute. Ibid. de baptismo, c. 18.

ft28 Medulla Patrum, part I. I. 6. c. 2. p. 124.

ft29 Interpolare enim omnia Ruffinus quaecunque suscepit interpretanda — solenne habuit. Huetii Origeniana, 1. 2. p. 116. nam ejus scripta interpretans, ita additamentis & detractionibus vexavit & corrupit ut Origenem in Origene desideres, ibid. 1. 3. c. 1. p. 233. Ruffinus Heraclii impulsu viginti tomos commentariotum Origenis in epistolam ad Romans Latinae linguae donandos suscepit: sed qua side? sua nempe, hoc est, pessima, Ibid. p. 253. Sed Ruffini tamen persidiam denno recordemur. Ibid. 1. 2. p. 59. vide etiam, p. 35. memincrit eruditus lector non tam illorum auctorem exislimandum esse Origenem quam Ruffinum, a quo non tam interpretati, quam recusi & interpolati sunt. Ibid. p. 124.

ft30 Addere aliqua, videor, & explere quae desunt, aut breviare quae longa sunt, Ruffini Peroratio in Ep. act Romans fol. 224. C.

ft31 Orig. Comment. in Matthew p. 372, 375. Ed. Huet.

ft32 Παρατηρητεον δε οτι των τεσσαρων οερηκοτων το εν υδατι ομολογοιν Ιωαννην ελελυθεναι βαπτιζειν, μονος Ματθαιιος τουτω προτεθηκε το οις μετανοιαν διδασκων το απο του βαπτισματος ωφελειαν εχεοθαι της προαιρεσεως του βαπτιζομενου. & Paulo post το δια του υδατος λουτρον εμπαριχοντι εαντον τη θειοτητι χααοισματων θειων αρχη κι πηψη. Origen. Comment. in Joannen p. 124.

ft33 Comment. in Matthew p. 391, 392.

ft34 Adv. Pelag. 1. 3. fol. 202; tom. z.

ft35 Cyprian. ad Fidum. Ep. 59. p. 317.

ft36 History of Infant, baptism, p. 1. ch. 4. p. 13.

ft37 Baptismom parvulis fidelium negant dandam Pelagiani. Danaeus de sacramentis ad cl!cem August. de Hares.

ft38 Abutebantur hoc Apostoli dido, at dicerent infantes fidelium baptizari minime deberi, ut legimus apud Aug. de peccator, merit. & remiss. 1. 2. c. 25. Forbes. Instruct. Histor, Theolog. I. 10. c. 10. p. 5.

ft39 L. 2. de Peccator. merit. & remiss, c. 25.

ft40 Sermon on baptizing of Infants, p. 5.

ft41 Sed dlsputationes quorundam, quae modo crebrescere, & multorum animos evertere moliuntur, Aug. de verb Apostol. Serm. 14.