

depraved ; and besides, it is said to remain *in* the saint, and therefore is distinguished from the mind in which it abides. It is called the *root of the matter*, and from this supernatural, begotten root, spring, all the opening, sanctifying fruits of the Spirit. Every good disposition, of spiritual kind, riseth, from this prolific, immortal root. As it is written, *The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth.*

This new principle is from Christ, as the elect Head of all spiritual blessings, and is peculiar to those who are chosen in him to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and the belief of the truth: and as it is never, possessed by any but them, it serves to *set them apart* for God, and distinguish them, as holy unto the Lord. By this principle the holiness of the Head is brought forth in the members, and they who were holy in Christ, by the will of the Father, become holy through Christ, by the indwelling and power of the Holy Spirit. Thus are we sinful from Adam, and sanctified through Jesus Christ: we are sinners after the flesh, and saints after the spirit, and this radical sanctification, as consisting in a new principle, is complete at once, and wrought instantaneously. In this sense, sanctification is neither liable to corruption, improvement, nor mutation: it is not of the will or power of man,

but entirely of God. They who are thus sanctified, are said to be created in Christ, unto good works, and to be the workmanship of God. Hence it is manifest, that sanctification is not the extirpation of an evil principle, but the infusion of an holy one: *I will put my Spirit within you*, saith the Lord. By this holy principle, God ever dwells in his spiritual temple, sways the heart to heavenly pursuits, and counteracts the works of the flesh. Such men have the spirit of Christ, and become followers of him, and are crucified to the world, and the world to them.

This sanctification is represented, by a being anointed with holy oil. *Ye have*, said John, *an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things*. As the typical things under the law were sanctified, and separated to God, by being anointed, so the vessels of mercy are sanctified unto the service and glory of God, by the influences of the Holy Spirit, and the possession of his spiritual gifts and graces. These anointed ones are truly consecrated to the holy service of the spiritual tabernacle, and are hereby *set apart* from the carnal world, as the holy ones of God, being sanctified *in* Christ, as their chosen Head, and *by* him, as their redeeming Surety, and *through* him as the Fountain of all holy influence, opened by the Holy Ghost, and imparted to the soul in regeneration, in a workmanship altogether new.

SECTION V.

The Acts of Sanctification, Internal and External, arising from a Holy Principle.

I WILL now consider sanctification as to its acts, in dispositions and conduct, according to sound doctrine and true experience. All holy dispositions or actings of the mind arise from the holy principle formed in the soul; as all the evil acts of men spring from an evil root within, or the corruption of nature in which they are born. Sanctification in its holy actings in consequence of an holy principle, certainly includes the actings of our minds, under the actuating power of grace, and as being led by the Spirit of holiness, who is federally the Spirit of Christ, and therefore, whom he sanctifies, he sanctifies in Christ's name. His holy energy is put forth in Christ's doctrine, blood, and righteousness. All the graces of the Spirit are drawn out under the ministration of the Spirit, and while Christ is presented in his own light, and the understanding is filled with scriptural views of his person and mediation. We are sanctified by faith, hope, and love; for faith perceives and appropriates Christ, hope tastes his preciousness, and love cleaves to his person, obedience, and

blood, by day and by night, through evil report and good report. Faith works by love, and hope purifies the mind, and by hope we are saved. We are born into a living state of sanctification through the Spirit, and are converted to the fountain of holiness under his invincible and liberating power.

Jesus Christ is not only the Head and Pattern of holiness to all his followers; but *his command is law*, and is the *written rule* of all holy actions; *not without law to God*, said the apostle Paul, *but under the law to Christ. Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ. For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty, only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another: for all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.— Honour thy father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise. Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness, thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. Whosoever therefore, shall break*

one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the Least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called Great in the kingdom of heaven. To these we might add, the latter part of most of Paul's Epistles, with a considerable part of the Epistles by Peter, James, and John; where we have the precepts of Christ our Lord and King plentifully stated and distinguished, as constituting not a rule of justification; but of active sanctification. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for *doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness*; that the man of God may be *perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*" If all scripture is *profitable for the man of God*, then it must be contradicting the words of the Holy Ghost, to say, the man of God has nothing to do with the words of the law of precepts above transcribed: some there are, however, who seem to take delight in so speaking, as to give the spirit the lie, and labour to *teach men so*, and yet wish to be thought greatest in the kingdom of Heaven too. If Paul believed that the brethren had nothing to do with the law, nor the law with them, why did he introduce to the churches, as in the preceding instances, the very words of the law? Would any of our doctrinal Antinomians ever think of doing the like? I

suppose not. Are they more wise, and more consistent than the apostle of the Gentiles? Perhaps not. Admitting that such persons do not practice their sentiment, still it is remarkable, that our holy Lord and Saviour demands, in the fore-cited passage, that principle and practice should go together: *whosoever shall both do and teach these commandments*, shall be great in the kingdom of Heaven, I cannot imagine, that our Lord could mean, that, whosoever should teach the disciples to pay no attention to them, and to believe that they have nothing to do with them, should be great, because, that would most evidently be contrary to the whole scope of his discourse, and the whole tenor of his preaching. 1 Cor. ix ; Gal. vi. also v. ; Rom. xiii. ; Matt. v. 19.

But it is not improbable, that some, to add an appearance to error, to which it can have no claim, may be anxious to assure us, that, the gospel is the only rule of conduct. Now, although I have already amply refuted this mistake, in a treatise, entitled *Doctrinal Antinomianism Refuted, &c.*, yet, I will suggest a thought or two in this place. If the gospel be a commanding law, it will no way interrupt the true meaning of the Lord or his apostles, in the precepts they have given to the saints and churches, if we substitute the word *gospel* for the word *law*, and the word *instruction* for

commandment. Let us make the experiment. "Being not without *gospel* to God, but under the *gospel* to Christ. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so *fulfil* the *gospel* of Christ. All the *gospel* is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Ye godly "children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right. Honour thy father and mother, which is the first *instruction*, or *doctrine*, with promise. He that loveth another hath *fulfilled* the *gospel*. For this (*gospel doctrine*) thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other *gospel-doctrine*, it is briefly comprehended in this *gospel*-saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love is the fulfilling of the *gospel*. Whosoever, therefore, shall *break* one of these least *doctrines*, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the Least in the kingdom of Heaven; but whosoever shall do *these doctrines*, and teach them, the same shall be called Great in the kingdom of Heaven." To these a few more shall be added, that we may have a no-law feast, for once, as well as our Neonomian friends. "If ye *fulfil* the royal *gospel* according to the Scripture (in Levit. xix. 18, Exod. xx. 16, 17.) thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well; but if ye have respect to

persons, ye commit sin *against the gospel*, and are convinced of the *gospel*, as transgressors of its doctrine of distinguishing grace. For whosoever shall keep the whole *gospel*, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of (*offending against*) all the doctrines. For he that said in the *gospel*, Do not commit adultery; said also, Do not kill. Now, if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the *gospel*." Now, reader, if you have any taste for propriety, you must be charmed with these improvements, made with so much ease, and at once calculated to force conviction on the mind! And I beseech you observe, that, the preceding passages were introduced by the inspired penmen of the Scriptures, as rules for the conduct of their religious brethren, as well as themselves, and in no direct reference to the article of justification.

To return then to the point in hand, as we find sanctification is, by the will of God, in *purpose*, so it is, according to the will of God, in *precept*; and his chosen are all brought to be actively engaged in the same, through union to Christ, the Head and Pattern of true holiness, and by the Holy Spirit's working in them, to will and to do those things, that are well-pleasing in the sight of God. Whatever is well-pleasing to God, as to disposition

and conduct, in his people, the same is commanded by the Lord Jesus, as King of saints, and Law-giver in Zion ;—to deny this, would be to reduce the service of the whole church to mere will-worship, and make the will of the creature the law of his conduct, instead of the will of God, which of course would leave no room for obedience in the whole spiritual world ; for, as where there is no law there can be no transgression, so where there is no command concerned, there can be no duty or obedience performed. This is too evident to be proved by argument. Hear the word of the Lord : “ If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love. Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you.” We may hear observe, that, our Lord distinguishes between his Father’s commandments and his own. The *former* he kept himself, and the *latter* he enjoined on his disciples. In both sentences, he uses the word *commandments*, in its natural acceptation, as requiring certain things to be done, as duty ; and others to be left undone, as being unrighteous. We cannot here substitute the word *doctrines* for *commandments* ; neither may we adopt the terms *faith* and *love* for *commandments* : for our Lord could not intend to say, If ye keep my faith and love, ye shall abide in my love, even

as I have kept my Father's *faith* and *love*, and abide in his love. John xv. 10. Besides, faith and love are not rules of action; but actions according to rule, arising from an in wrought principle of holiness.

The Father's commandments, which Christ kept, as the Mediator of the covenant of redemption, were properly the law of works, as founded in the nature of God, and the relation subsisting between him as the Creator, and man as his creature; and, therefore, our Lord kept the law as the rule of justification by works; but the law, as dispensed from his hand, is appropriated to a very different purpose; and is not a rule of justification, but of active sanctification. Its requisitions, as the law of Christ, are not made merely on the ground of our being the creatures of God; but on the ground of our being his adopted and new-created sons in Jesus, the Mediator and Lord of the household of Faith. Thus, the law or preceptive will of God in Christ, is distinguished from the law, as given in Adam. —

1. In the foundation on which it is enforced;
- 2. As to the characters to whom it is given; not men in general, but saints in particular;—
3. In the manner by which it is written in the heart; not in natural, but supernatural principle;—
4. Also in the end designed to be answered by the writing. The Father's com-

mandments were to give interest in the covenant promise on certain conditions required at the hand of our Surety; but Christ's commandments, ever suppose our interest, and are merely to carry on communion with God and each other, in a way becoming the character of God, and suited to glorify his name before the eyes of men; — 5. In the motives by which they are enforced: as electing love, the mediation of Christ, a full and free remission, and acceptance unto life in glory, with every spiritual benefit; — 6. In the evil threatened to disobedience, no curse, but a rod awaits the offender.

Whoever keeps Christ's commands, must first have them *from* him, by the Spirit, before he can possibly keep them *for* him, through the Spirit, in an acceptable way. He must have them in principle, before he can do them in practice: he must know them scripturally, love them spiritually, and experience them inwardly, in order to his keeping them rightly. *He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.* John xiv. 21. The same blessed Spirit, who writes this law of the Saviour upon our hearts, inclines and strengthens us to walk worthy of our vocation, and so to keep the commands of Christ, our exalted King. Why does the Holy Ghost work in the regenerate man to will and to do certain things? Because these things are right.

Obey, said Paul, *for this is right*. But why are these same things right? Because they are commanded of God our Saviour; and other things are known to be wrong, because God has forbidden them. These truths are known and regarded by the sanctified people of God. Active sanctification through Jesus, and by the Holy Spirit, has two branches, which we may now observe.

First. From things evil and hurtful. To sanctify, we have before seen, means to *set apart* any person or thing from a common or evil to a holy or God-honouring use. Now the law, as a covenant of works, is good, if a man use it lawfully; but if any one flee to it for life, by his works, he being a sinner, uses it unlawfully; it never was intended to be a rule of justification for sinners, nor is it adapted to any such purpose. To cleave to this legal form of truth, is natural to every natural man; and here the Spirit of life finds his people, when he comes to sanctify them for himself. From this law of justification by works, he presently *separates* them, and they become dead to it in their hearts, and move off from all dependence there, freely, wholly, and thankfully; and this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning all his saints, that they be thus sanctified or separated from the law, in the important matter of their true justification. For though

the law is not hurtful to an innocent creature, it is a tremendous testifier to the guilty : it is a ministration of death from an angry God, and by this strong bow, the arrows of the Almighty are fastened in the hearts of transgressors. Again, the Lord's chosen and regenerate people are sanctified from sin, as to its prevalent dominion over the powers of the mind. This is effected by a true conviction and godly sorrow, that worketh repentance unto salvation. It is expressed by a denying of self, a loathing of corruption, and hating it for Christ's sake, for truth's sake, and through a reverence of the divine character, and a true love for the perfections, doctrines, and precepts of the eternal God : it is represented by the idea of the Spirit's lusting against the flesh, so that the man cannot do the evil things he otherwise would ; also by crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts ; departing from iniquity ; laying it aside ; and putting off the old man with his deeds. By such language do the Scriptures set forth active sanctification, as springing from interest in Christ, a participation of his holiness in principle, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the sanctifier, in the virtue of his righteousness and blood ; and in all this we find the commands of Christ are verified and exemplified.—1 Thess. iv. 1—12 ; Rom. xii. 9—21.

Again. The beloved ones of God are *set apart from the world of ungodly men*, and their wicked ways. This is provided for in their ancient interest in Christ, and his redemption of them from amongst men by his own blood; as also by their being begotten again to a new state by the Spirit; and when these things become evidenced, in their open conversion to God and truth, and their walking in Christ by the Spirit, their sanctification is practically displayed. Then they are delivered, indeed, from this present evil world, and *separated* unto God, and come to share their part in the persecutions it is ever willing to pour, with liberal hand, upon all the sanctified people of the Most High Redeemer. The command is, "Come out from among them, and be ye *separate*, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty:" and these people are *sanctified* from false worship, and erroneous principles of doctrine, though they be tempted on every side to comply and unite with the unfruitful works of darkness.

Secondly. That God's children are sanctified *to things that are good and profitable*. They are *set apart* unto the Lord Christ, and for him, through the Spirit, in the exercise of faith, hope, and love. "Know that the Lord hath *set apart* him that is godly for himself."

It is given to them to believe in Christ, and to have the honour of suffering for his sake. *And this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ,* As I have enlarged on this point, in the book before mentioned (pages 28—31) I shall not stop to enlarge. Minding the things of the Spirit, arises, from sanctification in principle; for they that are born of the Spirit, mind the things of the Spirit, the doctrines of grace, the promises, the cautions and precepts of the Lord Jesus. They have a desire towards these things, and inwardly relish them. His flesh is their meat, and his blood their drink, because both were made a sacrifice for their sins, and are the price of their pardon, and the foundation of their peace: but the active part of sanctification is in proportion to the power of truth through the Holy Spirit on the mind. As sanctification is *a state*, the saints are all sanctified alike, and each one is equally holy at all times, but not so, as it is considered in an active and practical sense. The same person is influenced much more at one time than another, though in point of regeneration he is ever the same. His regeneration is not more *complete* at one time than another, but it is more *manifest*. Regeneration sows the seed of holiness in all its actings; effectual calling is the dispensation of divine power on the heart, through the principle;

conversion is the activity of the soul under that power and life, by which the whole man becomes sanctified unto God. He is *separated* from evil to good, and turned from darkness to light, and thus is prepared to serve God, in newness of spirit and of life. He is called to be a saint.

The judgment is sanctified by being enlightened, the heart by being filled with the love of God, and being brought over to Christ by faith. The spiritual man is sanctified, in his being brought to chuse spiritual things, through discerning their excellence and preciousness, in the inward light of the Spirit, which shines into the faculty by sound doctrine: and by being devoted to the service of God in body and soul, and walking according to our holy principle or state in Christ, as opened through the Spirit in our hearts, we are sanctified practically, and are a people *set apart* for God, to the praise of the glory of his grace. This is walking with God, and worthy of God: it is walking in Christ, whom we have received, and for Christ, through the strengthening agency of the Holy Ghost; it is walking after Christ and in his name, as a people truly sanctified for his glory. The people who are thus sanctified, discern within themselves a heart for evil and a heart for good, and experience an inward warfare, the spirit lusting against the flesh, and

the flesh desiring against the spirit. Though sin shall not have the ultimate dominion over the sanctified people of God, yet it sometimes makes them captives to their sad confusion and sorrow. *O wretched man that I am!* was the experimental exclamation of one of the greatest of mere men that ever lived. But was he not a sanctified man? Indeed he was; but he found, as many have done since his day, that, when God sanctifies a sinner, he does not take out of him his corruption, but puts within him his spiritual grace; so that the old enemy rises up from his apparent weakness to dispute for the dominion again and again: but victory is bought — is promised — is secured by the Captain of our great salvation!

SECTION VI.

On Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and Church-Fellowship.

THE Lord's people are sanctified to God in their baptism, church-fellowship, and ordinances. They dwell alone, and are not reckoned among the people of the world. "Ye are not of the world," said our dear Lord, "even as I am not of the world." When God the Father elected his people, in his eternal Son, he thereby sanctified, or set them apart from the rest, to himself, as a peculiar people, for

a peculiar end: and when the Son of God, in whom they were thus chosen, laid down his life for them, as his sheep, they were thereby sanctified from the rest, being redeemed from amongst men. Also, when the Holy Spirit regenerates and converts the people, thus elected and redeemed, they are openly sanctified unto the service and glory of God, and are *set apart* from the rest of mankind. So likewise, by their being baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, after they have received the Spirit of Christ, and have given evidence of their conversion, they are actively and practically sanctified, as the people of God's love, and the followers of the Lamb. As Israel were sanctified by being baptized unto Moses, as their leader, so, in a spiritual respect, believers are *set apart* by being baptized unto Christ, as their Lord and Saviour. They put on Christ by baptism, and are thereby publicly distinguished, and sanctified to the spiritual service of God, as holy to the Lord, and as delivered from this present evil world. The ordinances of God, like his gracious doctrines, are all discriminating, and can only be duly received by a distinguished people, for whom Jesus Christ has given himself a ransom, and in whose hearts the law of spiritual obedience and worship is graciously written. Spiritual ordinances can

only belong to spiritual subjects; neither is any service acceptable to God, but that which is according to his precepts, which springs from a state of grace, and is performed by faith in Christ, and with a view to his glory. It is certain there is nothing sanctifying in infant-sprinkling; for, if a work of grace is not afterwards wrought, the child, grown up to years of maturity, abundantly shews itself no Christian. Whatsoever is not of faith is sin; and it is evident religion is a personal thing, and cannot be carried on by proxy. The faith of one man can never avail for another, any more than the crimes of one man can be justly punished in Hell, in the person of another, who had nothing to do with the commission of them. That an infant cannot be esteemed a believer is sufficiently plain, but not more so, than that, an unbeliever has no right to the ordinance of baptism. The practice of Christian baptism belongs to those for whom Christ died, and none besides. Every proper subject of that ordinance is supposed, in the Scriptures, to be interested in Christ, and to be a follower of him by faith; and whoever is baptized, without special faith in Christ, is no Christian; and his conduct is, in the sight of God, a sin; for whatsoever is not of faith is not according to the law of Christ, nor the doctrine of the gospel, but is a presumptuous and unholy

pretension to the privilege of Christians. If thou believest thou mayest, is the testimony of truth; but where is it said, If thy father or mother believes thou mayest? — or, If the baptizer believes thou mayest? The worship of God, in his holy ordinances, is designed to draw forth the heart of the worshipper to the God whom he serves. This shews that the worshipper must be a spiritual character, and that he is sanctified *to* the worship, and also *in* or *by* it: and, when it is considered, what opposition arises from the doctrine of infant baptism, against the fundamental doctrines of the everlasting gospel of Christ, it should surely induce all good men, of the Calvinistic denomination, to reject it heartily and stedfastly. Do we not find that it is averred, infants are made members of Christ by *baptism*, for so the ceremony of sprinkling is called; and that they are thereby constituted heirs of the kingdom of Heaven? Is it not said that baptism is regeneration, and that it is the seal of the covenant of redemption? — that though it is acknowledged to be a spiritual ordinance, yet, carnal children have a right to be baptized? — also, that the favour of God is promised to the children of believers, as it is to their parents? If we consider these points at all, we must see, that, the tendency of this doctrine of salvation through baptism is, to represent spiritual

regeneration as consisting merely in an external rite; and, that, membership with Christ is effected by a few drops of water being scattered in the face, from the fingers of man; that the seal of the covenant is only an external act of a sinful mortal; that carnal persons may be acceptable worshippers in a spiritual institution; that a person may be made a member of Christ, and an heir of the kingdom of Heaven, and yet finally perish in Hell forever! Now, what is all this but barefaced Arminianism? All the promises of God are Yea and Amen in Christ. If God has promised salvation to the seed of the godly, this promise must be *sure* to that seed; and when it is considered, that, the covenant of life in Christ, which contains all the promises, is more ancient than that made with Adam in Eden, if it be allowed that Adam and Eve were regenerated after their fall, then I cannot see how any of the human race can be lost, according to the reasoning of the Pædobaptist; for why should the children of pious Adam, any of them, be damned, if those of godly Abraham are all to be saved? Why should not the faith of Adam have as much influence as that of Abraham, or any other good man? To say any thing about wickedness, and the want of faith or repentance, would here be beside the question; because it is pretended *God has promised to*

save them, and that in an everlasting covenant ; and, to say, the promise is only conditional, would be ruining the whole plan, because the pretence is, that salvation is by grace, to the seed of believers, as much as to their parents ; and Gen. xvii. 7, is cited to maintain the conclusion: and if God has promised them salvation, no doubt he has found and accepted an atonement for their sins. This must be supposed, because we are told, *Without blood there is no remission.* What then can be wanting to our brethren, to render their Pædo-baptism seemingly consistent, but that they at once subscribe to universal redemption? Then they will be able to plead the cause of the children of Adam, from the beginning to the end of the world: but one difficulty remains, *even then*, to be accounted for, and that is, how it is that the Scriptures so constantly affirm, that, *He that believeth not shall be damned.*

Whoever has a right to the ordinance of baptism, the same character has a right to the Lord's Supper, upon his being actually baptised; but he that eateth and drinketh, without discerning the Lord's body, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself. This shews, that no carnal man or unbeliever, has authority from God, to take a seat at the table of the Lord: and hence it follows, that no carnal person,

whatever his age may be, has right to baptism ; for one ordinance is as truly spiritual as the other, and both belong to the same kind of character. He that attends to the ordinance of baptism, as commanded by the Lord, his conduct is pleasing to God ; but without faith it is impossible to please God. Now, infants have not faith, therefore they cannot please God. The fair inference is, infant baptism is will-worship. The baptizing of believers is designed, in part, to shew, that, they are devoted to God, are sanctified, and engaged to serve him, in newness of life ; but, neither babes nor carnal adults, are spiritually devoted to God ; they are not sanctified, nor are they engaged in his service. The word of God requires, that, a state of grace precede the use of ordinances ; but, the Pædobaptist reverses the order of things : he is for using the ordinance first, and so puts his *unregenerate* babes upon a level, in worship, with his *regenerate* and believing brethren. How void of consistency must the scene appear, to behold at the same time, the nurse coming forward with her young infant in her arms, to the bason and the priest, and an adult character approaching, to be also sprinkled as a disciple of Jesus ! That the same bason and water may suffice to sprinkle both candidates, is easily conceivable ; but that one honest and intelligent man can act, as the

priest, in such a case, is no feeble testimony to the imperfection of this present state of mortals. Here, if Infidelity should laugh and deride, who will say it is without temptation offered by the weakness and folly of professing Christians?

But, I cannot now enter largely into the controversy about the ordinance of baptism, a more convenient opportunity may be afforded hereafter. The preceding observations may serve to shew, that baptized persons are sanctified or *set apart* to the glory of God, by passing through that ordinance for Christ's sake. They are distinguished by their profession and conduct, as the followers of Jesus Christ, whose name they confess, and whose conduct they aim to imitate.

As every institution of the Lord Jesus is designed to shew his distinguishing favour for his people; so the establishment of a church state for public communion and edification, is one orderly way of their being sanctified or separated, as a peculiar people unto God, to shew forth his praise. A gospel-church is as a garden enclosed from the world of mankind at large, a sacred lot appropriated to the Lord of life and salvation, as his special dwelling-place. There he manifests his glory, meets with his saints, ministers to their comfort, receives their sacrifices and services, and

edifies their souls. Within this spiritual enclosure, he has appointed the holy ordinance of the supper, as a gospel-feast upon a perfected sacrifice, once offered for the sins of his church. In this ordinance, they commemorate the great work of the cross, by which they were sanctified sacrificially, through the atoning death of their great Shepherd and Friend; and while they thus celebrate their Saviour's name, they are found a sanctified people, separated from the world by gospel bounds, and employed in the spiritual service of the Lord with one consent. Holiness to the Lord is graven on each Heaven-born communicant, and the unction of the Holy One is diffused through the household, while the name of Jesus is resounded throughout the assembly. They discern the Lord's body, as broken for their sins; and, that, they might have meat in the wilderness, and live for ever. They are brought nigh to God, are arrayed in the robe of justifying righteousness, and clothed in the blood-washed garments of complete salvation. These are they who follow the Lamb, and who are not only relatively and radically sanctified; but they are also practically sanctified: these glorify God with their bodies, and with their spirits, which are his, by choice, redemption, and possession.

A few remarks may here be made upon the controverted sentiment, called Strict Communion, which at this time is strongly assaulted by a learned Gentleman, who professes to believe, that, adult baptism is the only true baptism, and that it is commanded in the Scriptures. Notwithstanding, it is pleaded, that, Christian churches, of the Baptist denomination, ought to admit unbaptized persons to the table of communion, they ought, it seems, to make no distinction between obedience to the Lord's command, and disobedience! The Pædobaptist is *unable to see*, that, believers are the only characters that can be baptized into Christ; therefore, he ought not to be kept from the supper of the Lord, though, by the word of the Lord, he is justly chargeable with disobedience to his Lord's command. He professes to see, clearly, that, infant-sprinkling is agospel ordinance, appointed of God, though, in the word of God, neither precept nor precedent can ever be found: but he cannot discover, that, believers only are to be baptized, although both command and example plainly testify, that, such is the will of God: and because he is pleased to plead incapacity, and to affirm, that, he deems himself already baptized, having been sprinkled in his infancy, therefore, it is the duty of the Baptist to treat him as a baptized brother in Christ, and admit him to that

ordinance, to which the apostles never admitted a person so circumstanced! It is called a Christian spirit so to do, and the contrary severely censured; but is not love to Christ required to be expressed by an adherence to his commandments? Is not such love a Christian spirit? If this be allowed, and surely it must, it follows, that, the contrary conduct pleaded for, of acting without either command or precedent, in treating persons sprinkled in their infancy as fit characters for admission to the table of the Lord, cannot be an exemplification of the Christian spirit, but of a natural disposition to rebel against the authority of Christ, and to court the commendations of the erroneous. Men may please themselves, and applaud each other, as excelling their brethren in the spirituality of their mind and temper; but, unless a due regard for the authority of Christ's commands, and the example afforded in his conduct, together with that of his apostles, and the churches they planted, be expressed, we are ever at liberty to question the justice of their pretensions. It is, certainly, very unscriptural to make the spirit of any man, or party of men, a law of action, instead of keeping close to the precepts of the Lord; and to extol the efforts of Mr. *Hall*, as breathing so abundantly the Christian spirit, while he has neither com-

mand nor precedent, in the word of God, to direct him to build such a church, as that for which he so strenuously contends, may have its effect upon the weak and the heedless; but the thoughtful Christian, whose faith stands not in the wisdom of men, will still be partial to the apostolic model and direction.

We are to esteem the primitive churches, formed under the direction of the apostles, as patterns in all things; and so, of course, in their being all baptized before they partook of the supper of the Lord, or were admitted into fellowship in a church state. Whatever disorders or inconsistencies might obtain sanction, in the following centuries, with them we have no concern; neither are we to imitate the faults of the first churches; but, as far as they conformed to the apostolic authority, in doctrine and practice, we are required to learn of them, and walk in their steps: and though we have account of the success of their preaching at Jerusalem, and of converts being added to the church, yet, in no instance do we find any hint given of their breaking bread prior to baptism; but *hearing* stands first, then *believing*, then *baptism*, then *membership* and fellowship: and in the doctrine and fellowship of the apostles they continued, which is mentioned to their commendation; and this surely intimates, that, the apostles would have the same

conduct pursued by all succeeding churches, until the coming of Christ. To this purpose are the words of Jesus, our commanding Lord, when he said to his apostles, *Teach and baptize*, and, lo! I am with you always, *even to the end of the world*. Here is no intimation of an alteration or deviation being approved; nor can we determine a bound, when once the ancient land-marks are removed.

To admit unbaptized persons to communion, would be to allow of known disobedience and error in the church, and that with respect to a public institution, plainly commanded; and if one acknowledged error be knowingly admitted in the visible practice of the church, another can scarcely be censured and rejected, without partiality and unfaithfulness being displayed, to the blame and shame of the society. Surely, the way to keep the church free from error, would not be, to plant it within her fences. If it be pretended that error is not designed to be cherished, then let us not make room for it. The believer is commanded to confess his Lord in baptism, and afterwards to enter his house, and sup at his table; but, to take the supper first, and openly confess the Lord afterwards, is, to act most disorderly, and unscripturally. Should it be said, "The Pædobaptist does confess the name of Christ, before he is allowed

to eat at the table," I reply, 'He has not confessed his Lord's name, as he himself requires it to be confessed, by being baptized into his death through faith.'

It is impossible that both infant-sprinkling and the immersion of believers should be right in the sight of God; but were the Baptists to admit unbaptized persons, they would act as though they were both scriptural, whereas, there is no Scripture precedent for such conduct; neither can carnal infants and spiritual babes constitute one gospel family. If God has commanded believers to be baptized, he has not commanded unbelievers also to be baptized, whether they be infants or aged, for spiritual ordinances do not require any attention to be paid to the age of the people admitted; but to their principle, or state, and practice. Neither are there any spiritual promises to children, considered simply as infants; but the promises point to the regenerate and believing part of mankind, when viewed in a manifestative sense, and that is the sense in which we must take them, when we form a church state on the earth for the Lord Jesus Christ. God has never promised salvation, to any one, but in Christ, and his promise neither depends on childhood, nor old age. Suppose any one were to plead that a superannuated old man, whose father was a godly character, must be