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INFANT BAPTISM,

AND

DIPPING.

BY

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INFANT BAPTISM, AND DIPPING.

OF INFANT BAPTISM.

I. THE question is not, whether professing believers, Jews or Gentiles, not baptized in their infancy, ought to be baptized? For this is by all confessed.

II. Neither is it, whether in such persons the profession of saving faith, and repentance, ought not to go before baptism? This we plead for, beyond what is the common practice

of those who oppose us.

Wherefore testimonies produced out of authors, ancient or modern, to confirm these things, which consist with the doctrine of infant baptism, are mere tergiversations, that belong not to this cause at all; and so are all arguments produced unto that end out of the Scriptures.

III. The question is not, whether all infants are to be baptized, or not? For according to the will of God some are not to be baptized; even such, whose parents are strangers from the covenant. But hence it will follow, that some are to be baptized: seeing an exception confirms both rule and right.

IV. The question is only concerning the children, or infant seed, of professing believers, who are themselves bap-

tized. And,

First, They by whom this is denied, can produce no testimony of Scripture, wherein their negation is formally or in terms included, nor any one asserting what is inconsistent with the affirmative: for it is weak beneath consideration to suppose, that the requiring of the baptism of believers is inconsistent with that of their seed. But this is to be required of them, who oppose infant baptism, that they produce such a testimony.

Secondly, No instance can be given from the Old or New Testament, since the days of Abraham; none from the approved practice of the primitive church, of any person or persons born of professing, believing parents, who were themselves made partakers of the initial seal of the covenant, being then in infancy, and designed to be brought up in the knowledge of God, who were not made partakers with them of the same sign and seal of the covenant.

Thirdly, A spiritual privilege once granted by God unto any, cannot be changed, disannulled, or abrogated, without an especial, divine revocation of it, or the substitution of a greater privilege and mercy in the room of it. For,

- 1. Who shall disannul what God hath granted? What he hath put together, who shall put asunder? To abolish, or take away any grant of privilege made by him to the church, without his own express revocation of it, is to deny his sovereign authority.
- 2. To say, a privilege so granted may be revoked, even by God himself, without the substitution of a greater privilege and mercy in the room of it, is contrary to the goodness of God, his love and care unto his church; contrary to his constant course of proceeding with it from the foundation of the world, wherein he went on in the enlargement and increase of its privileges, until the coming of Christ. And to suppose it under the gospel, is contrary to all his promises, the honour of Christ, and a multitude of express testimonies of Scripture.

Thus was it with the privileges of the temple, and the worship of it granted to the Jews; they were not, they could not, be taken away without an express revocation, and the substitution of a more glorious, spiritual temple and worship in their room.

But now the spiritual privileges of a right unto, and a participation of the initial seal of the covenant, was granted by God unto the infant seed of Abraham; Gen. xvii. 10.

This grant therefore must stand firm for ever, unless men can prove or produce,

- (1.) An express revocation of it by God himself, which none can do either directly, or indirectly, in terms, or any pretence of consequence.
- (2.) An instance of a greater privilege or mercy granted unto them in the room of it; which they do not once pretend unto, but leave the seed of believers, whilst in their infant

state, in the same condition with those of pagans and infidels, expressly contrary to God's covenant.

All this contest therefore is to deprive the children of believers of a privilege once granted to them by God, never revoked as to the substance of it, assigning nothing in its room, which is contrary to the goodness, love, and covenant of God, especially derogatory to the honour of Jesus Christ and the gospel.

Fourthly, They that have the thing signified, have right unto the sign of it: or those who are partakers of the grace of baptism, have a right to the administration of it; so Acts x. 47.

But the children of believers are all of them capable of the grace signified in baptism, and some of them are certainly partakers of it, namely, such as die in their infancy (which is all that can be said of professors); therefore they may and ought to be baptized. For,

- 1. Infants are made for, and are capable of eternal glory or misery, and must fall, dying infants, in one of these estates for ever.
- 2. All infants are born in a state of sin, wherein they are spiritually dead, and under the curse.
- 3. Unless they are regenerate and born again, they must all perish inevitably; John iii. 4. Their regeneration is the grace whereof baptism is a sign or token. Wherever this is, there baptism ought to be administered.

Fifthly, God having appointed baptism as the sign and seal of regeneration, unto whom he denies it, he denies the grace signified by it. Why is it the will of God, that unbelievers and impenitent sinners should not be baptized? It is, because not granting them the grace, he will not grant them the sign. If therefore God denies the sign unto the infant seed of believers, it must be because he denies them the grace of it; and then all the children of believing parents dying in their infancy must without hope be eternally damned. I do not say, that all must be so, who are not baptized; but all must be so whom God would have not baptized.

But this is contrary to the goodness and law of God, the nature and promises of the covenant, the testimony of Christ reckoning them to the kingdom of God, the faith of godly parents, and the belief of the church in all ages.

It follows hence unavoidably, that infants who die in their infancy, have the grace of regeneration, and consequently as a good a right unto baptism as believers themselves.

Sixthly, All children in their infancy are reckoned unto the covenant of their parents by virtue of the law of their creation.

For they are all made capable of eternal rewards and punishments, as hath been declared.

But in their own persons, they are not capable of doing good or evil.

It is therefore contrary to the justice of God, and the law of the creation of human kind, wherein many die before they can discern between their right hand and their left, to deal with infants any otherwise but in and according to the covenant of their parents, and that he doth so, see Rom. v. 14.

Hence I argue,

Those who by God's appointment, and by virtue of the law of their creation, are and must of necessity be included in the covenant of their parents, have the same right with them unto the privileges of that covenant, no express exception being put in against them. This right it is in the power of none to deprive them of, unless they can change the law of their creation.

Thus it is with the children of believers with respect unto the covenant of their parents; whence alone they are said to be holy; 1 Cor. vii. 14.

Seventhly, Christ is 'the messenger of the covenant,' Mal. iii. 1. that is, of the covenant of God made with Abraham. And he 'was the minister of the circumcision, for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers;' Rom. xv. 8. This covenant was, that he would be 'a God unto Abraham and his seed.'

Now if this be not so under the New Testament, then was not Christ a faithful messenger, nor did confirm the truth of God in his promises.

This argument alone will bear the weight of the whole cause against all objection. For,

- 1. Children are still in the same covenant with their parents, or the truth of the promises of God to the fathers was not confirmed by Christ.
- 2. The right unto the covenant, and interest in its promises wherever it be, gives right unto the administration of its initial seal, i. e. to baptism, as Peter expressly declares, Acts ii. 38, 39. Wherefore,

The right of the infant seed of believers unto baptism, as the initial seal of the covenant, stands on the foundation of the faithfulness of Christ, as the messenger of the covenant, and minister of God, for the confirmation of the truth of his promises.

In brief, a participation of the seal of the covenant is a spiritual blessing. This the seed of believers was once solemnly invested in by God himself; this privilege he hath nowhere revoked, though he hath changed the outward sign, nor hath he granted unto our children any privilege or mercy in lieu of it now under the gospel, when all grace and privileges are enlarged to the utmost; his covenant promises concerning them which are multiplied, were confirmed by Christ as a true messenger and minister; he gives the grace of baptism unto many of them, especially those that die in their infancy; owns children to belong unto his kingdom; esteems them disciples, appoints households to be baptized without exception. And who shall now rise up, and withhold water from them?

This argument may be thus farther cleared and improved. Christ is 'the messenger of the covenant;' Mal. iii. 1. that is, the covenant of God with Abraham; Gen. xvii. 7. For,

- 1. That covenant was with and unto Christ mystical; Gal. iii. 16. And he was the messenger of no covenant, but that which was made with himself and his members.
- 2. He was sent, or was God's messenger, to perform and accomplish the covenant and oath made with Abraham, Luke, i. 72, 73.
- 3. The end of his message, and of his coming was, that those to whom he was sent, might be blessed with faithful Abraham; or, that the blessing of Abraham promised in the covenant, might come upon them; Gal. iii. 9, 14.

To deny this, overthrows the whole relation between the

Old Testament and the New; the veracity of God in his promises, and all the properties of the covenant of grace, mentioned 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

It was not the covenant of works, neither originally, or essentially; nor the covenant in its legal administration; for he confirmed and sealed that covenant, whereof he was the messenger; but these he abolished.

Let it be named what covenant he was the messenger of, if not of this. Occasional additions of temporal promises do not in the least alter the nature of the covenant.

Herein he 'was the minister of the circumcision, for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers;' Rom. xv. 8. That is undeniably the covenant made with Abraham, enlarged and explained by following promises. This covenant was, that God would be 'a God unto Abraham and his seed;' which God himself explains to be his infant seed, Gen. xvii. 12. that is, the infant seed of every one of his posterity, who should lay hold on and avouch that covenant, as Abraham did, and not else. This the whole church did solemnly for themselves and their posterity, whereon the covenant was confirmed and sealed to them all; Exod. xxiv. 7, 8. And every one was bound to do the same in his own person; which if he did not, he was to be cut off from the congregation, whereby he forfeited all privileges unto himself and his seed.

The covenant therefore was not granted in its administrations unto the carnal seed of Abraham as such; but unto his covenanted seed, those who entered into it, and professedly stood to its terms.

And the promises made unto the fathers were, that their infant seed, their buds, and offspring, should have an equal share in the covenant with them; Isa. xxii. 24. xliv. 3. lxi. 9. lxv. 23. 'They are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them.' Not only themselves who are the believing, professing seed of those who were blessed of the Lord by a participation of the covenant, Gal. iii. 9. but their offspring also, their buds, their tender little ones, are in the same covenant with them.

To deny therefore that the children of believing, professing parents, who have avouched God's covenant, as the

church of Israel did, Exod. xxiv. 7. 8. have the same right and interest with their parents in the covenant, is plainly to deny the fidelity of Christ in the discharge of his office.

It may be it will be said, That although children have a right to the covenant, or do belong unto it, yet they have no right to the initial seal of it.

This will not suffice; for,

- (1.) If they have any interest in it, it is either in its grace, or in its administration. If they have the former, they have the latter also, as shall be proved at any time. If they have neither, they have no interest in it; then the truth of the promises of God made unto the fathers was not confirmed by Christ.
- (2.) That unto whom the covenant or promise doth belong, to them belongs the administration of the initial seal of it, is expressly declared by the apostle, Acts ii. 38, 39. be they who they will.
- (3.) The truth of God's promises is not confirmed, if the sign and seal of them be denied: for that whereon they believed, that God was a God unto their seed, as well as unto themselves, was this; that he granted the token of the covenant unto their seed, as well as unto themselves. If this be taken away by Christ, their faith is overthrown; and the promise itself is not confirmed, but weakened, as to the virtue it hath to beget faith and obedience.

Eighthly, Particular testimonies may be pleaded and vindicated, if need be, and the practice of the primitive church.^a

A VINDICATION OF TWO PASSAGES IN IRENEUS AGAINST THE EXCEPTIONS OF MR. TOMBS.

THE passages are these:

^{&#}x27;Adversus Hæreses,' lib. 2. cap. 39. 'Magister ergo existens, magistri quoque habebat ætatem, non reprobans nec supergrediens hominem, neque solvens suam legem in se humani generis, sed omnem ætatem sanctificans per illam quæ ad ipsum erat similitudinem. Omnes enim venit per semetipsum salvare, omnes, inquam, qui per eum renascuntur

^{*} See also Dr. Owen on the Hebrews, vol. i. Exercitation the sixth, and vol. ii. p. 256. in which place he gives farther light into this truth of infant baptism.

in Deum, infantes, et parvulos, et pueros, et juvenes, et seniores. Ideo per omnem venit ætatem; et infantibus infans factus, sanctificans infantes; in parvulis, parvulus, sanctificans hanc ipsam habentes ætatem, simul et exemplum illis pietatis effectus, et justitiæ et subjectionis; in juvenibus juvenis, exemplum juvenibus fiens, et sanctificans Domino; sic et senior in senioribus, ut sit perfectus magister in omnibus, non solum secundum expositionem veritatis, sed et secundum ætatem sanctificans simul et seniores, exemplum ipsis quoque fiens; deinde et usque ad mortem pervenit, ut sit primogenitus ex mortuis, ipse primatum tenens in omnibus, princeps vitæ, prior omnium, et præcedens omnes.'

Lib. i. c. 18. "Οσοι γάρ εἰσι ταύτης τῆς γνώμης μυσταγωγοὶ, τοσᾶυται καὶ ἀπολυτρώσεις. "Οτι μὲν εἰς ἐξάρνησιν τοῦ βαπτίσματος τῆς εἰς Θεὸν ἀναγεννήσεως, καὶ πάσης τῆς πίστεως ἀπόσεων ὑποβέβληται τὸ εἶδος τοῦ ὑπὸ τοῦ σατανᾶ, ἐλέγχοντες

άυτοὺς ἀπαγγελοῦμεν ἐν τῷ προσήκοντι τόπῳ.

Mr. Tombs tells us, this proves not infant baptism, because though it be granted that in Justin Martyr, and others of the ancients, to be regenerated is to be baptized, yet it doth not appear that Irenæus meant it so in this place, unless it were proved it is so only meant by him and the ancients. Nor doth Irenæus, lib. i. cap. 18., term baptism regeneration; but saith thus, 'To the denying of baptism of that regeneration which is unto God.' But that indeed the word, 'renascuntur,' 'are born again,' is not meant of baptism, is proved from the words, and the scope of them. For,

- 1. The words are, 'per eum renascuntur,' 'by him,' that is, Christ, 'are born again.' And it is clear from the scope of the speech about the fulness of his age, as a perfect master, that 'by him' notes his person according to his human nature. Now, if then, 'by him are born again,' be as much as, 'by him are baptized,' this should be Irenæus's assertion, That by Christ himself in his human body, infants, and little ones, and boys, and young men, and elder men, are baptized unto God. But this speech is most manifestly false; for neither did Christ baptize any at all in his own person; John iv. 1, 2. 'Jesus himself did not baptize, but his disciples;' nor did the disciples baptize any infant at all, as may be gathered from the whole New Testament.
 - 2. The word which Irenœus expresseth, whereby persons

are born again to God by Christ, is applied to the example of his age, as the words and scope shew. But he was not in his age an example of every age by his baptism, as if he did by it sanctify every age; for then he should have been baptized in every age, but in respect of the holiness of his human nature, which did remain in each age, and so exemplarily sanctify each age to God, so as that there was no age but was capable of holiness by conformity to his example.

- 3. Irenœus's words are 'Omnes enim venit per semetipsum salvare, omnes, inquam, qui per eum renascuntur in Deum, infantes, et parvulos,'&c. Now if the meaning were, that Christ came to save all that were baptized by him, or by his appointment, then he came to save Simon Magus, or whoever are or have been baptized rightly. But in that sense the proposition is most palpably false, and therefore that sense is not to be attributed to his words.
- 4. Christ is by Irenæus said to sanctify as 'a perfect master, not only according to the exposition of truth, but also as an example to them of piety, justice, and subjection.' But this is to be understood not in respect of his baptism only, but his whole life, in which he was an example, even an infant, for then he did willingly empty himself, 'took upon him the form of a servant,' &c. Phil. ii. 7, 8.

By all which reasons (saith Mr. Tombs), I presume the readers who are willing to see truth, will perceive this passage of Irenæus to be wrested by Pædobaptists against its meaning, to prove a use of pædobaptism in his time.

- Ans. 1. The phrase of 'renascuntur in Deum,' is so constantly used by the ancients for baptism, that it may be referred to the conscience of Mr. Tombs, or any one who hath been conversant in their writings, whether they would not have judged and granted that it was here intended, if mention had not been made of infants and little ones. The ensuing exceptions therefore are an endeavour to stifle light in favour of an opinion, which is not unusual with some.
- 2. 'Per eum,' is the same with 'per semetipsum,' in the words immediately foregoing; that is, by himself in his mediation, grace, and ordinances. And to suppose that if baptism be intended, he must baptize them in his own person, is a mere cavil; for all that are born to God by baptism to this day, are so by him.

3. The words εἰς ἐξάρνησιν τοῦ βαπτίσματος τῆς εἰς Θεὸν ἀναγεννήσεως, 'unto the denial of the baptism of regeneration unto God,' do plainly declare, that by 'renascuntur' he intends the baptism of regeneration, as being the means and pledge of it, in allusion to that of the Apostle, λούτρον παλιγγενεσίας, Tit. iii. 5.

4. It is remarkable in the words of Irenæus, that in expressing the way and means of the renascency of infants, he mentions nothing of the example of Christ, which he adds

unto that of all other ages.

5. The example of Christ is mentioned as one outward means of the regeneration of them who were capable of its use and improvement; of his being an example of baptism, nothing is spoken: nor was Christ in his own person an example of regeneration unto any; for as he was not baptized in all ages, so he was never regenerate in any, for he needed no regeneration.

6. It is well that it is so positively granted that Christ doth sanctify infants; which, seeing he doth not do so to all universally, must be those of believing parents; which is

enough to end this controversy.

7. The meaning of Irenæus is no more, but that Christ, passing through all ages, evidenced his design to exclude no age, to communicate his grace unto all sorts and ages; and he mentioneth old men, because his judgment was, that Christ was fifty years old when he died.

8. It was the constant opinion of the ancients, that Christ came to save all that were baptized; not intending his purpose and intention with respect unto individuals, but his approbation of the state of baptism, and his grant of the means of grace.

OF DIPPING.

Bάπτω, used in these Scriptures, Luke xvi. 24. John xiii. 26. Rev. xix. 13. we translate 'to dip.' It is only 'to touch one part of the body.' That of Rev. xix. 13. is better rendered, 'stained by sprinkling.'

In other authors it is 'tingo, immergo, lavo,' or 'abluo;' but in no author ever signifies 'to dip,' but only in order to

washing, or as the means of washing. It is no where used with respect unto the ordinance of baptism.

The Hebrew word 500 is rendered by the Seventy, Gen. xxxvii. 31. by $\mu o \lambda \acute{v} \nu \omega$, 'to stain by sprinkling,' or otherwise; mostly by $\beta \acute{a}\pi \tau \omega$. 2 Kings, v. 14. they render it by $\beta a\pi \tau \acute{c} \lambda \omega$, and nowhere else. In ver. 10. Elisha commands him 'to wash;' therefore that in ver. 14. is, that 'he washed.' Exod. xii. 22. is, 'to put the top of the hyssop into blood,' to sprinkle it. 1 Sam. xiv. 27. 'to take a little honey with the top of a rod: in neither places can dipping or plunging be intended. Lev. iv. 6. 17. ix. 9. and in other places, it is only 'to touch the blood,' so as to sprinkle it.

 $Ba\pi\tau i \zeta \omega$ signifies 'to wash;' as instances out of all authors may be given, Suidas, Hesychius, Julius Pollux, Phavorinus, and Eustachius.

It is first used in the Scripture, Mark i. 8. John i. 33. and to the same purpose, Acts i. 5. In every place it either signifies 'to pour,' or the expression is equivocal. 'I baptize you with water, but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost;' which is the accomplishment of that promise, that 'the Holy Ghost should be poured on them.'

For the other places, Mark vii. 3, 4. $\nu i \pi \tau \omega$ and $\beta a \pi \tau i \zeta \omega$ is plainly the same, both 'to wash.' Luke xi. 38. the same with Mark vii. 3. No one instance can be given in the Scripture, wherein $\beta a \pi \tau i \zeta \omega$ doth necessarily signify either 'to dip,' or 'plunge.'

Bαπτίζω may be considered either as to its original, natural sense, or as to its mystical use in the ordinance.

This distinction must be observed concerning many other words in the New Testament, as ἐκκλησία, χειροτονία, and others, which have a peculiar sense in their mystical use.

In this sense, as it expresseth baptism, it denotes 'to wash' only, and not 'to dip' at all: for so it is expounded, Tit. iii. 5. Eph. v. 26. Heb. x. 22. 1 Pet. iii. 21. And it signifies that communication of the Spirit, which is expressed by 'pouring out,' and 'sprinkling,' Ezek. xxxvi. 25. and expresseth our being 'washed in the blood of Christ;' Tit. ii. 14. Heb. ix. 14. 19. 23.

Wherefore in this sense, as the word is applied unto the ordinance, the sense of dipping is utterly excluded. And though as a mere external mode it may be used, provided the

person dipped be naked; yet to urge it as necessary, over-throws the nature of the sacrament.

For the original and natural signification of it, it signifies 'to dip, to plunge, to die, to wash, to cleanse.'

But I say, 1. It doth not signify properly 'to dip,' or 'plunge,' for that in Greek is, $\frac{1}{2}\mu\beta\acute{a}\pi\tau\omega$ and $\frac{1}{2}\mu\beta\acute{a}\pi\tau\ell\zeta\omega$. 2. It no where signifies 'to dip,' but as a mode of, and in order to, washing. 3. It signifies the 'dipping' of a finger, or the least touch of the water, and not plunging the whole. 4. It signifies 'to wash' also in all good authors.

I have not all those quoted to the contrary. In the quotations of them whom I have, if it be intended, that they say it signifies 'to dip,' and not 'to wash, or 'to dip' only, there is neither truth nor honesty in them by whom they are quoted.

Scapula is one, a common book; and he gives it the sense of 'lavo, abluo,' 'to wash,' and 'wash away.'

Stephanus is another, and he expressly in sundry places assigns 'lavo' and 'abluo' to be also the sense of it.

Aquinas is for dipping of children, provided it be done three times in honour of the Trinity; but he maintains pouring or sprinkling to be lawful also; affirming that Laurentius, who lived about the time two hundred and fifty, so practised. But he meddles not with the sense of the word, as being too wise to speak of that which he understood not; for he knew no Greek.

In Suidas, the great treasury of the Greek tongue, it is rendered by 'madefacio, lavo, abluo, purgo, mundo.'

The places in the other authors being not quoted, I cannot give an account of what they say. I have searched some of them in every place wherein they mention baptism, and find no one word to the purpose. I must say, and will make it good, that no honest man who understands the Greek tongue, can deny the word to signify, 'to wash,' as well as 'to dip.'

It must not be denied, but that in the primitive times, they did use to baptize both grown persons and children oftentimes by dipping; but they affirmed it necessary to dip them stark naked, and that three times; but not one ever denied pouring water to be lawful.

The apostle, Rom. vi. 3-5. is dehorting from sin, ex-

horting to holiness and new obedience, and gives this argument from the necessity of it, and our ability for it, both taken from our initiation into the virtue of the death and life of Christ expressed in our baptism; that by virtue of the death and burial of Christ, we should be dead unto sin, sin being slain thereby; and by virtue of the resurrection of Christ, we should be quickened unto newness of life; as Peter declares, 1 Pet. iii. 21. Our being buried with him, and our being planted together into the likeness of his death, and likeness of his resurrection, is the same with 'our old man being crucified with him,' ver. 6. and the destroying of the body of sin, and our being raised from the dead with him, which is all that is intended in the place.

There is not one word, nor one expression, that mentions any resemblance between dipping under water, and the death and burial of Christ, nor one word that mentions a resemblance between our rising out of the water, and the resurrection of Christ. Our being 'buried with him by baptism into death,' ver. 4. is our being 'planted together in the likeness of his death,' ver. 5. Our being planted together in the likeness of his death, is not our being dipped under water, but 'the crucifying of the old man,' ver. 6. Our being raised up with Christ from the dead, is not our rising from under the water, but our 'walking in newness of life,' ver. 4. by virtue of the resurrection of Christ; 1 Pet. iii. 21.

That baptism is not a sign of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, is clear from hence; because an instituted sign is a sign of gospel grace participated, or to be participated. If dipping be a sign of the burial of Christ, it is not a sign of a gospel grace participated; for it may be where there is none, nor any exhibited.

For the major: if all gospel ordinances are signs and expressions of the communication of the grace of Christ, then baptism is so: but this is the end of all gospel ordinances, or else they have some other end; or are vain and empty shows.

The same individual sign cannot be instituted to signify things of several natures. But the outward burial of Christ, and a participation of the virtue of Christ's death and burial, are things of a diverse nature, and therefore are not signified by one sign. That interpretation which would enervate the apostle's argument and design, our comfort and duty, is not to be admitted. But this interpretation that baptism is mentioned here as the sign of Christ's burial, would enervate the apostle's argument and design, our comfort and duty. And therefore it is not to be admitted.

The minor is thus proved: the argument and design of the apostle, as was before declared, is to exhort and encourage unto mortification of sin and new obedience, by virtue of power received from the death and life of Christ, whereof a pledge is given us in our baptism. But this is taken away by this interpretation: for we may be so buried with Christ and planted into the death of Christ by dipping, and yet have no power derived from Christ for the crucifying of sin, and for the quickening of us to obedience.