

persons, time and place consider'd, 'tis plain that our Saviours Commission of discipling *all Nations*, &c. in general Terms, was more full, proper and pertinent, than if he had particulariz'd *Men, Women and Children*, for both he and his Disciples very well knew who were the Subjects of Baptism. Therefore a General Custom and a General Commission were most Analogous, and becoming the Authority and Wisdom of our Saviour.

Again, this Custom of Baptizing Infants being then in use: The Question ought not to be, *Where do you find that Children are commanded to be Baptized*, but thus, *Where do you find that Children are forbidden to be Baptiz'd?* Or thus, *Where do you find in Scripture that Children who were once in the Covenant are cast out of it again?* The likeliest place to look for such a change is at the Conversion of the three thousand Jews, who were Circumcis'd, and their Children, and consequently in the first Covenant; is it not reasonable to believe that they had that tenderness for their Children as to desire they might have their Children seal'd with 'em in the second Covenant as well as the first, especially when they were told *the promise was to 'em and to their Children?* If they had been deny'd we shou'd have had some Informations of it, by Command, Examples, &c. or by their repining at a State which left their Children worse than before, but there's not one footstep that shews the least intrenchment of Infants Privileges, or that the Second Adam had left 'em more unhappy than he found 'em.

Now finding no prohibition in the Apostles practice or writings, we'll examine the custom of the first Ages of Christianity, where so often as there is occasion to speak of Infant Baptism we find it mention'd as an Orthodox and Apostolick practice. St. Irenaeus, as we have somewhere else observ'd, and have no answer, was the Disciple of St. Policarp, who was the Disciple of St. John, and who convers'd often with such as convers'd with the last surviving Apostles, if not with the Apostles themselves; he makes frequent mention of it in his writings, particularly in *Ep. ad Rom. l. 5.* and in *lib. Hom. 8.* and *lib. 2. Cap. 39. p. 137.* which sufficiently shews that by the word *all Nations*, our Saviour, his Apostles, and the Primitive Fathers, did intend and mean *Men, Women and Children*. It wou'd be too tedious to reckon upon the Authorities of Tertullian, Cyprian, Chrysostom, Ambrose, Jerom, Augustine, &c. We shall only mention one Authority which will convince any unprejudic'd person. 'Tis that of the Presbyter *Fidus Anno 254.*

This *Fidus* had some scruples about the time of Baptizing Infants, whether he shou'd defer it till the eighth day, or not, which began to spread, and caus'd a Convocation of Bishops call'd the *African Synod*, amongst whom the Question was started;

there was threescore and six Bishops present, and 'tis impossible so many cou'd be deceiv'd in Customs, tho' six thousand might be deceiv'd in Opinions. They decreed unanimously that Children might be Baptiz'd upon the third, fourth, &c. days as well as the eighth. The Synodical Decree is too long, or we would transcribe it Verbatim, but 'tis to be seen at length in the 59th Epistle of St. Cyprian, or in the *Inquiry into the Constitution, &c. of the Primitive Church*, or in an Abstract of that book in our *Young Students Library*. Here's Authority enough, and such Persons as are so wilfully blind and prejudic'd as not to own it, are past dispute, and ought no longer to be treated with as reasonable Creatures.

Now having prov'd that the first Ages practis'd Infant Baptism, we shall examine who was the first Opposer, and we find him to be one *Auxentius* an Arrian, who lived 380 years after our Saviour. See our Second Paper, and after him several more in Germany, &c. Now if there was any more need of Arguments, we wou'd ask the Anabaptists this Question only, *That since (as we have shewn, and can further if there was occasion) that Infant Baptism is frequently mentioned by the Primitive Fathers for above one hundred years together before ever any one Person oppos'd it, it is not a more antient (and consequently true) Doctrine than that of the Anabaptists?* Thus much for the Fathers.

But for the sake of such ungrounded Persons as may have been misled by the plausible pretences of the *Anabaptists*, we shall shew the Inconclusiveness of their Doctrines, as well as we have, for the use of all, declar'd Infant Baptism to be Originally of Divine Institution, and therefore to be practis'd.

And now to the great Question of *Abrahams Seed*, the most rational of Anabaptists believe that if Children cou'd be prov'd to be in the Covenant, they are fit Subjects for Baptism, and 'tis also St. Peter's reason, *Acts 2.* In order to prove this we'll recur as far as Adam, where we may safely assert, *That if Adam had not sin'd his Children had been holy from the Womb, by Original Justice;* Hence we may infer from the Anabaptists own Principles, that Believers Children are in the same condition, (we mention not this as the Church of England's Belief) for they have no Actual Sin, and as for Original Sin, the Second Adam has taken it away. Ergo, nothing hinders but that they are holy, and as such in the Covenant, and by consequence Candidates for Baptism.

But to advance a Conclusion, whose Premises are Consonant to all true Churches of Christ: First then, every one agrees that Children were in the Covenant. It follows then that *Children are still in the Covenant, or else they are excluded; but they were never excluded, therefore, &c.* We advanc'd this Argument before, which stands, and always

always will stand in force, till the Anabaptists shew where; Mr. Collins wou'd fain strain the words of *John the Baptist*, *But now the Ax*, &c. to enervate this position, but 'tis so weak that we leave himself to judge of it, if he will consider the Context, where nothing is mention'd or design'd of Children, nor can it be thence deduc'd by any probable Consequence; besides, St. *John's* Baptism was distinct from that our Saviour Instituted; and his words were directed to such as came out of *Jerusalem, Judea*, &c. but not to Children who cou'd neither walk nor understand him if brought thither; the design of St. *John* here is largely discours'd upon by almost every Annotator; if you'l please to consult 'em all you'l find no Exposition of any one of the Fathers or Modern Divines that ever gave your sense of the place.

Again, we are not to judge by the Heart as God does; but according to appearance, all that we can determine is about visibility. Circumcision was called *the Seal of the Righteousness of Faith*; therefore all that were Circumcised had this Seal visibly, tho in Gods repute *all were not Israel that were of Israel*: That Visibility is all we can judge of is plain from St. *John's* Baptism who Baptiz'd all that came unto him out of *Judea, Jerusalem*, &c. tho 'tis not to be question'd but some might probably be Hypocrites. Thus St. *Peter* when the three Thousand were Converted and Baptiz'd, 'twas in so short a time that he cou'd have no demonstration of their sincerity, but Baptiz'd 'em as they appear'd to be Converts. Thus in the case of Infants whose Parents are Believers, their Children are Visible Members in the Covenant (for so they are accounted, *Acts* 2. 39.) till by ill Lives they appear otherwise.

Besides, the Jews with their Priviledges were not Extirpated wholly, there were but some Branches broken off, and the Gentiles being ingrafted into the common stock partaked of their Priviledges, but this of Childrens Incovenanting was amongst other Priviledges of the Jews, therefore, &c. *Rom.* 11. 16, &c.

Again, from the same major the Argument in the preceding paragraph is made good; tho there is one grand Cavil against it, and that is concerning foederal Holiness, which we shall now examine from this Text, *else were your Children unclean, but now they are holy*.

The Anabaptists say, *The Apostle means only a Matrimonial Holiness which is Legitimation, that the Infidel is sanctified by the Christian by Marriage, and that the Copulation is not Adulterous, because the Children are not Bastards, but Legitimate*. That Matrimonial Holiness or Legitimation is not meant, is plain, (1.) By the Apostles design, which was to shew how the Blessing of Christ was to come upon the Gentiles, that Christian Gentiles were to be grafted in for the Jews broken off. That Christians were Children of the Promise after the manner

of *Isaac*, &c. all which is quite different from your Construction of the place, and makes good our preceding Arguments.

(2.) If only a Legitimation of Marriage was design'd the Christian wou'd be sanctified in the Infidel as well as the Infidel in the Christian, but the Infidel is mentioned to be meerly passive, to be sanctified and not sanctifie.

3. It wou'd fasten an impertinence on the Apostle who so often mentions the term Infidel.

4. By unclean is not meant Bastards, but such as want foederal Holiness are called unclean, *Isa.* 52. 1, 2. & *contra*, such as have foederal Holiness are clean.

5. Children of Infidels born in Marriage are *Matrimonially holy*, and then Children of a Married Believer and an Infidel are not less, so that it 'twou'd have been absurd, in your sence, for the Apostle to have said *else were your Children unclean, but now they are holy*.

6. If Legitimation was only meant, the Apostle was mistaken in the Question, which was not whether living together were not adulterous, for that no body believes that has his Sences, but whether a Christian might with a safe Conscience have such a familiarity with an Infidel, &c. which seem'd inconsistent with the Precepts of Christianity; as, *Have no Fellowship with Unbelievers*. The Answer is, that if they were Married (as 'twas common in the Early times of the Gospel, that one was converted to Christianity before the other) in such case the Christians Faith shou'd be efficacious to the Children, and make 'em partake of the believers' qualities, not the unbelievers, which very well agrees with the fifth of the *Romans*, where we find the free Gift, *Righteousness of the Second Adam*, &c. to avail over and exceed the *unrighteousness of the first Adam*. To which we add, that the Seed is distinguish'd according to the Qualification of the Parent, visiting the Iniquity of the Parents upon the Children to the Third and Fourth Generation of *them that hate me*, and shewing Mercy unto *Thousands* (that is Thousands of Generations) in them that love me, &c. We shall mention but one other place which alone is sufficient to convince any rational Person that the Seed of believers and unbelievers are contra-distinguish'd, *Gal.* 2. 15. *We are Jews by Nature, and not Sinners of the Gentiles*; see the occasion of this saying. All which Arguments added together shew that there is a foederal Holiness of the Children of those that are in the Covenant, & vice versa.

From whence we argue.

If foederal Holiness supposes a right in the Covenant, and this right in the Covenant intitles its Candidates to Baptism, then the Children of believers are to be Baptiz'd.

But foederal Holiness supposes a right in the Covenant, and this right in the Covenant intitles its Candidates to Baptism, ergo, The Children of Believers are to be Baptiz'd: