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THE  
*Case of Baptism*  
CONSIDER'D,  
IN A  
SERMON

Preach'd in the  
CHURCH of *WYKE*,  
Near CHICHESTER,  
AT THE  
BAPTISM of Two Adult Persons.

By the Right Reverend Father in God,  
*JOHN WILLIAMS, D.D.*  
Late Lord Bishop of CHICHESTER.

L O N D O N:  
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4.



To the Reverend  
**Mr. JOHN WRIGHT,**  
CHANCELLOR and CANON-  
RESIDENTIARY of the  
Church of *Chichester.*

Reverend S I R,

**T**HE Sermon, and the short Case  
annexed, which you left with  
me, I have here sent you in  
Print. The Reason of their  
being Publish'd is Evident. The Sermon  
was preach'd by the late Lord Bishop of  
Chichester, in order to set right some in  
his Diocese, who were unhappily intang-  
led in the Errors which it refutes; and  
with the same Design both that and the  
Case were written out with his own  
Hand, and fitted for the Press, in order  
to their Publication. The Reason why  
they were not Publish'd sooner, I think  
fit to mention in your own Words, in the  
Letter which I lately receiv'd from you;

DEDICATION

viz. "We have deferr'd P  
" so long, in hope to have ad  
" some other of his Labour  
" every thing which he did  
" lue, and shew'd the Piety  
" ing and the Judgment wh  
" so eminent a degree in him  
" not found any thing besid  
" here publish'd, which had  
" last Hand." I heartily w  
have obliged the World for  
same way, and do join with  
seeching Almighty God, tha  
answer the End for which  
designed, bringing into the W  
such as have erred and are

Revere

Your Affectionate hun

Samuel



T H E  
**Cafe of Baptism**  
C O N S I D E R ' D.

---

I P E T. III. 21.

*The like figure whereunto, even Baptism,  
doth also now save us : not the putting  
away the filth of the flesh, but the an-  
swer of a good conscience towards God,  
by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.*



**I**N the 18<sup>th</sup> Verse, the Apostle  
saith of our Saviour, that he  
was *put to death in the flesh, but  
quickned by the Spirit* : and if  
it should be asked, by what  
Spirit he was quickned? It is  
answer'd, that it was by the same Spirit which  
*strove with Mankind before the Flood, and by* Gen. vi. 3.  
which Christ himself *also went, and preached  
unto the spirits in prison, that is, to those that  
were at that time, disobedient, when once the  
long-*

*long-suffering of God waited in them for their Repentance, while they were perishing in their View; wherein for Souls, were saved by water, i.*

Gen. vij. 18. *swimming upon the face of the appointed means for their Preservation.*

This said, the Apostle leadeth the Text to a Mystery contained in the Text *The like figure whereunto even Noah now save us. The like Figure, Antitype or Correspondent is that which bears a resemblance both to the Ark, and to the Flood. In like manner Noah and his Family were saved in like manner doth also now we are saved by that received into the Church, (as our Office of Baptism press it in allusion hereunto,) and are admitted to all the Privileges of the Covenant, and possess'd of all the Means to Salvation.*

So that the *Baptism which is now used is not a Baptism merely External, (as was used both by the Jews and Gentiles), not only a putting away of the flesh: but the washing of the heart with the renewing of the Holy Ghost; or the answer of our Apostle, the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the Resurrection*

Mark vij.

2, 4.

Tit. iij. 5.

*The Case of Baptism consider'd.*

3

In treating upon which Words, I shall shew,

1. What the Baptism is, which is here described by the Apostle, in the terms, *The like figure whereunto, even Baptism, doth also save us.*

2. Who are the Subjects of this Baptism; that are duly qualified for it, and that are *saved* by it.

3. The Use and Necessity of Baptism. It *doth save.*

4. What are the Obligations arising from this Baptism, implied in the Words, *The answer of a good Conscience towards God.*

1. I shall shew, what the Baptism is, described in the Text, where it is said to be *the answer of a good Conscience towards God.*

The Greek Word here used, and which our Translation renders *Answer*, is a Forinfecal Word, a Law-Term, and may be diversly rendred, it signifying, an *Answer, Profession, or Stipulation*; and in which sense soever we take it, has here a manifest Allusion to Christian Baptism, and to the manner of Administring it at that time in the Church; as will appear, if we reflect upon the several Significations of it, before hinted.

1. The Original Word signifies an *Answer*, which in the Nature of it implies an Enquiry, and the putting some Questions to which the Answer is made; and is therefore very properly



Epist. 76,  
& 80.

perly called by St. Cyprian, I  
tismi, *The Questioning or Exa*  
*tism.*

Acts viij.  
36, 37.

This was the Method used  
list *Philip*, at the Baptism  
who being instructed by his  
Principles of the Christian R  
appears) of the way of Ac  
Church by Baptism; when  
certain Water convenient for  
saith, *See here is Water, wh*  
*to be baptized?* *Philip repl*  
*vest with all thine heart, thou*  
is the Interrogation implied,  
expres'd; then follows the  
fession, *I believe that Jesus C*  
*God*; which is the Sum of the  
upon which *Philip* baptized

This way of Interrogatio  
been the Practice of those I  
to have been from thence  
Ages: And is therefore dese  
in our Church; where we  
gation in the Three Quest  
the Candidates for Baptism  
Answer is required: I me  
Abrenunciation, *Doest thou*  
*vil, and all his Works?* (2  
sion of their Faith, *Doest t*  
*Articles of the Christian Fai*  
Resolution of Obedience fo  
*thou abediently keep God's l*

*The Case of Baptism consider'd.*

5

*mandments, and walk in the same all the days of thy life? This Profession of Faith, and Promise of future Obedience, are plainly express'd by Just. Mart. Apol. 2. Whoever, saith he, are perswaded, and do believe these things taught by us to be true, and undertake that they can live so, are brought by us where Water is, and are regenerated after the same manner as we have been regenerated.*

So that we see Christian Baptism is very properly here called by our Apostle, *The Answer*, and accordingly well express'd in our Translation.

2. The Word here used implies also a *Profession*, that is, as aforesaid, a Profession of their Faith at Baptism; which is more particularly pointed to in the Phrase immediately following, *By the Resurrection of Jesus Christ*. In which Article of our Faith, it is usual in Scripture to comprehend all the other Articles of the Christian Religion, as That is necessary in itself to be believed, and is the great Confirmation of the whole; Christ by That being *declared to be the Son of God with Power*, Rom. j. 4. So Rom. x. 9. *If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus; and shalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raised him from the dead; thou shalt be saved.* That is, if thou doest sincerely believe the Christian Religion, and art ready to own it whatever thou sufferest for it; of which *the Resurrection of Jesus Christ* is both a necessary Article, and

B

ant

an undoubted Evidence, *Th*  
 And therefore the Apostle jo  
 ticle of Christ's Resurrectio  
*of a good Conscience towards God*  
 That to be an *Answer of a good*  
 Conscience rightly informed  
 surrection of Christ is believ  
 and professed at Baptism. *T*  
 He alludes, *Coloss. ij. 12. Be*  
*Baptism, wherein you are also*  
*through the faith of the operati*  
*hath raised him from the de*  
 Baptism you testify your B  
 Death and Resurrection.

3. The *Greek* Word here us  
 a *Stipulation, or Undertaking*  
 or *Promise*; by which a Per  
 self to perform whatever he  
 the Christian Religion. And  
 tism is very properly calle  
*Sponsio Salutis, the Engagem*  
 as it's a Means to it.

De Baptif-  
mo.

Now in which soever of th  
 we take the *Greek* Word in the  
 serves our Purpose; whether  
*Profession, or Stipulation*; sinc  
 these is herein requisite. F  
 time that the Person to be B  
 to the Interrogation, he doth  
 Christian Faith, and declare  
 obliged to the Performance of  
 of that Covenant, which he

*The Case of Baptism consider'd.*

7.

admitted into. With respect to the former, it's called by the \* Ancients the *Questioning at Baptism*; and a *Profession of Faith* †. With respect to the *Obligation*, it's called *the Promise, or Undertaking of Salvation* ||.

This is confirmed by the next Phrase, *A good Conscience towards God*: By which is not only signified the Sincerity of the Person, when he is thus desirous of Baptism, which is required; but is also a publick Declaration of his Faith, when it is towards, or to God. For then it is *the Answer of a good Conscience*, when it is made in the Assembly, in which God is more especially present; and where our Saviour promised to be, whenever Baptism was administred in his Name.

Acts viij.

37.  
εὐσέβη.

Mat. xvij.

20.

xxvij, 19,

20. compar.

To which publick Profession of Faith at the Administration of Baptism, St. Paul seems to refer, when he puts *Timothy* in mind of it.

1 Tim. vj.

12.

*Fight the good fight of Faith, &c. whereunto thou art called, and hast made a good profession before many witnesses.* That is, in other Words, according to thy Baptismal Vow, *Be not ashamed to confess the Faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his Banner against Sin, the World, and the Devil, and to continue his faithful Soldier and Servant to thy life's end, [as 'tis express'd in our Office of Baptism.]*

\* Aug. Epist. 107. Conc. Laod. Can. 46.

† Ambrose l. 2. de Initiandis, c. 2. Tom. 4. Cypr. Ep. ad Januar. Hieron. contr. Lucif.

|| Tertul. de Bapt.

Upon the Whole, You see the Phraseology and Manner used by the Apostle in the Practice of the Primitive Church, in the Admission of Communion by Baptism, when ministr'd in the Congregation, as the Circumstances of the Time; when the Candidates make a Solemn Profession of Faith, and engage themselves to undertake all that a Christian is oblig'd to of his Profession, as aforesaid.

2<sup>d</sup> General. Who are the proper Subjects of Baptism, or the Persons duly qualified for it?

I Answer, They are such as are sensible of their Sin, and are brought to God by Faith and Repentance, and a firm Belief of the Christian Religion, and an Engagement of conforming to the same unto for the Time to come, in all things. And therefore these two were required of all Persons that offer'd themselves to Baptism. To give an Instance as to Faith, see it in the foregoing Example of the Eunuch ask'd *Philip*, *Said he, what doth hinder me to be baptiz'd?* He answer'd, *If thou believest with a pure Heart, thou mayest.* The *Ethiopian* also answer'd, and said, *I believe that Jesus is the Son of God.*

Acts viij.  
36, 37.

A like Instance have we of the other Qualification, *Repentance*, in the Convinced *Jews*, Acts ij 38. that who great Passion and Earnestness said to the Apostles, *Men and Brethren, what shall we do?* Peter said unto them, *Repent, and be baptized every one of you, &c.*

These are the Subjects and Persons qualified for Baptism: and these are the Qualifications to be enquired after of all Persons to be admitted thereunto; and without which they are not duly capable of it.

Their Faith and Repentance must, in the first Place, be enquired into; and That they are to give an Account of, when they present themselves to be baptized.

But then, what becomes of Infants, who by this account of Baptism seem not to be Subjects capable of it, because not capable of these necessary Qualifications of Faith and Repentance?

I Answer, That is not the Case immediately before us; for the present Occasion refers to that of adult and grown Persons: But however, this being the general Case of the Christian Church, wherein most are baptized in their Infancy, it may require a farther Answer. In order to which, I shall observe, that there are several Cases in which the Inferior is comprehended in the Superior. Such is the Case of Minors, or Persons under Age, who are reputed to act by their Guardians, who then answer and undertake for them that  
cannot

*The Case of Baptism*

cannot answer or undertake  
Such among the *Jews* were  
who were in many Particulars  
Genealogies, and Covenants  
Males and Husbands. Such  
dren, whether Sons or Daughters  
many Cases, but more especially  
ral Transactions between  
were comprehended in the  
when the Parents were by  
Covenant entitled to any Privilege  
were their Children entitled  
Parent in that Case undertake  
so is the Child obliged by  
Parent. Thus it was in the  
with *Adam* and *Noah*, but  
with *Abraham*; which was not  
but also with his Seed after  
every Male-Child was to be  
eight Days old, and thence  
reputed to be God's Child  
Covenant of the Parent, and  
as the Parents themselves were  
actual and voluntary Deeds  
Thus it was, *Deut. xxix. 10.*  
*this day all of you before the Lord*  
*all the men of Israel, your little children*  
*that thou shouldst enter into the*  
*Lord thy God.*

Ezek. xvj.  
20, 21.

Gen. xvij.  
7, &c.

So when the Apostle speaks  
Covenant, and of the Promise  
annexed to it, *Acts ij. 39.*

*The Case of Baptism consider'd.*

11

Argument and Encouragement, *Repent, and be baptized every one of you, for the remission of sins; for the promise is unto you, and to your children.*

From which Relation it is, that the Title passes from and by the Parent to the Child; and what the Parent is, that is the Child reputed to be; and what the Parent has by virtue of that Covenant, that is the Child also reputed to have. Thus the Apostle states the Point, in the Case put to him concerning the Cohabitation of a Christian married before to an Infidel or Heathen; which Cohabitation he there advises to upon several Considerations. 1 Cor. vii. 12, &c.

And whereas it might be thought that the Children born to them might suffer for the Infidelity of one Parent; he shews, that it is rather the contrary; for they are reputed Holy for the Faith of the other Parent, and are for that Reason capable of being admitted and taken into Covenant. For, saith he, *the unbelieving Husband is sanctified by the believing Wife; and the unbelieving Wife is sanctified by the believing Husband: else were your Children unclean, but now they are holy.* That is, if both the Parents had been Unbelievers, their Children had been *unclean*; having then no Title to the Covenant, and being incapable of it by a natural Incapacity; because, by reason of Nonage, they could not give an actual Consent. But now, when one Parent



rent was a Christian and virtually the same to the had been Believers: For in believer was, as it were, fa liever, and the Children Parents Sanctification. N file) *they are holy.*

But it may be said, If this is thus sanctified by the Covenant, then what need is t the Child, at least till it c Discretion, and is capable it self?

I Answer,

1. That Baptism is now on was heretofore; it is a M of Admission into Coven The Parent's Faith and Pro Baptism, as it did under the cision; but stands not inst withstanding the Children Circumcision by *Abraham's* sion; yet without they v Circumcised, they were n Covenant; and for the w Title they had to the Privi nant by being of his Fan void; as it is determined

*He that is born in thy ho  
bought with thy money, must  
sed: and my Covenant shall  
an everlasting Covenant. A*

*Jed Man-child, whose flesh of his fore-skin is not circumcised; that Soul shall be cut off from his People: he hath broken my Covenant. So much is required of the Profelyte, Exod. xij. 48. When a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the Passover to the Lord, let all his Males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof.* And the Case is the same under the Gospel, where Baptism is to us, what Circumcision was to them, a Means of Admission into Covenant; and alike necessary, as I shall shew.

2. I Answer farther, That the Parent's Faith and Profession, and his being in Covenant, answers only for that Part which Infants are not capable of, which is Profession and Stipulation, Faith and Repentance; but it answers not for that Part, which they are capable of, as Baptism. And therefore if there be a Capacity of their being taken into Covenant, by the Faith of their Parents, then they are for that Reason to be initiated and enter'd into it by Baptism, which they are capable of. And their Parents are alike oblig'd to bring them to Baptism for their Admission into Covenant; as to be Baptized themselves, if they had not been already Baptized. So it was when Circumcision was the Sign, and the Way of Admission into Covenant; and in like manner is it now, when

C

Baptism

Baptism is the Sign and  
tion.

3. A Covenant in the Nature  
a Sponſion and Stipulation,  
miſe and Agreement ; for w  
an Agreement is uſually c  
*Mat. xxvj. 15.* And therefore  
can be in Covenant, there n  
taking and Sponſion for the  
is no ſuch Covenanting but  
therefore if Children may  
and the Children of Believe  
be Holy or in Covenant by  
lation they have to ſuch P  
Children of ſuch muſt be I  
to it ; becauſe there is now  
pointed for Admiſſion into  
Baptiſm.

So that when the Apoſtle ſaith  
*your Children unclean, but*  
he thereby takes it for gran  
dren of ſuch were in Coven  
their Children ; provided th  
admitted into it by *the*  
*generation* in Baptiſm ; and ſo t  
*Tit. iij. 5.* *holy and clean.*

Now if this be ſo, that  
thus vertyally in the Parent,  
to be in Covenant by vert  
being in Covenant, then th  
to all the Privileges of that  
ſrequently to that which is

*The Case of Baptism consider'd.*

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mission into it. For if they have a Right to the greater, they have a Right to the less; if they have a Right to the Privileges of the Covenant (so far as that to them appertains *the Kingdom of God*, as our Saviour saith) they have a Right also to the Sign by which Persons are admitted into it; and a Sign which Children are as capable of as the Adult; and such is Baptism; which is (as I have said) the same to us as Circumcision heretofore was to *Abraham*, and to all his Seed and Descendants. Mar. x. 14.

From hence it will be manifest, that Children of Believers, or Christians, have a Right to Baptism upon the Faith and Profession, the Stipulation and Engagement of the Parent: and therefore if the Parent undertakes for them, it is in effect the same as if they themselves (were they capable) had of their own accord undertaken.

And the Case is much the same as to Sureties and Sponsors, that are either in the Place of the Parent, where there is none; or that are Undertakers with the Parent. So he that was born in *Abraham's house*, or bought with his money of a stranger, that is, a Slave, and had no Parent to take care of him (if a Child) was to be circumcised. The Master in that Case was the Common Sponsor for such of his Family as were under Age. So it is said of *Abraham*, *I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord.* Not only his Gen. xvij. 12, 13.  
Gen. xviii. 19.  
own

own Childern, but all that we were thus brought, and to be venant, by the Special Diremand of God ; whether they Adult, (as will more fully a

3<sup>d</sup> General is to shew the ty of Baptism ; that is, of E which *doth also now save us*, pointed thereto.

In order to which, I sh

Matthew  
xxviiij. 19.  
Acts ij. 38,  
41.

1. That Baptism was first Saviour as the Way of Ad Church. And therefore tho tized were said to be *adde* For the Church is a Visible requires a Visible Sign of A to the Society of which t made Members.

2. Baptism is now mad Condition of the New Cov the Privileges of it, *viz.* t Sin, the *Gift of the Spirit*, a

1. *Forgiveness of Sin.* S were pricked at the Heart Acts ij. 38. *Men and Brethren, what sha* Apostle replies, *Repent, and one of you, for the remission of* if Baptism had not been nece nefs, it would have been

said, Repent every one of you for the Forgiveness of Sin; but when he saith, *Repent, and be baptized every one of you, for remission of sins*; It shews that one is necessary as well as the other; and that in the ordinary Way they could no more be forgiven without Baptism, by which they were to be admitted into Covenant, than without Repentance. Therefore *Ananias* for that Reason presses it upon *Saul*, *Now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins.*

Acts xxij.  
16.

2. Baptism is made the Condition of Receiving the Holy Spirit. So the Apostle *St. Peter* in the abovesaid Place, *Repent, and be baptized every one of you— and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.* Where it is not only to be understood of the Extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, but of the Ordinary. For the Apostle promises it to all, without any difference, *Repent, and be baptized every one of you— and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*— And not only they, the Three Thousand converted at that time; but also all that hereafter should be converted and baptized, they and their Children, and all that were afar off, *all that shall be a long time hereafter.*

Acts ij. 38,  
39.

Πᾶσι τοῖς  
εἰς μακροῦ

Baptism

3. Baptism is also made Everlasting Life. So *Mark* believeth, and is baptized, *John* this our Saviour was very For when he had said, *John* man be born again, he cannot God: He explains himself be born of water, and of the Spirit, to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. No Person cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven without being born of the Spirit, without he be born of Water. This is the Title which he gave him a Title to it. *Except* a man be born of Water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. *Except* a man be born of the Spirit, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.

3. The Necessity of Excommunication  
 ther appears,

1. In that Persons were baptized in the chief Principle of Faith, but they were desirous to be encouraged in it, or by their Teachers. So *saith* the *Scripture*, *What doth hinder me, &c.* So *Ananias* to *Saul*; *Now, Arise, and be baptized.*

2. They were no sooner Christians, but they were immediately baptized; or upon the first day of the Week. So the *Three Thousand* converted, the *Samaritans*, *Lydia* and *the Eunuch*, which last it is particularly

*Acts* viij.  
36.  
*Acts* xxij.  
16.

*Acts* ij.41.  
viiij.12.  
ix. 18.  
xvj.15,33.

tized in that *very Hour* at Mid-night, *v. 25.*  
straightway, *v. 33.*

I grant that in those Times there was often a present Reason for that Expedition; as it was with the *Eunuch*, who was upon his Journey homewards, as far as *Ethiopia*: So when the Apostels and Teachers were not to continue in the Place, as was the Case with the Jailor; or when the Persons baptized were immediately upon it call'd to some special Service, as was the Case of *Saul*, *Act. ix. 20.* But then this shews the Importance and Necessity of it. For what else could be the Reason of this haste in the Disciples and Converts to desire, and in the Apostles to encourage and require it? They were certainly sensible of the Duty and Advantage of it; of the Duty, as it was a Divine Institution; and of the Advantage, as it was the appointed Way for Admission into the Church, and which intitled them to all the Privileges of the New Covenant, and so was by no means to be neglected. From whence it is, that we do not find one Instance of the Delay of it in the Word of God; but on the contrary it was administred in *the same hour, straightway,* (as abovesaid.)

3. From the same Reason was it, that there were no Christians but what were actually baptized: So that to be *baptized into Jesus*, was the Character of a Christian. And of this we have an Instance beyond all Exception,

Rom.vj. 3<sup>d</sup>  
Gal. iij. 27<sup>d</sup>



A<sup>cts</sup> x.44,  
47.

ception, in those First-fr  
that upon the Preachin  
instant received the Ho  
yet after that command  
giving that as a Reason  
would have to be a Re  
Baptism ; *Can*, saith he,  
*that these should not be b*  
*ceived the Holy Ghost as*  
the Apostle supposes  
be some, who would in  
Water-Baptism to those P  
had already received th  
Ghost, which ordinarily  
the Consequent of Bapti  
said) what need would t  
Baptism, when they had  
by it, and were baptized  
What need would there  
when they were already  
End ? But the Apostle r  
wise. *Can any man forbid*  
he supposes Baptism to b  
Case necessary ? And wh  
but because it was by our  
stitution, the way of  
Church ? And 'tis as mu  
had said, Surely now th  
sufficient Title to Baptism  
made Members of Chri  
have already received the  
as we ; without any diffic

*40*