



# **SPECIAL NOTE**

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A B. A. B. 11 (2)

# TREATISE

OF

(2)

Laying on of Hands.

WITH THE

# HISTORY

THEREOF,

Both from the Scripture and Antiquity.

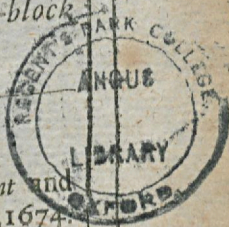
Wherein an Account is given how it hath  
been practised in all Ages since *Christ*,  
the mistakes about it rectified, and the  
sense of *Heb. 6. 2.* cleared.

By H. D'ANVERS.

*Isa. 57. 14. Take up the stumbling-block  
out of the way of my People.*

L O N D O N,

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A

# TREATISE

OF

## Laying on of Hands.

**H**AVING given you an Account, both <sup>The Intro-</sup> from Scripture and Antiquity, of <sup>duction.</sup> the business of Baptism in its Institution, Subject, Manner, End, It may neither be unnecessary nor unprofitable to give you here some Account of that of Laying on of Hands, not only because it immediately follows that of Baptisms, Heb. 6. 1, 2. more especially; because for Confirmation, as hath been called, it hath been next after Baptism, so solemnly asserted, practised, and used both in former and latter times, as an Ordinance of Christ, and Essentially necessary Church-Communion. But what this laying on of Hands is, and how that of Confirmation is founded upon the Word of God, we shall consider and examine, and recommend to the judgment of all discerning and impartial Christians.



# A Treatise of laying on of hands.

The Method observed.

The Method I shall observe herein, shall be, first to give you an Account what we find of this Rite in the *New Testament*. Secondly How asserted and Practised by the *Ancients* with the *Opinions* of the *Fathers* and *Decrees* of *Councils* upon it. Thirdly How Practised and enjoyed by the *Church of Rome*. Fourthly, How by the *Church of England*. Fifthly, How asserted by some of the *Presbyterian* and *Independent* perswasion. Sixthly And how practised and enjoyed by several of the *Baptised Churches* in this Nation, with some remarks upon each of them for the better discovery of Truth.

1. How asserted in this New Testament.

1. Benediction.  
Miraculous healings.

1. How laying on of Hands is used in the New Testament.

First, in Benediction, Mark 10. 16. He took the young Children up in his Arms, put his Hands upon them, and blessed them.

Secondly, In the Cure of Diseases and healing the sick, Mark 6. 5. And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his Hands upon a few sick folks and healed them. Acts 19. 11. 12. In my Name they shall cast out Devils, they shall speak with New Tongues, they shall take up Serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; They shall lay Hands on the sick and they shall recover, Acts 28. 8. And it came to pass, that the Father Publius lay sick of a Feaver and of a Bloody Flux, to whom Paul entered in and prayed, and laid his Hands on him and healed him.

3. For extraordinary Gifts.

1. Before Baptism.

Thirdly, For the conferring the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit. viz,

1. Before Baptism, Acts 9. 17. And A

As he went his way and entered into the House, and putting his Hands on him said, brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me that thou mightst receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost, and immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been Scales, and he received sight forthwith and rose and was Baptised.

2. After Baptism, Acts. 8. 14. 15. &c. Now when the Apostles which were at Jerusalem, heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John, who when they were come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost, for as yet it was fallen upon none of them, only they were baptised in the Name of the Lord Jesus. Then laid they their Hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. And when Simon saw that through laying on of the Apostles Hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, saying, give me also this Power that on whomsoever I lay Hands they may receive the Holy Ghost, but Peter said, thy Money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money, &c.

2. After Baptism.

Fourthly, In Ordination or setting apart to Office, viz. Acts 6. 6. whom they set before the Apostles (viz. the seven Deacons the Church had chosen) and when they had prayed and laid their hands on them, and the Word of God increased, &c.

4. Ordination.  
1. Deacons

1. Tim. 4. 14. Neglect not the Gift which is in thee that was given thee by Prophecy with the laying on of Hands of the Presbytery. 2 Tim. 1. 6. Wherefore I put thee in Remembrance

2. Elders.



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that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee, by the putting on of my hands. 1. Tim. 5. 2. Lay hands suddenly on no Man, neither be partaker of other men sins, keep thy self pure.

3 Messengers.

Acts 13. 3. And when they (viz. the Elders Teachers of Antioch had Fasted and Prayed and laid their hands on them [viz. Paul and Barnabas] they sent them away.

In which Scriptures, speaking of this Rite we may take notice of these things.

1. First, the several kinds of it, viz. Blessing, Benediction, Healing, Ordination, and giving of the Spirit.

2. Secondly, what called, viz. Laying of hands.

3. Thirdly, the Subjects, viz. Little Children, Sick Persons, and such upon whom the Spirit had not fallen, and Church-Officers.

4. Fourthly, the Administrators, viz. Christ Jesus himself anygifted Believers, the Elders or Prebyters, The gift of Apostles.

5. Fifthly, the end, to Bless little Children, give Miraculous healing. And for Extraordinary gifts of the Spirit to confirm the Gospel. And for Ordination of Church-Officers.

2 How by the Ancients.

Dionysius.

Secondly, How asserted by the Ancients, and by the Canons and Decrees of several Councils.

Dionysius the Areopagite Paul's Convert at Athens, supposed to be the first Writer about the year 70. in his Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, cap. de Bapt. saith, After Baptism let the Sacrament of Confirmation be adjoynd with Vnction.

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ben let the Eucharist be given, Contemp. 3.  
Term. 8.

Pope Clement in his fourth Epistle, saith, P. Clement  
Let them be Baptized, and then Consigned by the  
Bishop for the Holy Spirit, for without Confir-  
mation no perfection. Joseph, Vice comes De Bapt.  
Ritibus p. 369. c. 18.

Justin Martyrs Responses 137. Quest. saith, Justin  
After Baptism we are to anoint with Holy Chrism Martyr  
for Spiritual benefit, Vice com. ch. 28. p. 369.

Pope Hyginus in his decree, as saith Gracian P. Hygi-  
nus.  
Osiand. Cent, 2. l. 2, c. 5. saith, in Cate-  
chism, Baptism, and Confirmation, let there be a  
Gossip if necessity require.

Pope Calixtus, Anno. 218. Ordained Confir- P. Calixtus  
mation to be performed with Chrism, Flores  
Temporum confes. Fabo. c. 7.

Pope Urban, in his decretal Epistle, enjoins, P. Urban.  
that the Sacrament of Confirmation be immedi-  
ately given after Baptism, and that all the faith-  
ful are to wait for the Spirit by the imposition of  
the hands of the Bishop, Vice co. c. 38. p. 370.

Pope Melchiades, or Meltiades about 310 P. Melchi-  
ades.  
Ordained Imposition of hands as necessary to  
perfect Baptism, And in his Universal De-  
cretal Epistle, answering the Question, which  
of the Sacraments, Baptism or Confirmation was  
of grater Efficacy and Vertue, saith, they are to  
be joined together, there being such Affinity be-  
twixt them, that one is not to be done without  
the other; neither of them being perfect alone,  
Vice comes p.

Pope Eusebius in his decretal Epistle calls P. Eusebius.  
Imposition of hands a Sacrament which was not  
Lawful to be administred but by the Bishop. Magd.  
Cen.



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Cen. 4. p. 478. Also in his Epistle to the Bishop of Tusca, prefers laying on of hands of Confirmation before Baptism, Mag. Cen. 4. c. 7. p. 581.

Cyprian.

Cyprian in his 37 Epistle to Jubajan saith that Baptism is consummated by the Sacrament of Confirmation. And again in Ep. 72. lcv. If Persons are fully sanctified, and may be sons of God if they be born of both Sacraments, viz. Baptism and Confirmation, Vice. com. p. 370.

Ambrose.

Ambrose after the Font or Baptism, let there be perfection or Confirmation, for so he calls imposition of hands, Lib. 2. c. 7.

Jerom.

Jerom advers. Lucif. Contending for the Rite of the Church, saith, And do not you know that it is the Custom of the Church, that upon the Baptised, hands should be imposed, Mag. Cent. 4. p. 420.

Augustin.

Augustin; That Imposition of hands after Baptism, was necessary for the gifts of the Spirit. And that if Ignorant Infants be brought to be Baptised, let them Answer for them that brought them, and being Baptised let them be Confirmed and Anointed with holy Chrysme, and so let them receive the Eucharist, Lib. de Eccle. Dogm. Vice comes, c. 28. p. 371.

P. Inno-  
cent.

Pope Innocent in his first Ep. 22. Macedon. c. 5. Shews how impious and Sacrilegious it is to repeat the Baptism of Infants or Adults and how requisite to lay hands on the Baptised, after the Example of Peter and John, Act. 8. 17. and Paul 19. 6. Vice comes c. 3 p. 376.

Isidore.

Isidore saith, that Imposition of hands do belong not to the Bishops Vicars, but to the Bishops.

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shops themselves; And the Reason he renders is, because that none of the 70 Disciples who represented the Apostles, had power by laying on of hands to give the Spirit, Magdeburg. Cent. 6. p. 675.

Haimo upon Hebrews 6. saith, Imposition Haintō. of hands is called Confirmation, which by the Spirit is received, and after Baptism confirms the Unity of the Church, and that Children as well as Adult were to partake thereof, Mag. Cen. 9.

Rabanus Maurus Lib. 1. Inst. Cler. c. 30. saith, Rabanus. That there are two laying on of hands, one by the Priest in Baptism, the other by the Bishop in Confirmation, as Christ gave the Spirit by blowing upon them before the Resurrection and after upon the day of Pentecost.

## Canons and Decrees of Councils.

In the Council of Laodicea in Phrygia Pa- C. Laod. catiana, held under P. Sylvester, the first of that Name, Bishop of Rome, about 315. It was decreed in the 48 Canon, that the Baptised ought to receive after Baptism the most sacred Chrysm, and be made partakers of the Heavenly Kingdom. Vice com. p. 371.

In the Council of Eliberis in Spain, held C. Elibe- 305. under Pope Mercellius. It was decreed in the 38 Canon. That such as sayled into strange Countries



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Countries, or if a Church be not near at hand, a Believer if he hath Baptism intire, viz. Baptism and Confirmation, and have not two Wives, may Baptise a Catechumen in case of necessity through sickness, but so that if he Recover, he bring him to the Bishop that he may be perfected by Imposition of Hands, and Canon 77. If any Deacon shall without a Presbyter Baptise, the Bishop ought by blessing to perfect or Confirm them.

c. carth.

In the 4. Council of Carthage under P. Innocent the first, about 418. It was decreed that there should be Imposition of hands for the Absolving the Penitent, Vicler. L. 2. de persecut. Vandal.

c. Spalen.

The Council of Spalencia, ordained that the Baptised were to have hands laid upon them and to be signed with Chrism, and that the Bishops onely were to perform it, Magdeb. Cen. 7. p. 148.

c. Bracerens

The Council of Bracerens c. 7. Commanded that a little Balsam should be put into the Consecrated Oyl, and that no less Reverence should be paid to this Ceremony, than to Baptism it self. Mag. Cen. 7. p. 148.

c. constant.

The Council of Constantinople chap. 7. That none were to be admitted to Confirmation but those that were instructed by Catechism, and could say the Creed and Lords Prayer by heart. Mag. Cen. 7. p. 148.

c. cabil.

The Council of Cabilonesis, Cap. 6. In the time of Pope Eugenius, Decreed that the Baptism of the Adult should presently, if Infants after some years of understanding, be confirmed with

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with Consignation and Chrysm and that Confirmation should not be reiterated, Magd. Cent. 8: P. 350.

In the Gallican Council it was decreed, That Gallican. when the Bishop goes his Canonical Circuit to Confirm, that the Priests be always ready for his Assistance, and that there be Gossips as well in this, as in Baptism; and that the confirmed have his hair cut, Mag. Cent. 8. p. 350.

The Council of Trent, about Confirmation, c. Trent. Decreed.

1. That whosoever said it was an Idle Ceremony not a Sacrament properly, or that it was formerly used that Children might give an Account of their Faith. 2. That to ascribe Vertue to Chrysm was to wrong the holy Spirit. 3. That every simple Priest is the ordinary Minister for Confirmation and not the Bishop onely, should be accursed. Olian. Cent. 16. p. 417.

By which sayings of the Ancients, Canons, and Decrees of Councils, it appears they had early set a foot something for an Ordinance of the Church enjoyned to be Practised after Baptism, and whereof we give you this brief account from them.

First, As to the Name by which it was called, 1. Name, viz. Confirmation. 2. Anointing or Chrysm. 3. Imposition of hands. 4. Perfection.

I. Con-



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1. Confirmation, because both *Baptism* and the *Unity* of the Church was thereby confirmed.  
 2. *Chrysm* or anointing, because Oyl mingled with Balsam, the thing used herewith in imitation of the *holy Oyl* used of old. 3. *Imposition* of hands in allusion to the Apostles practise, *Act. 8. 19.* who laid on hands for the Spirit ( though this could not properly be so called, because it was but crossing the Forehead with the Finger. ) 4. *Perfection*, because they esteemed Baptism imperfect without it, therefore for the first times they used to practise it together.

2. Ground. 2. As to the *Grounds* upon which it was practised, viz. as an *Apostolical Tradition* handed to them from the *Apostles times* by the Eminent Doctors of the three first Centuries, upon whose Authority it was practised, till confirmed by the Councils before mentioned, viz. *Laodicea, Eliberis, &c.*

3. Manner. 3. As to the *Manner* of performing it, viz. by *Crossing* and anointing the Forehead of the Confirmed party, with Oyl and *Chrysm*.

4. Admin. 4. As to the *Administrators*, viz. onely a Bishop to whom in an especial manner it was entailed, its being unlawful for any other to do it from *Peter* and *Johns* being sent by the Church of *Jerusalem*, to impose hands which *Philip* did not do.

5. Subjects. 5. As to the *Subjects*, viz. All Baptised persons who were either Adult, or Infants, immediately

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mediately, or afterwards, Baptised Infants at years of discretion. The *Adult* were first the Catechumens, who were either the Children of Heathen that inclined to Christianity, or the Children of Christians newly come to the Faith, who to their compleating in Christianity, were to take these five steps, thus known and distinguished.

1. They were to be *Catechised*, taught and <sup>1. Adult.</sup> instructed, and then were called the *Catechumeni*.
2. Upon their propounding themselves to *Baptism*, were called the *Competentes*.
3. Being admitted to *Baptism*, were called the *Illuminati* or *initiati*.
4. After *Baptism* being confirmed, were called the *Perfecti*.
5. After *Confirmation* and receiving the *Eucharist*, they were called the *Fideles*.

Or, 2. Infants who were for the 4, 5, 6 and <sup>2. Infants</sup> 7. Cent. the Subjects of it, and with *Baptism*, <sup>presently.</sup> did receive *Confirmation* and the *Eucharist* immediately, and so esteemed *perfect* and compleat Christians, then it began to be deferred for a week after *Baptism*, the Children wearing the *Baptismal* white Garment all the week, and upon the 8 day *Baptism* was perfected by *Confirmation*, as saith *Raban. Maurus L. Inst. Cler.* c. 30.

Or, 3. Such Infants who after they had been <sup>3. Persons</sup> Baptised, did arrive to knowledge and discretion, <sup>Baptized in</sup> and were able to say the *Lords Prayer*, *Ten Com-* <sup>Infancy in</sup> <sup>their Adult</sup> *mandments*, and *Creed* by heart, as appears by <sup>state.</sup> some of those latter Councils.

And



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And the reason of the said Alteration, as saith *Vicecom.* p. 378. was because about *Charles* the first's time, in the 8 Cent. Adult Baptism, did very much wear off. The People for the most part being now *Christians*, their Children became so *numerous*, that the Bishop found it too hard a task to perform his part.

Therefore they appointed certain *Visitations*, especially at *Easter* and *Whitsontide*, to confirm those in their *Diocesses*, that having been Baptised in *Infancy*, were able to give an Account of their *Faith*, which, saith *Vicecomes*, was Practised in several places in the Latin Church.

6. The End. 6. As to the End of this Rite, viz. For the giving of the Spirit, and conferring of Grace, to perfect and confirm imperfect Baptism, and therefore esteemed a Sacrament of greater force and Vertue than Baptism it self, and therefore to be done with Oyl, Typing, Figuring, or Signing the Spirit.

7. Ceremonies.

7. As to the Ceremonies, they were divers, viz. The party to be confirmed was to be in white Garments, his head bound up in Linnen, the hair of the head to be Cut, and to have Gossips to undertake for them.

8. The Order.

8. As to the Order of administering it, viz. especially after Baptism (though some of the *Catechumens* in Imitation of *Ananias* his imposing hand upon *Paul* Act. 9. had it before.) and then had they an immediate right given them to partake of the *Eucharist*, without

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which they could not be admitted to partake thereof.

9. As to the *Form* in which the Bishop administered it, viz. in these words, I *Sign* thee with the *Sign* of the *Cross*, and *confirm* thee with the *Chrysm* of Salvation in the Name of the *Father*, *Son*, and *holy Spirit*. *The Form.*

## The Usage of the Church of Rome.

The Church of Rome observed the very same *Church of Rome.* Order and manner with the same rites and Ceremonies, to the same ends and upon the same ground as an *Apostolical Tradition*, which the former Centuries had done; only whereas there began to be some space betwixt the *Infants Baptism*, and their *Confirmation*, that they for the most part especially in the latter Centuries have performed them together.

Contarenus, *Lib. de Sacrament.* a great Popish *Contarenus.* Writer, saith, that *Thomas Aquinas* thought that this Sacrament ought to be given to very Young Infants, because they obtain more Grace and therefore more Glory, which custom, saith he, we have kept, leaning upon the Authority of so great a Man. *Aq. part 3. Q. 72. Ar. 8.*

*Didoclavius* saith, in *Altar. Damasc.* Many think it to be expedient rather in the time of Infancy, because the *Infant-Age* is not capable of *Fiction*, whereby the effect of the Sacrament may



may be hindred, and that the Antient use of the Church favours that Opinion.

*Ordo Rom.* In the *Ordo Romanis*, An old Popish Missal, it is Recorded, that the Bishop having seated himself in the Church, the Arch-Deacon holding the Chrysm, the Priest presents the Baptised Infants with their Names to the Bishop, who dipping his Finger in the Oyl, and Crossing every one in the Forehead, saith, I Sign thee with the Sign of the Cross, and Confirm thee with the Chrysm of Salvation in the Name of the Father, Son and Spirit; and which Rite they say is confirmed by the Act of the Apostles and opinion of the Fathers from the Scriptures, viz. Acts 8. 17. Acts 19. 6. and Heb. 6. 2. and called Confirmation, because the Unity of the Church was confirmed by the Bishop, as saith Ambrose upon Heb. 6. Haimo and Ansel. Joseph Vice comes, c. 30. p. 375.

*C. Trent.*

The Council of Trent, as before decreed, That whosoever should say that Children should first give an account of their Faith before Confirmation should be accursed.

*Bellar.*

Bellarmino de Sacrament. L. c. 11. saith, That Confirmation confers greater Grace than Baptism; neither can Baptism be perfected without it.

And again Tom. 2. saith, Confirmation is to confer Grace that maketh acceptable, and to strengthen the soul against the Assaults of the Devil, and to be enroled thereby the servants of Christ.

And again in the same Tom. 2. That it is more perfect than Baptism it self, for whereas Baptism may be administred by Ordinary Priests or Deacons, yea even women themselves in case of necessity, this is not to be performed but by the holy hands of a Bishop.

## The Usage of the Church of England.

The Church of England, though they lop off *Chur. of*  
many of the Ancient and *Popish Superstitions Engl;*  
and Ceremonies herein; yet do they retain the  
thing, viz. Confirmation after Baptism by a  
Bishop onely, and the Subjects, viz. Baptized  
Children, able to say their Catechism, accor-  
ding to the Decrees of the Council of Con-  
stance, and the Galican Councils before-menti-  
oned. The whole Rite and Ceremony thereof,  
with what appertains thereto, you have at  
large in the *Engl. Liturgy*, in the *Rubrick*; the  
Substance whereof you may please to take as fol-  
loweth.

The Order of Confirmation or  
Laying on of Hands upon Chil-  
dren Baptized, and able to ren-  
der an Account of their Faith ac-  
cording to the *Catechism*.

TO the end that Confirmation may be admi-  
nistrated to the more edifying of such as shall  
receive it (according to St. Paul's Doctrine, who  
teacheth that all things should be done in the  
Church to the Edification of the same) it is  
thought good that none hereafter shall be confirm-  
ed.



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ed, but such as can say in their Mother-Tongue the Articles of the Faith, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and can also answer to such Questions of the short Catechism as the Bishop (or such as he shall appoint) shall, by his discretion oppose him; and this Order is most convenient to be observed, for divers Considerations;

First, Because that when Children come to the years of Discretion, and have learned what their Godfathers and Godmothers promised for them in Baptism, they may then themselves, with their own mouth, and with their own consent, openly before the Church, ratifie and confirm the same, and also promise that by the Grace of God, they will ever more endeavour themselves faithfully to observe and keep such things as they, by their own mouths and Confession, have assented unto.

Secondly, Forasmuch as Confirmation is ministered to them that are Baptized, that by Imposition of hands and Prayer, they may receive strength and defence against all Temptations to Sin, and the Assaults of the World and the Devil, it is most meet to be ministered when Children come to that Age, that partly by the frailty of their own Flesh, partly by the Assaults of the World and the Devil they begin to be in danger to fall into sundry kinds of Sin.

Thirdly, For that it is agreeable with the Usage of the Church in times past; whereby it was ordained that Confirmation should be ministered to them that were of perfect Age; that they being instructed in Christ's Religion, should openly profess their own Faith, and promise to be obedient to the Will of God.

The Order it self, this following Prayer being said,

**A** Almighty and everlasting God, who hast vouchsafed to regenerate these thy Servants by Water, and the Holy Ghost, and hast given unto them forgiveness of all their sins, strengthen them, We beseech thee, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost the Comforter, and daily encrease in them thy manifold Gifts of Grace, the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of counsel and ghostly strength the Spirit of knowledge and true Godliness, and fill them, O Lord, with the Spirit of thy Holy Fear, Amen.



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Then shall the Bishop lay his *hand upon every*  
*Child severally, saying,*

**D**Efend, O Lord, this  
 Child with thy Heav-  
 enly Grace, that he may  
 continue thine for ever, and  
 daily encrease in thy Holy  
 Spirit more and more, until  
 he come into thy everlasting  
 Kingdom, Amen.

Then shall the Bishop say,

**A** Almighty and everlast-  
 ing God, Which maketh  
 us both to Will and to  
 do those things that be good  
 and acceptable unto thy Ma-  
 jesty, We make our hum-  
 ble supplications unto thee  
 for these Children, upon  
 Whom, after the example of  
 the Holy Apostles, We have  
 laid our hands, to certifie  
 them

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them ( by this Sign ) of thy  
Favour and Gracious Good-  
ness towards them, let thy  
Fatherly Hand, we beseech  
thee, be over them, let thy  
Holy Spirit ever be with  
them, and so lead them in the  
knowledge and obedience of  
thy Word, that in the end they  
may obtain the everlasting  
Life, through our Lord Je-  
sus, who with thee and the  
Holy Ghost, liveth and reign-  
eth, one God, world without  
end, Amen.

Then the Bishop shall *bleſſ* the Children,  
ſaying,

*The Bleſſing of God Almighty,  
the Father, Son and Holy  
Ghoſt, be upon you and remain  
with you for ever and ever,  
Amen.*



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After are added these Directions relating to  
Confirmation, viz.

That the Curate of every Parish, or some other at his appointment, shall diligently on Sunday and Holy-days half an hour before Evening-Prayer, openly in the Church, instruct and examine so many Children of his Parish sent unto him, as the time will serve, and as he shall think convenient, in some part of this Catechism.

And all Fathers, Mothers, Masters and Dame shall cause their Children, Servants and Apprentices (which have not learned their Catechism) to come to the Church at the time appointed, and obediently to hear and be ordered by the Curate, until such time as they have learned all that is here appointed for them to learn; and whensoever the Bishop shall give knowledge for Children to be brought before him to any convenient place for their Confirmation, then shall the Curate of every Parish either bring or send in writing the Names of all those Children of his Parish which can say the Articles of the Faith, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments; and also how many of them can answer to the other Questions contained in this Catechism.

And there shall none be admitted to the Holy Communion until such time as he can say the Catechism, and be confirmed.

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Dr. Cave, in his late *Primitive Christianity*, Dr. Cave.  
upon the Subject, faith of our English Confirmation, That almost exactly according to the *Primitive usage*, it is still retained and practised in our Church at this day; and happy were it for us, were it kept up in its due power and vigour: Sure I am that many of our chiefest Breaches and Controversies in Religion, do, if not wholly, in a great measure, owe their Birth and Rise to the neglect and contempt of this excellent Usage of the Church, p. 219.

Concerning which Rite, as used by the Church of England, we observe,

1. The Name given it, viz. Confirmation.
2. The Subjects, viz. Children Baptized in their Infancies, that are taught their Catechism, and are able to say the Creed, Lord's Prayer, and Ten Commandments in the English Tongue.
3. The Administrators, a Bishop only, and therefore the Ceremony was so vulgarly called *Bishoping*.
4. The Force and manner, as express'd by the Bishop's putting the hand upon the Head of the Children, and saying that Form of words directed.
5. The Ends, as declared, viz. 1. To confirm Infants Baptized, and the Promise of the Sureties made for them therein. 2. To give the Spirit for the encrease of Grace, and strength against Temptations. 3. To confirm the Unity and Order of the Church, and orderly to admit them therein.
6. The Time when administered; betwixt



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their *Baptism* and the *Supper*, as soon as they can say their *Catechism*.

7. The *Grounds* upon which they assert; viz. The *Usage* of the *Antient Church*, *Decrees* of *Councils*, *Apostles Practice*.

Performed by them with very little *Reverence* or *Caution*, either how or upon whom they do it, saith *Mr. Hanmer* and *Mr. Baxter*.

*Mr. Hanmer*, p. 42. Though they deem it to be of some weight and consequence, yet as used by them, it is little less than ridiculous, a meer vain and empty Ceremony; or (as the *Saxon-Confession* terms the *Romish Sacrament* of Confirmation) *Inanis Umbra*, an Empty Shadow; and *Hommius*, a vain Invention of Superstitious men.

*Mr. Baxter*, In his Book Of Confirmation, p. 155. saith, To his knowledge it was done by the best of them in a careless budling way, mumbling over a few gormal Prayers upon persons that they knew not whether they were Christians or Infidels, or that they did so much as know there was a God.

In the Fifth place, We come to give you an Account how this Rite hath been asserted and pleaded by some, both of the Independent and Presbyterian Perswasion; so especially by *Mr. Jonathan Hanmer*, in his Book called Confirmation the Ancient way of compleating Church Members: Written with great applause in the year 1657. And *Mr. Baxter*, in confirmation thereof, in his Book called Confirmation and Restoration the necessary means of Re-

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formation and Reconciliation: Who do therein undertake to prove the necessity of Confirmation, a laying on of the hands of the Presbytery for the confirming and compleating Infants-Baptism, perfecting their Church-membership upon their Profession and Confession of Faith, and which they endeavour to make good by this five-fold Argument.

1. By Scripture. 2. By the Testimony of Fathers. 3. By Councils. 4. By the Judgment and Practice of the Waldenses. 5. By the Judgment of many of the Reformed Divines.

## I. As to Scripture.

The main Scripture he insists on to prove this Confirmation by ( and which as modestly said, is a probable ground for the same ) is that of Heb. 6. 2. *And laying on of Hands.* Where, as urged, it is made one of the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ. Where,

1. Its Place is to be taken notice of; being next after Baptism, and as it were, an Appendix thereof, and for the most part immediately following it in such Adult as were baptized, and the next Priviledge in the Church as such did enjoy who were baptized in Infancy.

2, Because the best Interpreters do usually understand this of one or more of the three Particulars that Imposition of hands hath relation to, viz.

1. Of the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost, which was conferr'd at first upon many new Converts by the laying on of the Apostles hands, Acts 8. 17, 19.

2. Of



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2. Of the Officers of the Church who were ordained and set apart unto their Offices by Prayer and Imposition of hands. This Pareus in *Heb. 6. 1. Initiata erat Doctrina de Donis Spiritualibus & Ministerio Ecclesiae*; It was an Initial Doctrine concerning Spiritual Gifts and the Ministry of the Church, *Ames. in Bellarm. Enervat.* By Imposition of Hands is meant the whole Ministry; *Per Impositionem Manuum Ministerium totum intelligitur.*

3. Of the Confirmation of such who had been Baptized, who before the Church made a Profession of Faith, the Adult before Baptism, the Baptized Infant before Confirmation. So Piscator, Beza, Rivet, Doctors of Leyden, Anselm, Calvin, Hyperius, Illyricus, Mr. Deering upon the place. By these and other Expositors, it is said, is this place of Scripture understood, in part at least, of Imposition of Hands in Confirmation; which therefore in their apprehension, is warranted by it, as a Doctrine Fundamental that ought to be known by all, and a thing practised by, and taking its Rise from the Apostles. And,

2. By Testimony of Faith.

II. That it was also an Apostolical Practice received by the Church in after-Ages, *Cassander* (that Learned Papist, and so well vers'd in the Ancients, even to Miracle) tells us, *Semper in Ecclesia religiosissime observatum fuisse*, To have been always most religiously observed in the Church; and therefore have you an Account thereof from many of the Fathers, viz. *Dionys. Areopag. Clem. Roman. Justin Martyr's Responses, Tertullian, Cyprian, Ambrose;*

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brase, Jerom, &c. Which being all before mentioned, we need not repeat. And;

III. The Decrees of *Councils*, confirming <sup>3. Dec. of</sup> Confirmation to have been an *Ancient and General Practice* in the Churches of Christ; of which two only are mentioned, viz. The *Laod.* before recited, about the year 300, and the *Council of Eliberis* in *Spain*, in 305. And,

IV. By the Judgment and Practice of the <sup>4. wald.</sup> *Waldenses*; who received it as an *Apostolical Practice*. Institution, as appears by their *Apology* and *Confession of Faith* exhibited to *Uladislaus K.* of *Hungary*, Anno 1504. witnessing to *Infants-Baptism*, and their *Confirmation* after, upon their *Personal Confession*; which he mentions at large out of the same *Apology*. And,

V. From the compliance of the succeeding <sup>5. Reformed</sup> *Reformed Churches*; amongst whom the *Church of England* is mentioned as one, who took much of the *Order of Confirmation* (as he saith) from that of the *Waldenses*; part whereof he repeats; especially the *Conclusion*, that *debars any from the Holy Communion*, that were not confirmed; and adds thereto the good wishes that *Hommilus*, *Calvin*, the *Leyd. Professors*, &c. that this *Business of Confirmation* was drained from *Antichristian Mixtures*, both as to *Name*, *Nature*, *Matter*, *Form*, *Administrator* and *Subject* also; the *Romish Church* confirming *Children* in their *Infancies*.

In



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In whose *Hypothesis* we have first,

1. The Name they give this Rite; namely *Confirmation*. 2. The Subjects, Adult Persons, all baptized in Infancy. 3. The Administrators, viz. The Presbytery-Eldership. 4. The End, viz. To confirm Baptism, give the Spirit, and orderly to admit into the Church, 5. The Time when to be administered, viz. Betwixt Baptism and the Lord's Supper, when they give an Account of their Faith, and desire Church Communion. 6. The Grounds upon which they assert it; viz. 1. *Spiritual*; especially from *Heb. 6. 2.* 2. The Sayings of the *Ancients*, and Decrees of *Councils*, confirming it to be an Apostolical Practice. 7. The Usage and Practice of the Ancient and Modern Churches, especially that of the Famous *Waldenses*.

6. Baptized Churches  
S. Fisher.  
Jo. Grisfith.  
W. Rider  
T. Grantham.

6. The Usage of several Baptized Churches in the Nation.

Sixthly and lastly, We come to give you an Account how that this Rite of *Laying on of Hands* hath been asserted and practised by several Baptized Congregations, who have by their *Writings* maintained and defended, that *Laying on of Hands* upon all Baptized Believers, is an Ordinance of Jesus Christ, essentially necessary to Church fellowship and Communion, and that none are to be admitted to the Lord's Supper without it; and which they endeavour to make good, especially from *Heb. 6. 2.* Which they conclude to be a *Laying on of Hands* upon all Baptized Believers.

1 Because

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1. Because it is reckoned amongst the *Foundation-Principles, Doctrines and Oracles of God.* And, 2. Because they find the Church of *Samarita, Acts 8. 17.* and the Church of *Ephesus did practise* accordingly immediately after Baptism, which therefore they do conclude was both *Christ's Precept* and the *Practice* of all the Churches in the *New Testament.*

Amongst whom respecting this Practice, we observe,

1. The Name they give this Rite, viz. *Lay- Name.*  
ing on of Hands.

2. The Subjects, viz. *All Baptised Believers, Subject.*  
*Men and Women.*

3. The Administrators viz, The Elders or *Admin.*  
*Presbyters.*

4. The End, for the promised Spirit to confirm the Baptized, and orderly to admit into the Church. *End.*

5. The Time or Order in which this is administered; betwixt *Baptism* and the *Supper,* *Time.*  
or presently after the *Baptism.*

6. The principal Ground upon which they assert it, viz. The Scripture; especially from *Heb. 6. 2. Acts 8. 17. 19.* *Principal Ground*

Thus have you an Account of this Rite, *Wherein*  
not only from *Scriptures,* but how it hath *all Par-*  
been owned and practised since the first times, *tis do*  
by several sorts; and who notwithstanding the *agree.*  
vast differences among them in the Ceremonial  
part, yet do all of them harmoniously agree in  
the following *Substantials, viz.*

That there is a warrantable ground to conclude



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clude that the Hands of the Bishop, Elder, or Presbyter should be *imposed* upon every Baptized Person for the receiving of the Spirit, or Confirmation, and that without it none ought to be *admitted* to the Lord's Supper.

It remains therefore in the next place, that we consider the said *Grounds* upon which so great an Ordinance is enjoined, and which we find to be either *Tradition* or the *Scripture*.

1. That of *Tradition* ( which is principally asserted by the first four ) is made good either from the *Sayings* of the *Ancients*, and *Decrees* of *Councils*, or the *Usage* of the ancient Churches.

2. And that of *Scripture*, which is principally urged by the two latter, is especially from *Heb. 6. 2.* compared, *Act. 8. 17. & 19. 6.* which we shall examine *distinctly* and apart.

*Tradition*

And first, As to the *Sayings* of the *Ancients*, that are *avouched* to make this good, we shall first consider what they say about this Rite; and 2. Of what *Credit* and *Authority* the said *Authors* are who be produced for the same.

And first, As to the *Rite* it self, which they would make us believe to be so great an Ordinance of Jesus Christ, we find it to be so *blasphemous* and *Ridiculous*, that the very naming of the Particulars thereof, may be *sufficient* to detect the *folly* and *Impiety* thereof to all discerning Christians. Whether respecting the *Name*, which they call *Chrysm*; *Unction*, *Perfection*, *Confirmation*, of which the *Scripture* is so much a stranger; or the *Nature*, which

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which must be by putting the Sign of the Cross with a Bishop's greas'd Finger, in the Forehead of the Confirmed, with these words of Blasphemy, *I sign thee with the Sign of the Cross, and with the Chrysm of Salvation, in the Name of the Father, Son and Spirit, the Party being in a white Garment, his Head bound with Linnen, his Hair cut, and attended with Gossips or Sureties. And this is that which the several fore-cited Popes and Fathers have reported to be Apostolical; and the several Councils have by their Canons and Decrees determined and enjoyned as the great Sacrament of Confirmation, and so transcendent also to Baptism it self; and which without dispute (we must believe) was so much the appointment and practice of Christ and the Apostles, and as yet practised accordingly by the Church of Rome to this day.*

Concerning which Hommius tells us, *That Hommius it is not only unknown and contrary to the Scriptures, but blasphemous and Idolatrous, and the vain Invention of superstitious men.*

And Tilenus, upon their lifting it above Tilenus Baptism, and confining it only to a Bishop's hand, saith, *That they make an Excrement of Antichrist so much more excellent than the Sacrament of Christ, by how much they make a Bishop exceed a common Priest, or an ordinary person. Syntag. Part 2. c. 58. S. 15.*

And Amesius saith, *The Reasons given by the Ames. Papists for the same, are both empty and impious. Bel. Enervat. c. 4.*

And notably Mr. Calvin, In Pref. ante Cate- calvin. chis. inter Opuscul. *That beyond measure they have*



have deckt this *Adulterous Confirmation* like an Harlot, with great splendor of Ceremonies, and many pompous Gauderies; moreover, while they will adorn it, they do it with execrable Blasphemies, boasting that it is a Sacrament more worthy than Baptism, and calling them half-Christians, whoever have not been besmear'd with their stinking Oyl; but in the mean while their whole action contains nothing else but *Histrionical Gestures*, or rather wanton *Apish Plays* without any Art or emulation, &c.

2. *What* Secondly, from the *Authorities* themselves their *Au-* urged in proof hereof; concerning whom, we *thorities.* may so well say, as is the *Doctrine*, so are the *Doctors*, viz. Those that are first cited to deliver the same, the very naming of whom, may be sufficient to detect the Cheat, we having already by *substantial evidence* proved, that all those first recited *Authorities*, viz. *Dionys. Areopag. Clem. 4. Ep. Justin Martyr's Respons. Hyginus's Decree*, and the *Decretal Epistles* of those first Popes, to have been *Impious Lies* and *Forgeries*, things that in after-Ages, by the Rise of the *Mystery of Iniquity*, were feigned and invented by some *Monks* and *Friers*, and put upon those men of Name of the first Ages, the better to countenance those *Anti-christian Impieties* that were to be imposed upon the *World*, for *Apostolick*; for by such *Lies* and *Forgeries*, did the man of sin ascend the *Throne*. And is there not good ground think you, to suspect the Justice and Truth of that cause, that cannot otherwise be defended nor maintained, but by suborned Wit-

nesses, and *Knights of the Post*; for upon no better Authority have they imposed this which they call the Sacred Rite of *Confirmation*, *Infants-Baptism* *Exorcism*, and a hundred ridiculous Ceremonies more, which they would persuade us to believe were Apostolical, though as to this of *Confirmation*, some of themselves are constrained to acknowledge, *nec ab Aposto- Rivet.*  
*lis, nec à Christo fuisse Institutio, &c.* That it was neither instituted by Christ or his Apostles, but by Pope Calixtus Anno 218. *Rivet's Controv. Tom. 2.* Yet so intoxicated with the Whores Cup were all these Councils, upon no better grounds to decree it, and all these after-Doctors, as *Ambrose*, *Jerom*, *Austin*, and others, to assert and plead it for an Ordinance of Christ, which was not onely so contrary to the Scripture, but so blasphemous and ridiculous, as before.

And if it had been an *Apostolical Tradition* to practise this, as the first Councils decreed, and the Fathers and others practised, viz. for many hundred years, as a Baptismal Rite, to be performed at one and the same time with Baptism, whether upon Infants or Adult, and to whom also as perfect and compleat Christians, they gave the Eucharist; how came the after-Councils to be so bold, to alter and change it from Infancy to the Adult state, putting it upon them onely for so many Ages; and the Church of Rome afterwards to alter and change it again, returning it to its first practice, leaning upon the *Validity* of those first *Authorities*; concerning whom, though it is no wonder that they should hold fast such impious



Forgeries, and have recourse to such lying *Fables*, to maintain it; yet it is matter of admiration, to find our *Protestant-Writers and Churches* to fly to these *Authorities*, both *Fathers* and *Councils*, to create some colourable pretence for Confirmation?

Objection  
as to the  
Waldens.  
church.

But what do you say to the *Practice* of the *Waldensian Church*; to whom you have ascribed so much *Authentickness*? Who, as you observe, were such early *Witnesses* for *Truth*; as well as eminent opposers of the *Romish Church* in all their *Fopperies*; who yet, as it appeareth, have asserted and practised Confirmation, as you have at large in the forecited *Apology* to King *Laodislaus*, King of *Hungary* and *Bohemia*.

Ansr.

To which I say, That it is most manifest, as I have already demonstrated that that *Apology* was not from the *Waldenses*, as the *Preamble* it self declares; but from some of those Professors distinguished by the name *Hussites*, who held much with those of the *Reformed Way* in *Germany*: and not the *Taborites* or *Waldensian Brethren*, who also inhabited in *Bohemia*, and other parts of *Germany*, *Poland*, and *Hungary*. And that those true *Waldenses* were of a quite contrary Opinion, appears by their *Ancient Confessions of Faith*; an eminent Instance whereof you'll find in their *Treatise of Sacraments*, in *Paul Perin*, p. 329. and in *Morland's History*, p. 175. in these words viz.

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As for the Sacrament of Confirmation, which we find not instituted either by Christ or his Apostles; for Christ, the Pattern of all his Church, was not confirmed in his Person, and he doth not require that there should be any such thing in Baptism, but onely pure Water; and that such a Sacrament is not found needful for Salvation; whereby God is blasphemed, and which was introduced by the Devil's instigation, to seduce the People, and to deprive them of the Faith of the Church, and that by such means they might be drawn the more to believe the Ceremonies, and the necessity of Bishops.

It is also to be taken notice of, that Justin <sup>Justin Mar-</sup> Martyr, in his Apology, giving an Account of <sup>tyr gives no</sup> the Faith and Practice of the Churches in those <sup>account in</sup> days to Antonius Pius, takes not the least notice <sup>his Apology.</sup> hereof, though he recounts all their Services and Ceremonies in Worship with great Plainness.

It is also not unworthy our observation, that <sup>Novatians.</sup> the Novatians, that worthy famous Church and People, did, as Joseph Vicecomes tells us, oppose this Business of Confirmation in Century 3. Vicecomes, l. 28. p. 372.

And also it is manifest out of Breerwood, the <sup>Not in the</sup> eminent Recorder of the Antiquities <sup>Gr. Churches</sup> of the Greek Churches, that the Greeks did impugn and reject that of Confirmation. Br. p. 127. out of Paf. De Rep. Mosch. p. 40. And particularly tells us that the Nestorians did not practise it. p. 124. <sup>Nestorians.</sup> out of Bib. Pat. p. 1054.

That the Abyssines inhabiting Prester John's Abyssines Country, did not practise it. Br. p. 167. Ex Alv. Hist. Aethiop. c. 5.

And



Muscov.

And that the *Muscovites* omit it, Br. p. 136.  
*Ex Jo. Metrap. Russ.* in *Epist. ad Episc. Rom.*  
*apud Sigism. De Reb. Musc.* p. 31.

*Cophiti*  
 nor *Jacobites*.

And that there is no mention either of the  
*Cophiti* in *Egypt.* or *Jacobites* in *Syria*, that ever  
 practised this Rite.

It is also manifest out of the *Confessions* of  
 Faith of the *Belgick Churches*, esteeming them-  
 selves the true and immediate *Successors* of the  
*Waldenses*; recorded at large in the *Dutch*  
*Martyrol.* or *Bloody Theater*, Printed in 1660.  
 That there is no mention of any such practice  
 as *Imposition of Hands* upon all baptized per-  
 sons amongst them either formerly or lat-  
 terly.

3. The  
*Scripture*  
 Ground.

In the next place we shall consider the *Scripture*  
 ground that is urged and produced in  
 proof hereof, especially by the two latter  
 which we find to be principally from *Heb. 6. 2*

The *Doctrine of Baptism*, laying on of Hands

Mr. Han-  
 mer.

ἐνδεσμός τε χειρῶν, which Mr. *Hanner* ac-  
 knowledgeth to be the chief; and (though  
 as he modestly expresseth himself) but a proba-  
 ble ground from the *Scripture* to found it upon;  
 being there made one of the *Principles* of the  
*Doctrine of Christ*, and placed next after *Bap-*  
*tism*, and as it were an *Appendix* thereof, and  
 which for the most part, immediately followeth  
 it in such *Adult* as were baptized, and the next  
 privilege of the *Church* (he saith) that suc-  
 did enjoy as had been baptized in *Infancy*; and  
 that many of the best *Interpreters* did usually un-  
 derstand this place to mean, in part at least,  
*Imposition of Hands* in *Confirmation*; though

doth confess others did also take it to mean Imposition of Hands in Ordination; and others, the whole Doctrine of laying on of hands, as exprest in the Scripture; but especially leans upon the Tradition, and the Usage, and Practice of the Church in all Ages, p. 26, 27.

1. To whom, and to all of his Perswasion, I say, That if their *Infants Baptism* be a Nullity, which they pretend hereby especially to confirm, and is the main design of his and Mr. Baxter's Treatises; that their practice hereupon falls to the ground; for if their *Hypothesis* be naught and rotten, their *Thefts* cannot be sound that is built upon it: but that is so, the foregoing *Treatise* of that Subject doth amply discover; proving with great clearness, that it was an *Invention* and *Institution* of man, yea, of the man of Sin; calculated on purpose to out Christ's Baptism, and to defile his Church; and this appearing to be of the same Piece, contrived and ordered by the same Heads and Hands it is meet, that as they have lived, so they should die together.

And secondly, We may conclude rationally, If Infants were capable of *Baptism*, they were as capable at the same time, of laying on of hands (as first instituted and practised) and of the Supper also, as *Austin* and others tell us they had them all together, and not first baptize them, and then many years after (and no body knows how and when) confirm them; for if one be a Foundation or beginning Doctrine, as the other, they have done best and most according to Rule and Reason,



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that have practised it immediately, and not deferred it.

And thirdly, Since the Scripture is, as confess'd, but a probable ground, and that of Tradition, Antiquity, and constant Usage of the Church, the more certain; the latter appearing so invalid upon all the foregoing Considerations, that faint insinuation from that Scripture, cannot be a ground sufficient to build that Practice upon.

And to which lastly, we will add Mr Baxter's Sober Cautions, enough to shake the confidence of any that have no better Ground for the Practice; as we find them in p. 127, 128, 129. of his Confirmation: Where, after he had, with all his might, endeavoured to establish it both from Scripture and Antiquity, doth, according to his wonted manner, in a few Lines unsay more than he had said in all the rest, viz.

Mr. Baxt.  
Sober Cautions.

1. That we do not find that God instituted this Sign as a Matter of Necessity, still without interruption to be used; but onely that by holy men it was applied as a convenient Sign or Gesture to the works in which they used it; even as lifting up of hands in Prayer, was ordinarily used as a fit Gesture, not wilfully to be neglected without cause, and yet not of flat necessity; or as Kneeling in Prayer, is ordinarily meet, but not always necessary; we find no more Scripture for the one or for the other: which shews how little Reason there is to make it matter of Necessity. The Ancient Church also used it so variously, as that it is plain they fixed it to no one Case alone; of the divers Cases in which they imposed hands on the

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the Catechumens, and four times on the Penitents and divers others; as, saith he. you may see in Albaspinæus's Observat. p. 31. 32.

2. We find that Kneeling in Prayer, and lifting up of hands, were often omitted; so we find that sometimes the Holy Ghost is given before Baptism or Imposition of Hands, Acts 10. And we find not that the Apostles used it at all, viz. for Confirmation; though I confess the Negative Arguing is infirm; yet it seems not probable that this was always done.

3. It was somewhat suspicious to find in Justin Martyr's Description of the Christian Churches practices, no mention of this, nor any Sacrament but Baptism and the Lord's Supper, nor any of the Roman Ceremonies; and Irenæus and some others also are silent in it too.

4. God maketh no Ceremonies under the Gospel so necessary, except the two Sacraments; nor layeth so great a stress on them as under the Law; and therefore we are not to interpret the Gospel as laying mens Salvation, or the Peace of the Church on any Ceremonies, unless we find it clearly express'd.

5. For all that I have said from Scripture for Imposition of Hands in Confirmation (though the Lawfulness of it is proved past Doubt) yet the proof of the Duty of using it is liable to so many Objections, as that I must needs confess that the Gospel-tenderness, and the sense of our mutual Infirmities, and our care of tender Consciences, and of the Churches Peace, should restrain all the Sons of Piety and Peace from making it a matter of flat necessity, and forcing them that scruple to submit to it.



*The Scri-  
pture gr.  
upon w<sup>ch</sup>  
the Bapt.  
have  
founded  
it.*

We come in the next place to consider the Scripture-Grounds upon which the Baptists have asserted this Rite, and founded this Practice of imposing hands upon all Baptized Believers; and so essentially necessary to Church-Communion, and which, as before, you find to be especially held forth from *Heb. 6. 12.* Though affirmed not with that *Sobriety* and *Modesty* as the other from *Probability*, but rather *Infallibility*; and therefore impose it accordingly, denying *Fellowship* to any that do not so receive it; and as some have in Print asserted, as neither being *Babes* in Christ, nor having *Communion* with God; as Mr. Griffith in his Book hath it, call'd *God's Oracle*, p. 87. And the reason of this their great confidence from this Text is, as you have heard, two-fold; first, Because *Laying on of hands* is reckoned amongst the *beginning-Teachings*. And secondly Because they find it, as they say, practised accordingly, *Acts 8. 17. Acts 19. 6.*

To the *Trial* and *Examination* thereof, we shall therefore apply our selves, and see whether these have discovered a better Basis to found this Practice upon, than those that have gone before.

And in order thereto, we shall in the first place lay down these two following Principles, so fully owned by themselves, as a Line to carry us through the Work, viz.

1. That to every Ordinance of Christ there must be some plain positive word of Institution to confirm it. And neither Humane Tradition,

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nor far-fetcht Consequence and Inference, such as the many Volumes that have been written from Circumcision and Federal Holiness to assert Infants-Baptism to be an Ordinance of Christ, which no ordinary capacity can reach, and only men of Parts and Abilities can trace and follow in their Meanders.

2. That to practise any thing in the worship of God for an Ordinance of his, without an Institution, is Will-Worship and Superstition. But how their assertions will comport with these honest Protestant Principles, we shall presently see.

The great Text urged for the Institution of this Ordinance, is, Heb. 6 1. 2. *Therefore leaving the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of Repentance from Dead Works, and of Faith towards God, of the Doctrine of Baptism, and of laying on of hands, and of Resurrection of the Dead, and of Eternal Judgment.*

This is the Text which is affirmed to be the *Grantb.* great Charter of the Church for this Point of Faith and Practice; but how to find the least Warranty for the same therein, we see not. If it was indeed said, Let all baptized Believers have hands laid upon them; with as much plainness, as Let all Believers be baptized, Mat. 28 29. Acts 10. 48. Or, Let all Baptized Believers eat the Lord's Supper, 1 Cor. 11. 24. Acts 2 41, 42. It was something to the purpose.

But



Object.

But is it not reckoned amongst the Principles, Foundation, Doctrine and Oracles of God?

*Ans. 1.* It is very true, the *Doctrine* of laying on of hands is here reckoned amongst the *Principles* of the *Doctrine* of Christ (or his beginning-teachings); but then it must be supposed to be such a laying on of hands as was somewhere *taught* and *practised*. But such a laying on of hands upon all Baptized Believers, we find no where taught or *Practised*. Jesus Christ our great *Example* (as the *Waldenses* so well observe) had no hands laid upon him by John Baptist after he baptized him; neither did he lay hands upon all his *Disciples* before they broke Bread; neither did he give one word of it in his Commission upon his *Ascension*, nor do we read that this *Church* of the *Hebrews* practised any such thing; for there is no mention that the 120 had hands so laid upon them; nor the 3000 in *Chap. 2.* or 5000 in *Chap. 4.* after their Baptism, before they broke Bread: Neither do we find the least of it in any other of the *Churches* in the *New Testament*; neither in *Samarita*, by *Philip*, after he baptized them, nor *Corinth*, *Philippi*, *Coloss*, *Thessalonica*, *Rome*, the *Churches* of *Galatia*, *Churches* in *Asia*, *Smirna*, *Thyatira*, *Pergamus*, *Sardis*, *Philadelphia*; no, nor in *Ephesus*: It is true, *Paul* laid hands upon twelve of their number, upon another occasion, as *Peter* and *John* did in *Samarita*; whereof you have an Account hereafter; nor in the *Churches* in *Syria*, *Antioch*, *Lystra*, *Derbe*, &c,

But

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But why should laying on of hands be reckoned amongst the beginning Principles, and called the Doctrine of Laying on of hands, if it was not to be practised by all? for none doubts but laying on of hands was a *Practice*, and this *Practice* was to be taught to all Baptized Believers; yea, the *Babes* in Christ; and therefore must it needs be practised by all.

Object. 2.

This, it is true, hath gon for the *Institution* and great *Ground* upon which it hath been urged and imposed; but how much of *Fallacy* and *Falshood* is in this *Argument*, you will easily discern; as though no act done upon, or *Practice* done by others, might be matter of *Doctrine* or teaching to us, without being engaged in our own persons to doe the same: were not all the Miracles that Christ and his Apostles did, matter of *Doctrine*, and much *E-dification* and *Instruction* from them, and yet not for our imitation and practice?

Answer;

But this in the Text respects some of Christ's *beginning* teachings; his first words, that is *Milk* for *Babes*, and can you tell us of any but such as is proper for all baptized *Babes*, or new-baptized Believers?

Object. 3.

Yes no doubt; for what say you to those words of Christ in the *Commission* it self, which you cannot deny to be *begining-words*? Mar. 16. Where it is expressly said, That the Baptized shall in his name cast out Devils, speak with new Tongues, take up Serpents, drink poyson, and not hurt them; and also shall lay hands

Answer.



*hands on the sick, and they shall recover. And so did the baptized Believers accordingly in those days, going out and preaching, the Lord working with them, and confirming the Word with Signs following: But is this the standing Ordinance to all baptized Believers to the world's end? This was indeed that laying on of hands properly called Confirmation; whereas afterwards a laying on of hands of another nature, was so called, and introduced; so that here you have then a laying on of hands amongst Christ's first Teachings for Tongues, Healing and Miracles necessary and profitable to be taught to all, even the meanest Babes, for Confirmation; as Heb. 2. 3, 4. 1 Cor. 14. 22. Acts 8. 8. Mark 16. 20 Which yet I presume none will say that every Believer ought to practise.*

*Ans. 2. Secondly, If every one of these Principles in Heb. 6. are so absolutely to be taken in by Babes, and without which, we are not to esteem them communicable; what do you say to the Doctrine of Baptisms in the Text, one of the Principles and Foundations of the Gospel? it is not said the Doctrine of Baptism. Must all be baptized with the Baptism of the Spirit and of Suffering also, or not to be received into Communion?*

*Ans. 3. And Thirdly, As to Laying on of Hands mentioned amongst these Principles in the Text, as it may respect the Laying on of hands upon the Ministry, for their solemn Investiture into their Office, whether Deacons, Acts 6. Elders,*

Elders, 1 Tim. 1. 14 or Messengers, Acts 14. (whereby they are set apart to transact in the whole Order, and in all the Ordinances of God's House; and wherein every particular Member comes to be concerned, not onely respecting the Administrations performed by them, but the reciprocal Duty incumbent upon each of them towards those their Overseers (so set over them). It becomes necessary therefore to be taught, known, and understood by all, and that in the beginning-Teachings, though all and every Member are not concerned in the Personal Practice thereof; for all are not Prophets, Apostles, Teachers. And it is most remarkable, that the Doctrine or Teaching of laying on of hands, is all that is mentioned in this Scripture; all baptized Believers must be taught it, that's plain; but that they are obliged therefore to practise it, is not here or elsewhere to be found.

But what do you say to Acts 8. 17. & 19. 6. *Object. 4.*  
Are there not two express Presidents for such a laying on of Hands immediately after Baptism, as we infer from hence, concluding that these two Texts aforesaid, give sufficient warranty so to determine?

It is true, this hath been so received and *Answer.*  
warg'd by those that so practise; but how warrantably, we shall farther examine. We read indeed of laying on of hands for the giving of the Spirit in three places; one whereof, Acts 9. 17. was before Baptism; and these two mentioned, after; so that there is no positive Conclusion



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clusion to be fetcht from the Presidents, whether before or after; as it was in the matter of *Healing*, which was given sometimes by laying on of *hands*, sometimes by *words* of Faith spoken to the Sick, sometimes by *Prayer*, sometimes by *sending Handkerchiefs*, sometimes by their very *Shadows*; so also was the Spirit given sometimes by *laying on of hands*, sometimes by *Prayer*, sometimes by *Preaching* or *Prophecyng*, sometimes before, sometimes after *Baptism*.

But concerning these two Scriptures so much insisted upon, and imposed to be the *President* and *Pattern* for all Churches, and for every *Member* in the Church, let us put them to trial.

As to that of *Samaria*, it is said, that several being converted in that City, and baptized by *Philip*, who wrought many *Miracles*, and continued some time with them, as *v. 13.* yet did he not impose hands upon any of them that we read of. *The Church of Jerusalem* bearing that *Samaria* had received the *Word* of God, and that the Spirit was fallen upon none of them (*viz.* in a visible manner which was the proper phrase attributed to those extraordinary measures of the Spirit so frequently given to the Saints in those dayes, as *Acts 10. 44. & 11. 15. 16, 17* which sometimes did fall upon them before *Baptism*, as *Acts 10.* and sometimes after, as *Acts 2. 14 31.* without laying on of hands) did therefore send *Peter* and *John*, who it seems, were extraordinarily gifted by God; so that

on

on whomsoever they prayed and laid hands, the Spirit was visibly, extraordinarily and immediately given; as ver. 18. As healing to the sick, by those that had that Gift also given by God, (from whom every good Gift came) and who accordingly, 'tis said, laid their hands upon them; but how many of them 'tis not said; surely not upon all; for Simon by his prophane Offer, discovered he had neither received the Wisdom nor Grace thereof, and had neither Lot or Part therein, though baptized; and so 'tis said they received the Spirit in such a manner that it was visible to the Spectators.

And as to that of Ephesus, Acts 19. 6. Paul it seems, finding some of the Church there, that had not received the Spirit after they had beleived and were baptized, viz. in that visible manner so usually given in those dayes, layes his hands upon twelve men of their number; (it is not said all the Church) who thereupon, did immediately receive the Spirit, in such a degree, that it was demonstrated by speaking with Tongues and Prophecyng.

So that in neither of these two places (so much urged for the Explanation of Heb. 6. 2. And to be a President and Rule for us, to the end of the world) can we find that there was a laying on of hands immediately after Baptism, nor with any certainty upon all and every Member of the Church, nor to such an end as can be attainable in after-times.

And



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And as to that of 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. Wherein *Paul* exhorts *Timothy* to stir up the Gift that was in him by putting on of his hands, asserted to be a laying on of hands of this kind, as urged, not *Ordination*; is,

*First*, A begging, not proving the Question.

*Secondly*, It is manifest that *Timothy* had the hands of the Presbytery laid on him, which none doubts to be *Ordination*; and that *Paul* and *Barnabas* were the Presbyters that did ordain in those Churches of *Asia*, is very manifest, *Acts* 14. 23. Wherein by God's Blessing upon his Ordinance, there was a Gift received, and to be stirred up; and therefore in saying, Stir up the Gift that was in him by putting on of his hands, and neglect not the Gift that was in him, which was given by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery, whereof *Paul* was one, seems to mean one and the same thing, and not two things, as urged; and to be no other than those ordinary Ministerial Attainments, which by giving attendance to Reading, Meditation, Prayer, Exhortation and Doctrine, was to be increased and stirred up.

Therefore since not the least Syllable of Institution, neither Precept nor President can be found out for such a Practice, may we not fully conclude in the words of our Agreement, that for any to practise any thing in the Word of God without an Institution from the Word of God, is Will-worship and Superstition.

But

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But if this be not the laying on of hands *Obj. 6.* intended in the Text, what is it? If we have mis'd the sence and scope of the Apostle, pray you give us a better, or let ours stand.

Suppose we are not able to tell you, nor to be positive or peremptory in the Case, many things being hard and difficult to be understood, which some that are ignorant wrest, &c. would our Ignorance warrant you, to set up your Inferences and Conclusions, as *Oracles* and *Ordinances*, without any *Evidence* or *Authority* from the word, and be thereby confirmed in your confident Assertions? It may be enough to have evinced to you, that yours is not, cannot be that *Ordinance* of Christ, that Principle and Foundation *Doctrine*, so confidently asserted by you. Yet not to leave you in the Dark, take here my apprehension of this Text, and wherein I am perswaded I have the mind of Christ, *viz.* *Ans.*

The Apostle, the better to gain their *Attention* to the great *Doctrine* of the *High Priesthood*, tells them in the foregoing Chapter, by way of reproof, how dull of *bearing* they had been in times past, how little they had *improved* Time or Talent, what little progress they had made in *Christianity*, and what *Babes* they yet were therein, and who, instead of *bearing strong meat* in *Doctrine* he was delivering to them, they stood in more need of *Milk*, and to be taught again those *beginning-words of God*, wherein in their first planting they had been *instructed*, which notwithstanding

*Heb 6.12*  
opened.



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ing for the present he would forbear to press upon them, but go forward in his Design.

Not laying again the *Foundation* of *Repentance* and *Faith*, the *Doctrine* of *Baptismes*, *Laying on of Hands*, *Resurrection* and *Judgment*, which are all the Principles that are here *enumerated*; which some call five, some six, and some seven; though as to the number, if they must be taken for all the beginning-Principles, I conceive we must either suppose them very *comprehensive*, or else many must be left out, as the *Ten Commandments*, and *several* of the *Institutions*, such as the *Lord's Supper*, which I presume will go for a beginning-teaching as well as *Baptism*.

Therefore we must suppose that *Repentance* and *Faith* must comprehend all both the *Negative* and *Positive* part of *Holiness*; those of *Baptismes* and *Laying on of Hands*, the *Institutions*, *Priviledges* and *Orders* in the *Church* of *God*; *Resurrection* and *Judgment*, the whole of our *Hope* and *Happiness* for the time to come; and particularly that *Doctrine* of laying on of hands, to contain not only those laying on of hands by which the miraculous *Healings* and *spiritual Gifts* were attained for confirmation of the *Gospel*, but those laying on of hands for the investiture of the *Church-Officers*, who were to transact the whole order of *God's House*, for the *edification* of each *Member* and therefore necessary to be taught to every one. And this is that, which amongst the rest they had need to be taught. and might have

have been teachers of themselves; *viz.* what was the end, use, blessing and benefit of such a Rite in the several *Ministrations* thereof; but no ground in the least to confirm it to one particular, much less to such an one of which no *Syllable* either here, or in the whole Book of God.

But why shoulp you infer, that we by the Doctrine of Laying on of hands, may take in all the Laying on of hands spoken of? when- as it is said laying on of hands in the Singular, and not laying on of hands in the Plural Number; therefore must respect only one sort of laying on of hands. *Obj. 6.*

Which is a meer Criticism, and has nothing *Answ.* of *Truth* in it; the Doctrine of laying on of hands is as much *Plural*, and may respect the teaching of all sorts, of laying on of hands, as the Doctrine of *Baptismes* respects all sorts of *Baptismes*.

But why should any be offended that we pray for a Blessing upon our *Brethren* or *Sisters* after their Baptism, or upon their admission into the Church, whereby the whole may also take the better notice for whom we pray? *Obj. 7.*

To which I answer, that we are not offended at a practice of that kind, be it *lifting up* or *laying on of hands*, provided it be not urged as a thing of *absolute necessity*; while the *Bishops* of old used many *Ceremonies*, people were not so much concerned; but when they would impose them as necessary, and *Institutions* *D 2*



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tutions of Christ, that broke the Peace, and occasioned much mischief; so to all such laying on of hands, a beginning-Doctrine, or Oracle of God—a Foundation of Christian Religion to which every Member and Disciple of Christ ought to submit, upon penalty of Non Communion for the neglecting or rejecting a *Foundation-Principle*, though no one word of Institution, Command, Precept, or Example for the same; and that under pretence of receiving more of that Spirit of Christ thereby, which is a Spirit of Love, Meekness, Humility, Tenderneſs, Peace, Edification, there appears to be more of that other Spirit of uncharitable judging, rending, tearing, and dividing the Body of Christ; and for asserting for Doctrine and Practice the Customs, Commandments and Traditions of men; it is for these things our Offence lies, as so well founded upon Deut. 4. 2. & 12. 32. Rev. 22. 18 Prov. 30. 6.

There are two Objections more that I have lately met with, that I think very necessary to give some Answer to, the one is this, viz.

Obj. 8. That as to the Point of Antiquity, though ('tis granted) the Ancients and their Followers ever since, have so much erred, not only in the Subject. but divers Circumstances about this Rite of Imposition of hands; yet inasmuch as there hath been all along such a Witness born to the thing it self, it makes much for its Apostolicallness, and confirms our Practice therein.

*Ans. 1.* To which, I say, That it doth not appear that such a *Witness* hath been born all along thereto; for as Mr. *Baxter* so ingenuously acknowledgeth, that *Justin Martyr*, *Irenæus*, and others in those times are as silent about it, as the Scripture is, that any of the *Apostles* did ever so practise it in the first times; those *Authorities* that are pretended to assert the same in the first *Centuries*, having been proved to be so *spurious* and *suppositions*.

*Ans. 2.* But Secondly, If the Practice of it should be granted to be as ancient as the keeping of *Easter* and *Lent*, *Diocesan Bishops*, and *Patriarchs*, and many other things that have been so generally received and practised, it no more proves it therefore to be *Apostolical* than each of them; for a pretence to *Ancient Prescription*, without a word of God to warrant it, can never justify the *Divine Authority* of any Practice.

*Obj. 9.* The other is this, viz. That as to positive Scripture-Institution, so much called for to justify our Practice of laying on of hands upon all the Baptized, from Precept or Example, it is not only unreasonable, but dangerous; as to many Truths, to be demanded (as hath in express words been lately told me) for where is the plain word either for *Women's* receiving the *Lord's Supper*, or to lay on hands upon *Officers*?

In answer whereto, I must needs say I am much grieved and astonished at such prevarication;



cation; and than which, what can more betray the Truth and Justice of your Cause? for do not your own *Answers* to such like *Instances*, so usually brought by the *Pædobaptists*, sufficiently confute you? And do you not know that if we had not plain and positive Scripture for both, that we would not practise either? For is not 1 Cor. 11. 28. compared with 1 Tim. 2. 4. 5. & Gal. 3. 28. a sufficient Precept for Womens Recieving? And Acts 1. 14. with Chap. 2. 42, 44. substantial evidence for the Practice thereof? And as for laying on of hands upon Officers; is not 1 Tim. 5. 22. a full Precept? And Acts 6. 6. & 13. 3. & 14. 23. 1 Tim. 4. 14. as clear Presidents for the same? And may we not warrantably say, Let there be but as good Scripture-Authority produced for laying on of Hands upon all Baptized Believers before they are permitted to partake of the Lords Supper, and it shall suffice? But to set up a practice in God's Worship, without a warranty from his Word by some plain positive Rule and Direction, the thing pleaded for by you) is no less (in my Judgment) than to give countenance to all the Antichristian Innovations, to let go at once the strongest Hold of Protestantism, reproach the Wisdom of Christ, and slight the Authority of the Holy Scriptures, as though we had not a sufficient direction, therein in all parts of God's worship.

And therefore to all those worthy Sayings to this purpose, of those Eminent men mentioned in the Treatise of Bapt. p 93. I shall add that most remarkable Expression of Dr. Owen, which

which you'll find in his *Communion with God*, p. 171. viz. *This then they who hold Communion with Christ, are careful of, they will admit of nothing, practise nothing in the Worship of God, private or publick, but what they have his warrant for; for unless it comes in his Name, with Thus saith the Lord Jesus, they will not hear an Angel from Heaven; they know the Apostles themselves were to teach the Saints onely what Christ commanded them, Mat. 28. 20.*

By which sound and wholesom Rule well observed, we are delivered from all Humane Inventions and Traditions; and by which Confirmation, *Infants-Baptism, Lent, Easter, &c.* and a hundred more of like import, are turned out of doors, as accusing Christ of unfaithfulness, and the Scripture of insufficiency.

And to which purpose, T. G. himself hath so very well urged lately to Dr. *Stillingsfleet*, about *Infant-Baptism*, from Dr. *Fulk* out of *Irenaeus*; *Irenaeus. viz. When the Hereticks are reprov'd out of Scripture, they fall to accusing the Scriptures, as if all is not well in them, and that the Truth cannot be found out of them that know not Tradition: And therefore that Tertullian saith, Take away these things from the Hereticks, (which they hold with the Ethnicks) that they may stay their Questions upon the Scripture onely.*



## The Conclusion.

**T**HUS you have had a *candid Account* of the *Rise, Growth and Progress* of this *Rite of Confirmation* or *Laying on of Hands*, from the beginning to this day ( amongst all *Perfwasions* that have owned it ) with the *Authorities* upon which it hath been *founded and imposed*; together with a *genuine Examination* of the *Grounds and Reasons* each *Party* have given to justify the same. And may we not upon the whole, fairly come to the following *Conclusions*? *viz.*

1. That there doth not appear to be the least *Scripture Precept* or *Practice* for any such *Ordinance of Confirmation*, or an *Imposing of Hands* upon all the *Baptized* before they *break Bread*, or are admitted into *Church-Communion*.

2. That the *Instances* produced to prove it an *Apostolical Tradition*, are *impious Lies* and *Forgeries*.

3. That the *Authorities* by which it hath been heretofore *enjoyed*, were nothing but *Antichristian Canons and Decrees*.

4. That the most *eminent Witnesses* and *Confessors* that opposed the *Antichristian Usurpations* and *Innovations*, have all along witnessed against and *impugned* this of *Confirmation*. *viz.* The *Novatians, Donatists, Waldenses, Greek Churches, Wickliffians, &c.*

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All which are worthy the serious Consideration of all Sober and Judicious Christians, and are especially recommended to them, who having rejected Infants, and embraced Believers Baptism, do yet cleave to this Practice, with these following Observations, viz.

1. That it is most manifest that those Popes, Councils and Fathers, that have enjoined and imposed Infants sprinkling for a Sacrament, or an Ordinance of Christ, have enjoined this also as such.

2. That the Principal Arguments that have been pretended for the one, have been urged and pleaded for the other also; viz. Apostolical Tradition, and pretended Inferences and Consequences from Scripture.

3. That the Famous Churches and Confessors that have opposed Infants sprinkling, as Superstitious, Popish and Antichristian, have upon the same account, opposed this also.

4. That it doth not appear that any Baptized Church or People did ever, in any Age or Countrey, own such a Principle or Practice to this day, except some in this Nation in these late Times.

But then it may well be enquired, if this be so Novel a thing amongst the Baptists, how came those in this Countrey so to receive and practise it, as before asserted?

To which I give the following Account, as I have received it under the Hand of one that affirms to have had the perfect knowledge thereof, as being an eye and ear-witness of the same, and who certifies to this purpose, viz.



How, when and why laying on of hands was practised by the Bapt. in this Nation

“ That about the year 1646, some 27 years since,  
 “ one Mr. Cornwell, heretofore a publick Preacher,  
 “ then a Member and Minister of a Baptized  
 “ Congregation in Kent, was a great Asserter of  
 “ this Principle and Practice; who coming about  
 “ that time into that Baptized Congregation, then  
 “ meeting in the Spittle Bishopsgate-Street, Lond.  
 “ did from Heb. 5. 12, 13. & 6. 1, 2. preach the  
 “ necessity of Laying on of Hands; inferring from  
 “ thence, those that were not under laying on of  
 “ hands, were not Babes in Christ, had not God,  
 “ nor Communion with God. Whereupon, several  
 “ of the said Congregation were perswaded to come  
 “ under that Practice; and which notwithstanding  
 “ ing the Church in Tenderneſs indulged to them,  
 “ upon their promise of a peaceable demeanour in  
 “ the Church. Notwithstanding which their said  
 “ Promise, they did afterwards not onely press  
 “ their said Perswasion uncharitably, as they had  
 “ been taught by their aforesaid Teacher; viz.  
 “ That none were Babes in Christ, nor had Com-  
 “ munion with God without it; therefore not to  
 “ be communicated with in Church-Ordinances  
 “ (and as after was published in I rini, by a  
 “ Leading Brother amongst them, in a Book called  
 “ God’s Oracles, and Christ’s Doctrine) but  
 “ made a Rent and a Separation for the same;  
 “ and from that very Schism propagated the same  
 “ Principle and Practice amongst many others in  
 “ the Nation ever since, who have kept that di-  
 “ stance from their Brethren (not owning the  
 “ same) as not esteeming or communicating with  
 “ them as the true Church of God, because de-  
 “ ſective in one of the beginning-Principles or  
 “ Foundations of the Christian Religion.

Now this being a true Narrative as to matter of Fact; doth it not naturally follow?

First, That such a Principle so suck'd in, and received, is founded in gross Ignorance and Error? For what can more favour of *Darkness* and Error, than to make our *Adoption* and *Communion with God* to depend upon some External Act done? As though Christ himself was utterly mistaken, when he tells us, *That as many as receive him, have the priviledge to become the Children of God, even as many as do believe in his Name, John 1. 12, 13.* And the Apostle also in confirmation thereof, *That we are all the Children of God by Faith in Christ Jesus, Gal. 3. 26,* And, *that of his own Will we are begotten by the word of Truth, Jam. 1. 16.* But this Doctrine asserts our *New-Birth* in another way, by the Laying on of Hands after Baptism ( and as though persons might be baptized that were not *Children of God*; but afterwards to be made so by this new way; ) thereby confirming the *Superstition* of the *Papists*, in their Idolizing this Rite above all other *Ordinances*, as before.

And Secondly, The Principle ( upon this account ) appears not more erroneous, than the Practice upon it, corrupt and vicious; viz. to make a Separation from the Church upon it, so contrary not only to known Order, Discipline and Duty, but their declared Promise; and therefore must not all those Churches of that Constitution necessarily be supposed to be founded in Sin, and Schism, as well as in great Error and Ignorance? and concerning which unnatural and undue Separation, I hear some of Eminency amongst them, have lately so had their



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their *Conviction*, as to plead *Reformation* therein with their *Brethren*, and who I doubt not, from the true sense of the *bitter fruit* (even the *Gall* and *Wormwood* that hath been brought forth thereupon) will naturally be led to consider the *Root* from whence it hath sprung, viz. the mistaken Principle, as here discovered; for as our Saviour tells us, *Mat. 7. 17, 18.* That it is the corrupt Tree that brings forth the evil fruit; and that as the good Tree cannot bear evil fruit, so the corrupt Tree cannot bear good fruit. All which is recommended to the serious Consideration of the Impartial and Judicious; not doubting but the day is hastning, when not onely all *Anti-christian Fogs* and *Darkness*, but all *Mists* of *Error* and *Ignorance*, shall be dispelled; and that the *God of Truth* will so send out his *Light* and *Truth*, and cause it so to spring up out of the *Earth*, that *Knowledge* shall fill the *Earth* as the *waters* cover the *Sea*; when *Discord* and *Division* shall so cease amongst his *People*, that they shall not with their *Babylonish Language* vex one another any more, but with one *Lip* and *Shoulder* shall serve the *Lord* with one consent. And for the speedy accomplishing and fulfilling such amiable and acceptable Promises, let all the Upright say *Amen, Amen.*

F I N I S.

