

Water, there being no part free from the Water thus rained upon *Nebuchadnezzar*: In which respect, it seems, the Septuagint renders or expresses his lying open to the Snow, Hail, Rain, or Dew, so long a time, by the word, ἕσῳφι. And, 2. My Answer is, That the Greek here is *Hyperbolic*, and not properly to be understood; and our Translators knowing this, did not (as I suppose) translate the Word according to its proper Signification, our Language not well bearing it in that case, but according to the thing which was to befall *Nebuchadnezzar*. And it seems very disingenuous, for you to conclude from this *Hyperbole*, that Sprinkling is more congruous to the signification of βαπτίζω, than Dipping, tho in so saying you contradict most of the Learned that have interpreted the word, βαπτίζω. And I am sure, (and you know it much better than I can tell you, for my Learning is nothing, when compared with yours,) that our Lexicons, Dictionaries, and Grammars, do make the prime Signification of βαπτίζω to be a dipping, as they do who dye Colours; and *Scapula* does not make βαπτίζω, nor βαπτίζω, to signify Sprinkling at all.

2. What you say in your 2d, 3d, 4th, and 5th Particulars, is answered before; but here you say, *The Church was never confined to that Mode of Dipping, but had several Ways of baptizing, dipping, or sprinkling, &c.*

I answer: What Usages the Church has had, is not the Question; but the Ground of her doings is the matter of our Enquiry: But yet I will venture to say, she was always confined to dip, if she kept that Ordinance according to Christ's own Example, which I think is a better Expofitor of the word βαπτίζω, than any *Lexicon* in the World.

2. The Alteration of the manner of this Ordinance, has not only occasioned us to say, You that only cross and sprinkle are not baptized; but the *Muscovites* declare the Latin Church to be unbaptized for the same reason. For this you may read *Daille* on the Fathers, lib. 2. p. 148. where he tells us; 'The Custom of the Ancient Church was to plunge those they baptized over Head and Ears in Water, as *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, and *Epiphanius* testify. And this is still the Practice of the *Greek* and *Russian* Church at this day, as *Cassander de Baptismo*, pag. 193. And yet notwithstanding this Custom is now abolished by the Church of *Rome*; and this is the reason why the *Muscovites* say that the *Latines* are not rightly and duly baptized. Thus he. Nor is this the only Cause.



Cause why we think your pretended Baptism a Nullity, for your Error about the Subject is more than the other.

3. What you say further is, to make us believe that Christ did not go into the Water ; that the Eunuch went to the Water only, because the Preposition *eis* signifies *ad*, to. But your Conscience will tell you, it signifies *into*, as well as *to* ; and indeed you grant it : and then to what purpose do you quarrel our Translation ? However, we have proved that Christ was baptized in the River : and 'tis expressly said of the many Thousands which came to *Jordan*, that they were all baptized in the River, confessing their Sins. Now, Sir, here *ἐν Ἰορδάνῃ ποταμῷ*, cannot be rendred to the River, nor with the River, ( without egregious Folly ) and then 'tis very plain, that they were all dipped in the River ; for it had been absolute Folly to go into the River to sprinkle the Face, Hand, or any other part of the Body. Seeing then they went into the River to baptize, it shews it cannot rightly be done without going into the Water : and therefore of necessity we must understand, *Dipping* is the only true Mode of *Baptizing*.

4. I marvel how any wise Man can look upon that Text, *John 3. 23. John baptized in Enon, -- because there was much Water there,* and so much as think Sprinkling to be a lawful way of baptizing. If he will use any of his Wit, he cannot but infer, Baptism could not be rightly done with a few drops of Water, seeing *John* chose *Enon*, because there was much Water there. And what tho *πολλὰ ὕδατα* signify many Waters ? yet it does not signify many Rivers ; but by the Noise of many Waters, is often meant the Noise of much Water in one Source or Channel. However, you say, the Greek signifies the Confluence of these two Springs, *Jordan* and *Jaboc* ; but yet you are unwilling that they should yield so much Water as might suffice to dip in. And yet the Scripture tells you elsewhere, that *Jordan* overflows all her Banks at certain times ; and *Lithgow*, that was at it, will give you an account, that it is a River sufficient to dip a bigger Man than your self in.

But here, you say, is no mention of dipping. Yes, Sir, but there is ; for when you hear, that *John* was baptizing in *Enon*, he was either dipping or sprinkling. The latter would make the Speech absurd and nonsensical ; the former therefore was his Business, for he was dipping in *Enon*, near *Salem*, because there was much Water there.

Your Church therefore is very much to blame, in leaving the  
Way



Way of Truth, and following her own Tradition, and is therefore the cause of our present disunion, and will be till she turn to the Truth, both in the Subject and Manner of Baptism, or at least forbear to impose upon us without Authority from Heaven.

What you add, by way of answer to some of our Objections against Infant Baptism, is answered in my Reply to Dr. *Stillingfleet*, and Mr. *J. Barret*, which is bound up with my Book of *Primitive Christianity*, and to that I will refer you. What you add about Sureties or God-Fathers, &c. I shall not take notice of at this time, and indeed the usage is so odd, that Dr. *Fer. Taylor* well said, if it had been God's will to have had them, *It is to be supposed he would have given them Commission to have transacted the Solemnity with better Circumstances, and given Answers with more Truth; for if the God Fathers answer in the Name of the Child (I do believe) it is notorious, they speak false and ridiculously.* And this is even enough to say to such an Innovation: But what absurdity is it, which being once made a Cannon by learned Men, will not find some to daub it up with untempered Mortar? Could Men but remember *Nadab* and *Abihu*, *Lev. 10.* they would fear to add to, or take from the Ordinances of Christ, under what pretence of Piety or Prudence soever.

Thus Sir, I have briefly answered your Arguments, and hope I have not mistaken your Sence in any Passage I except against. And for a Conclusion, I crave leave to say, That the way to obtain that Unity which is so desirable, between the Baptized Believers and the Church of *England*, is not to fall to it by Disputation, but by proposing what Abatements may be made about such things as are not mentioned in the Scripture, (as this of *Pædo-Baptism* is not) or at least what mitigation may be hoped for, as to the imposition of such things: And on the other side, I trust in the Lord that you shall call for nothing from us, wherein we may submit without sinning against God, but we shall gladly hearken to you.

In the mean time, constant Prayer to God for the Blessing of Truth and Peace, and friendly conference between the leading Men on both parts, may do much to further so good a Work, specially if his Majesty would be graciously pleased to permit such friendly Treaties. But of writing many Books there is no end.



An Apology for

SECT. IV.

*A Plea for the Church-Assemblies of the Baptized Believers.*

**M**Any and very great has been the Sufferings of the Baptized Believers in this Nation, since the publication of the Act, entitled, *an Act to prevent and suppress seditious Conventicles.* And if the meaning of the said Act be to restrict all Christian Assemblies, (except the Parochial) to the number of four Persons, besides the Families where they do assemble, We see not how we can, with safety to our Souls, conform to the Limits thereby prescribed. But forasmuch as the said Act pretends only the prevention and suppression of Seditious Conventicles, We humbly conceive, that those who are free from Seditious Designs in their meeting together to worship God, are rationally acquitted from the Imputation of Sedition; and consequently no Man can conscientiously prosecute any of us upon that Statute, being utterly unable to prove any such Crime against us; nor could any ever yet convict us of such an Evil, nor, by the Grace of God, shall they (I hope) ever be able to do it.

Upon a due Enquiry it will evidently appear, that it is the Lord himself that hath ordered his People to convene or congregate, for the better discharge of the great Duties of Prayer, Preaching, and the Celebration of other his holy Ordinances; to which holy Ends he has allowed, not four Persons only, but the whole Church, in any Town or City, to come together into one Place, among whom also such as do not believe the Gospel, are allowed to appear, in order to their Illumination, and this without any limitation in respect of Number: So that it seems to exceed the due Bounds of humane Power, to use Restraint, where God hath given such gracious Liberty. 1 Cor. 14. 23, 24, 25. Jam. 2. 2, 3. Heb. 10. 24.

Forasmuch then as God has not given any Power upon Earth, to forbid any Christian, or such as desire to know Christ, to hear his Word at any time, or in any place; but on the contrary, commands every Man that hath an Ear, *to hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches,* Rev. 2. 7. saying, *To day if ye will hear his Voice, harden not your Hearts,* Psal. 95. 7. *Proclaiming to every one that thirsteth, to come and take of the Waters of Life freely.* Isa. 55. 1.



To whose gracious Invitation the *Spirit and the Bride* (the Church) agreeth, saying, *Come*, Rev. 22. 17. It must needs be very dangerous for any Man to say, *Do not come*, when they desire to drink of these living Waters, which flow in the lively Preaching of the Gospel of Christ. And how can we think that our gracious God, who in Things pertaining to this Life, will not allow us to say to our Neighbour, *Go away, and come again to morrow, and I will give, when we have it by us*, Prov. 3. 27, 28. will ever accept us with a *Well-done, good and faithful Servant*, if in the more weighty Matters of his Law we put Men off with delatory Answers? *Behold, now is the accepted Time; behold, now is the Day of Salvation.*

It must be granted, that the Church is the Light of the World, a City set upon a Hill, that cannot be hid; whilst therefore we are conscionably, and (we trust) groundedly persuaded, that we are a part of this Church, a necessity lieth upon us, to *make manifest the Savour of the Knowledge of Christ in every Place*. For as it was truly said to Christ, *That no Man doth any thing in secret, and himself desires to be known openly*: So neither must the Church of Christ obscure her Light by a secret Profession of Christianity, lest she contradict her own Prayer, and the Practice of the Primitive Churches, held forth in these Words: *God be merciful to us, and bless us, and cause his Face to shine upon us, that his Way may be known upon the Earth, and his Saving-Health among all Nations. And now, Lord, behold their Threatnings, and grant unto thy Servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy Word. — And they spake the Word with boldness. — And they overcame him by the Blood of the Lamb, by the Word of their Testimony; and they loved not their Lives unto the Death. — And became Followers of the Churches of God, having received the Word in much Affliction, with Joy of the Holy-Ghost.*

And if for the like faithful Testimony we must still suffer, as we have done, we shall rejoyce, as Christ hath exhorted us. The Church is taught of God to hold fast, not her Faith only, but also the Profession of her Faith; and this not by Starts and Girds, as Men give them License or Toleration, but with all constancy, and without wavering. And surely our Lord foreseeing, and by his Apostles foreshewing what would come to pass, required that this Profession be held without wavering in the Business of Church-Assembling, *Heb. 10. 25.* because without such Assemblies, the whole Service of God (in a Church-way) is like to fall to the ground.

This Duty, as it is of greatest importance, so it is founded upon Heavens Authority: *Forsake not the Assembling of your selves to-*



gether. And it is granted by the learned Protestants, *That against the Law of God or Nature no contrary Custom doth ever prevail.* [Dr. Field of the Church, lib. 4.] *He that doth any thing by Command from the King, contrary to the Command of God, does not fear God,* (saith Dr. Savage, Chaplain to K. Charles II, in his *Dew of Hermon*, p. 36, to 39.) And, speaking of the first Preachers of the Gospel, he saith, *Their Rulers enjoined them not to preach Christ, and therein they did well to disobey; for otherwise they had not feared God, inasmuch as tho their Rulers were above them, yet God was above them both.* — For in commanding any thing contrary to the Word and Will of God, they abuse their Power, either through their Ignorance or Wilfulness; and in that case merely Passive Obedience is to be yielded. These latter Sentences are the more remarkable, being written by one of his Majesties Chaplains, in Answer to a Book written by the Baptized Believers in this Age, entitled, *Sion's Groans for her Distressed*; which Book, whilst he pretends to confute, he has confirmed it, in the main scope and Intent of it.

As it is impossible, by Mulcts and Penalties to overcome the faithful Professors of the Truth, (for that which is of God, Men cannot overthrow, Acts 5.39.) so neither will those that are zealous for Error, be vanquished by that way. And the mischief is, their Errors are by their Sufferings made the more taking with those of weak Judgments. What then is the result of Persecution for Religion? Is it not commonly this, That the Hypocrites or Time-servers do fill that Church which has the Power of the Magistrate on her side? And suppose she have the Truth on her side, yet those Temporizers come not to her Communion for the Truths sake, and therefore cannot be a Blessing to her, nor she to them; nay, these shall, the soonest of all others, betray her, when ever Time shall minister occasion; for those who are not true to God, and their own Conscience, will never be faithful to Men. *They worship not the King of Heaven, but the Earthly Crown and Scepter, much like Euripus, carried headlong sometimes this way, sometimes that way.* Socrat. lib. 3. cap. 21.

But, shortly, to sum up what is or might be further said in this Case.

1. To restrict our Assemblies to the *Limits* of the said Act, is to obey Man rather than God, who gives liberty, without limiting the Numbers of those that meet, to worship him in a Church-way. And whilst we believe our Assemblies are true Churches, we must endeavour to meet in God's way, whoever countermands it.



2. For thus to limit our Assemblies to the Number of Four; will certainly destroy all our Church-Assemblies: For, suppose some Congregation or Church consist but of an hundred Persons, these being divided into Fours, have no Church-Assembly, unless every of these four be a Church. And if the Magistrate have just power to divide us into Fours or Fives, he has power to subdivide us into Two's, and by consequence to dissolve all our Assemblies. I confess, a small Number may constitute a true Church. *Gregory Thaumaturgus*, tho a Bishop, had a Church consisting but of seventeen Persons. [*Basil. de Spirit. Sanct. cap. 29.*] Our Saviour has promised his presence, where *two or three are met together in his Name*. But then *in his Name*, signifieth in his Authority, and according to his Appointment. Now Christ has nowhere appointed, that four, and no more, should come together into one House or Place; no, tho an hundred Persons be come together, if more do come, they cannot be prohibited by all that Power which God has given to Man, as we have shewed.

3. Our zealous Country-Men of the Parochial Way, would think it very unlawful to be limited in their Meetings to fours or fives; and yet they ought to be restrain'd from Seditious Practices as well as others; and we do by as good Right think it unlawful for us to be so restrained. We hope our Legislators did not intend at all to exalt their Authority against the Lord, whose Power is above all. But yet when these Laws come to be executed upon good Men, by the Industry of mercenary Fellows, meerly for worshipping God, then are they turned into Snares to the ruin of the Innocent, and dishonour of that Power which gave them being. And all this falls out, for want of better provision in the said Laws, to convict Men of Sedition, than only because they were observ'd to preach or pray.

4. Wherefore, being fully satisfied that our Assemblies are true Church-Assemblies, and that upon the strictest enquiry we are able to make into the due Nature and Order of such Assemblies, we conceive our selves indispenibly bound by the Word of God, the Examples of the first and best Churches, and the Tie of Conscience, as regulated by a sincere Love of Religion, to hold fast the Profession of our Faith without wavering or changing, by reason of the Change of Times, or Man's Laws. Being also rationally persuaded, that the more publick and free Men are to serve the Lord, the less danger of Sedition. Wherefore, with innocent Hearts, and pure Hands, (as to any Design of Sedition) in the strength of Christ, we will keep his Way, and let the Lord do with us as seemeth him good.



## S E C T. V.

*Of the Baptized Believers Call to Christianity, and to the Work of the Ministry.*

**W**HEN our Saviour commanded his Apostles *to teach all Nations, and to preach the Gospel to every Creature,* We do not doubt but their performance of *this his gracious Will,* may truly be said to be the *calling of the Gentiles, or Nations:* And that Men enjoy a great Mercy (for which they ought to be very thankful) to be born in a Nation to whom the Gospel has been preached, and received by their Progenitors; And that it is also a great Blessing to be born under the Government of Christian Princes; and we believe we ought to love and honour our Nation, and the Rulers of it, upon this very account (as well as for the Obligation of Nature and Laws) *viz.* because they assert the Interest of Christ Jesus in general as well as we.

Nor is it our Business to destroy the State of Christianity received in any Nation; nor at all to despise the Ministry that conscientiously upholds it (but only to labour that Christianity may be delivered from the Errors that have encumbered it, by reason of the charge of Governments and Interests, or Corruptions of the Ages past.) And in this Consideration, as we look upon our Nation to be a Christian Nation; so we count our selves much more happy in being Members of a Nation that owns the true God, Christ Jesus to be the Saviour of the World, the Scriptures to be holy and true, and that Faith and Holiness is the way to true Blessedness, than to have been of any other Nation whatsoever.

But yet for all this there is a great Truth in the Words of *Tertullian, i. e. We are not born, but made Christians.* And therefore, we do not think that our meer Birth of Christian Parents does qualify us, or give us an actual Right to Christ's Ordinances; but to this end we believe, and know, that every Person ought to have the Gospel preached, or some way made known to them, and that a work of real Grace (or the new Birth) at least by a solemn Profession, must precede our Baptifmal Covenant; to this the Scriptures give full consent, *John i. 12, 13. 2 Cor. 5. 17. Eph. 2. 10. 1 Pet. 1. 23.* And thus we, and ours (so many of them as the Lord our God does call by the preaching of the Gospel) are actually incorporate



incorporate with the Church of Christ Militant, and engaged thenceforth in the high and holy Calling, and actual Profession of the Christian Religion.

2. But now, Whether we have any lawful Call to the work of the Ministry, is the business to be a little considered, partly, for that some of our late Persecutors were pleased to suggest the contrary; and partly to put our selves upon the strictest Trial, even in this case where we are supposed to be the most deficient.

The Questions in this case to be resolved, are,

1. *Whether a succession of Ordination from Man to Man, down from some of the Apostles, be absolutely necessary to a due Call to the Ministry? or,*

2. *Whether the same Means that is of Authority sufficient to make Men Christians, be not also sufficient to make Ministers?*

In answer to these Questions, we shall do little more than offer what we have formerly written upon this Subject. And tho' the Papists are the Men who stand most stilly for Succession, as necessary, yet of late we find our Friends of the Church of England looking that way, as if they would justify their Ordination in a successive Line from Man to Man, through the Papacy: which thing is disclaimed by Dr. Luther, with the greatest vehemency, in these words. 'Who so loveth Christ, ought to endure any thing, rather than to be ordained by the Papists; because in their Ordinations all things are carried with such wicked preposterousness, that if they were not mad, and blind, they would perceive how they mock God to his Face; --- being stricken with an universal blindness, they do not so much as know the Word of God, --- especially the Bishops who ordain. --- Let me be counted a Fool, a Knave, a Liar, if there be any one of them, ordain'd by them, who dare say, that at such time as he received Orders, he was commanded to dispense the Mysteries of Christ, or to teach the Gospel, --- but they ordain Sacrificers of the unbloody Sacrifice of the Mass, and to hear Confessions, &c. Thus far Luther. And the Oath which they take at their Ordination (as set down by Mr. Bullinger) is very un-gospel-like, the sum of it is in these Words, *That the Priest will be a true Subject to the Pope, obey the Decrees of the Fathers, and of the Church (i.e. the Roman Church) and that he will persecute Hereticks.*

Beza censures all Ordination taken from the Papists. Let us hear him speak. 'What ordinary Vocation is that which you say the first Reformers had, excepting some few of them, is it not the Pall? Shall we think then, that the Popish Orders are valid, in which there is not any preceding enquiry into manners? No such Enquiry



quity or Procedure, as is inviolably to be made, or observed, by Divine Right in Elections, and Ordinations, — Shall we think so highly of their Ordinations, that as often as any false Bishops are converted to true Christianity, immediately all the Filth, Unclean-ness, and Impurity, collated, is washed away? Nay, but with what Face or Conscience will he be able to forsake Popery, and not abjure his irregular Ordination? or if he do abjure it, how can he by virtue thereof claim Authority to teach?

Thus these two Pillars of the Protestant Reformation, are so far from deriving their Call to the Ministry, through the Papacy (as some late Protestants pretend to do) that they do utterly reject any Ordination which comes from them. Nor was *Luther* and *Beza* ordained after they came from the Papists. (Mr. *Stub's Occas. Quar.*) But *Beza* is said to defend his Call to the Ministry, by Instances of those that were called extraordinarily, as *Isaiab, Daniel, Amos, Zecharias, &c.*

These things premised, we may assume, that either of these ways (as approved by our Reformers respectively) could we go to defend our Call to the Ministry, as well as they: Being first, many of us, ordained by those who received Ordination from you, and some may run with you to Bishop *Cranmer*, who was ordained by the Papacy; and then proceed, till we come up to *Clemens*, or *Lucius*, and so to *St. Peter*.

And as for the pretence of *Beza*, or *Luther*, about their extraordinary Call, it's not impossible for us to give as fair a Demonstration of it, as either of them, (specially if we take the Rules given by Mr. *Beza*, to judg of such a Call by, to be cogent, viz. *good Life, sound Doctrine, and the Election of the People.*) But to be plain, we do not very well like either of these ways. Not the first, it is so fordid, as that the Papists themselves in deriving their Call through the Papacy, are forced to take it from so many false pretended Popes, or Diabolical Popes, even Witches and Devils incarnate (by their own confession) that they make but a lamentable Succession of it in the end. And especially, if *Stapleton* may be regarded (tho a Papist) who tells us, *That it is not a bare and personal Succession, but lawful Succession, which is a note of a true Church; and defineth that to be lawful Succession, when not only the latter succeeds into the void rooms of those that went before them, being lawfully called thereunto, but also hold the Faith which their Predecessors did.* Now let this Rule be honestly stood by, and we are sure the Papists shall never be able to prove a Succession of many points  
of



of their Faith, and Doctrines from the Apostles, whilst the World stands, and consequently neither can the Protestants derive a lawful Succession from them.

We like not the second way, for we will not compare with *Isaiah*, *Daniel*, *Amos*, nor *Zechariah*, in respect of their immediate Mission. But this we say, That our Call to the Ministry is no otherwise extraordinary, than our Call to believe the Gospel is so; or, as it stands clear from all the idle Ceremonies used by Papists, or others in their Ordinations, or as it is ordered (as near as we can) according to the Word of God. And is the sacred Word of Power to beget us to God, and by the assistance of his Spirit to make us his Children, or Christians? and is it not of Power or Authority sufficient to enable us to worship God in his own Ordinances, which were made for Christians, and not Christians for them? This seems justly ridiculous.

We make no doubt but that it's easy with God (and no extraordinary thing) to raise a People to himself, in a Nation where all have corrupted the way of Christianity, (or lost the State and Praise of a true Church) meerly through his Blessing upon the reading and diligent searching of the Scriptures, (I speak of a Nation where the Scriptures are received, as that is our case.) The Truth is, all the ways of God's Worship, are (in the Word) made ready for us, and laid at our Doors, and we do but take up gladly, what others let lie as useles things, that they may hug their own Devices.

But now to silence a Papist for ever (which some will think to be a difficult undertaking); do they not allow (even by the Pen of the Learned *Bellarmino*, chap. 7.) that even an Heathen, that is not baptized, may administer Baptism in case of Necessity? And this they esteem a valid Baptism. And why then may not we, when God hath opened our Eyes to see any other Truth, as well as that, enter upon the dutiful observance of it in the best way we can, our Circumstances (especially the case of Necessity) being considered? For is not Necessity as good a Warrant to take up the practice of, or to restore one Truth as well as another? Certainly, one Ordinance is as sacred as another, and where Churches are settled, ought to be dispensed in the most honourable way, and by the most fit Instruments, even Christ's Ministers. Wherefore, till the Papists shall recal their opinion about Baptism, and prove a Succession as necessary to Baptism as Ordination, they can with



no shew of reason, insist upon the necessity of Ordination. to be founded upon Succession. But further,

It's evident from the Scriptures, (*Acts 13.*) that a Succession is not necessary to true Ordination; for tho the Apostles were yet living, it was not thought necessary that they should impose Hands upon *Barnabas* and *Paul*: but this is done by gifted Men, or the Prophets that were in the Church at *Antioch*. The only question here to be resolved is, *Whether this laying on of Hands was for Ordination?* The Papists do hold it was; some Protestants deny it; but some Protestants do affirm it. Mr. *Churchman*, in his History of *Episcopacy*, tells out of *Chrysostom*, *That tho Paul was an Apostle neither of Men, nor by Men, yet as for the Work to which he was separated, ask the said Father (saith he) and he will tell you, εἰς τὴν Ἀποστολὴν, That it was the Office of an Apostle, and that he was ordained an Apostle here, that he might preach the Gospel with greater Power, — And certainly that he had not the Apostleship before, may be made manifest by that which followed after.* But tho some Protestants doubt whether this were *Paul's* Ordination (tho the matter is clear of it self) yet here is the Ordination of *Barnabas* without all question; and then it is evident that there was an Interruption of Succession in the case of Ordination, even in the Apostles Days, and therefore by no means to be held to be necessary in our Days, who are so far removed from the times of the Holy Apostles, that in vain do Men think to find a clear and undoubted Succession, of any one Ordinance from them. Wherefore we may safely conclude, that where the Truth of the Gospel is received, with the Gifts of God's Spirit (as that was the case at *Antioch*) there is a sufficiency of Power on the Persons so gifted, with the advice of the Church to send forth, or appoint Men to the work of the Ministry; altho 'tis true, this course is most warrantable in the case of necessity, and in no wise to be done in contempt or wilful neglect of that way, which is more ordinary and regular. Howbeit, to tie all Power of Ordination so strictly to the Persons of Men ordained, by such as were ordained by the Apostles themselves, would in all likelihood throw the Power of Ordination out of the Church of God at this day; especially if we stand upon the due Election and Qualification of Persons so claiming Succession from the Apostles themselves.

And because due Qualifications, and Election, is as necessary to a true Minister of Christ, as Ordination, seeing it's most certain, that unless God do first make Men Ministers, it's impossible for the  
Church.



Church (rightly) to make them Ministers. We shall here add, That besides his moral Vertues, and Spiritual Gifts, he that is regularly called to the Ministry, must first be a true Member of the Church, and chosen by a true Church to that sacred Employment. And then we may boldly (yet modestly) suppose, that true Ordination (at least in some part of it) is only found in the Congregations of Baptized Believers at this day: For, where true Baptism is not, Ordination cannot be regular. Again, due Election is found amongst them, whilst neglected both by Papiists, and Prelatists. And further, the true Form and Order of Ordination is found in our Churches. The first is evident of it self, *No Baptism, no due Ordination*; is a Truth without exception among all that own Ordination. And for the second, 'tis certain none are ordained to any Office in the Baptized Churches, till elected by the consent of the Church, or the Major part, to whom they are to minister.

And herein they follow the Footsteps of the Apostles, *Acts 1.* when one must be chosen in the room of *Judas*, the 120, which was the whole Assembly, allowed the choice of two: and good reason there is, that where all are equally concerned, they should all be satisfied in the choice of such, as to whom they commit the care and feeding of their Souls.

When the seven Deacons were to be ordained, the whole Church is consulted, *Acts 6.* and the Election made by them who knew the qualification of the Persons.

And as holy Scripture, so Antiquity stands with us in this case. The *Nicene Council*, writing their minds to the Church at *Alexandria*, concerning some that were to succeed other Bishops, gives these Directions: *If so be they shall seem to be worthy, and the People shall chuse them.* What Rules were to be observed in respect of their worthiness for Ministerial Employment, may be gathered from *Clement, Epist. ad Corinth.* Having (saith he) made trial of them by the Spirit, to be Bishops and Deacons. And again, Others well approved of, should succeed into the Office and Ministry, who therefore have been constituted, -- by famous and discreet Men, with the good liking and consent of all the Church, -- and who withal, have of a long time had a good Testimony from all Men.

*Leo* gives the same direction (*Epist. 84. c. 5.*) charging, That none be ordained against the Wills and Petitions of the People: And again, *Epist. 49.* The Custom was that he should be chosen of all, that was to be over all, and wills, that the liking of the People and their Testimony



## An Apology for

mony be sought: That in Ordinations, the Rules of the Apostles and Fathers ought to be observed; that he that is to be over the Church, should not only have the Allowance of the Faithful, but the Testimony also of them that are without.

Cyprian is as clear for us, (*Ep. l. i.*) The People who full well and perfectly know the Life of him that is to be ordained Bishop, are to be present, and to be chosen with their allowance, who know the Conversation of every one. And he brings *Salinius* (his Colleague) for Instance, who was chosen by the Voice of the whole Brotherhood, and the Judgment of the Bishops which came together.

Each Church stands free (saith *Dr. Bilson*, *Perpet. Govern.*) by God's Law to admit, maintain, and obey no Man as their Pastor without their liking; and that the Peoples Election dependeth on humane Fellowship, and first Principles of humane Society and Assemblies.

*Dr. Field* informs us, That this Right of the People hath been invaded many ways: 1. By great Personages and Magistrates. 2. When the Bishops grew to great Pomp, and the Clergy began to be enriched by Benefices, Elections were, and to this day are made according to the Interests of the Rich and Strong, whilst the People are not only deprived of, but become ignorant, that any Right remains in them to chuse their own Ministers or Pastors.

Now this Privilege, tho' lost in most National Churches, is restored and maintained in the Baptized Churches, where none are elected Messengers, Bishops, or Deacons, without the free Choice of the Brotherhood where such Elections are made. And after such Election of Persons of known Integrity and competent Ability, we proceed to Ordination, with Fasting and Prayer, and the laying on of Hands, according to the Scripture; *Acts 13.3.* When they had fasted and prayed, they laid their Hands on them, and sent them away. Thus for the Ordination of Messengers, (which after the manner of some are called Bishops.) *Acts 14. 23.* And when they had ordained them Elders in every Church, and prayed with Fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed. *Acts 6. 5. 6.* And they chose Stephen, a Man full of Faith, and of the Holy-Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicholas, whom they set before the Apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid their Hands on them. Thus for the Ordination of Deacons. All which Apostolical Practices are religiously restored and observed in the Churches of the Baptized Believers, without any devised Adjuncts of our own or others. By all which it may appear,



appear, they have a lawful Call to the Work of the Ministry.

Here I meet with an Objection; *'Tis doubted by some, whether a Man having received Ordination as a Presbyter, may afterward have Ordination as a Messenger of the Churches of Christ, the Objector supposing that the first Ordination is sufficient, only the Church must give him another Commission.*

This Objection I answer three ways: 1. By Antiquity. 2. By Reason. 3. By Scripture.

1. Antiquity is directly against this Objection, being rather for a threefold Ordination than only one, as I shall shew by and by. But first, I marvel how the Objector would give a Man a Ministerial Commission without Ordination, the Church having no other way at all to give Commissions but by Ordination; nor can any Man tell us, how she can give her Commissions Ministerial, but by the very Act of her Ordination; and according to the Nature of her Ordination, such, and no other is her Commission.

Now our Ancients understood this, and therefore did usually bring Men gradually to the degree of a Bishop, (*i. e.* a Messenger, according to the Scripture, Bishop, or Overseer, being a Name common to Elders in the Primitive Times.) Thus *Chrysostom* was first ordained a Deacon, then a Presbyter, after that he was ordained Bishop of *Constantinople*, by *Theophilus* Bishop of *Alexandria*. And saith the learned *Bilson*, *In the Primitive Church they were first Deacons, and upon Trial, when they had ministred well, and were found blameless, they were admitted to be Elders; and after that, if their Gifts and Pains: so deserved, they were called to an higher degree: so that every one, by the ancient Discipline of Christ's Church, before he could come from ministering to governing in the Church of God, received thrice, or at least twice, Imposition of Hands.*

2. Reason tells us, that every Man that is called to the Work of the Ministry, ought to have a Commission (that is, an Ordination) commensurable to his Ministry. It is Christ's peculiar to give Commission by the Word of his Mouth only, the Church cannot do so; she must confer Ministerial Authority in some solemn Rite or Ceremony. This is plain in the case of *Deacons*, it was not sufficient for the Apostles to say (of Persons eminently qualified) we order or appoint them to serve Tables, or, look ye to the Poor: But besides their great Qualifications and Election, they must receive their Commission or Authority by Prayer, with the laying on of hands, else they have no Commission. In like manner a *Presbyter* must be

solemnly.

Socr. 1  
16. c. 12,  
13.



solemnly ordained, before the Holy-Ghost hath made him an Overseer of the particular Flock committed to his Charge. And then in reason, if he have a far greater Charge afterward committed to him, he has need of a Commission (that is, an Ordination, for other Commission there is none) to enable him to take care of many Churches, and to plant new Churches in the World. We read not of any Messengers, that acted as such in that great Trust, without an Ordination agreeable to their Work; and it is ill venturing to send Men out with a Commission too short for their Employment, it being irrational so to do, and without any good Example. Let us see then what the Scripture will say in favour of our Answers.

3. The Apostles had a twofold Apostleship; the one limited to the Jewish Nation, *Mat. 10.* the other of extent to all Nations, *Mat. 28.* If they were ordained to either, then they were ordained to both; and the latter seems to be the more solemn and formal Ordination, not only for that when Christ had given them Order what to do, he *lift up his Hands, and blessed them, Luk. 24. 50.* but also gave them Order to tarry at *Jerusalem*, until they were *endowed with Power from on high.* When their Work was *particular* or limited, they had a limited Commission; when their Work was *universal*, they had an universal Commission. Sure the Church, who hath no way to give Commissions but by Ordination, shall do well and wisely to follow Christ, the Author of all her Power, when she delegates or gives it forth to any of her Ministers. This Answer may suffice, yet we add:

*Barnabas* is confessed to have been one of the Seventy Disciples, and had a divine Authority from Christ to preach the Gospel to the Jews; but when he is sent to preach to the Gentiles, he hath a new Commission, even an Ordination, as appears, *Acts 13.*

F I N I S.



