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## HISTORY OF THE MODE OF BAPTISM.

About three years ago THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY (Vol. XIII, No. 4) published an article on the various baptisms practiced by the people of God under the old dispensation. The article in question was part of a paper read before a pastoral conference. The resolution of said conference that the paper be published in its entirety in this periodical has not fully been carried out by the essayist chiefly because of the great length of the paper. This second installment contains the history of the mode of baptism from the beginning of the second century to the beginning of the Reformation. The reader will notice that the right to speak has in the main been given to literary and monumental evidence.

In the year 1873, Bryennios, then Metropolitan of Serra, discovered a very old volume in the monastery of the Holy Sepulcher. This ancient treatise bears the title *Didache ton Dodeka Apostolon*, that is, the "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles." Many critics place its date between A. D. 90 and 100, and none later than 165. In a chapter on Baptism the *Didache* directs: "If you have not living water, baptize into other water; and if you cannot baptize in cold water, do so in warm; but if you have neither, then pour out water on the head three times in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."<sup>1</sup>) This oldest evidence regarding the

1) Ἐὰν μὴ ἔχης ὕδωρ ζῶν, εἰς ἄλλο ὕδωρ βάπτισον· εἰ δ' οὐ δύνασαι ἐν ψυχρῷ, ἐν θερμῷ· ἐὰν δὲ ἀμφοτέρω μὴ ἔχης, ἔκχεον εἰς τὴν κεφαλὴν τρις ὕδωρ εἰς ὄνομα πατρὸς καὶ υἱοῦ καὶ ἁγίου πνεύματος. (Chap. VII, p. 23.)

# THE PROOF TEXTS OF THE CATECHISM WITH A PRACTICAL COMMENTARY.

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## THE THIRD ARTICLE.

(Continued.)

### PRESERVATION IN FAITH.

1 Pet. 1, 5: *Ye are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.*

The First Epistle of St. Peter is written to Christians who "now for a season, if need be, are in heaviness through manifold temptations," v. 6. One should think that the first words of the Epistle would be words of sympathy with their present sad lot. But no; Peter, or rather the Holy Ghost, has a better means of lifting them above trials and troubles.

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12) Cooke, *Chr. Theol.*, p. 65.

He begins the body of the letter with a fervent thanksgiving: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again." *Sursum corda!* Think of the wonderful thing God has done by you: He has *begotten you again*. What impelled Him? Nothing of merit or worthiness in you; it was His grace, pure grace, His *abundant mercy*. And the purpose He had in view? You are begotten again "*unto a lively,*" *i. e.*, a living, "*hope,*" a hope sure to attain its end. It is not a Fata Morgana. The firm basis of this "living hope" is "the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." Cf. 1 Cor. 15, 17. 18. "Jesus, my Redeemer, lives, I to life shall also waken."—What is the object of that hoped-for treasure? It is an *inheritance* of incomparable beauty, an inheritance "incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away." Language is inadequate to express its gloriousness; we can speak of it in negatives only. And this inheritance is secure: it is "reserved in heaven for you." This "inheritance" is life eternal, life in the kingdom of glory. What a consolation for the suffering Christians to know: your "inheritance is reserved in heaven for you." In heaven are no enemies of the Christians, hence no danger of its being lost. Well and good; but, the Christian might falteringly ask, what of me? I am still a pilgrim here below in the enemy's territory; the end of my journey is not at hand as yet; shall I not fall into the hands of spiritual robbers and murderers on the way? Shall I be preserved for this inheritance? Most assuredly. Fear not; "*ye are kept unto salvation.*" Ye are *kept*, literally, *guarded*, unto salvation. The apostle would say: I know you have powerful enemies, devil, world, and your own flesh, to contend with, but take heart: ye are *guarded*. "With might of yours naught can be done," but ye are *guarded*. How? Ye are "*kept guarded, through faith,*" *φρουρουμένους διὰ πίστεως*, through faith in Christ Jesus. But how do I know that I shall be kept in faith? The apostle answers: "*By the power of God ye are kept through faith unto salvation.*" Therein the power of God manifests itself that He preserves faith in us and through this faith keeps us unto salvation. What a sweet,

strong consolation for the suffering Christian who is anxious about his soul's salvation! It is a consolation that has inherent power to strengthen the weak faith of the Christian, and to cause him to rejoice when he looks forward to that time when this salvation shall be revealed, v. 5 b.

Phil. 1, 6: *Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.*

Paul begins his thanksgiving for the Philippians thus: "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy." Why does he thank God? "For your *fellowship in the Gospel* from the first day until now." He thanked God because the Philippians had become partakers in the Gospel, that by God's grace they had received it in faith, and lived in faith of their Savior Jesus Christ. For this he thanks God. God "had begun this good work" in them. When man comes to faith, all thanks therefor are due to God, and to Him only. Cooperation on the part of man is totally excluded. The apostle proceeds: "I thank my God . . . , *being confident of this very thing that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it.*" God "had begun a good work" in the Philippians, had brought them to faith by the Gospel, and the apostle is *confident*, *πεποιθώς*, has the firm conviction, is absolutely certain, that He will surely finish it, complete it, until the day of Jesus Christ. Not the Philippians themselves can or will do this, but God, and He only. He will keep them in the fellowship of the Gospel; He will keep them in faith and strengthen their faith. The warrant for Paul's firm confidence is the fact that it was *God* who began this work. His beginning the work is a pledge of its being completed, perfected. In spite of all our spiritual enemies we shall attain the end of our faith, our souls' salvation. Of such precious promises we should boldly lay hold, and be certain that neither death nor life shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord, Rom. 8, 38. 39.

## THE CAUSE OF UNBELIEF.

Ezek. 33, 11. *As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.*

The *wicked* are they who must confess: "Our transgressions and our sins are upon us, and we pine away in them," v. 10. The *wicked* are they whose sins are not forgiven. When they ask, "How should we then live?" v. 10, the answer is, The *wicked* as *wicked* cannot live. Their lot is death, *the death of the wicked*, eternal damnation. Their death is just. "The wages of sin is death." Whose fault is it if they die this death? Their own. They will not *turn from their wicked way*.

Or is it perhaps God's fault? The Lord God declares: "*I have no pleasure*" in their death; my pleasure is for them to *live*. This is God's good and gracious will towards the *wicked*, though they have richly deserved death. This His gracious will is an *earnest* will. He declares: "*I have no pleasure*" in their death; that should suffice us. But to make assurance doubly sure, God confirms this declaration with an oath: "*As I live!*" His *earnest* will is their salvation, hence He lovingly implores them: "*Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways.*" God has done all to save them. If they despise His call, they die of their own fault; they *will* to die. Hence God can say: "Why *will ye die*, O house of Israel?" v. 11b. God's will to save man is an *earnest* will; His grace, a *universal* grace. Whosoever knows that he belongs to "the *wicked*" and comes to a knowledge of his sins and transgressions, shall also know and firmly believe that for him, too, there is grace in store. Rom. 5, 6; Is. 53, 12; Matt. 9, 13; Luke 15, 2.

1 Tim. 2, 4. *God will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.*

The cause why so many men are eternally lost does not lie in God. "*God will have all men to be saved.*" God's will is an *earnest* will; this the verb *θέλει* expresses. It comprises "*all men*"; according to God's gracious will not a single soul

is destined to damnation. How are "all men" to be saved? By "*coming unto the knowledge of the truth.*" This is God's gracious, earnest will. What is meant by "the truth" through the knowledge of which "all men" are to be saved? Christ says: "*I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.*" So to know Christ is to know the truth, the way of salvation. And of this *truth* we are to have a deep knowledge, an *ἐπίγνωσις*. The head-knowledge does not save, but the deep knowledge of the heart that "Christ is the Way, the Truth, the Life," that "no one cometh to the Father but by Him." We are to know that we, "all men," are by nature unsaved, lost; that our sin separates us from God, but also that this barrier has been removed by Christ. He came into the world to save sinners. To this knowledge "all men" are to come and thus be saved. This is God's earnest will, and hence He has the Gospel preached, the sun and center of which is faith in Christ Jesus; and this "Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," Rom. 1, 16.

2 Pet. 3, 9. *The Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*

In the preceding paragraph the apostle had administered a stinging rebuke to the scoffers who ridicule the idea of Christ's return to judgment. They rest their argument on the proposition: "All things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation," v. 4. In masterful fashion Peter turns their own weapon against these mockers, proving conclusively that they are willful ignoramuses, vv. 1—4.

In the present paragraph he addresses the Christians. Among other things he says: "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise." Why, then, does He delay His second coming? "He is long-suffering to us-ward," *μακροθυμεῖ εἰς ἡμᾶς*. Men have sinned and still sin. God might justly punish, but He stays His blow. Why this patience, this long-suffering? Because "*He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*" God's great love to all mankind is the ground of His long-suffering. The word trans-

lated "*willing*," βουλόμενος, implies deliberate consent. The Lord does *not will*, does *not wish* the death of any sinner. If any perish, it is not because God so willed, so desired, so wished, so decreed. He did not, as Calvin teaches, predestine some people to eternal damnation for the glorification of His sovereign majesty. Negatively and positively His gracious will toward all mankind is here set forth: "*Not any should perish, but all should come to repentance.*" Language can devise no stronger way to express the thought: God's earnest, gracious will is the salvation of all mankind. More emphatically than is done here this truth cannot be expressed: There is no predestination to damnation.

"God will have all men to be saved." "The Son of Man is come to save that which was lost," Matt. 18, 11. And He, "the Lamb of God, taketh away the sin of the world," John 1, 29. "He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world," 1 John 2, 2. All things are ready. And now God wills, earnestly wills, "*that all should come to repentance,*" that all should come to a knowledge of their sin, come to know that by virtue of their sin they deserved to "perish" eternally, come to know that in Christ Jesus there is salvation, firmly believe in Him and His merits, and thus escape perdition and enter into everlasting life. So God is minded towards all. His grace is *universal*. And because He is so minded towards us, He is long-suffering. He will give to all time and opportunity to come to repentance, v. 9 a.

Matt. 22, 14. *Many are called, but few are chosen.*

This passage has been the subject of much discussion. The controversy centers on the word "called," κλητοί. The *tertium comparationis* of text and context is lost sight of, hence the confusion. In his latest book, *Conversion and Election, a Plea for a United Lutheranism in America*, Dr. F. Pieper gives a very lucid explanation of Matt. 22, 14. We take great pleasure in quoting it, the more so because much there

said is pertinent to the matter treated of in this article. We read, pp. 123 ff.:—

Without question, "calling" is used in a twofold sense in Scripture. Rom. 1, 6 "the called of Jesus Christ," *κλητοὶ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*, are the converted of Jesus Christ, those actually received into the kingdom of God, the *Christians*. Being called is here identical with being converted or becoming a believer. And this is certainly the meaning of the term in the great majority of passages in the epistles. On the other hand, Matt. 22, 14: "Many are called, but few are chosen," *πολλοὶ γὰρ εἰσιν κλητοί, ὀλίγοι δὲ ἐκλεκτοί*, distinguishes the called from the elect. According to the context the called are persons toward whom God has omitted no effort, as regards their being invited, with earnest and urgent pleading, to the kingdom of God. But God has expended His efforts upon them in vain. The great majority of them do not obey the call. They are not translated from the world to the Church; they remain *extra ecclesiam*. In this passage of Holy Writ "call" and "conversion" are not identical in meaning. The call, in this sentence, is a person's *invitation* to the kingdom of God, without including his conversion. The same meaning appears in two more passages, Matt. 20, 16; Luke 14, 24.

Next, Calvin's argument, who would determine the character of the call by reference to the *result*, is refuted:—

Over against this it should be maintained: The call is a divine quantity *in itself*, regardless of the *result*. This is most powerfully exhibited Matt. 22. The king's benevolence, evidenced by the gracious terms of his invitation to the supper he has prepared, as well as his anger, enkindled by the contempt with which his invitation is received, demonstrate the intense divine earnestness of the calling even in the case of the *ineffectual* call. Matt. 22 is in subject-matter a parallel of Is. 5, 4: "What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it?" and of Matt. 23, 37: "I would have gathered you — and ye would not." Hence it is quite proper to say that all who live under the sound of the Gospel *may* be converted and saved, as was shown in the preceding chapter. Hence, too, our Confession treats of the call which God directs to all hearers of the Word in such terms as these: "This call of God, which is made through the preaching of the Word, we should not regard as being a mere delusion (*non existimemus esse simulatam et fucatam vocationem*), but know that God thereby *reveals His will*, that He would *work* by His Word, in those called in such manner, that they might become enlightened, converted, and saved. For the Word by which we are called is 'a ministration of the Spirit,' giving the Spirit, or by means of which the Spirit is given, 2 Cor. 3, and 'a power of God unto salvation,' Rom. 1. And since the Holy Spirit would, through the Word, be active, strengthen, and give power and ability, it is God's *will* that we should receive and believe the Word and be obedient to it." Also the calling which remains ineffectual has behind it the gracious workings of divine omnipotence and the omnipotent workings of divine grace. There are *motus inevitabiles*.



Our Confession says of the called who do not come: *Veritati* AGNITÆ *perseverantes repugnant*, they offer constant resistance to the truth which they have recognized. The reason why men are able to resist the call: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," while they cannot resist the call of doom which summons them before the judgment-seat of Christ, is, because in His call of grace in time God works through means, while on Judgment Day He operates in glory *unveiled*, ἐν τῇ δόξῃ αὐτοῦ. Not only in the latter, but in the former instance as well, the operative power is a divine and omnipotent power. "We believe according to the working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead." But the operations of God through means have the property of being resistible. God working without means, in majesty unveiled, cannot be resisted, as is evident from Matt. 25, 31 sqq., and as is shown at length by Luther in *De Servo Arbitrio*. To say that "the result is the interpretation of the purposes of God" is the smart talk of a would-be wise person.

Matt. 23, 37. *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not.*

This "cry of the mother-heart for its perverted and lost child" Jesus utters at the end of His prophetic career, on the last day of His public preaching in the Temple. — "How often would I" — "and ye would not!" How sharp the antithesis between the "I" and the "ye," between Christ's gracious will and the perverted will of the Jews!

Christ first says what *He* willed. This His will He had manifested by His deeds, and it was known to the people of Jerusalem. With the words, "How often would I," etc., Jesus points back to all those signs and wonders which He had performed in Jerusalem, and to all those sayings which the children of Jerusalem had heard out of His mouth. The Lord had often called the inhabitants of Jerusalem to repentance; with word and deed He had manifested Himself as their Savior and Redeemer; with great and precious promises He had lovingly invited them to come to Him. Back of all these admonitions and pleadings was the *will* of Jesus, the earnest will, to gather them to Himself, "even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings," to gather them to Himself, ἐπισυναγαγεῖν, to convert them so that they might find rest for their souls. "And

*ye would not.*" Herewith Jesus reminds the children of Jerusalem how they had conducted themselves over against Him from the very beginning; He reminds them of their conduct as it was patent then and there. Jerusalem had stoned and killed the prophets, and when Christ had come unto His own, His own received Him not. They had remained aloof from Him, had not become His disciples, had contradicted His teachings, had blasphemed His great signs and wonders; often they had tried to apprehend Him in order to kill Him. Back of this evil conduct of theirs was their *perverted will*. "*And ye would not.*" Thus the Searcher of hearts lays bare the evil counsel of their hearts. — These exhortations and enticements of Jesus had affected the heart and the will of the Jews; they had felt how He was minded towards them; but they opposed their perverted will to His gracious will, and thus hindered the earnest gracious will of Christ: their conversion and salvation. (Cf. *Lehre u. Wehre*, Vol. 43, 200.)

Acts 7, 51. *Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.*

These are words of Stephen, the first Christian martyr. In his address he had recounted all the benefits God vouchsafed to His disobedient people. God had left nothing undone to save them. Oftentimes He had called them to repentance by the prophets. But what had they done? Moses the fathers had refused, v. 35; the prophets they had persecuted, v. 52. By refusing Moses and persecuting the prophets, they had despised the *Word, God's Word*, that Moses and the prophets spoke; they despised, *resisted, the Holy Ghost*, who spoke through Moses and the prophets. Thus did "the fathers," and "*as your fathers did, so do ye.*" The "ye," the children, had betrayed and murdered the Just One, Jesus, v. 52. Him and His Word they rejected. And now they were resisting the preaching of the apostles, who testified that in Jesus alone there is salvation, and by resisting the word of the inspired apostles, they resisted the Holy Ghost, who is in and with the

Word, Luke 10, 16. Thus they manifested their stiff-neckedness and their being uncircumcised in heart and ears. They closed their ears to the Gospel of Christ and their hearts to the Holy Ghost, who spoke through this Gospel. — Unbelief resists the Holy Ghost. Man hears the Word of God, and in, by, and through the Word the Holy Ghost wills, earnestly wills, to convert man; but man resists the operation of the Spirit in the Word and is thus lost. Whose fault is it? His own, not God's.

The word used for "resist," *ἀντιπνέετε*, is a very strong one. It means: Ye *fall against* Him, *i. e.*, the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost endeavors, earnestly endeavors, to convert them through the Word, and they experience that power from above, but they "fall against" Him, they resist with might and main. The Holy Ghost, as it were, tried to storm the citadel of the hearts of the unbelieving Jews, but this earnest will and purpose to take them captive was frustrated by their obstinate resistance.

Hos. 13, 9. *O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help.*

From the study of the preceding passages we have learned that God's gracious will to save mankind is *universal*: "God will have all men to be saved," 1 Tim. 2, 4; Ezek. 33, 11; 2 Pet. 3, 9. — This His will to save man is an *earnest and sincere* will. Besides the emphatic assertions making this truth plain, 1 Tim. 2, 4; 2 Pet. 3, 9, we have the oath of God, "As I live," Ezek. 33, 11, the positive statement of the Savior, "How often would I," etc., and His mournful lamentation over Jerusalem, Matt. 23, 37. With emphasis it is said that it is God's earnest, sincere will that "the wicked turn from his way and live," Ezek. 33, 11; "that all should come to repentance," 2 Pet. 3, 9. To accomplish that end God sent prophets, His mouthpieces, to proclaim His good and gracious will; to that end Christ Himself, the exegete of the Father, John 1, 18, revealed the Father's gracious will in order to gather men unto Himself, Matt. 23, 37; to that end the apostles, men sent by God, preached the Gospel, the power of God unto salvation, Acts 7, 51; Rom. 1, 16. And

through this efficacious Word men are brought to faith and thus are saved. Rom. 10, 17; 2 Cor. 4, 6; Eph. 1, 17. 20. —

Why, then, do not all that hear the Gospel come to faith? Because they resist God's earnest, sincere, and gracious will, and thus *prevent* their coming to faith. "Ye would not," Matt. 23, 37; "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost," Acts 7, 51. This is the Scriptural answer to the question, Why are most men lost? Hence our Catechism says: "Most men obstinately resist the Word and Spirit of God, and are thus lost by their own fault."

These two truths so pointedly set forth in the foregoing passages are summed up and placed side by side in that dictum of Hosea, so often quoted by our Confessions: "*O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself,*" — non-conversion depends entirely on man's evil conduct; "*but in me is thy help*" — conversion depends solely on the grace of God.

But here reason immediately interposes: All men by nature are *equally guilty* before God and *dead* in sins, 1 Cor. 2, 14; Eph. 2, 1; aye, the carnal mind is *enmity* against God, Rom. 8, 7; hence, man's coming to faith, or his conversion, is solely and only the work of God. True. Scripture declares: "Ye are risen with Him through *the faith of the operation of God*, who hath raised Him (Christ) from the dead; and you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses," Col. 2, 12. 13. But why, then, — since all by nature are equally guilty and dead in sin, — does not God, whose will to save man is universal, whose grace is free, earnest, sincere, efficacious, grant faith to all? Why is a Saul converted into a Paul, and why is Caiaphas not converted? Why does Peter rise from his deep fall, and why does Judas fall into despair? In other words, why is it that some persons *in preference to others* come to repentance and are saved?

We do not know. Scripture is silent on this point, so we must be silent. What we do know is this: If man comes to faith, this faith is of the operation of God through the means

of grace, Col. 2, 12. "We *believe* according to the working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead," Eph. 1, 19. 20. If man does not come to faith, but remains in his unbelief, it is because, as Christ says, "ye would not," or, as Stephen words it, "ye do always resist the Holy Ghost." Doubting questions of reason must be fought down with the Spirit's weapon: "It is written!" In the school of theology here below the axiom applies: *Quod non est biblicum, non est theologicum*; in the school of theology up above where "we shall see Him as He is," 1 John 3, 2, we shall clearly understand the truth of God's Word uttered by His prophet Hosea: "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help."

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(To be continued.)