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A

REPLY TO A PUBLICATION

OF

GELLIUS FABER,

MINISTER AT EMDEN,

WHICH HE PUBLISHED IN THE YEAR 1562

(IF I MISTAKE NOT), TO SLANDER THE PIOUS CHILDREN

OF GOD, AND TO EMBITTER THEIR CROSS; TO ENSNARE AND DECEIVE

THE THOUGHTLESS, AND TO COMFORT AND ENCOURAGE THEM

IN THEIR UNRIGHTEOUSNESS AND CORRUPTION.

BY

MENNO SIMON.

Duo opposita (inquit Philosophus) juxta se posita, magis eluseunt.

(Two facts set opposite to each other, says the philosopher, become the more

apparent.)

SECON'D PART.

ELKHART, INDIANA:

PUBLISHED BY JOHN F. FUNK AND BROTHER.

1871. May God, our heavenly Father, through his beloved Son, Jesus Christ, our

Lord, graciously grant spiritual enlightenment and salutary understanding to

all the pious and unprejudiced readers of this work, of whatever class, who

sincerely seek the Lord and his saving truth, Amen.

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus

Christ," 1 Cor. 8:11.

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PREFACE.

PAUL writes to Timothy, and says, "This know also, that in the last

days perilous times shall come; for men shall be lovers of their own

selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents,

unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trace?breakers, false

accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

traitors, heady, high?minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of

God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from

such turn away," 2 Tim. 3:1?6.

Further he says, "I charge thee therefore before God and the Lord Jesus

Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his

kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove,

rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and doctrine, for the time will

come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own

lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and

they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned

unto fables," 2 Tim. 4:1?4.

Again Daniel says, "There shall be a time of trouble, such as never was

since there was a nation," Dan. 12:1.

Beloved reader, if you will pay close attention to the seeking,

teaching and conduct of the preachers of the present day, and to the

deplorable condition of the common people, you will be convinced that

the teachers of whom' Paul speaks are here, in great numbers and that

the abominable time has arrived. O reader, take heed! It is such a time

now, that if Sodom was flourishing as of old, it would compare as pious

and righteous with the present, miserable world. Yet, through the just

punishment and wrath of God, Sodom was turned into ashes and suffered

the vengeance of eternal fire.

"Behold," says the prophet, "this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom,

Pride, fullness of bread, abundance of idleness, was in her,,and in her

daughters; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy;

and they were haughty and committed abomination before me; therefore I

took them away as I saw good," Ezek.16:49,50.

But now the world lives as if they were merely born to ungodliness and

sensuality; and as if God was a dreamer and his word a fable. Say,

beloved, is it not so 8 My kind reader, is it not so a Where is he who

sincerely fears God and seeks after the truth I Wherever we tern we see

nothing but unrighteonsness, idolatry, deceit and despising of God. And

all this is decked with the holy name, word, death and blood of Christ;

besides, with human weakness and with false freedom, to avoid offence,

O Lord! as if Christ were the Redeemer of all the impenitent and

Mediator of all perverse sinners. No, my reader, no; this is not the

case. Beware I Paul says, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die,"

Rom. 8:13.

Inasmuch, then, that the world is so corrupted, on every hand, that it

has become a double Sodom, nay a confused Babel or benighted Egypt,

under the pretense and name of christian churches; and since the great

and merciful God has, in these latter days of unrighteousness, again

revealed unto some the precious word of his divine grace in a pure,

christian understanding, and placed it as a clear light amidst the

darkness, wherewith he yet in everlasting love will assemble unto

himself, before the dark day, an obedient and willing church through

the revelation of his holy word and the enlightenment of his eternal

Spirit; and since he has chosen them as his own peculiar people from

the assembly of anti?ohrist, through true repentance and a virtuous

walk (although in weakness), under the cross of Christ, together with a

salutary use of the sacramental signs according to the ordinance of

Christ and his apostles and through a free, unfeigned confession of

faith in the precious blood of Christ; therefore all the gates of hell

arise and rave, so that, alas, true christians can find but little rest

upon earth, as may be seen.

The rulers banish and persecute them; drag them into prisons and

dungeons, torture and rob them, and in many places deprive them of

their manhood, possessions and even life.

This perverse and reckless people ever call us anabaptists; heap one

shameful lie upon another; point at us with the finger of scorn, as if

we so behaved that fire and sword were too merciful a punishment for

our bodies, and eternal hell?fire too merciful a punishment for our

souls.

The preachers and the learned " are corrupt, and speak wickedly

concerning oppression; they speak loftily," as the prophet says, Ps.

73:8, although we testify by so many tribulations that we, in our poor

weakness, sincerely desire to fear and follow the Lord, and that we

seek and desire peace with all mankind; yet, we are infamously

slandered; we are accused, everywhere, before lords and rulers of

cities and countries, that we are ungodly sects and anabaptists; that

we are seducing the populace; conspire to raise mutiny and rebellion;

and are falsely accused of other criminal intentions; that they may

thus obscure and obstruct the precious word of God, the word of true

repentance; the joyous gospel of grace; the true and powerful faith in

Christ Jesus; the pious, unblamable life, required by the Scriptures;

and destroy the glorious kingdom of Christ, and his righteousness; lest

their cause and unfaithfulness be made manifest to the world; as may be

educed from their fruits; and that on the other hand, the corrupt

kingdom of antichrist, the kingdom of this world, may be preserved

uninterruptedly and maintained without shame unto the end, in

falsehood, impenitance, open idolatry, a carnal, easy life and in

unrighteousness, according to the desires of the old serpent.

Behold thus works the "prince of the power of the air, the Spirit that

now worketh in the children of disobedience," as Paul says, Eph. 2:2;

as may, alas, be plainly seen in the case of Gellius Faber, if we well

consider his writings, slanders, bitter, offensive words, his false

accusations, his vain boasting and gross garbling, and judge them

according to the Spirit and word of the Lord.

Notwithstanding that it is well known to many thousands of honest and

reasonable people (as I suppose) that we seek nothing else upon earth

but that we may in our weakness, willingly walk in the footsteps of

Christ, in obedience to his word; that we may again light the

extinguished lamp of truth, may call many unto righteousness, and that

we may save our souls by the assistance and grace of the Lord, on which

ac, count we, poor ones everywhere, must endure so much tribulation,

misery, anxiety, cross and persecution; nevertheless, the above

mentioned Gellius, who in this case should be our assistant and

fosterer (for he claims to be a servant of the holy word), still

increases our anxiety and sore persecution, and the hatred and

bitterness against us, by his unscriptural arguments and hostility to

our foundation and doctrine, by his covert, malicious complaints to the

magistracy, and by his infamous slanders which he publishes, through

his writings, to the world, to the dishonor of God and his holy word;

to the disgrace of all the pious; to the confirmation of his own

condemnation, and to the deceiving of the simple. Therefore, no

well?disposed person will think hard of me, that I, by an open reply,

in accordance with the Spirit and word of my Lord, defend, .to the best

of my ability, the honor of God, the salvation of my brethren, the

foundation of my faith and the praise of Christ, my Lord, whose service

I entered, unworthily, by his grace and calling, according to his

divine will.

I trust, too, with the gracious help of God, that I shall be able to do

this so powerfully and clearly, with so many plain reasons and

Scriptures, that not only the theologians but also all reasonable and

impartial readers and hearers will, by the grace of God, clearly

understand that he and the preachers of his class, support deceiving

lies; and that we, through the grace of God, support the sure

foundation of truth. I, herewith, humbly beseech and faithfully

admonish all my readers, friends and enemies, that they will

attentively read, assiduously examine and judge according to Scripture

this my forced reply and defense, not with partiality, not drowsily and

spitefully but with care and impartiality. This matter is of like

importance to us all, namely, the praise of God, and of Christ, and the

salvation of our poor souls. Let none imagine that he is not accepted.

There is but one road and gate that leads to life, which is a strait

road, Matt. 7:13, also, but one doctrine. If we wish to enter with

Christ into the kingdom of his glory, we must all walk the strait way

and enter in at the narrow gate and be obedient to his word; of this

let every one be aware.

Since, then, it is evident that Gellius, and the learned, base their

doctrines, sacraments, &c., mainly upon human wisdom, garbled

Scriptures, upon ideas and opinions; and that we base ours upon God's

word; that he and his followers walk upon the broad road, and that our

followers walk upon the strait road; that he is not persecuted, but

does persecute by his writings; and, on the other hand, that we are

persecuted and do not retaliate; therefore, all right?minded persons

must admit that the truth and the true church is not with them, but

with us; for it is an infallible?rule as proven by the word of God and

the example of all the pious, that where the true church is, there also

are and necessarily must be the saving doctrine, true sacraments,

unfeigned love, a pious, godly life and the excommunion or separation

of the impenitent and perverse, according to the word of God; as may be

clearly educed, by the grace of God, from the following replication.

I would, therefore, earnestly pray all the pious, for God's sake, that

they would assist me by their ardent prayers to the Most High, that he

will bestow upon me, a poor, weak man, together with my beloved

brethren and faithful servants in the Lord, the gift of his grace and

the power of his wisdom; so that we may silence all opponents, by

virtue of true doctrine and an unblamable walk, and thus maintain to

the end, the house of our God, in pure, godly zeal and christian love,

to the honor and praise of his great name, to whom be praise and the

eternal kingdom, Amen.

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REPLY TO A PUBLICATION

GELLIUS FABER.

Pure and clear is wisdom; strong and powerful is truth; simple and

desirable is righteousness; happy is he who possesses them, for his

heart rejoices in the Lord, his mouth speaks what is right, and his

feet are upon the way of peace.

IN THE first place, Gellius adduces the saying of Christ, as a warning

to all his readers, where he speaks, "Beware of false prophets, who

come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening

wolves," Matt. v:1s.

Answer. If the reader can rightly distinguish, according to the Spirit

and word of God, between the nature of the sheep and the wolves, and

understands what this sheep's clothing means, with which the ravening

wolves are covered, then the saying would, undoubtedly, not be applied

to us, but to our opponents; for in what kind of clothing he here

appears, with which he keeps the simple in darkness and binds their

souls to damnation, will be plainly and clearly shown, through the

grace of God, to all the pious and godly readers, in the following

reply, if they compare it with his writing.

In the second place he adduces Paul and says, " Now I beseech you,

brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the

same thing and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be

perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment," 1

Cor. 1:10.

Answer. If we well consider this saying, we will find that it

admonishes all true christians not to live carnally nor to be

sectarian; that the one shall not boast of this and another of that;

but points us to the only and true Shepherd and Savior of our souls,

Jesus Christ, who was crucified for us and in whose name we were

baptized; all of which we, in our weakness, would gladly and earnestly

do, by the grace and help of God, as our tribulation, misery,

affliction, blood and death abundantly have testified in many different

instances.

But Gellius so construes it as to keep his readers from the unity of

the Spirit, word, house and body of Christ, and to keep them, through

his deceitful doctrine, unscriptural infant?baptism, &c., in the unity

of the spirit, word, house and body of anti?christ, and undisturbedly

upon the broad way.

In the third place, Gelliushas addressed his writing to a nobleman, as

is generally customary with the learned; thinking, perhaps, that by

this means, their aim will be the easier attained, through the favor

and assistance of such high officials; something which the pious

testimonies, prophets and teachers of God's truth and word, especially

of the New Testament never desired and much less sought.

In the fourth place Gellius gives his two principal reasons why he has

published his writing. The first is, he says, Because I see that these

anabaptists are daily coming into this country, secretly, from the

imperial dominion, where they do and can do the most damage, and not

only sow here anew, their pernicious seed by hedgepreaching, but also

by publications, writings and private letters, which we must stop and

silence lest the unwary be deceived, and that we may yet redeem some of

them who have not yet become slanderers, &o.

Answer. These very offensive words, like anabaptists, secretly coming,

hedge?preaching, pernicious seed, &c., alas, plainly show the

disposition of the man who penned them. Yes, my readers, Gellius knows

as well as I do, what Christ has commanded concerning baptism, and how

the holy apostles practiced it. Again, that Paul rebaptized some who

were baptized of John (although John's baptism was from Heaven) only,

because they were not informed concerning the Holy Ghost; that the

worthy martyr Cyprian and the African bishops, together with the

council of Nice, did not acknowledge the baptism of heretics, as

baptism, on account of their being outside of Christ's church, and

without his Spirit and word.

Notwithstanding all this, we must be called anabaptists; never minding

that we, in our infancy were baptized, not only without the Spirit,

faith, word or divine ordinance, but also without all reason and

understanding, with an open, anti?Christian baptism, by such as he and

the learned of his class themselves call anti?Christians, apostates,

heretics and deceivers who neither rightly understand God nor his word;

who practice open idolatry; who bend their knees before wood and stone;

who put their trust in idle doctrines and commands of men; who

unrestrainedly walk according to the lusts of the flesh, and who

worship and honor a creature of God, namely, a piece of bread, as the

only and eternal Son of God.

Although we have before us as a pattern, Christ's plain word and the

salutary doctrine and open practice of the apostles, besides, Paul and

both the councils, as heard; yet, alas, there are no bounds to

offensive words, such as anabaptists, &c., which Gellius uses against

us.

We may not retaliate, Rom. 12:19, else we might call them

infant?baptists with more propriety than they call us anabaptists; for

we have the whole Scriptures on our side, but they have not one word

nor one example. But his saying that we do and can do most damage in

the imperial dominion, shows, alas, his stupidity and blindness.

All Scriptures teach us that idolaters and carnally?minded shall die,

and he well knows that in these countries, their (the world's), worship

is nothing loss than open idolatry and gross abomination and that their

life, as a general thing, is nothing but a reckless, impenitent and

carnal life, as is the case at Emden and everywhere. Yet he dares to

write that there they do most damage. And this he does for no other

reason than because they (the pious) storm the kingdom of hell with the

Lord's Spirit, word and power; rebuke open idolatry; teach the true

worship; rightly confess Christ; and because they point out the true

way to this perverse, impenitent and carnal generation. If this is

damaging, as Gellius calls it, then the Scriptures which speak so

over?much of an unblamable, pious life, have badly deceived us; this

you must admit. , what a wrong judgment.

Behold, thus does the god of this world blind such rebellious and

contentious spirits, who so recklessly contend against the word of God

and who do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, Rom. 2:8, that

they become so obdurate and perverse that they call the glorious gain

in Christ, attained through his grace, Spirit and power, a loss; and

call good, evil, and evil, good; woe unto such, Isaiah G:20.

I would further say, that he also says, in other places that we are the

only ones who obstruct them in their doctrine of impenitence and

offensiveness, by our doctrine (which is not ours but the sound

doctrine of Christ), and by our humble and unblamable walk which

results from our doctrine through faith; and that we are thus the cause

of their not being so highly esteemed as before and that they cannot

continue in their ways, as they would like to do; therefore, perhaps,

he complains that we do most damage there. But we say, It is because

they serve the world under the semblance of the gospel, only from

carnal motives; and flatter the rulers that they may aggrandize

themselves with the property, church and cloister, which was intended

(though wrongfully), as a sacrifice to the honor of God and that they

may maintain the gospel of Christ by force of arms; because they

flatter the people with the idea that Christ remitted our sins; that

faith alone, avails; that they are poor, weak sinners who cannot keep

the commandments of God, and other like idle consolations; so that

everybody lives according to the lusts of his flesh, singing and

crying, " The cord is loosed and we are free," and turn the grace of

God into unrighteousness, as Jude says, 1:4; because they live in the

old state of sinfulness, without any fear of God, as if they never in

their lives heard one syllable of the word of the Lord, and as if God

would not punish ungodliness and unrighteousness; therefore the just

Lord who righteously judges all things, again takes from them the

knowledge which they may have had, because of their ingratitude (for

they, only teach and proclaim the gospel of his grace according to the

lusts of the flesh) and give it to those who will bring forth fruit, as

Christ spoke to the Pharisee, Matt. 21:43.

Again, to the unreasonable and offensive word "secretly enter," I

reply: Moses and Christ, the apostles and prophets, as also, natural

reason unanimously teach us that we should receive, comfort, help,

assist and serve the miserable, afflicted and needy stranger; and it is

a fact well known to Gellius that these poor children whom he afflicts,

have tied in unfeigned fear of their God to a foreign country for

protection, with their weak women and little children, to escape the

bloody tyrannical sword; not on account of crime or roguery, but on

account of the testimony of God and their consciences; even as the

pursued doves flee from the bird of prey; and that we, through the

grace of God place ourselves under the protection of this or that

merciful and kind?hearted ruler; and although they, for the sake of

divine truth, are bereft of their native country, possessions and

earthly comforts, yet they can, through God's grace, reasonably support

themselves, as is promised in Scripture. If he were, in fact, what he

boasts to be, namely, a preacher of the holy word, then his inmost soul

would be moved to compassion towards these afflicted orphans and

innocent hearts; he would be kind to them and assist them as much as is

in his power; .he would intercede for them before the magistracy, since

he may observe in them such a moving spirit and ardent zeal, that they

stake their possessions and blood to the praise of their God, as may be

openly witnessed. But, now, this misery and sore affliction namely, the

flight from the gaping lion's mouth and from fire and sword, into more

merciful countries, must be called by him "secretly entering." O, Lord!

What kind of a preacher and christian he is; how he acts according to

love; and how he walks according to the word of the Lord in this

respect, all reasonable persons who are not more than half blind may

judge from these, his writings together with his daily cries of the

same kind. To the slanderous sentence " sowing pernicious seed," I

reply: Every seed bringeth forth fruit after its own kind, Gen. 1:11.

My dear reader take heed to what I write. God's word, on every hand,

requires a pure heart, a new mind and a penitent, christian life, dead

unto sin. John the Baptist says, "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for

repentance," Jesus says, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at

hand," Matt. 3:8; 4:17. Again, I am come to call sinners to repentance,

Matt. 9:13, and many other Scriptures of the kind might be adduced.

Inasmuch, then, that the Scriptures, on every hand, require of us true

repentance, and that also the sacramental signs, as baptism and Holy

Supper signify, represent and teach to all true christian believers a

penitent, unblamable life; and since, according to the tenor of the

Scriptures, no one can be a true christian without true repentance and

that every kind of seed brings forth fruit after its own kind, as

already said, namely, lies, children of lies, and truth, children of

truth; and since it is a fact well known to many reasonable persons

that God has, through us and our fellow?servants, in his great power

and infinite grace, turned unto the true and living God, many a proud,

avaricious, unchaste, cruel, lying, carnal and idolatrous heart and has

so humbled, moved, renewed and changed them that they would rather die

than act hypocritically, or willingly speak or countenance any

falsehood against the well being of their neighbors, as is testified in

our Netherlands by the precious blood of so many pious saints. And

since the fruits of Gellius' seed, that is, his followers, remain so

entirely impenitent in their lives and unchanged in their hearts that

they live in pomp and splendor, go attired in silk and velvet and are

decked with gold and silver; live in all manner of unrighteousness,

avarice, carousing, hatred and envy; in short, live according to the

lusts of the flesh, and would, for the sake of a penny, falsely swear

by the Lord or by their soul, &c.; therefore we will let all reasonable

and intelligent persons judge who of us bring forth bad fruits, Gellius

and his followers, or we and our followers. Whoever sincerely seeks and

loves the truth, read and ponder.

O, dear Lord! thus thy holy and precious word, the word of thy grace,

the word of thy love, by the power and grace of which we will live

eternally with thee, is called by this man and by others also, deceit

and pernicious seed; and their open lies, obvious error and

unreasonable adulteration of Scripture, of which more will be said

hereafter, is called the true doctrine of Christ and the holy word of

God. If it be wilful slander and perverseness, then, alas, it is too

bad. But if it be ignorant blindness or misconception, then, the

gracious Father grant them eyes to see. This is my sincere wish, as the

Lord knows.

Again, he writes, " that we sow anew our pernicious seed, not only by

hedge?preaching, but also by publications, letters &c. To this I reply

with holy David: We believe, therefore we speak, and must suffer

tribulation. For since God, the merciful Father, has given us, poor

creatures, the Spirit of faith and bestowed upon us the Spirit of his

love from on high, through his Son Jesus Christ, and has besprinkled

our hearts with the heavenly dew of his love, has opened unto us the

seven seals of the book of his knowledge; has disclosed unto us the

mystery of his divine word and pleasure; has awakened us from the dead

and given us life, a new heart, mind and disposition, and has nourished

us with the bread of life, so that we, through his grace, have found

the beautiful pearl, the precious treasure and eternal peace, which we

could not possibly acquire through the deceiving doctrine, subtle

sophistry and false consolations of the learned; therefore we would

teach, proclaim and imprint on the hearts of all mankind, to the best

of our ability, this manifest grace of his great love toward us, that

they may enjoy with us the same joy and renewal of spirit, and know and

taste with all saints how sweet, good and kind the Lord is to whom we

have turned.

We preach, therefore, as much as is in our power, both day and night,

in houses and in the open air, in forests and in wildernesses, hither

and thither, in this and in foreign lands, in prisons and in dungeons,

in water and in fire, on the scaffold and on the wheel, before lords

and princes, orally and by writings at the risk of possessions and

blood, life and death; as we have done these many years; and are not

ashamed of the gospel of the glory of Christ, Rom. l:18; for we are a

living fruit, and strongly feel the moving power in our hearts, as may

be seen in many instances by the commendable submissiveness and willing

sacrifices of our faithful brethren and joint?heirs in Christ Jesus.

We would save all mankind from the ,jaws of hell; deliver them from the

chains of their sins, and by the gracious help of God, win them to

Christ by the gospel of his peace; for this is the true nature of the

love which is of God.

He then accuses us of preaching at night, and says in another place "

That we secretly enter into cities and towns, from fear of the cross;

that we sit with closed doors to treat with the simple; not to convert

them to true christianity but to convert them to anabaptism," &c. To

which I reply in the first place: It is true that we sometimes have to

serve the Lord and preach his word at night (in the dead of night), but

I fear that Gellius and the learned are the principal cause of this:

For they have so embittered and still embitter all lords, princes,

rulers and magistrates against us by their fiendish, unmerited

upbraiding, slandering and defaming that we cannot, alas, so much move

them, with Scripture,? supplications, tears, misery, tribulation, loss

of possessions, blood or life, that we can safely go about, verbally to

defend the word of God, before these open enemies of the cross of

Christ and of wholesome truth; but we must (understand, we teachers)

everywhere conceal ourselves in shops and retired places to escape the

persecutors and blood?thirsty, if we do not wish to be, at once, torn

up and devoured by the terrible beasts which arise from the sea.

Beloved readers, observe well what I write. Gellius accuses us of

"preaching at night." It was in the year 1543; if my memory serves me

right, that a decree was read throughout West Friesland, " That

criminals and even manslayers were promised pardon, imperial grace,

freedom of country (in those times banishing was in vogue), and besides

one hundred earl?guilders, if they would betray me and deliver me into

the hands of the executioner."

About the year 1539, a husbandman, who was a very pious man, named

Tjaert Reyndertz, was seized in my stead, because, out of pity and

compassion, he concealed me in his house while I was hotly pursued; and

was a few days thereafter, put on the wheel, after a free confession of

faith, as a valiant soldier of Christ, after the example of his Lord;

although his enemies, even, acknowledged that he was an unblamable,

pious man.

Also, in 1546, at a place where they boasted of the word, four houses

were at once confiscated, because the owner had rented one of them for

a short time, to my sick wife and little ones; although the neighbors

were not aware of their presence.

What decrees have been issued against some of us, and what rewards have

been offered for our apprehension, in different dominions and cities;

what imperial mandates and Roman condemnations have been resolved

against us; and how we are treated on every hand, is well known to

Gellius and to the preachers of his class. That they are the very cause

and the authors of these things, I unreservedly write and testify

without fear. Behold, thus they hate all those who rightly teach God's

word.

Notwithstanding this, Gellius and others are not ashamed to say, "That

we, out of fear of the cross, secretly enter cities and towns, sit with

closed doors," &c., as if we were stones, and blocks of wood, which

neither do nor can fear any deathly evils; while he and his, well know

that the chosen men of God, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and Aaron,

besides the prophets and apostles, nay, even Christ himself, so feared

to die that they sometimes took to Right.

In the second place, I say, that so long as I, poor weak man, have

served the"pious with my small talent, I have taught more, by far, in

day?time than at night. The Lord, is my witness that I write the truth?

Yet we must be upbraided by these perverse people as night and

hedge?preachers, as if the word of God could not be taught any where

but in their houses of abomination (who know not the Scriptures), and

as if God was not a God of the night as well as of the day. O,

perverseness.

Say, reader, was not the night pure unto faithful Moses, and all Israel

to eat the passover ? Exodus 12:3?8. Did Christ think it wrong to

oxhort Nicodemus at night? John 3:2. Did he not partake, with his

disciples, of the Holy Supper, at night, just before his suffering,

Matt. 26:26; Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:23. Did not the church assemble at

night, when Peter was delivered from the hands of the tyrant by the aid

of an angel, out of fear of Herod and the Jews? Acts 12:7. Did not holy

Paul at night preach the word in an upper chamber at Troas, and break

the Lord's bread with the disciples, just before his leaving? Acts

20:7. Did not the saints of the primitive church sometimes meet at

night to break the Lord's bread and drink the holy cup? for which they

were suspicioned and had to hear and bear many hard names. Does not

Hilarius write, that the apostles met in halls and retired places, and

that they traveled through many countries and nations, by water and by

land, against the prohibitions and decrees of the rulers.

Behold, my readers, whether that which was allowable and free to Moses,

Israel, Christ, the apostles and to the primitive churches, namely, the

service and preaching of the word of God at night, is free to us or

not, especially in these critical times of tyranny, we will let the

intelligent reader judge according to Scripture, in the fear of his

God.

O Lord! thus they (the world) seek causes, encumbrances and complaints

to offend thy poor children more and more and to burden them with the

cross, that they may persecute and kill them, in semblance of justice;

for they are an obstacle to their works and a smarting to their eyes.

In the third place I say, that I have heretofore twice offered publicly

to treat with them on Scripture, under safe conduct, before twenty or

thirty witnesses or before a full meeting. But what kind of answer I

received, their message, which I yet possess, testifies. Afterwards, in

the memorable times of bishop Herman, Elector of Ceulen, at their own

request, I offered this same thing again to the learned men of Bon, but

my offer was rejected, on account of these kind gentlemen being

dissuaded by John A'Lasco and A. g.; by their accusing me of three

falsehoods, such as I never thought of and much less said or advised,

and which I, for good reasons will not now touch upon, for all of which

I have the testimony of a manuscript of a preacher, named Henricus. But

what their intentions were, in regard to this matter, I will leave to

him who knows all things. Also, the preachers of Wesel, in the land of

Kleef, pretended that they would furnish me safe conduct and treat with

me, &c.; but when I signified my willingness, in writing, I received an

answer that they would let the executioner treat with me; and other

tyrannical and unchristian words.

I will yet speak of what I asked in my "Foundation;" in the " Preface

to the Twenty?fifth Psalm," many years ago; also in my "Excuse," in the

"Supplication to the Magistracy," and also in my "Message to the

Learned and Preachers of the German Nations," who boast of the word,

concerning a free Treatise on Scripture, published in the year 1552.

And I am still willing and prepared, at all times, so long as breath

remains in me, or my intellect does not fail me, and so long as I can

sit on a wagon or lay in a ship, to appear before Gellius, or anybody

else, verbally to defend the foundation of our faith and to testify to

the truth of Jesus Christ, if I can do so in safety, in good, christian

faith and in sincerity of heart, to the praise of our God, to the

extension of his church, to the promulgation of his holy word and to

the salvation of our neighbors. This is the main desire of my heart,

that I may preach and promulgate his great, adorable name, teach his

word, seek his gain and honor and exalt and defend his praise, to the

best of my humble ability.

Since it is manifest that the world is, unjustly, so embittered against

us, that we are, alas, not suffered to be heard or seen; and that many

an innocent, pious sheep, who is not a teacher, is sent hither and

thither to be slaughtered by the sword, water or fire, without any

mercy; and that we, miserable teachers, are not allowed to live in

safety, any where under the broad canopy of heaven, not even in a

pig?sty (so to speak), if known; but that we, through open mandates,

are already judged before we are delivered, and condemned before we are

seized; something which never, as far as we know, transpired since the

apostolic times; therefore, I pray all my readers for God's sake, that

they will, ?in the fear of God, thoughtfully consider what gross

injustice Gellius and his followers have done us, by the use of such

wrong and bitter words, as night?preaching, hedge preaching,

conspiracy, secretly entering, &c., when we neither can nor dare do

otherwise, as is well known. Besides, we have on our side Moses and

Christ, the apostles and also the example of the primitive church; who

served the Lord at night as well as in day time, as has been already

heard; and we are also prepared, at all times, to render an account of

our faith and to defend the truth; if we can do so in good, christian

faith, without deceit and shedding of blood, as has been already said.

I say farther: It is by far more praiseworthy to teach the genuine,

saving truth, at night, in a secret corner, when we can not openly meet

in day?time, than to proclaim, in day?time, deceiving lies and a

powerless doctrine of impenitence, from the pulpit; as has, alas, been

openly done these many years before the whole world; this must be

acknowledged and admitted; for the disorderly state of affairs and the

impenitent life of this generation testify to it.

At his saying, that we should be stopped and silenced, lest we deceive

the unwary (single) as he calls them, I reply: A better and surer way

than the one we have by the grace of God, nobody can point out; of this

we are convinced from the inmost of our soul. For we acknowledge and

feel that we have the word of God. Nevertheless, we will always freely

accept, and willingly follow the instruction of any pious person, who

can, in the fear of God, convince us by the Spirit, word, example,

commands, ordinances, prohibitions and usages of the Lord, and not by

tyranny and violence, and point out any thing that would be more useful

and better; to greater honor to God, or more to the edification of his

church, than we have followed and confessed during several years of

manifest truth, and to which we have unwaveringly testified in so

exceedingly much anxiety, misery, tribulation and persecution. For all

things in Christ's church that shall avail and stand before his throne

must be judged by the Spirit, word, example, commands, ordinances,

prohibitions and usages of the Lord. I trust that those who seek and

sincerely fear the Lord, will agree with me in this respect.

But with this writing of Gellius he will, surely, not convince us; for

it is full of brawling, profanity, defamation, false accusations,

tyranny, sophistry, wrong explanations and false doctrines (if I am

wrong, rebuke me); so that it does not silence the pious, as was his

intention, but makes them still more active; and it will be the cause

of strengthening salutary doctrine and truth, and thus be the cause of

his loss where he intended to make gain. For I trust, when both our

writings are compared one with another, that, through the grace of God,

a glorious, clear light will be thrown on the church of Christ; while

it will expose to the plain and humble whom he intends, by it, to

dissuade from our doctrine what his own nature, works, writings and

fruits are, and, by comparing them to Christ's plain word, Spirit,

example, ordinances and usages prove to them how earthly and

carnal?minded he and his are; how he exercises his profession; what he

seeks; what are the fruits of his doctrine; what sacraments he uses;

what ban he practices, and what kind of church he holds to, &c.

I would, therefore, faithfully admonish and pray him, not to undertake

more than he can accomplish; and not to kick against the pricks, Acts

9:5, for it will not avail him. But he should remember that many a

learned man (not that I esteem learning, if at all opposed to Christ),

in past times as well as at present, has industriously tried it, as he

now does; but what has been accomplished by it, the fruits openly

testify. For some of them have become such zealots against us that they

have made themselves guilty of innocent blood; they have grossly

offended and condemned to the judgment of the devil, so many pious and

faithful hearts, who, through fear and love of their God, dared not

walk with them on the broad road; have, besides, written and contended

so much for the unity of their churches, that they have brought the

poor, reckless people to such a disorderly and wild state, that they,

generally speaking, lead such a fruitless, impenitent life that it

seems as if never prophetic or apostolic doctrine had been taught, and

as if never Christ nor the holy Spirit had appeared on earth.

Had they, now, wisely, obediently and humbly comprehended, listened to

and followed the word and ordinance of the Lord, the usage and example

of the apostles; had they sincerely feared their God; had they not

acted hypocritically with lords and princes, and the world in general;

but taught the doctrine in true zeal without any respect of persons or

favors; had they faithfully, unto death, rebuked the sins of all

mankind, of high and low station alike, with doctrine and with life;

had they unwaveringly served God and obediently proclaimed the gospel,

in such a manner as to have assembled and built up unto the Lord a

truly, penitent people, that is, a true church, according to the

example of the apostles; had they not sought their own gain and ease;

and had they also not abused and slandered the pious and godly, by

their crying and writing; then the precious word, Christ's glorious

gospel of grace never would have been profaned so lightmindedly; nor

would this poor, unwary people have been degenerated into this wild and

reckless state, as, alas, may now be witnessed in all parts of the

world.

Thus, I fear, it will be with Gellius; for of what use his preaching

and church?service have been these many years, toward bringing about a

pious, penitent life in the fear of God, I will let the world judge by

his disciples, who are the fruit of his seed.

O, that he would take heed, and not break God's holy and precious word;

that he would not slander the pious and godly, who testify to it with

their heart, mouth, life and death; that he would learn to know his own

envious, impure and bitter heart; his deceiving, inconsistent and

infamous doctrine, and his selfish, ambitious flesh; and would humble.

himself under, the mighty hand of God, as the Scriptures teach us to

do, for then he might ,yet be saved. But as it is, I fear that his

brawling, slandering and condemning of all the pious; together with his

seeking after improper gain, favor and honor of men and the desire of

an easy, careless life, will so entirely close his heart and bewilder

his senses, that he will not acknowledge or desire the glorious

brightness of Christ, nor the wisdom which is of God. God grant that my

apprehension be not realized, and that he may yet receive grace; this

is my sincere wish toward him and all of our opponents, Amen.

Gellius says further, that hehas published his writing for the purpose

of redeeming some of our followers, who have not yet become slanderers;

and he says also, that some have been redeemed through their faithful

services, who now, with united hearts and spirits adore, praise and

thank their Lord andGod, at the public meetings of the church of God

and Christ (these are his words), because they have been delivered from

death and damnation, and now feel a delight in Christ, and penitence

and peace in their hearts.

Answer. If we, in true, christian zeal and unfeigned love, rebuke or

reprove their false doctrine, deceiving, unscriptural sacraments and

their reckless, carnal life, with the Spirit, word and life of Christ,

and point them to the glorious example of the prophets, of the

apostles, of Christ and of all the true servants of God, he calls us

slanderers. From this it may be observed that our work of love is ever

interpreted to the contrary. For if we write or speak mournfully, it is

called sighing and groaning, if we reprove sharply, it is called

brawling and slandering. If we pipe, they dance not; if we mourn, they

lament not, as Christ says, Matt. 11:17. It is wrongly spoken, whatever

we say\_ to the perverse. Although they commit abomination, yet they are

not ashamed, neither do they blush, Jeremiah 8:12.

If the reproof of open sin, in true, christian love, according to the

word of God, is slander, as Gellius calls it, then all the saints of

God, the apostles and prophets, as also Jesus Christ himself were

slanderers; this is incontrovertible; for they called the false

prophets and preachers, false teachers, deceivers, dumb dogs, blind

guides, hypocrites, thieves, murderers, wolves, cunning devisers,

enemies of the cross, servants of their bellies, children of damnation,

dry clouds, dead trees, locusts, &c., before the whole world. But no.

To openly reprove deceit, transgressions, blasphemy of God or his word

and sin in general is not slandering, as Gellius, through perverseness

of heart, pronounces it against the innocent; but it is the fruit of

the faithful love of those who would oppose evil and do good unto all.

I will leave it to the judgment. of all pious and reasonable persons,

if he is not a profaner of the church, a brawler and a slanderer, and

guilty of innocent blood, who calls the church of God a conspiracy; the

regenerated children of God, apostatical anabaptists; the salutary

doctrine of Christ, sectarianism and fanaticism; who slanders and

condemns the baptism which Christ commanded, and the apostles taught

and practiced, as being a heresy; and falsely maintains and practices

on the poor, ignorant people, the baptism of anti?christ, with many

high?sounding words and phrases? Who promises grace and peace to the

proud, obdurate, avaricious, carnal and impenitent boaster, whom all

Scriptures judge unto death; because he can, in appearance talk of the

Scriptures, although without Spirit, power or change of heart; who,

without just cause, maliciously slander, falsely suspicions, and

unjustly condemns, the poor orphans and afflicted christians who

sincerely seek and fear the Lord; and thus delivers them to the

magistracy to be put in dungeons, and to the executioner to be killed.

But as to his boasting, that some of our brethren have again associated

with them, and thus others may be yet redeemed by his writing, &c. I

answer, in the first place: Christ says, "Wide is the gate and broad is

the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in

thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which

leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it," Matt. 7:13, 14. My

readers, observe that all who wish to leave the broad way and enter

upon the narrow one, must' enter in at the strait gate, must forsake

themselves, take up the cross and follow Christ Jesus; must become

regenerated christians, dead unto sin; must crucify their flesh and

subdue their lusts; must give up, through the power of faith all

visible and perishable things, as gold, silver, home and goods, nay,

wife and children; together with all they are and have, for the victory

of Christ, if circumstances and the honor of Christ require it; they

must be prepared to endure disgrace, hunger, misery, pillage,

persecution, bonds and death, for the sake of the testimony of God and

their consciences, and must adhere to the word of God, by watching and

praying; for all those who are yet laden with the burden of

unrighteousness and an evil conscience, as with avarice, ungodly

desires, the works of the flesh, &c.; or who feel at all doubtful

concerning the word and promises of the Lord cannot enter in at the

narrow way and strait gate. Let every one be aware of this.

In the second place I say, that the edification and faith of the true

christians is tempted in many and various ways, as both Scriptures and

experience clearly teach and testify. Now they are tempted by flesh and

blood, which never is at rest, then by the lust of the world, and the

lust of the eyes, which invitingly tempt the selfish flesh in which no

good thing dwelleth, Rom. 7:18. Again, by the cross and tribulation,

which often press heavily; and lastly, by the flattering preaching of

peace and the easy doctrine of the preachers who lustily cry, Peace,

peace, as the prophet says, Jer. 8:11, by means of which they console

the timid in their faithlessness and disobedience to God, and make an

easy way for those who would enjoy the world according to the lusts of

the flesh. It is as Peter says, " While they promise them liberty, they

themselves are the servants of corruption," 2 Peter 2:19. For this

reason, some of the seed which is sown by the way side, is picked up by

the fowls of the air; some is sown on stony places, where there is not

much earth, and although it springs up in a short time; yet it can not

stand the scorching sun of persecution, and some is choked by the

thistles and thorns, and brings forth no ripe ears, Matt. 13:4?'7.

Behold, the proper reason why some timid, light?minded, carnal, corrupt

and selfish spirits have again associated themselves with them, is,

Because the way was too narrow and the gate too strait for them, and

they could not withstand the storming of the flesh. The smiles of the

world were too inviting, and the tyranny too oppressive. The thousand

wiles of Satan, by which all the pious alike are tempted, succeeded;

because, alas, they preferred earthly to heavenly things, and therefore

we could no longer live in unity of spirit and peace with them. For

they would not be thus subjected, as the prophet laments, Jer. 2:17;

but would follow their own inclinations in every respect, and walk,

without the cross, on the broad way of the flesh, with the world. But

by the writings and services of Gellius, they were, surely, not

redeemed, as he boasts they were.

Behold, these people of whom he so loudly boasts, were such (we regret

to have to say it) as, with Demas, 2 Tim. 4: .10, loved the present

world, and who so lived with us for some time that we, according to the

divine word, dare no longer eat and drink with them. They are not

regenerated as Gellius claims, but they are degenerated in their faith

and act hypocritically, with earthly?minded hearts under the feint of

prayer; they have not forsaken the broad way which leads to death but

the narrow way which leads to life; they do not delight in Christ but

have forsaken him; they have found rest for their flesh but not for

their souls, through repentance, as Gellius pretends. For facts prove

whose cause is right, theirs or ours; whose actions are hypocritical,

and whose are not, while our actions sacrifice possessions, blood and

even life for their cause; but what theirs do, is well known.

This, then, is my conclusion as to his first reason given, why he

published his writing; namely, As the angel of darkness can transform

himself into an angel of light; as Paul says, 2 Cor. 11:14; can feign

love and make great promises; can feign true confession of Christ and

can use Scriptures masterly, so also, can his servants do, as may be

seen by this. For Gellius says he published his writing that he might

redeem some and save others from deceit; to silence the anabaptists, as

he calls them; to root out the pernicious weeds; to serve the church of

Christ; to keep the weak of the Netherlands in the right understanding

of evangelical doctrine and the right use of the holy sacraments, &c.

But if we rightly consider it, and judge it by the Spirit, word and

example of Christ; by the usage of the holy apostles and primitive

apostolic churches, we find it to be nothing but an institution of the

flesh; an encouragement to the impenitent; an inducement to the broad

way; a defence of the churches of anti?christ; a confusing and

blind?folding of the simple; a covert instigation to persecution of the

pious; a destroying of the church of Christ; a dextrous encumbering of

the godly; an unreasonable, envious defamation of .the saints; an

adulteration of the holy word; yea, an open encouragement to

unrighteousness, impenitence and carnal liberty.

Behold, this is the effect, fruit and aim of his writing; although he

adorns and covers it under the semblance of good intentions and love.

If I should at any time yet meet with him, and not be able to verify

these assertions, by their fruits and by virtue of the Scriptures, then

I will be willing to recant them and bear my shame; for I trust that I,

through the grace of God, know of what I write.

An other reason, says Gellius, why he published his writing is, because

a nobleman to whom he addressed it, offered to bear the expenses of

printing it, &c.

Answer. Zeal is a good thing and highly commendable, if in a good cause

to the service and glory of God. But let every one well consider how,

why and wherefore he is zealous; lest he make himself guilty of

innocent blood, which is the most abominable sin next to sinning

against the Holy Ghost.

If his honor has done this in sincere zeal and with good intentions, as

Paul did before his conversion, and meant it to be to the honor of God

and to the salvation of his neighbors, then I hope that God will give

him more light and make truth more manifest to him. But if he has done

it for the sake of an idle name or fame, or for the sake of carnal

profit and satisfaction, something which the learned can very adroitly

portray to such high persons; or, if he .contends against the people of

God with a bitter zeal, which I trust is not the case, as does Gellius

and the preachers, generally, then his action has become such a gross

sin and great blindness that I fear he will never be brought to confess

Christ.

I would therefore cordially admonish his honor, and beseech him in

christian love that he no more burden himself with the sin of others;

fqr he and every?body else will have burden enough of his own, at the

day of judgment. All misleading of the miserable souls; all unbelief

and idolatry; all lightmindedness and liberty of the flesh; together

with all uproar and tyranny which are apt to be the result of his

writing will be required, in the day of Christ, at his hands as well as

at the hands of the preachers, if not repented of, because he assists

and supports them in their abomination with his advice and assistance,

with money and material.

Therefore, in my opinion, his honor would have better first considered

the matter well and laid out these expenses to the support, assistance,

consolation, nourishment and clothing of the needy, especially in these

hard times; and not for the purpose of deceiving many unwary hearts and

of putting more encumbrances and persecution on the pious.

Again, that Gellius has published his writing under the permission of

the said nobleman, has an appearance as if he was one of those who

honor and esteem a person according to the measure of his usefulness.

But for what reason he has done so; what his seeking and how his heart

is, in this matter, I will leave to the Lord who knows all things.

Experience sufficiently teaches of what disposition the rich are,

namely, proudhearted, ambitious and covetous of honor. God's wisdom did

not say without a cause, Verily, "I say unto you, It is easier for a

camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter

into the kingdom of God," Matt. 19:24. James also says, " Go to now, ye

rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.

Your riches are corrupted and your garments are moth?eaten; your gold

and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against

you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire," &c., James 6:1?3.

Again, Paul says, " For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not

many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are

called," &c., 1 Cor. 1:26.

Since, then, the mouth of the Lord, as also his faithful servants,

James and Paul, have so plainly expressed the dangers of the rich and

of those of high standing; since experience teaches how proud?hearted

they are, as may be educed from their high titles, houses, shields,

medals, clothes, servants, horses and dogs; and since Christ says, "

Verily I say. unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little

children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven," Matt. 18:3;

therefore it would be more in accordance with evangelical

righteousness, if Gellius, instead, would industriously teach such

proud hearts and high persons, the humility of Christ, so that they may

learn to forsake themselves; may learn to know themselves, of what they

are born, what they are and what they will be; that they may die unto

their excessive pomp, splendor, superfluity and ungodliness; may fear

God in all sincerity, and walk in his ways; that they may faithfully

serve their neighbors, with their abundance, in true humility of heart,

and not continually enkindle the fire of pride, fleshly security and

light?mindedness, by his flattery or by high?sounding and supplicating

phrases; for the inborn ambitious nature of the flesh of Adam's

children is, alas, already too apt to crave such things without being

encouraged by flattery and smooth words.

I would, therefore, faithfully admonish all to fear God, to strive

after truth and to love their neighbors; for the time is coming, and is

near at hand that we all shall hear, each one at his time, "Give an

account of thy stewardship, for thou mayest be no longer steward," Luke

16:2. I do not dedicate this my reply and defense to this or that one,

as is the custom of the learned, but dedicate it, in christian

humility, "To the pious Reader," and desire to subject it to the

judgment of all the godly and pious.

If any one under the broad canopy of heaven can teach me with plainer

Scriptures or with more powerful truths, whether he be learned or

unlearned, man or woman, I will gladly accept of such instruction and

obey them. But, by the grace of God, we are convinced that we are on

the sure and true way which Christ has prepared for us. Blessed are we

if we walk in it and enter in at the strait gate. Let all of

understanding minds, who, in true zeal and in the fear of God, seek the

praise of their Lord, read and judge that which now follows.

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OF THE MISSION OR CALLING OF THE PREACHERS.

GELLIUS complains very much of a bitter and sneering epistle of the

anabaptists, as he calls them, in which they are said to have. given

five particular reasons, as I understand from his writing, why they

cannot conscienciously accept the preachers as true and uablamable, and

cannot use their sacraments as true and Scriptural ordinances, &c. Of

which the vocation of their preachers is the first reason. Gellius

assiduously tries to maintain that their calling is christian?like and

according to Scripture and says that ours is sectarian and not

according to scripture.

Answer. How bitter and sneering the said epistle may have been, I do

not know, for I have never seen it. But I presume it was not so bitter

as Gellius complains that it was; that it was a reproof of his

corruption, his deceiving and unscriptural sacraments; something which

he ever, maliciously, calls brawling and sneering.

Since I did not read the epistle myself, as said, therefore I will not

undertake to defend every word of it; but will undertake a defence, by

virtue of my ministry of the divine word, and because I have been

disgracefully treated in regard to it, so far as concerns the five

articles in which the preachers are reproved or accused, whose vocation

Gellius maintains as evangalical and right. And I trust that, with the

gracious assistance of God, I will be enabled to de fend these articles

with such power and clearness of Scripture, that all impartial,

reasonable readers, on comparing our writings, will, by the grace of

God, behold, as in a mirror, that he and all the worldly preachers are

not the called preachers and teachers of the church of Christ, to whom

the Scriptures point; but that they are the open preachers and teachers

of the world, or of the church of anti?christ against whom the

Scriptures on every hand warn us, and in many places terrifies us

against them. He that hath ears, let him hear what the word of the Lord

teaches.

Gellius points out a difference between the calling or sending of the

prophets of Christ and the apostles and between the calling of the

bishops, pastors and other servants of the church, and says, "� That

the sending of the prophets of Christ and the apostles was done without

any means of man, solely of God; but that the sending of the bishops

and pastors is done of God by means of .man."

Answer. We do not contradict this, but agree with him in this respect.

But we contradict that the calling of which they boast is done in

accordance with the apostolic doctrine and usage; and would say that we

should well observe these five, following points or articles, according

to the Scriptures; namely, Of whom they are called; what?they are that

are called; to what purpose they are called; what fruit the called

bring forth; ?and what the proper desire and seeking of the called is.

In the first place, we must observe that the calling which was done in

the primitive, apostolic church, by means of man, was not done of the

world but of the true christians and obedient disciples of the Lord and

his word. For Luke writes, Acts 14:23, "And when they had ordained them

elders in every church,, and had prayed with fasting, they commended

them to the Lord, on whom they believed." Paul also says to Titus, "

For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order

the things that are wanting and ordain elders in every city, as I have

apointed thee," Tit. 1:5, &c. Read also 1 Tim. 3:12.

Since the preachers, then; boast of a calling of God, by means of man,

as said, therefore I would ask without all artifice, Who is the Paul or

Barnabas, or Timothy or Titus that has called and ordained Gellius and

his like preachers to the service? If they answer, the magistracy; then

I would ask in the second place, If the magistracy, who assumes this

matter, have the?spirit, calling, ministry, ordinance, and power of

Paul, Barnabas, Titus and Timothy? If they answer in the affirmative,

then I would like to see their grounds proven according to Scripture.

If they say, because they are part of the church, as Gellius seems to

have it, then I would ask in the third place, Whether they are actuated

by the Spirit of God? Whether they have crucified the flesh with its

lusts, and in their weakness, walk innocently and christianly according

to Christ's example and teaching, with his followers? Whether they have

become new creatures? Whether they are in Christ and Christ in them?

&c. If they say, God knows, and not we, then I would ask in the fourth

place, Are you such trees, then, that we cannot judge your fruits, and

such lights that we cannot see its refulgence? My reader, ponder well

on these questions.

Scriptures plainly testify that there is no christian but who is in

Christ and has his Spirit, Rom. 8:9. It is evident that the magistracy

does not conform themselves to the example and Spirit of the Lord, as

may; alas, be perceived on every hand by their fruits. For they live in

every respect according to the lusts of the flesh; seek vain honor,

treasure, pompous living, &c.; they are earthly, and not

heavenly?minded; therefore we should consult the word of the Lord

whether such people are competent to ordain preachers, pastors and

servants for the church of Christ, while their fruits testify that they

are yet without Christ's Spirit, kingdom, church and word themselves,

as said.

If they should say that they are not called of the magistracy, but of

the church, then I would ask in the fifth place, Whether the church

which has called them is flesh of Christ's flesh and bone of his bone?

Eph.5:30, that is, a church which sincerely seeks and fears God; that

walks in obedience to his word; loves and serves his neighbor; controls

his ungodly lusts; strives after truth with all his heart; leads an

unblamable, pious life, and who is prepared for the sake, of the will

and word of the Lord, to sacrifice and abandon, money, goods, blood and

life, nay, father, mother, life, husband, wife, children and every

thing else, if the honor of God requires it? If they answer no, which

is the true answer, then it is already proven that they are not the

church and people of the Lord; for the church of Christ must be in

unity of spirit with Christ, as has already been heard. If, then, they

are not of Christ's church, how can they call preachers unto the church

of Christ, as Paul, Barnabas, Timothy and Titus, and the primitive

church have done? If on the contrary they answer Yes, then I say again,

their open unrighteousness, slander, godlessness, avarice, pomp,

drunkenness, superfluity, unchastity, hatred, envy; unmercifulness,

violence, &c., testify before the whole world that the answer is not

the true one.

Inasmuch as it is manifest that both the magistracy and the subjects

are directly contrary to the Spirit and word of Jesus Christ, to his

walk and actions; and have not a syllable which in this respect agrees

with, the spirit and actions of Paul, Barnabas, Timothy, Titus, or of

the primitive church; therefore I am very much surprised that he can be

so imprudent and inconsiderate, or so very bold as to boast, in these

times of grace in which the truth has become so manifest, that he and

the preachers of his character were called and ordained of God by the

means of man, as were the elders of the primitive church, by Paul,

Barnabas, Timothy and Titus.

O, that God would grant that he would once consider and not compare the

faithful men and dear servants of God, together with the zealous,

regenerated communities and pious children of the primitive churches to

this impenitent, reckless and bad world who wish to be considered the

true church; and would no more blind the poor unwary hearts who little

regard the holy word, with such a semblance and quotation of the

Scriptures; for it would be of infinite value to his poor, miserable

soul, at the time of his dissolution.

I would now leave it to the reflection of all intelligent readers, how

the calling, of which the preachers boast, can stand the test of the

Scriptures, while those of whom they boast that called them, are found

to be not only no regenerated, pious christians, but besides, open

despisers and impenitent contenders against God and his word, as may,

alas, be seen, on every hand, by their actions.

In the second place we should observe of what disposition, doctrine and

conduct the called servants of the word should be, according to the

testimony of the Scriptures; namely, "Blameless, the husband of one

wife; vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to

teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but

patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that ruleth well his own

house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;" not a

novice; he must be holy, just, temperate, &c. " Holding fast the

faithful word as he hath been taught; that he may be able, by sound

doctrine, both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." "Moreover he

must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into

reproach and the snare of the devil," &c. "Even so must their wives be

grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things," 1 Tim. 3; Tit.

1.

My reader, observe, this is not my word but the word of the Holy Ghost,

which gives a true pattern of a true preacher, bishop, pastor, teacher

and servant who will, in the church of Christ, bring forth fruit which

will remain, John 15.

The Holy Spirit points us to such teachers, to obey and follow them.

Paul says, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit

yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give

account; that they may do it with joy and not with grief," Heb. 13:17.

In another place he says, "We beseech you, brethren, to know them which

labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to

esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake, and be at peace

among yourselves," 1 Thess. 6:12, 13.

Such teachers are compared in the Scriptures, to the oxen that tread

out the corn, which shall not be muzzled. They are the elders worthy of

double honor, and the faithful laborers, worthy of their hire, Dent,

25:4; Matt. 10:10. But how Gellius and all the preachers of the German

nations, whom he esteems as faithful servants, conform to this I will

leave the impartial reader to judge according to the word of the Lord.

Faithful reader, consider well that which I write. They boast that they

are called in accordance with Scriptures, as you may hear; although it

is obvious and palpable that they lead a life as the one portrayed by

Peter and Jude. Many of them are so fallen in the fullness of Bacchus

that they, alas, live night and day as swine in full rest; .their

tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place

clean, as the prophet says, Isa. 28:8; they fearlessly walk after their

own lusts, as Jude says; and they esteem as joy the temporal, lusty

life, says Peter; they are spots and blemishes, sporting themselves

with their own deceivings while they feast with you.

Some of them, also, are open fornicators and adulterers. How their

wives, as a general thing, conform themselves to Scriptures, may be

educed from their fruits. Others are so avaricious that they have

become open usurers. They are so intent upon perishable lucre, money

and possessions that I dare truthfully say that they, through the easy

doctrine of their gospel, have become lords upon earth; yet, most of

them are loved of the world and highly esteemed by the ignorant. Their

pomp, laziness, easeseeking, vanity, light?mindedness, pride, &c.,

baffle all description to say nothing of their tyranny, lying,

brawling, slandering, betraying and uproaring against all who seek and

fear the Lord.

Reader, it is as I write. O, how willingly would I be silent and close,

if the honor of God and his word, and the love for your souls did not

compel me to do so; but as it is I am forced to touch upon their

abominable shame. Their abominations are so gross and terrible that my

soul shrinks back at the thought of them, therefore, imagine how, if I

shall treat and write of them. How their actions and behavior agree

with the description of Paul, who teaches us that they shall be

unblamable, have but one wife, not given to wine, not avaricious, nor

covetous of filthy lucre; that they shall be temperate, modest and

amiable; have a good report of those that are without; this I will

leave to all pious hearts to judge in the fear of God, according to the

Scriptures. Behold, my reader, since it is manifest that they are quite

contrary to the word of the Lord, in their walk; therefore it is, in

fact, nothing but vain hypocrisy, to call such unfruitful, offensive

actions, evangelical edification and such a void mockery, a calling.

But Gellius tries to clear himself of this, and lays the blame on those

who, according to his writing, lead an unchristian life after the lusts

of their flesh, against the ordinance of the apostles, saying, that

they cannot weaken the cause of the pious, by their unrighteousness; I

would, in the first place, say, Since he complains of them so much, in

his book, and says, that they would better be pastors of swine than

pastors of the sheep of Christ; and wishes that they would be

ex?officiated, &c.; and since these constitute the majority of them, as

may be openly seen; therefore Gellius should admit, that, according to

the Scriptures, we should not follow such, nor partake of their

sacraments, even, if they were the true sacraments; for he himself

admits that they are useless people and wishes them ex?officiated.

In the second place I say, Since Gellius acknowledges that they are

unfit for their offices; and since he and they are of one church,

calling and service, why does he suffer them to remain in their

offices, and why does he not, by virtue of his calling, excommunicate

them with the advice and consent of his church? Since they are a

hindrance to the community and a reproach and disgrace to Gellius and

his brotherpreachers, whom I would were themselves pious and

unblamable.

If he says that the magistracy are to blame, he then admits, that those

magistrates are not true servants and members of Christ, who admit such

offensive people, as adulterers, wine?bibbers, covetous, &c., as are

met with on every hand, to be preachers, while they ruin the souls of

the poor miserable people by their wicked offensive life, to say

nothing of their doctrine; whom they might debar with a single word,

without blood?shed. And what is more, Gellius himself is a faithless

shepherd, and dumb watchman. And the magistracy, which is his elector

and companion in church?service, have a contempt for God and slander

his word.

In the third place I would say, It would be well for Gellius to first

learn to know from the Scriptures the nature of Christ and his church

together with the true churchservants, pastors and preachers; to

rightly judge all things by the Spirit, word and example of the Lord;

and to thoroughly search himself, his brother preachers and his church

before contending so maliciously against the pious and accuse them

before the whole world, without cause. I would further say, Since (if I

understand him aright) he admits that we should not hear the

adulterers, wine?bibbers, strikers, &c., nor partake of their

sacraments (something which was intended, probably, to make his cause

have a good appearance); therefore we are forced to view in a

Scriptural light, how he, according to Paul's doctrine, can stand as a

pastor of the church and as a servant of Christ.

Paul says, A bishop must be blameless; this applies also to a true

preacher, pastor and teacher; and it is obvious that Gellius is not

unblamable, but blamable in many respects; that he is a friend of the

world, who seeks to please the world, contrary to the word of God and

the example of Christ, the apostles and of the prophets, otherwise he

would have suffered persecution, 2 Tim. 3:12, and not have exercised

his service at ease, for so long a time, as is testified by the example

of Christ, the apostles and by all the true witnesses.

Again, that he is a hireling who has been hired as a servant at certain

wages and a stipend, contrary to the example of Christ and the example

of all the true messengers who have been sent by him. He is not only

not persecuted for the sake of the testimony of Jesus but he himself

persecutes the godly, pious hearts who have neither injured or harmed

him nor any body else. He persecutes them wilfully by his instigation,

advice and writings; contrary to the example of Christ and all the

chosen, as may, alas, be seen by his writings here cited. Besides this,

his doctrine is wrong and deceiving. He is an upbraider, condemner,

defamer and backbiter of the innocent who sincerely fear God and are

zealous for his word; yea, who would seal it with their blood,

something which he does not. This assertion is, alas, made good by his

writing in which he, without just cause, accuses and condemns the

god?fearing, pious hearts before the whole world as being apostates,

anabaptists, conspirers, contrabands, cowers of pernicious seed,

excommuned sects, servants of the devil and tools; and thus makes them

the objects of suspicion, although they sincerely seek the Lord and

daily sacrifice possessions and blood for the sake of his holy word.

Besides, he is a supporter and defender of the kingdom of anti?christ,

a falsifier of the Scriptures, an abuser of the sacraments, a

strengthener of the impenitent, a liar, &c., as will be plainly shown,

by the grace of God, each in its' turn.

In the third place it should be observed for what purpose the true

preachers are called, namely, that they should teach the word of the

Lord; rightly use his sacraments; lead and rule in the church of God;

gather together with Christ and not scatter; console the afflicted;

admonish those not ordained; seek what is lost; bind up what is

braised; separate those that are incurable, without any respect of

person, and should assiduously watch over the vineyard, house and city

of God, as the Scriptures teach, Matt. 28:19; 12:30; Mark 16:15.

Behold, my reader, these are the proper reasons why the Holy Ghost has

ordained in the house of the Lord bishops, pastors and teachers,

according to the precept of Paul Paying, "He gave some apostles, and

some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers; for

the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the

edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the

faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto

the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ," Eph. 4:11?13.

But for what purpose Gellius and all the preachers of the world are

called, may be educed from their doctrine and work; namely, to preach

to suit the magistrapy and the world. Again, to offer to the two golden

calves of Dan and Bethel (understand what I mean); to keep the church

of anti?christ, without penance and regeneration in unity and peace of

the flesh, on the perverted and crooked road of darkness and death,

under the name and semblance of the word, contrary to the Spirit,

doctrine and example of Christ; to console the wilful, reckless world,

who wish to be called the church of Christ, without regeneration and

obedience, in their impenitent .and ungodly nature, with the death,

blood, baptism and Supper of the Lord; to violently oppose Christ Jesus

and his word and Spirit, so that the world may live on in their

original state and unrighteousness unrebuked; that the preachers may

continue in their improper gain and careless life; and that the

ignorant people, both rich and poor may live on in the lusts of their

flesh, pomp, splendor, drinking, carousing, in avariciousness and

hoarding, in short, may continue in the broad and easy way of the

flesh, unreproved.

This is made too manifest to be denied, by deeds which speak for

themselves; yet their cause is artfully adorned with the Scriptures;

they talk much; boast loudly of the grace and favor of God; they use

baptism and supper under the appearance of truth, as if they were the

church of Jesus Christ; although, in fact, they are nothing but a

selfish, refractory, impenitent, earthly and .sensual people, as is

obvious by their fruits. If I do not write the truth, reprove me.

Since, then, it is clearer than day?light that they are not called to

uphold the church of Christ, which is of God and a divine nature, with

salutary doctrines, Scriptural sacraments, an unblamable life; earnest

reproving, without favor or respect of persons; with faithful

admonition and separation, ii necessary; but are, under false pretenses

of the name and church of Christ; they are servants of the world;

receive their reward from it; honor and love it; speak of it, and

please it, and whom it seeks and loves to hear, for they are of the

world, as John says, 1 John 4:5.

Therefore it is, in the third place, an incontrovertible evidence, that

they, alas, are no called servants of the church of Christ; as they

falsely etend, but are the servants and supporters of the kingdom of

antichrist, as may be unmistakingly learned from their doctrine, walk

and fruits if we closely examine them.

In the fourth place we should observe what kind of fruits they bring

forth, for Christ says, " I have chosen you and ordained you, that ye

should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain,"

John 15:16. We confess with holy Isaiah, as does also Gellius, that the

doctrine of the holy gospel, if preached in the power of the Spirit,

according to the Spirit of Christ, cannot fail to bring forth fruit. "

For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth

not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and

bud," so, also, is the word that goeth forth out of the mouth of the

Lord, Isaiah 55: lo.

But Gellius and we should well consider that the sower should, by the

power of true faith and the co?operation of the Holy Spirit, be changed

into the Spirit and nature of Christ, and should then teach or present

to the people the pure, unadulterated seed, which is the word, without

all abuse, leaven and hypocrisy, for where there are such cowers, there

it will bud and bring forth. The word of the prophet, which the mouth

of the Lord has spoken is true and firm. But where there are not such

sowers there they arise too early or start out too late; labor and

pains will be in vain; for God works not unto repentance but through

those who are of his Spirit.

Inasmuch, then, that the word with true preaching does not remain

fruitless as we have seen, and since we clearly see that the seed of

the preachers of the world brings forth no fruit unto repentance, but

alone hypocrisy, therefore it is an indisputable fact that they have

not the word of the Lord in power; but that they are artful workers and

not true preachers, or else the word of the prophet must be false,

which says, "If they had stood in my counsel, and had caused my people

to hear my words, then they should have turned them from their evil

way, and from the evil of their doings," Jer. 23:22.

Since then, that preachers are known by their fruits, and that Gellius

and his like preachers have preached their doctrine and sacraments so

many years to the whole world (which they may continue to, do without

fear, while they are not opposing the impenitent in their hypocrisy and

uncontrolled life, but rather console and encourage them), and yet do

not convert a miser nor usurer to liberality; do not bring forth their

disciples further than that they profess in name and appearance; remain

unchanged in their heart, hate and oppose true righteousness, walk upon

the broad way, and earnestly strive after the world, flesh, money and

possessions. The pompous remain pompous; the proud remain proud; and

liars continue in their falsehood, as is manifest; therefore this their

fruitless preaching, vain doctrine and church?service fully prove that

their calling is not of God and his word, but of the son of the abyss,

anti?christ and of the world, however much they adorn and boast of

their cause. The word of God is and will remain true, Isaiah 55:11.

Glellius then refers us to his fruits, and says, Is not the preaching

of the truth and the light of the holy gospel, which we assiduously

preach and promulgate both by teaching and writing a good fruit and

glorious testimony that our calling is of God and not of the devil; by

which the kingdom of the devil is destroyed and by which the papistical

abominations, idolatry, masses, absolutions, vigils, &c., have become a

deadly stench?

Answer. If they did not mix the dross with the silver and water with

wine, that ia, if they would preach the truth, without falsehood, and

the light without darkness in the power of the Spirit, and would

testify it before the whole world by a pious and unblamable life, then

we would agree with them that it is a glorious light and a noble fruit.

But while they practice wrong and pervert truth into lies, the true

apostolic baptism into the baptism of heretics, the church of Christ

into pernicious sectarianism and conspiracy, &c., and on the other hand

pervert lies to truth, the anti?christian to christian baptism and the

reckless, wild world to the Lord's church, &c., we say that their

doctrine is deceiving, offensive and wrong, and is not the true

doctrine, as Gellius boasts and pretends.

Yea, my reader, they so preach the word of the Lord that

unrighteousness and abuse yet remain in fall sway; they so teach the

truth, that in many respects, false doctrine, lying and deceiving is

not yet weakened nor destroyed; they so use and practice divine service

that the high places are honored and idolatry is not avoided; they so

preach the christian church, that the church of anti?christ remains in

full power, as is openly manifested to the whole world both by their

work and their tyranny.

In short, it is manifest that they so preach and promulgate the gospel

that no repentance follows but that every one, alas, remains as he is;

yea, what is worse, that the people are not only not regenerated but

are daily growing more wicked. Neither encomiums, reasoning nor artful

demonstrations will avail here, for their fruit testifies that their

doctrine is faithless and false, as said before, Jer. 23.

The serpent spoke the truth when he said, "God doth know that in the

day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened; and ye shall be as

gods, knowing good and evil," Gen. 3:5. But that which he promised

before was a lie, namely, " Ye shall not surely die." Adam and Eve were

thereby deceived. Thus, also, do those who teach the serpent's word.

They so teach the impenitent, carnal people, concerning the death of

the Lord, by their unscriptural sacraments of impenitance, and so

console them in their reckless, Adamic nature and life, by false

promises (although they do some times speak the truth, as did the

serpent, produce Scriptures, partly reprove sin and praise virtue) that

there is no body to be found who truly feels sorry for his sins, who

sincerely repents of his wickedness, saying, " What have I done," Jer.

8:6. Behold, says the prophet, so they practice falsehood and

strengthen the wicked that none repent of their wickedness.

That some of them have thus weakened the papistical abominations, for

this they and we give praises to the Lord. But what does it avail if

they renounce the pope and they themselves step in his stead? It is

true that many branches of the tree of anti?christ are hewn off, but

the roots and body still remain. And although he destroyed some high

places, yet they walk in the ways of Jeroboam and have not come to

Jerusalem for the purpose of truly worshiping.

Yea, kind reader, had the learned firmly trusted the living God,

faithfully adhered tb his word, and had they not acted hypocritically

with the world and had they themselves, in power and deeds faithfully

practiced, without fear of the cross and the disfavor of the

magistracy, what they have, in some of their writings, pointed out, O,

what a noble and clear light would have shone on the world, which now,

alas, has become such a pernicious darkness and destruction, and a

broad way, through the fear of the cross, through hypocrisy,

selfishness, desire of ease, ambition and favor of men.

In the second place he says, Is the whole Bible, translated (into the

German language) by the memorable D. Martinus, a despisable fruit? Are

the songs or hymns composed by Luther and many others a contemptible

fruit? Is, also, the constancy, which exists in these times of peril

and danger of body and possessions, as it did in the beginning of the

gospel, not a noble and genuine fruit of our calling? But such fruits

are of no account in their sight or else they will not see them;

although they are the surest and the best fruits, &c. The fruits of the

outward life and dealings with men, although often mere hypocrisy, only

avail in their sight.

Answer. The deceased translators, authors and composers we will leave

undisturbed, for they have already found their Lord and Judge; but we

will turn to the living, with whom we have to speak. His saying, that

writing, translating and composing are the surest and best fruits, is,

in my opinion, a very senseless assertion, for such things can be done

through learning and skill in languages, without regeneration and

change of heart, as he himself well knows. Yea, as the Bible or the

Scriptures are read by the greater part of the world, with impure,

carnal hearts, so, also, they can, undoubtedly, be translated, through

the knowledge and skill of languages, from one language into another,

with a carnal, unregenerated and impious heart.

And as hymns are generally sung in God's houses or temples, carelessly,

and are light?mindedly sung, here and there, in the streets and in

riotous taverns; so, also, can they be composed by alight?minded heart

without spirit or regeneration? These are, therefore, not the surest

and best fruits, as Gellius pretends to say, for they do not remain.

But whatever some, in by?gone times may have written, in true zeal,

which is Scripture or conformable to Scripture and useful to the

regeneration of the pious, we should, reasonably, praise and esteem.

However, the surest and best fruits arc?, to so preach the word of God

in power, that many may be born of him and be led to sincerely fear and

love him; to cordially serve their neighbors; to die unto flesh and

blood; to believe on Jesus Christ with all the heart, and tremble at

his word; that they may do nothing contrary to it; may truly worship

God and conform their whole life or walk according to his Spirit, word

and example, for such fruits remain.

I would further say, He boasts of the danger and constancy (as he calls

it) of some of their number; now, in these times of war, which he calls

a time of trial, because, (if we understand him aright), they can no

longer uphold and protect their cause by force of arms; and consider it

a noble fruit, although they have, perhaps, not been tempted unto death

as we daily are; and therefore he so indiscreetly condemns and profanes

our cause, which the Lord knows we have maintained and will maintain in

spite of sword or any other deadly weapon, something which cannot be

truthfully refuted. We have patiently walked ac fording to the example

of Christ; sacrificed our possessions and blood which might have been

saved by a single, hypocritical word; and at all times, for our

invincible constancy, we suffer with fire, water and sword; being

defenceless, and without any resistance " we are killed all the day

long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter," Rom. 8:36.

But we give praise to God, that some of them have sacrificed their

blood for the sake of the testimony which they had, and with James

count them happy; yea, that they are joint?heirs in the sufferings of

Jesus Christ; for their deeds have proven that they sought God and were

faithful as far as they were enlightened. But what will that avail

them, while they close their hearts to the light of truth; contend

against the Spirit, word and will of God; preach lies, pervert and

abuse the sacraments, and console and encourage the wild, wicked world

in their impenitent, reckless life? Something which the faithful heroes

have not done, for they were faithful in every thing which they

acknowledged as the truth. If they had acknowledged more they would,

doubtlessly, have died for the sake thereof as well as for that which

they did, at the time, acknowledge.

If our opponents are of the same spirit then they may boast. But their

fruits openly testify that that they are, alas, very different.

Again, he writes, that the fruits of an outward life, alone, avail in

our sight, &c. Do not our sole oppression, trials, great tribulation,

misery, possessions and blood; besides, our open and frank confession,

openly testify that he makes this assertion without all truth. Yea,

that he openly slanders and wrongs us? O malitiosam calumnian ac

perversitatem, (O malicious calumny and perversity).

My kind reader, observe that all Scriptures and the power of true faith

constrain us zealously to teach an upright, pious, godly and penitent

life; for Jesus Christ says, "Let your light so shine before men, that

they may see your good works." Paul, also teaches, "That ye may approve

things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence

till the day of Christ." That we might walk worthy of the Lord and his

gospel. Peter says, "Having your conversation honest among the

Gentiles;" and John says, That we should walk even as Christ walked,

Matt. 6:6; Phil. 1:10; Col. 1:10; 1 Pet. 2:12; 1 John 2:6.

Since Scripture, on every hand, enjoin upon us a pious life, as has

been heard; therefore it is reasonable and just, if we believe the word

of God, that we zealously follow, in our weakness, that which the

Spirit of the Lord has so clearly taught and enjoined in his holy word.

But his assertion, that such fruits, only, avail in our sight comes,

alas, from an impure heart. For, I presume, he well knows, that we

plainly teach that we cannot be saved by outward works, however great

and glorious they may appear or that we can thus entirely please God;

for they are ever mixed with imperfection and weakness and, therefore,

through the corruption of the flesh we cannot acquire the righteousness

required in the commandments; therefore we point, alone, to Christ

Jesus who is our only 40

and eternal Righteousness, Reconciliation and Propitiator with the

Father, and do not at all trust in our works. My reader, I write the

truth in Christ Jesus, and lie not.

O, that Gellius would quit his unguarded talk, and speak no more than

that which is true, for a liar is a disgrace and shall not inherit the

kingdom of God; and that he could ? once feel what a true, christian

faith is, what it requires in its nature and what it produces in power;

he would then know what it is that brings forth such a pious, penitent

and unblamable life which he has in times gone by, so disgracefully

slandered and upbraided as devilish fruits, hypocrisy and a new

mockery; and, as appears, would yet upbraid, if it was not for the

experience of many and the great quantity of innocent j blood which has

been shed.

Behold, dear reader, now you can see how they adorn and deck their

abominable hypocrisy and fruitless, impenitent church?service with

writing, translating, singing, &c., although generally alone without

repentance and regeneration, as heard; and how they basely construe and

explain the sincere, pious fruits of true faith which are taught and

represented by all the Scriptures, ceremonies and sacraments; that they

may daub the wall with untempered mortar and console the poor,

miserable people in their disregard of the word of the Lord. But when

the Lord's hurricane, flood and great hailstones shall come with a

great noise, then they will break down the wall that they have daubed

with untempered mortar and bring it to the ground so that the

foundation thereof shall be discovered, &c., Ezekiel 13:13, 14.

In the third place, Gellius writes that the office of a preacher

consists of two parts, namely, in rooting out, destroying and opposing;

also in sowing and building, &c., and boasts that their fruits,

especially as regards the first part, cannot be denied in many kingdoms

and principalities; and that the Lord Jesus Christ (as he says), has,

through their services, planted sincere repentance and such true

christian faith in many hearts, that the small community at Emden, in

sure expectation of a reward in heaven. willingly supports several

hundreds of poor people by their alms, &c.

Answer. We admit that the first part of a preacher's office consists in

rooting out, destroying and opposing, and the other of sowing and

building up, and this is a proof for us that they are not the preachers

to serve in such capacity. Although they have renounced, in different

cities and countries, (for which we praise the Lord), some abuses and

idolatries, which were so gross that .they might be plainly noticed,

without Scriptures, to be abominations; yet, the root of all deceit

remains untouched, namely, the false doctrine and unscriptural

sacraments, with which they console the world and encourage them in

their impenitence and natural state or Adamic heart which is the source

of all unrighteousness, as may, alas, be seen on every hand by the

fruits.

If, then, they are the true preachers as they pretend to be, let them

execute the first part, namely, To break in pieces with the hammer of

the divine word the proud, obdurate hearts, the impure, avaricious

hearts, the blood?guilty, tyrannical hearts, &c., of whom it is written

that they are worthy of death; to humble them by the eternal judgment

and punishment of Almighty God; to discover to them their ungodly and

corrupt nature and flesh, by virtue of the commands; that they may

learn to know themselves, see their shame and thus, with sorrowing and

repenting hearts, in the fear of the coming wrath and eternal

punishment of the just and great God, sincerely and tremblingly repent

and die unto their sins, crucify their flesh, smother their lusts, and

walk before their God with broken and humbled hearts. Behold this is

the true and principal rooting out, destroying and opposing to which

Scriptures say, the true preachers are called.

Then let such moved and humbled hearts, such penitent and sighing

sinners, who are, with Peter and Magdalene, heart broken, bitterly

weep, and with David confess their guilt; then point them to the only

and eternal seat of grace, Christ Jesus; teach them the eternal mercy,

love, favor and grace of God, according to the Scriptures; console them

with the gospel of peace; carefully anoint their wounds, caused by the

sharp and smarting wine, with the oil of the joyful promises of Christ,

that they may thus, through faith arise with Christ from the death of

their abominable sins into the new life of all virtue; that they may,

in true faith and in pure, unfeigned love, ever walk without all

offence, according to the example of Christ and all the pious; and give

thanks to the Lord for his manifest love. Behold, thus sow and build,

all true preachers who are called of the Spirit of the Lord and are fit

for his service.

Dear reader, observe; Since Gellius and the preachers, then, are not

such destroyers and builders, rooters and planters, as their deeds

testify; but destroy that which is good and build up that which is bad;

that they root out truth with their offensive doctrine and plant

falsehood with their false sacraments and easy life; therefore our

assertion is incontrovertible, that they are not the servants of Christ

nor his true messengers.

He writes, "that the Lord, through their service, has planted true

repentance and such a true christian faith in many hearts, that the

small congregation at Emden were comforted in expectation of a heavenly

reward."

Answer. If this were true indeed, as he writes, it should be attested

by the fruits and manifested by the works. Paul says, "The kingdom of

God is not in word, but in power," 1 Cor. 4:20. Let nobody falsely

boast; we will bejudged of one before whom nothing is hidden. Nobody

knows what true, christian faith and and true repentance are, but he

who has truly received them and felt their power. If God, then, plants

repentance in so many hearts, as Gellius pretends, why is he and his

like preachers, yet so impenitent, so inimical and refractory to truth,

and so offensive and blamable in wholesome doctrine? If those of whom

he speaks are of the same mind with him, which we trust they are not,

then he has not written the truth; this is too plain to be 'denied.

Those hearts in which God has planted true repentance and an ardent,

true, christian faith cannot, especially in these times of manifest

truth, long be hidden, nor remain without the cross promised by the

Holy Scriptures, if, even, their own preachers and relations are to

persecute them. For if they would testify their faith by a frank

,confession, by a pious life and by works, which are the fruits of true

and ardent faith, they would soon find that they have to bear the cross

with Christ, their Lord. However much Gellius may garble it in his

writings, the word of Christ is and remains the word of the cross; all

who accept the word in power and in truth must be prepared for the

cross; this, both Scriptures and experience abundantly teach us.

This had necessarily to be said, lest we be consoled with a false

boasting and idea, and lest the word of the Lord, spoken to the false

prophets, be applied to us; saying, Ye promise life to those souls to

whom you should not promise it, "By your lying to my people that hear

your lies," Ezekiel 13:19.

Notwithstanding, many are suffered in their churches who wantonly live

in pomp, splendor, carousing, avarice and according to the lusts of the

flesh, which service a true and faithful preacher, through which God

works, does not allow, if the evangelical Scriptures and apostolic

ordinances and doctrine shall avail and are true.

But, as to the alms and support of the poor, I would say, that it is a

good and praise?worthy work, and' cordially approve of it. Also, that

many pious, gentile philosophers, as Aristotle, Plato, &c., have

considered it as right and just. But we contradict that. sincere and

true repentance, or the true seed and foundation of sincere love, which

is a fruit of true faith, consists therein; for we may give in

hypocrisy, as well as in love, as may be seen by the Scribes and

Pharisees, by the open heathens and daily, yet, by the papists.

Paul also agrees with this, saying, "And though I bestow all my goods

to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not

charity, it profiteth me nothing," 1 Cor. 13:3. Therefore, let every

one take heed for what purpose and with what heart he bestows his alms.

For the love which is of God and of a divine nature hates all boasting

and hypocrisy, neither does it know them; of this I am convinced.

If Gellius points to the support and service of the poor, which I deem

praiseworthy, as a fruit of true repentance, then I would ask in the

first place, Whether he finds a lack of alms with our church; although

they are exiled to foreign countries and live in poverty and misery and

are partly robbed of their possessions?

In the second place I would say, that while he wants to boast of true

repentance, he should first commence with the repentance of such faith

as brings forth the love and fear of God, and not with the alms for the

poor. For the Lord's own mouth speaks, That love is the keeping of his

commandments; yea that it is the greatest commandment, Dent. 6:6.

Yea, my reader, if he and his could fully comprehend sincere, true

repentance and true christian faith, which he thinks has been planted

in their hearts, O, how cordially would they fear their God, love and

thank him for his fa rors and loving?kindness, and how willingly would

they follow and obey his holy word I But how they do love and thank him

for his loving?kindness and how they obey and follow his word, their

actions and fruits, alas, too plainly testify.

If they love God, and if a true, living faith and genuine repentance

has been implanted in their hearts, as he boasts, why do they, then,

yet walk after the manner of the Gentiles in pomp and splendor, in the

lusts of their eyes, embellishment of their bodies and houses, in

avariciousness, carousing, &c.? and why do they not heed the words of

Paul? namely, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die," Rom. 8:13.

If they love their neighbors, as the Scriptures command and true

repentance brings forth, why are they, then, so usurious, avaricious

and perfidious amongst themselves? Why do they litigate? Hatred, envy,

lying, deceit, backbiting and defamation still prevail amongst his

followers; besides they curse, swear, brawl, fight, war, destroy, rob

and some of them are fornicators, perjurers, &.c.; to say nothing about

their disgraceful upbraiding, profaning and defaming of all those who

seek and fear the Lord. What sort of repentance and faith it is, of

which he so loudly boasts, you may consider in the fear of God.

O, my kind reader, it never fails that where true faith is, there,

also, is the righteousness of faith; where there is unfeigned,

christian love, there also is obedience to the holy word, and where

there is true, sincere repentance there also is an unblamable life,

according to the truth; this is incontrovertible.

Is it not a false assertion to say that the giving of alms shows true

repentance; sins we do not know whether it is done in sincerity of

heart or in hypocrisy and vanity while he can plainly see that those

who give alms generally are merely of the world and flesh, yea, without

regeneration and repentance

It would be well if he could take to hear what stands written: The alms

(gifts) of the ungodly do not please the Most High; and sins are not

remitted by much offering; he who offers of the possessions of the poor

does, even as if he slaughtered the Son, in the sight of the Father.

But to keep God's commandments, is a pleasing offer and to do according

to the command, this is an offer which avails. "To depart from

wickedness is a thing pleasing to the Lord; and to forsake

unrighteousness is a propitiation.' Again, "To obey is better than

sacrifice and to hearken, than the fat of rams," Eccl 35:3; 1 Sam.

15:22.

I would further say that it is my fixed opinion that the before

mentioned alms, of which he boasts, are not the two mites or pennies of

the widow's necessaries; but only a small crumb of their abundance,

riches and wealth. This I frankly assert, and I have not the least

doubt that if they would apply, to the support of the poor, their silk

damask and the superabundance of clothes in which they go splendidly

attired, the ornaments of their houses, the golden and silver rosaries,

the useless, costly ornaments, gold rings, chains, silvered and gilt

swords, besides, the booty of the persecuted which may be found in the

houses of some, then the poor would not, in the least, suffer from

want.

O, my reader, yet by him, this must be called true repentance and a

highly boastful work. If such boasting of outward works was heard from

our side, how soon would we hear that we are work?saints, and that we

want to be saved by our own merits.

O, Lord! dear Lord!! thus the ignorant people are deceived and consoled

in their impenitent, reckless life with their own works and merits. I

think that such preachers may justly be called peace?preachers,

bolsterers and false daubers of the Spirit of the Lord, since they

praise such a carnal people as penitent and happy according to the

prophetic word, while they are still quite earthly and carnally?minded;

as their daily walk openly testifies before the whole world.

My faithful reader, observe the word of the Lord, and take heed; for it

is not always a true christian faith nor sincere repentance which the

children of the world, who are prone to walk upon the broad way,

sometimes teach and represent as true faith and sincere repentance. But

this is true faith; which cordially accepts all the words of God, the

threatening commands as well as the consoling gospel, and trusts in

them as the sure and true word of God, &c. From such faith, which Paul

calls a gift of God, springs the fear of God which drives out sin, and

the true love which gladdens, enlivens and cheers the heart and leads

it into the obedience of the word.

Where there is such a faith which brings forth a new, convened and

changed mind; which makes us dead unto sin and leads us into a new

life; changes us from Adam to Christ; puts off the old man with all his

works and puts on the new man with his works and thus conforms all his

thoughts, words and works to the Spirit, word and ways of the Lord,

behold, there is true repentance to which the holy prophets, John the

baptist, Christ Jesus, together with all the apostles and pious

servants have so earnestly pointed us and so faithfully admonished us.

All those who would rightly preach this faith and this genuine

repentance, and would thereby bring forth fruits, must themselves

first, truly believe and sincerely repent; this is too obvious to be

denied; and that Gellius and his like preachers do not yet, in power

and truth, believe and sincerely repent, I will leave to be judged by

their own writings and fruits, both here on earth and before the throne

of God and Christ.

Gellius further writes, and says, If it were true that many of our

audience turn the preaching of the holy gospel to lasciviousness, as in

Jude 4, and that our preaching avails but little, although many pious,

peni. tent hearts incontrovertibly prove the contrary, then the old

lamentation of the prophet Isaiah were but verified, that says, Who

hath believed our report, &c. f He also points to the saying of Christ,

namely, If they have kept .

my word they will also keep your word; with which he doubtlessly means

to say, as the world has not kept my doctrine, therefore they will not

keep your doctrine.

He also, refers to the four kinds of seed and four kinds of earth,

Matt. 13:8, 19, 23.

Answer. God has never, from the beginning, preached repentance through

the impenitent. The mouth and wisdom of God say, "Do men gather grapes

of thorns, or figs of thistles," Matt. 7:16.

Sine, it is clear that Gellius and his like preachers remain so earthly

and carnallyminded, and are driven by such an unmerciful, tyrannical

and slandering spirit, which is, properly, the inborn spirit, nature

and fruit of the old serpent; how, then, can they rightly preach the

penitent, pious life and the fruitful, merciful, amiable spirit, nature

and disposition of Christ, which they not only not acknowledge, but

upbraid as hypocrisy and which they sincerely hate in all the pious

In the second place, I say, that the preaching of peace and the making

of cushions of the learned, as they do, will bring forth but few truly

repentant persons. For although the world is so wicked and wild that we

should reasonably be terrified at their very great wickedness, yet they

are so comforted and consoled by their preachers, with their infant

baptism, supper, alms and with the merits, grace, death and blood of

the Lord, that they presume themselves to be the Lord's chosen holy

church and people.

In the third place I would say, because he speaks doubtfully, saying,

If it were true that many of his audience turn the preaching of the

word to lasciviousness, and little fruit was brought forth by it,

something which he however does not admit, &c., the reader should well

mark how assiduously they defend the world and the church of

anti?christ, saying, If it were true, &c. Yet the whole German nation

has degenerated to such a wild and reckless freedom, by the preaching

of their free gospel that if we reasonably admonish and reprove them

for their open unchastity, carousing, pomp and splendor, cursing and

swearing, lascivious and foul words, we must immediately hear that we

are conspirators, vagabonds, fanatics, heaven?stormers, anabaptists and

other indecent, disgraceful slanders.

But in regard to the complaint of Isaiah and the saying of Christ, If

they have kept my saying, &c., John 15:20, with which he wishes to

cover and adorn his unscriptural practices and doctrine of impenitence,

I would ask him: If Christ and the apostles have received those who

lived after the lusts of their flesh, such as drunkards, railers,

egtortioners, avaricious, fornicators, adulterers, &c., as their

disciples, so long as they had not sincerely repented?

If he answers in the affirmative, then he speaks contrary to all

Scripture. For Paul says, That we shall not eat with such, if he does

call himself a brother, 1 Cor. 6:11) and that they shall not inherit

the kingdom of God, 1 Cor. 6:11. If he answers in the negative, then I

would again ask, Why they receive them as disciples while they are not

disciples of Christ, but are, according to his own words, of the world?

If he answers that they do not receive them, then I would ask him why

they baptize their children before they let them partake of the sapper

3 And whether it would not be better if he would separate them,

according to the Scriptures from the communion of those whom he esteems

pious? If he answers that he does not know of such, which he can by no

means, truthfully say, then I would, lastly ask, if he does not know a

tree by its fruits; if he cannot see a light that shines in darkness,

as all true christian lights are called in the Scriptures, nor a city

which is built upon a high mountain? Matt. 6:14.

Since Gellius and all the preachers, receive and suffer such impenitent

persons, whom he himself calls of the world, as heard, in the communion

of their churches, against the practice of Christ and of the apostles,

therefore they must thereby acknowledge that Christ's church is of the

world or .the world of Christ's church; that they, contrary to the

apostolic doctrine, ordinance and example, dispense the sacraments also

to the world, which according to the Scriptures properly belong to the

penitent alone; who have placed themselves in the church of the Lord,

in obedience to the word; that they, thereby, include the penitent (if

such there be) in the communion of the impenitent; and that they are

open flatterers and enemies of the cross of Christ, Phil. 3:18, who act

hypocritically with the higher class and flatter the world, lest they

lose their favors; and thus openly and faithlessly transgress the

Lord's word and ordinance, for the sake of their bellies and reject it

as powerless and discouraging.

Again, as to his reference to the Lord's parable, I would say, That I

would have him take a better view of it and not console himself

herewith; for it has reference to the true preachers and disciples who

have been put to the trial of the cross of Christ, in obedience to the

word, and not to the crossfleeing preachers and the world, as may be

learned not alone from the Scriptures but also from experience.

For some reject the received and manifest truth, and the sown seed is

devoured of the fowls of the air and does not bring forth fruit. Some

are withered by the scorching sun of the cross, oppression and misery,

which proves them wood, hay and stubble, 1 Cor. 3:12.

Others are smothered by the cares of this world, and by deceitful

riches and the lusts of the flesh, so that the received knowledge dies

in them, and the lusts and love of this world prevail, which in our

times, as well as in the times of the primitive church, is too often

the case with those who, with Demas, alas, again grasp the love of the

world.

But the last receive it in a sincere, pious heart, and meekly bring

forth fruit with patience; although they are much tempted by all kinds

of trials, anxiety, oppression and deadly perils, yet they are, by the

gracious help of God, so armed with a true faith, love, hope, and

patience or long?suffering; are so confirmed in God, that neither the

fire of tribulation can consume them (for they are gold, silver and

precious stones), nor sword and pain can frighten or deter them from

the ways of the Lord, Rom. 8:38.

That the beforementioned parable has reference to such christians and

not to the world and its preachers, is too clear to be controverted or

denied. And Gellius and his like preachers of the world remain

defenders of unrighteousness, comforters of the impenitent and servants

of the kingdom of anti?christ, who not only pitifully deceive their own

souls but also those of their church, and support and defend them in

their gross abominations and impenitent carnal lives, by their

perversion of Scriptures and useless consolations, to their eternal

destruction.

In the fifth place it should be observed, what the preachers' desire

and seeking should be. The Scriptures teach that Moses and Jeremiah,

Exod. 4:10, reluctantly accepted of the service when they, Jer. 1: G,

were called and sent of God, as Jeremiah laments when the cross bore

heavily upon him, Exod. 4:10; Jer. 1: G; Jer. 20:8.

All that the prophets, apostles and faithful servants of God ever

sought and desired was nothing else than that they might proclaim the

name of their God and might point their neighbors to the way of peace.

They did not seek money, gold, honor and an easy life, but they

executed their office to which they were appointed, and which was,

alas, not weighed by the heedless people, under many sore trials,

miseries, anxieties, tribulations, beatings, poverty, oppression and

tortures, and at the risk of life even, as sacred and profane

histories, in many instances, teach. But why the preachers of the world

have hitherto refused and yet refuse the service, and what they seek

thereby, experience and the Holy Spirit plainly teach us, saying, that

they promise death to the pious and life to the wicked, for the sake of

A hand?ful of barley or a piece of bread; that they seek the fat and

the wool, milk and flesh; that they eat but do not feed the Lord's

sheep, Ezekiel 34:3; that they preach peace for their bellies' sake

(that is, if well paid), and war if not well fed, &c.

Facts testify openly that it is true that they do not seek the

salvation of souls, but a careless, easy life; for we never saw in all

our life that the preachers lived where there were no rents or liens.

That, also, Gellius does not seek the salvation of his sheep, but the

rents, he has testified when he left Norden, where he was called by the

same calling, and moved to Emden where the annual income was greater;

something which the paters, in times gone?by, esteemed as unjust in

their concilions and decrees, and punished with excommunication.

If he sought the salvation of their souls, and not the rents, as

becomes a good and faithful shepherd, according to the example of Jesus

Christ and of all faithful servants, why, then, did he make void his

first call. ing, which was, according to his assertion, divine, and

leave the first sheep who werE no less delivered through the death of

the Lord, and bought with his precious blood, than the last, of which

he now has the charge. O, hypocrisy and feigning!

Again, Gellius says in regard to the sustenance of the preachers, That

they have little care as to how the community, of whom the magistracy

are a part, provides them the necessaries of life, while it is certain

that i1 they serve the gospel, as he says, they shall also live of the

gospel; and cites Matt. 10:10; Luke 10:7.

Answer. If Gellius and the preachers were such servants as are referred

to in these Scriptures, then it is plain, that the sustenance of the

gospel was promised them. But if any?body goes into the service and

uselessly destroys and ruins the Lord's goods, if faithless, seeks his

own self in all things and does the things which are contrary to the

will and honor of the Lord, should such a faithless servant receive the

reward which is reasonably due to the faithful, assiduous laborer ~ I

think you will answer in the negative; and that he should rather

receive the displeasure and punishment of the Lord: For he speaks, "

When the Lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto

those husbandmen

They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will

let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the

fruits in their seasons," Matt. 21:40, 41.

We acknowledge that sustenance has been promised, by Scriptures, to the

true and faithful servants. But, since Gellius and his like preachers

are unfaithful servants who destroy the Lord's goods, steal his gain,

scatter his sheep and do not gather them together; who, alas,

fearlessly lead to hell his precious treasure, namely the poor

miserable souls, in great numbers, as those truly regenerated can

scripturally judge by the testimony of their open deeds; therefore

their sustenance is not the sustenance of true preachers, but an

unreasonable, shameful gain; an unbecoming livelihood and the reward of

the deceived souls; this, ail of sound understanding ? must acknowledge

and admit.

O, my faithful reader, remember, so long as the world donates such

splendid houses and large incomes to their preachers, the false

prophets and deceivers will be numerous.

They pretend to vindicate by Scripture all heresy, deceit, idolatry,

pomp, hypocrisy, tyranny and drunkenness, together with their

unreasonable and shameful service of the flesh and world, and make the

ignorant and blind world believe that it is right.

But I openly testify, I testify it unreservedly that the preachers of

the world, to take them all in all, are Balaamites, who love the reward

of unrighteousness, and serve for the sake of a handful of barley and a

piece of bread, whereby they profane the name of God, Ezekiel 13:19.

"Prophets which eat at Jezebel's table," 1 Kings 18:20, servants and

defenders of Maaz, 1 Chron. 2:27, who are honored with great rewards of

Antioch, that is, anti?christ; Ahabites, who, for the sake of an acre,

stone the pious Naboth, 1 Kings 21, that is, who advise and instigate

the world by their speeches, writings, backbiting, complaints and

permission to, the killing of many an innocent, pious child of God.

Again, they are priests of Jeroboam, who, contrary to the example of

Christ Jesus and his holy apostles, hire themselves, for an annual

stipend, to an unevangelical service of impenitence, which is

practiced, in all respects, without power, spirit, repentance and

regeneration, as may openly be seen; their service is vain labor and

mockery, besides, an unbecoming speculation.

O, how distinctly has the Holy Ghost portrayed them before our eyes, if

we would but see, saying, "And through covetousness shall they, with

feigned words, make merchandise of you." Again, "Having men's persons

in admiration because of advantage," 2 Peter 2:3; Jude 18, and other

like sayings; For that they have sought unreasonable gain and an easy

life, from youth, and yet seek it, is so obvious, that it cannot, at

all, be denied.

Besides, their liens and properties have been obtained from

anti?christ, through artful dealings, enchanting roguery and clerical

robbery, and are yet, daily, thus obtained from those who walk upon the

broad way without repentance, and who find, alas, no pleasure in the

Lord's holy word.

They act hypocritically and flatter the magistrates and those of

high?standing; they console the impenitent and persecute the pious;

they adulterate the plain word, sacraments and ordinances of Jesus

Christ, by which the church should be gathered and maintained in Him;

they preach to suit and please the world, that they may receive, under

the semblance of the gospel, the bloodreward of the poor and miserable

souls, for which they assiduously strive; that they may peaceably

possess it and turn it to the advantage of easy times. Yet they console

themselves with the idea that they serve the gospel and therefore

should live of the gospel. Behold, thus they give a scriptural shape to

all kinds of false doctrines and works, and thus they give a fine

appearance to hypocrisy.

My faithful reader, I warn you in sincere love, take heed. Again, I say

unto you, The true and faithful servants of Jesus did not have such

annual stipends, rents and property attached to the apostolic churches;

but the greater part earned their livelihood by their own labor; yet

served the church of Christ, and, in all love and humility, walked

before them with true doctrines and an unblamable life. They have

diligently watched over the Lord's house, city and vineyard; opposed

all evil and deceiving spirits with the word of the Lord; admonished

the disorderly, consoled the afflicted, reproved the transgressors,

excommunicated the disobedient and refractory; served reasonably, left

the world to the world, and have patiently borne its cross; and what

necessaries they needed they received, not of the world, but at the

hands of their pious disciples, in humility, without avariciousness or

on desire of shameful gain. Scriptures allow this much, as said above,

for they rightly pastured the Lord's sheep, they faithfully planted the

vineyard, assiduously tilled the land, and stored the sheaves and

fruits in the Lord's barn, as the example of the prophets and apostles

points out and the Spirit and word of the Lord command, and enjoin upon

all faithful servants.

I will conclude my remarks in regard to the calling of the preachers,

and would yet say, Since the Scriptures teach that the servants of the

holy word are called either of the Lord himself, or by means of the

pious, as has been heard; that they shall be unblamable; able rightly

to rule the Lord's church, bring forth permanent fruits, destroy and

build up; that they shall not seek unreasonable gain, but sincerely

seek the honor and praise of God and the salvation of their neighbors,

8,c.; and since we plainly see and palpably feel that they, alas, are

altogether called of such as we would wiph had the Spirit of Christ;

moreover that they are blamable in all things, for they are of an

unmerciful, tyrannical disposition, and of an earthly, carnal life;

pervert the gospel, and do not teach it in power and true repentance;

wrongly use the sacraments without power, spirit and repentance, and

dispense it to those who are not disciples of Jesus Christ; they

deceive the people; do not bring forth permanent fruits, plant that

which is evil and root out that which is good; they do not seek the

honor and praise of God but their own profit and gain, the favor of the

world and an easy, careless life, I will let their doctrines,

sacraments, fruits and life testify to this; therefore I say without

any reservation that they are not the called preachers and servants of

the church of Christ, whom we shall, according to the Scriptures, obey,

accept and follow, as they pretend we should, but that they are

preachers for the sake of gain and servants of anti?christ, against

whom we are, on every hand, warned by the word of God; not to hear or

follow them nor their doctrine but to flee from and avoid them as

deceivers, false prophets, wicked men and faithless servants.

Yea, my reader, what can they say about their calling, preaching and

church?service

It is, briefly stated, not possible, according to the sure promises and

prophecies of Christ Jesus and the prophets, that a true and faithful

preacher, witness or teacher, especially in these evil times and in

this wicked and tyrannical world, can faithfully teach and proclaim,

without respect of persons, the pure gospel of Jesus Christ, without

being exiled, proscribed or killed; much less enjoy life at ease and

liberty, as they do, without persecution, yea, receive annual stipends

of the world and be highly honored and loved by them.

Peruse all the Holy Scriptures and see if you can find that Christ

Jesus, with his holy apostles, true witnesses and followers fared as

they do and received as they do; whether persecution, cross,

tribulation, anxiety, prison and death were not, generally, their lot

and part. Besides experience, yet daily, teaches this abundantly.

If, then, the preachers acted rightly, if they were walking according

to the example of Christ and his apostles; if their teachings and

dealings were right, as they pretend them to be, then all the Holy

Scriptures must be wrong, the word of the cross be fulfilled and Christ

and his prophecies must be false, this is incontrovertible. Therefore,

all their boasting and artful citations concerning their calling,

office, doctrine and church?service, together with their defense are,

in fact, wrong, futile, hypocritical, unjust and without truth. " For

all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's," Phil.

2:21; their own ease and not the salvation of their neighbors; they are

enemies of the cross; they serve their own bellies, Rom. 16. If they

would rightly reprove all the ungodliness, idolatry, abuse, pride,

pomp, splendor, hypocrisy and unfaithfulness of this world, without

respect of persons with the same earnestness, assiduity, heart and

mind, &c., as did Christ with his holy apostles and true witnesses, and

in other respects would not act so freely; if they would hate all

unrighteousness of the world as Christ Jesus and his apostles hated it,

then they would not long remain at ease in their comfortable houses;

they would not have such incomes and they would be little regarded by

this reckless, wild world. Of this I am convinced.

But they do differently; they make the garment to fit the man (as the

saying is), and they so teach and act that the world may suffer them

and love them and that they may be the friends of the world, so that

they may be at ease, not be persecuted and enjoy good times; this is

something which is generally well understood, and a sure proof that

their sending or calling together with their doctrine and

church?service is in every particular without the ordinance, Spirit and

word of God, as said before.

Herewith, Gellius' article on the calling has been replied to. I would

earnestly beseech him and all the preachers to reflect in the fear of

God for before the flaming eyes of the Lord, which search heaven and

earth, nothing wrong will be hidden, however artfully it may be covered

before man's. eyes, and however much it may be decked and adorned with

smooth words.

Next, Gellius denies our calling, and says, Before we can agree with

the preachers or teachers who claim that they bring forth fruit, they

must first be rightly called of a church of God, and not from a

collection who have been deceived by false prophets; and then come

boldly forward and preach; or they must show by facts (as he says) that

Christ has done wrong, and that he should have rather preached

seecretly to avoid the cross (as he says we do) than in public, &c.

Answer. The sending or calling of Moses, of Christ, of Paul, of the

apostles and prophets was also denied by the perverse. Moses had to

hear that he had killed the Lord's people and that he had led them into

the wilderness that they might perish through want and misery. Christ

Jesus was called a wine?bibber, blasphemer and one possessed of the

devil, Matt. 11:19. Paul was called a rebel and an apostate Jew, &c.

Behold, thus in their times the sending of the faithful servants of the

Lord, nay, the the Lord and Messiah himself was despised, although

testified by many miracles. How much more, then, shall we be despised,

who are such weak and insignificant instruments, and live in seven fold

worse and more wicked times than those in which they lived.

Inasmuch, then, as we are accused by our opponents, the learned, that

we are not called of a church of God, but of false prophets, or of a

false church, therefore I would briefly admonish the reader, to weigh

well with the Scriptures who, how and what the church of God is; that

it is not a collection of proud, avaricious, extortionate, vain

persons, drunkards and impenitent, as the church of the world is, of

whom the learned are called but a collection or congregation of saints,

as the Holy Scriptures and the Nicene symbol clearly teach and

represent, namely, of those who, through true faith, are regenerated of

God unto Christ Jesus and are of a divine nature, who will gladly

conform their lives according to the Spirit, word and example of the

Lord, are actuated by his Spirit and are willing and prepared patiently

to bear the cross of their Lord Jesus Christ.

Behold dear reader, such were they whom the apostles and faithful

servants won unto Christ Jesus, and added to his church with his Spirit

and word, nor does Scripture acknowledge any others. From such and of

such they have, with fasting and prayer, chosen and called unto the

service of the Lord the pious and unblamable pastors and teachers; and

not of the world, as has been heard.

Since, then, the preachers of the world and their congregations, are

not the church of Christ but are such preachers and churches as shown,

by their spirit, words and deeds that they are of the world; and since

the merciful, great Lord in these latter days of abominations,

graciously gathers together, by his Spirit and word, many faithful

hearts from the different unscriptural sects, both great and small, and

from different nations and tongues, in one faith; and places them as an

admonition to sincere repentance, with their doctrine, life, goods and

blood, before the whole world, yea, as a light upon a candlestick;

therefore these must be the Lord's church and people; or else the word

of God, which is and remains true, must be wrong and false. And some

from these and of these are chosen with fasting and prayer and ordained

to the service of the Lord by the laying on of hands according to the

example and doctrine of the apostolic churches; now, all of sound mind

may judge and weigh, according to Scripture whether such a calling or

choosing is not consistent with Scripture and according to the usage of

the primitive churches; and whether it cannot stand before the Lord and

his church as divine, holy and just.

Further, it is a fact well known to me, that the preachers tell the

simple, and which Gellius' writing, if carefully read, also insinuates

that I should have received my faith, doctrine and calling of a

deceiving, refractory and corrupted sect, by the secession of whom the

Lord intends to purge his church. For this reason I am necessarily

forced to explain my actions briefly, which I, under different

circumstances, would, for the sake of modesty, remain silent; namely,

how I first came to the knowledge of my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ;

and how I afterward, unworthily, became one of his servants; and I

hereby beseech all my readers, for God's sake to consider well this my

narration, and that they will not think hard of it, nor consider it as

vain boasting that I here tell it; for the honor of my God and the love

for his church urge me to do so. Let all judge me as they will He who

has created me and has hitherto graciously delivered me from my

enemies, knows me; he knows what I seek in this life and what my

greatest desire is. [1]

Again, that Gellius wants us to preach publicly, has been sufficiently

replied to above, as I trust, in treating of night preaching. Yet I

would propound these three questions.

In the first place, Whether a person would not be guilty of blood, if

he would persuade somebody by artful words or force him into a deep

water or by such means get him to take poison, if he knew beforehand

that death would be the consequence?

In the second place, Since he boasts to be a called preacher and

preaches in public, I would ask, Why he is not moved to love and

compassion for his own country? Why he does not, amongst the papists,

openly proclaim his faith, sacraments and doctrines, contrary to the

emperor's decree, tyranny, persecution and ill?will as he would have us

to do?

Thirdly, since he will admit, as I suppose, and must admit, if he judge

according to the Scriptures, that the avaricious, proud, haughty,

drunkards, vain, extortioners, liars, unrighteous, &c., can not inherit

the kingdom of God, and that they therefore are not christians; I would

ask him, Why it is that he does not lay aside the fear of the cross (of

which he blames us) and separate, without all respect of person, the

impenitent of his church, from the communion of his sacraments,

according to the doctrine and ordinance of the Holy Ghost, since it is

God's express word and ordinance? He would have us preach publicly,

notwithstanding that he well knows that we can no more do so without

the loss of life, than to go on the water without sinking, or to take

poison without dying. For he and the learned have brought about such a

state of affairs, by their disgraceful slanders and preaching, that we

are, alas, already judged before we are caught. Besides he advises the

magistracy to stop our doings; and he well knows how he treated a

certain person, about ten years ago, who would gladly proclaim to the

people the testimony he had, in sincerity of heart, and that he refused

me a discussion of Scripture twice, as has been heard. Yet he says, if

we are true teachers we should preach in public; while he himself, for

the sake of a livelihood and the fear of the cross does not preach his

doctrine (whatever it amounts to) in his own place but has moved to

another and more safe place, and there, although he can freely practice

his doctrine and sacraments, he neglects separation, scriptural reproof

and the ordinances of God from the fear of the cross. Now the

reasonable reader may educe from all this what kind of a christian, not

to mention preacher, he is; since he would have us, miserable ones, to

do that which he himself dares not do nor touch, as you may see.

If Gellius could take these three questions to heart and would consider

them in a scriptural light and in the fear of God, he would be ashamed

all his life that he so indiscreetly attacks us, against all love,

reason, intelligence and the Scriptures and that he, under such a

semblance, so tyrannically strives after, the ruin, blood and death of

the pious.

But in answer to this writing that the prophetic and apostolic doctrine

and sacraments should not be taught and dispensed in secret, retired

corners and shops, but in public, I would say, We admit that Christ

Jesus, generally preached in public, however with such discretion that

he sometimes avoided the raving, mad people, after they had resolved

upon his death, until the time of his suffering had arrived (which time

was known to him beforehand), and the prophecies were fulfilled, Luke

21:32.

Also, that although Jesus Christ sent his disciples to preach the

gospel to all people, to Gentiles as well as Jews, he did not command

them, nor would he, that they should serve and dispense his sacraments,

namely, baptism and Supper to the enemies of his word, Matt. 28:19;

Mark 16:15. Therefore it is obvious that he accuses us of this without

any truth orfoundation of the Scriptures. He does not only accuse and

reprove us but also Christ Jesus, God's eternal word and wisdom

himself; for he has celebrated his Holy Supper, at night in a secret

place, with a separate people; he also accuses and reproves Paul and

the primitive, apostolic church, who oft held theirbrotherly meetings

at night, in retired places, as has been sufficiently adduced above.

Observe how openly he speaks against God's word.

He writes further, that our calling is not testified by any thing,

further than that we not only fill the hearts of many with a mad and

irreconcilable hatred of all church ordinances and true servants of the

church, however pious they be, but also inspire them with a

contentious, envious spirit.

Answer. If animosity and bitterness of heart had not so entirely

blinded him, and if but a small spark of a true, christian spirit were

in him, then he would soon acknowledge the precious fruits of true

repentance. But as it is, he has become so blinded, that, alas, he

calls the glorious fruits of the Holy Spirit, the fruits of the devil

and new monkery; and the burdensome, pressing cross of so many pious

saints, the cross of evil?doers or heretics. Which is in my opinion an

abominable sin and gross slander.

The Pharisees said, " This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by

Beelzebub, the prince of devils," Matt. 12:24, although they strongly

felt in their hearts that it was the finger and power of God. Christ

said that it was blaspheming against the Holy Ghost, Luke 12:10. But

what Gellius does against us I will leave to the Lord.

God knows that I wish that I might deliver him and all the preachers

from their sore damnation, even at the cost of my own life. Behold,

thus I hate him and all those who seek my life; although we must hear

so much evil spoken against us; and I trust that all who fear the word

of the Lord, will be of one mind with me in this regard.

Notwithstanding this, he writes that we fill many hearts with anger and

irreconcilable hatred against them, &c. By no means. And this for no

other reason than that we in sincere and faithful love, earnestly

reprove the hypocritical deceivers, whom he calls the true and pious

servants of the church, and the unscriptural infant baptism, together

with all abuses, which he calls church ordinances not only by the

Spirit and word of the Lord, but also by our possessions and blood, and

because we point them to Christ Jesus and him crucified, to his Spirit,

word, ordinances and to the doctrine and usage of his holy apostles.

I truly believe that a spiteful, envious person has no part in God's

city. And if we, who are daily killed for our love, are yet spiteful

and envious, then much suffering is in vain. I trust that I write the

truth when I say that I am more terrified at hatred and envy than at

fire and sword. Yet we must hear that we are spiteful. Behold, thus

good is ever turned to evil and our love to hatred. What sentence the

Scriptures pronounce against such may be seen in Isaiah 5.

He also accuses us That we are not unanimous but quarrel amongst

ourselves in regard to many articles of christian religion; namely, in

regard to obedience to the laws; to the justification of man; to the

Godhead of Christ and his becoming man, and in regard to the powers of

the magistracy, &o.

Answer. I trust that I can write with a clear conscience that we, who

are grains of one loaf, are also of one mind in Christ Jesus. But as in

the times of the apostles, false teachers arose in the apostolic church

who started and taught false doctrines and who were, after faithful

admonition, separated from the communion of their church, if they did

not repent, as may be learned from many Scriptures; so also it is in

our times. Satan is ever at work. Paul says, "There must be also

heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest

among you," 1 Cor. 11:19. And if such be deaf unto truth, reject

admonition and start perverse sects, then we may no longer receive them

as brethren, as the Scriptures teach us. So long as we continue to do

this in obedience to the holy word and in the true fear of God, we are

convinced from the inmost of our hearts, that we will be clear of all

sectarianism as also of blasphemy and perversity; although we must

innocently hear such charges from the world.

Since it is a fact well known to Gellius and his fellow?preachers that

peace?breakers and sectarians are not allowed in our communion at all,

but are unanimously separated from us, according to apostolic doctrine

and usage, Rom. 16:1'7; Tit. 3:10, therefore it is very wrong in him to

call so many pious persons contentious, and cause them to be of such

bad report with the world, without truth; while they hate discord and

strife and seek nothing but that they may humbly follow the crucified

Jesus, in the peace of their hearts.

If he should say that he accounts them as of us because they have

received the same baptism with us, then I would say again that Peter,

Simon, Paul and &c., were also one. Then all papists, Lutherans and

Zuinglians besides all thieves, murderous wizards, buggerers

fornicators and rogues are one; for they have received one baptism;

this is incontrovertible.

Again, in regard to his accusation that we dispute among ourselves in

regard to obedience to the laws; the justification of man; the power of

the magistracy &c. I would say, that I trust I can testify before the

Lord and his church with a clear conscience, that I never but once to

my knowledge, disputed, or as Gellius calls it quarreled with any one

in regard to the justification of man, and this one has already ran to

ruin. Nor have I ever discussed the questions of obedience to the laws

or the power of the magistracy other than by way of brotherly

instruction. What our confession and grounds are concerning the

before?mentioned articles, may be clearly educed from our writings.

O, dear Lord, that Gellius would once consider his own words when he

writes that the calling of the pious should not be nullifled on account

of the impious, and would have sufficient fear of God in him to feel

concerned about the lies, violence and injustice which he unreasonably

practices on us. For what else does he but wilfully defame the pious,

perhaps against his own sentiments, ,that he may oppose the word, may

uphold his cause by making ours false and suspicious, lest his

pharisaical faithlessness be made manifest. Yea, he writes as if he

would say, Judas was a traitor and thief, therefore all the other

apostles are traitors and thieves. Again, Simon was a rogue, therefore

all the members of the apostolic communities were rogues, &c. For he

well knows that we do not, may not suffer heretics, peace?breakers &c.

in the communion of the peaceful and pious, as already heard.

O, that he would leave off slandering the peaceable and could rightly

see into the angry quarreling, bitter hatred, division, rupture and

brawlings of all those who uphold infant baptism; could see how

dreadfully they are divided amongst themselves; that they are so

inflamed by envious zeal one against another that they not only slander

and adjudge each other to hell by calling each other fanatics,

profaners of the sacraments and anti?christians, but that they also

take up the sword against each other, as is the way of sectarians; that

they utterly destroy countries and inhabitants, cities and towns,

against the meek nature, doctrine and example of Christ Jesus and his

apostles.

Besides their learned men are so divided amongst themselves that we can

scarcely find five or six in one country who agree in doctrine. One

includes every thing in the providence and predestination of God, Quasi

necessafumc (as an implied necessity). Another disputes it; the third

includes Christ's flesh and blood in the bread and wine; the fourth

understands it spiritually; the fifth baptizes the children on their

own faith; the sixth on the strength of the covenant with Abraham and

its promise; the seventh says that faith is no obstacle to persecution;

the eighth denies it; the ninth believes in faith without fruits or

work; the tenth says, that faith through love shall be active; the

eleventh says, that the sacrments may be dispensed to the impenitent

and perverse; the twelfth denies it; and other like differences exist

among them.

Notwithstanding they call the godly, pious hearts and peaceable

children of God, who are zealous for God and his righteousness, as much

as is in their power, and who do not countenance quarreling, a

contentious sect and ungodly, deceiving conspirators, while they, on

the contrary, are peaceable, teachers of one mind; besides they call

the impenitent, wicked world the church and people of the Lord.

Behold, so manifestly the Lord "will destroy the wisdom of the wise,

and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent", 1

Cor.1:18, yea, that to them Christ Jesus is Belial, and Belial Christ

Jesus; light, darkness and darkness, light, 2 Cor. 8; that they, alas

consider the doctrine, life, power, confession, and the sacrifice of

possession and life of the chosen as nothing; but that they judge every

thing perversely, unfavorably and with partiality, according to the

flesh, and thus construe every thing to offensiveness; that they seek

all kinds of excuses to offend the pious, to blaspheme truth and to

uphold unrighteousness, that nobody be converted, repent and sincerely

seek and follow the word of the Lord. O, Lord! grant that this may be

made manifest unto them.

He further writes: "Nor is it a desirable fruit, but a shameful

disgrace that they, contrary to the example of Christ, and the apostles

constitute themselves a church, desecrate the Lord's Sabbath, leave the

open assembly and service, hate and upbraid the servants, and not only

not examine the solicitous labors and prophecies of the servants but

also boldly despise them, contrary to the command of the Holy (shoat

and the doctrine of the command of the Sabbath."

Answer. Observe, reader, how adroitly they can adorn lies, and how

frightfully they can suppress and despise truth under cover of virtue.

All the evangelical Scriptures teach us that the church of Christ was

and is, in doctrine, life and worship, a people separated from the

world. It also was in the times of the Old Testament, 2 Cor. 8:17; 1

Peter 2:9, 10; Exod. 19:12.

Since the church always was and shall be a separate people, as has been

heard, and since it is as clear as the meridian sun, that for centuries

no difference has been made between the church and . the world, but

that they have been indiscriminately blended together in baptism,

Supper, life and worship, which is so plainly contrary to all

Scripture, therefore we feel ourselves constrained by the Spirit and

word of God, and not of our own account, to gather together, to the

praise of Jesus Christ and to the salvation 'of our neighbors, and not

unto us, but unto the Lord a pious and penitent church or community

from all untrue and deceiving sects of the whole world, not contrary to

the doctrine and example of Christ Jesus and the apostles, as Gellius

falsely accuses us, but according to the Spirit, doctrine and example

of Jesus Christ, manifested unto us; yea, gather them patiently under

the cross of misery, in spite of all the violence and gates of hell,

and not by force of arms and persecution as is the custom of the world,

but separate them from it, as the Scriptures teach, that they may be an

admonition, example and reproach to the impenitent world as has already

been heard.

They keep and sanctify the Sabbath which is not the literal, but the

spiritual Sabbath, which never ends with true christians, not by

wearing fine clothes, not by carousing, vanity and idleness, as the

reckless world do, but by the true fear of God, by a clear conscience

and unblamable life, in love to God and their neighbors; for that is

the true religion, Heb. 12:1, and in the fear of their God they do not

attend the public Sabbath and holiday gatherings which are, alas, not

consecrated to Christ, but to anti?christ in all manner of vanity and

hypocrisy, in pomp and splendor; nor do they take part in their idle

church?service which tends to nothing but deceiving that they may

thereby attend the gathering of the saints and the true service,

convince the erring, and thus make manifest, truth and the true

doctrine, to the reformation and salvation of all mankind.

They do not hate and envy the open deceivers and false preachers who so

miserably deceive the poor people, as Gellius accuses us, but earnestly

reprove them in love according to God's Spirit and word, that they may

repent and be converted, as the Scriptures teach us.

In short, they do not despise. the solicitous labors and the prophecies

of the true and faithful servants of Christ, nor the precious gifts of

the Holy Spirit, against the commands of the Holy Spirit and the

doctrine of the command of the Sabbath, as he very wrongly complains we

do, but they shun, at the risk of possessions and life, according to

the advice, doctrine and admonition of the Holy Spirit, and the

doctrine of the Sabbath, the false labors, and the powerless,

impenitent and hired prophecies of the anti?christian servants, who do

not serve Christ and the church, as they boast; but serve their bellies

and the world; and they dare not hear and follow them because their

doctrine and fruits show that they are those whom the Scriptures and

divine truth forbid us to follow.

Their priests, says the Lord, "teach for hire, and the prophets divine

for money." They rely upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord amongst

us? No evil can betide us; therefore " Zion shall be plowed like a

field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps," Mic. 3:12; Jer. 26:18. It is

also manifest that Gellius and his like preachers have done the same

thing of which he accuses us, for they, long before we did, have

separated themselves from the papists into a separate church, as is

known to all mankind to be incontrovertible. But we are sorry to say

that our separation from them was caused by themselves. For if we would

have found them to be right we would have remained with them; but as it

is, we have, alas, to leave them. at the cost of life and possessions,

as may be seen.

Behold, my kind reader, here you have before you, my brief reply to the

main articles concerning the calling of preachers, which Gellius so

respectfully brought forward to the defense of his cause and to the

detriment of ours.

I have no doubt but that you, by the grace of God, will find a clear

difference, explanation and foundation, if you compare his writing with

ours and judge according to the word of the Lord by the manifest fruits

on both sides; and this is the summary of my writings, that nobody can

be a truly called preacher and God?pleasing servant in the Lord's house

and church, without having the Holy Spirit which worketh in all true

christians; without regeneration which transforms the heart from

earthly to heavenly things, through faith; nor without unfeigned love,

which seeks nothing but the praise of God and the salvation of his

neighbor, nor without . the salutary, precious word which cuts and

cleaves without respect of person; nor without the pious, unblamable

life which is of God.

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[1] Here follows in the original works of Menno Simon his renunciation

of the Church of Rome. See First part, Page 4.

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CONCERNING BAPTISM.

I deem it unnecessary to write much concerning the baptism of the

believing, in this place; why we teach that it shall be received and

practiced at the confession of faith; for we have explained this matter

before, by so many plain Scriptures and reasons, to the intelligent

reader, that he can plainly see and palpably feel the foundation and

truth.

Therefore I will refer to the main articles and arguments with which

Gellius undertakes to defend his infant baptism as apostolic and

christian, and will rebut them with the Scriptures; andItrust

tobeenabled, by the grace of God, to do this with such clearness and

power that all attentive, intelligent readers may fully perceive that

he can stand before the holy ordinance, word and truth of the Lord,

with his infant baptism, as little as he can with his calling.

Before I enter upon the examination of the matter, I would, not without

cause, first relate to the kind reader, that some years ago, I had a

discussion with John A'Lasco, Gellius and Herman; and, as we had a

lengthy reasoning concerning baptism, and they admitted that all the

Scriptures which I adduced, relating to the matter, were spoken by the

ancient or believing, we at last got on the subject of infant baptism,

which, according to their opinion was also right, although not

Scriptural. At last, after having had a lengthy discussion and after

they had made many unscriptural assertions, I propounded two questions

and prayed them for God's sake to answer them Scripturally. The first

question was, Has a ceremony any promise, which is practiced without

the command of God? They answered that it had not. Then I asked them,

in the second place, Is not such a ceremony, which is practiced without

the command of God, idolatry? They answered that it was.

When I heard them answer these questions thus unreservedly, I said,

Well, dear men, what will become of your infant baptism? They all three

simultaneously answer: Yea, dear Menno, if you would ask of us for the

command, then show us first where it is commanded that we should

baptize the believing. When I heard this I was much alarmed, for I

perceived that, in fact, they meant nothing but party and carnality. I

pointed them to the sixteenth chapter of Mark, where the Lord speaks, "

Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He

that believeth, and is baptized shall be saved," Mark 16:15, 18.

But this was no command to them. Then I referred them to Matthew 28:19,

where the Lord says, " Go ye therefore, and teach all nations baptizing

them (or as the Greek text has it: Make all nations disciples, and

baptize them), in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the

Holy Ghost."

This did not avail with them, for it reads, they said, "baptizing" and

not "baptize them;" although, alas, they well knew that the surest

translation is the Greek text. in the imperative mode, namely, baptize

them; something which I had till then never noticed so particularly.

Behold, they contended so wilfully against the plain word and Atrath of

God, that they openly denied it to be a command; while they had many

times read (also according to the Lutheran translation) that the Lord

had commanded it in an express command, saying, "And baptize them." [2]

When I perceived that they wanted to find an excuse by means of the use

of the participle, I proposed the following, If I command my servant

and say, Go and plow the ground,sowing it with wheat; as the Lord said,

"Go and teach all nations, baptizing them," &c., have I not, I now ask,

commanded my servant to plow the land and to sow it with wheat,

although I use the participle sowing, the same as baptizing was used.

They answered that this was using philosophy and not the Scriptures.

Behold my reader, thus boldly they sought to deny the truth.

Seeing that they, although convinced, obstinately persevered in

falsehood and would not receive the powerful and plain truth, as did

the Pharisees, I was much grieved and said, Men! men! I Since I find it

to be a fact that you, in perversity of heart, reject God's truth, and

delight in falsehood, I will be silent and ~ not speak another word

with you concerning this matter; for, alas, it is all in vain! Reader,

in the day of the appearance of Jesus Christ, before his impartial and

eternal judgment, it will be found true as I here write.

Behold, so dishonestly do they deal with God's precious and eternal

truth, that they then pretended that there was no command to baptize

the believing, and now they have an abundance of commands to baptize

the unconscious children. O, God! thus they mock with the souls of men,

and they know not how much to garble, bend and break the sure

foundation of truth, that they may remain on the broad road, without

the cross, that they may please the world and that they may lead a

careless life according to the lusts of the flesh.

Gellius first says in regard to this matter, That we blasphemously

speak against the holy church, because we say that the children cannot

believe, cannot repent and cannot obey the word of the Lord, while they

(as he says) constitute a great part of the church, and that they are

referred to in plain and clear words by the prophet Joel, in the

preaching of repeptence, &c.

Answer. His commencement is unscriptural and his end will be

unscriptural. Observe, the word of God shall be our judge. Say,

beloved, is it not a great blindness in him to undertake to include

unconscious children in the preaching of repentance? and a little

further on admits himself that they cannot, in their feeble

understanding, understand the doctrine, which is a doctrine of

penitence. If they cannot understand the doctrine how can they then

believe; if they do not believe how can they then repent, and if they

do not repent how can they be included in the preaching of repentance?

If they, then, have neither doctrine, faith nor repentance, which he

admits they have not, on account of their feeble understanding, and

which is not necessary for them to have, while they are God's own and

while sin has not become alive in them to bring forth fruit, therefore

all of sound judgment must admit he reproves himself and acknowledges

that he wrongfully accuses us, when he says, that we speak

blasphemously against the holy church, because we say that the

unconscious children cannot repent, believe nor obey; for he admits

that they, in the feebleness of their understanding, cannot understand

the doctrine, from which faith, repentence and obedience originate, as

has been already said.

In the second place he writes, That there is one church and one faith,

both under the Old and New Testaments, from the time of Adam to the end

of the world; and that from the time of Abraham, under the Old

Testament, preaching and circumcision was commanded for the purpose of

the gathering, edification, growth and extension of the church, and

under the New Testament, preaching and baptism, without regard to the

age of persons.

Answer?. I understand it that all those who, from the time of Adam to

the present time, and also hereafter, had, have and shall have the

Spirit, mind and nature of Jesus Christ, and who did, do and shall walk

as obedient children by virtue of such a spirit, in truth, were, are

and shall be the Lord's church, kingdom and people. But we would have

reasonably expected that Gellius would have added that each in his

times had a peculiar doctrine, ordinance and usage. That from the time

of Adam to Abraham no ceremony was practiced on the children because

the Lord had not commanded it; and that circumcision was commanded from

Abraham to the time of Christ. But now we have Christ, the promised

prophet, Dent. 18:15; Acts 7:37, to .whom all the Scriptures pointed

that we should obey and follow him. He is the eternal Word and Wisdom

of God; all that abide in his doctrine, walk in the truth, for his word

is truth, and his command is eternal life. What ordinance this wise

counsellor has commanded us concerning the children, under the New

Testament; what he has commanded us and what he has not, concerning

them, all pious, faithful hearts may learn from his holy word.

But what he says in regard to them, that in the New Testament no regard

is made as to age, but that we should preach to all and baptize them,

is in my opinion so directly contrary to Scripture, common sense and

his own words, that he should reasonably be ashamed of the assertion.

For how can we teach a little, unconscious child repentance according

to the word of God? Christ commanded that we should preach the gospel

to those who have understanding, and those who believe are to be

baptized. Nor has he left in his gospel any other command, ordinance or

example concerning this matter.

Besides, he acknowledges that the children, on account of their feeble

understanding, cannot understand the doctrine, as already heard. Yet he

writes, in the face of this plain ordinance of the Almighty God, and

his own confession, that in the New Testament, teaching and baptizing

are commanded, without respect to age.

Behold, thus grossly err all who reject the word of the Lord. Is this

not violently rejecting Christ and accepting anti?christ, and is it not

plainly wrong? I must admit that I have never read a word in the

Scriptures with such misunderstanding.

In the third place Gellius writes, That the church should give the seal

of the covenant of grace to children according to the command of God

because they are participants in the covenant or promise of God, and in

the sanctity of the church and in eternal life; for the covenant is not

altered and God is no less gracious to our children, who are born under

the promise, than to the children of Israel who were born according to

the flesh; for it is written, I will be thy God and thy children's

after thee; and that therefore, in the gathering of the churches, under

the Old and New Testaments the same command obtains, both as regards

the preaching, and the use of the holy sacraments.

Answer. Gellius does even as all the false prophets have done who

miserably deceived the people, and pretended that the Lord of lords

said so, although the Lord had not spoken it, as Scripture informs us,

Jer. 23 17; Ezek. 13:7.

Say, reader, is it not an intrepid deed and a condemnable boldness,

that he dares publish to the whole world that God has commanded it;

since eternal Wisdom has neither commanded it by word nor deed? Peruse

the whole New Testament from beginning to end, and if a word can be

found that the mouth of the Lord has commanded it, or that the apostles

have anywhere taught or practiced it, then we will, by the grace of

God, unanimously admit that he is right.

Inasmuch, as it is clear that nothing has been mentioned concerning it

in all the Holy Scriptures, as has been said, and that he, in the face

of this, dares write that they do it according to the command of God,

then the pious reader may imagine how abominably he sins against his

God, especially since truth is manifest, and how lamentably he deceives

the poor souls by open falsehood when he writes that God commanded it;

since the Holy Spirit, I say, has not expressed it in a single word,

nor manifested it unto the church of God by word or practice of the

true witnesses of Christ.

His assertion that the command is not altered, is so diametrically

opposed to truth, that we may well wonder at it. The Scriptures clearly

testify that God promised Abraham the multiplying of his seed, and the

land of Canaan as an eternal inheritance, and commanded him that he

should circumcise himself, his son Ishmael, &c.; also all male children

of the age of eight days; for it was a covenant in the flesh, Gen. 17.

And thus was commanded to Abraham, at the promise of the multiplication

of his seed and the possession of the land of Canaan, the blood?sign of

the circumcision of the foreskin, on the eighth day of their age, of

all the male children and not the female children. But to us the

blood?sign of circumcision is not commanded, but baptism in the water.

Now, observe the first difference. Not on the eighth day, but when we,

through the spirit, in faith, are born of God, and have become

followers of Abraham. Observe the second distinction. Not alone the

males, but both males and females, who through the preaching of the

holy word, have died unto the old life and have arisen with Christ in

newness of life; who are pricked in their hearts; who circumcise their

hearts and minds; who put on Christ, and who have the testimony of a

clear conscience, before God, Rom. 6; Acts 2:37; Col. 2; 11; Gal. 3:27;

1 Pet, 3:21. Observe the third difference. Not to possess a literal

kingdom and land, and to become a great people upon earth, as was

promised to Abraham and his seed; but to bear all manner of anxiety,

affliction, tribulation and misery upon earth, for the sake of the

testimony of the word of God; to turn the heart away from all visible

and perishable things; to die unto pomp, splendor, the world and flesh,

and thus to walk in our weakness as Christ has walked in his

perfection, &c.

Behold, reader, how openly he adulterates the Scriptures, and how

grossly he perverts the truth when he writes that the command is

unchanged, and that the gathering of the churches under the Old and New

Testaments are the same, and that no different commands are given, both

as regards preaching and the use of the sacraments; for it is all

changed and renewed as may be clearly educed from the foregoing

references. I will leave to your reflections if such a thing may not be

called perverting truth into falsehood.

Again, from his saying that the church is no less gracious to our

children than to the children of Israel, born in the flesh, I

understand him to say, If God will not have our children baptized, that

he is less gracious to them than he was to the children of the

circumcision; by which he openly testifies that he couples the kingdom,

grace and promise of God with that sign.

If God is only gracious to such children as have received, or may

receive that outward sign, then it must necessarily follow that God has

been ungracious to, and displeased with all the children before the law

of circumcision; besides to all children who died before the eighth

day, and during the forty years they passed in the wilderness, together

with all the maids and women, because they were not circumcised; then

he must also be displeased with all the children under the New

Testament, for they are not commanded to be baptized.

O no, to children belongs the kingdom of God. Not by virtue of any

sign, but alone by grace through Christ Jesus, Matt. 19:14. And as to

his calling infant?baptism a sealing of the covenant of grace, I would

reply, If he can show me a place in all the New Testament where the

baptism of the believing is called a sealing of the covenant of grace,

then I will admit that he is right. But I know to a certainty, that he

cannot. do so. If the baptism of the believing, which is ordained of

God himself, is not called such, how can infant baptism, then be called

such, which is not ordained of God, but is merely self?chosen fiction

invented of man?

If he should allude to the circumcision, I would say that they are two

distinct and different signs, and that the first has no relation

whatever to the second; for these following reasons: Firstly, because

all the signs, before and under the law, given to the patriarchs, as

the coats of skins to Adam; the rain?bow to Noah; the circumcision to

Abraham; the yearly offering of the high priests, &c., Gen. 3:21; 9:16;

17:10, 11; Lev. 16, all, unitedly pointed to Christ who has now

appeared, and in whom all the preceding signs are fulfilled; and we now

have no sealing or assurance through outward signs and symbols, but

through the true Sign of all signs, Christ Jesus, as he himself says,

"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son

of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish,

but have eternal life; for God so loved the world that he gave his

only?begotten son," John 3:14 ?16. Secondly, because we, now, are not a

people according to the letter, as was Israel, but are a people

according to the spirit; who, before they receive the sign, are turned

to God through the preaching of repentance; who die unto the old sinful

life; who receive the light of grace in their hearts; who accept the

true Sign of peace, Christ Jesus, through faith; arise with him into a

new life and are thus sealed in their hearts, through the promise of

the Holy Ghost and the eternal covenant and the grace of God. For if we

were not sealed in our hearts before the sign, then we could not truly

repent before the sign; nor could we burden ourselves with disesteem,

disgrace, anxiety, tribulation and misery which are connected with the

cross.

But by the sign, which we accept in obedience to the holy word, we

testify that we, through Christ, the true Sign, given us by the Father,

and made known to us through the word, have peace with God, and that we

are assured of the spirit of his grace.

Behold, my reader, here you may now observe that the signs of the New

Testament do not seal or assure us, as the learned teach the poor

people; but that our only, eternal surety, is Christ Jesus; that the

sealing of our hearts is the Holy Spirit; and that the signs or

sacraments are nothing more than that they are given to the penitent,

sealed and assured christians, for the purpose of admonishing and

reminding us that we should walk in continual repentance; that we

should practice our faith, and that we should eternally give praise to

the Lord for his inexpressibly great kindness and grace, through Jesus

Christ.

All who teach differently, and point you to water, bread and wine as a

sealing or assurance, as Gellius does, points you away from the true

Being, to the sins; from Christ to Moses again; give you a vain hope

and a false surety and cause you to remain impenitent and without

Christ all your lifetime; for you console yourself so much with the

signs, that you remain without the signified truth, as may, alas, be

plainly seen by the whole world.

For however drunken, covetous, pompous vain and given to lies they may

be, they still boast themselves christians. They are so consoled with

this ungodly sealing of the idolatrous water (I say ungodly sealing

because it is so directly contrary to the word of God) and with the

bread and wine of the preachers, that they all walk upon the broad

road, and remain without the word of God.

Behold, this is the proper fruit and effect of the sealing of Gellius,

which he so highly praises and so artfully teaches. But, as regards the

saying: I will be your God and your seed's after you, from which they

conclude that as the children of Abraham were circumcised with him on

account of the promise; that also our children should be baptized on

account of the same promise, I would reply, Firstly, God promised

Abraham to be his God and his children's God. In this promise the

females were included as well as the males; this must be admitted.

Notwithstanding, Israel did not circumcise the females but only the

males, although the females were included in the promise; and that

because God had so ordained it. From which it may be safely educed that

the male children of the seed of Abraham were not circumcised for the

sake of the promise but for the sake of the ordinance which was

commanded to Abraham and his seed. For if it had been done for the sake

of the promise, and not for the sake of the ordinance, then the females

should also have been circumcised, as joint participants and joint

heirs of the same promise. This is incontrovertible.

In the second place I would say, That if Israel had followed the

doctrine of Gellius, and some other preachers, in respect to this

matter, then they would also have circumcised the females,

notwithstanding they were not commanded to do so; for they were joint

heirs of the covenant of grace, as our children whom they want to have

baptized, are joint heirs of the promise.

If they should answer, that the ordinance referred to the males and not

to the females, although the females were joint heirs of the covenant

of grace, then I would reply that their cause is already lost. For as

the command of circumcision at that time, had only reference to the

males and not to the females, although the females were ,joint heirs of

the promise, so also does now the ordinance of baptism have reference

to the believing and penitent, and not to the unconscious children,

although they are joint heirs of the promise, as heard.

They further say, If infant baptism is not commanded neither is it

prohibited. To this I reply: The circumcision of the females was

neither ordained nor prohibited, even as infant baptism is neither

ordained nor prohibited; yet they did not circumcise the females, and

that because they were not commanded to do so. Therefore, all who blame

us because we do not baptize oui children, who are joint heirs of the

promise and are not prohibited from being baptized, also blame Israel

because they did not circumcise their female children, who were joint

heirs of the promise and were not prohibited from being circumcised.

Thirdly, I would say, since I observe that Gellius only includes the

children of believing, and not of unbelieving parents in the baptism,

and since he well knows that the proud, avaricious, pompous, envious,

bloodguilty, whoring and idolatrous are not believers, nor, according

to Scripture, joint heirs of the promise, therefore I cannot stop

wondering at his inattention, that he, against his own belief and

doctrine, yet baptizes the children of such parents, whom he must

acknowledge, as being without God and Christ, and therefore having no

promise. If he says that he does not know the faith of others, then I

would say again, that he then acknowledges, in the first place, that

his infant baptism has an unstable foundation, if we, according to his

own words, are to baptize them on account of the promise to the

parents, while he does not know whether the parents believe or not;

and, in the second place, that such parents are not fruitful trees nor

shining lights.

But what shall we say! If Gellius were to tell all his pompous,

drunken, usurious, and unrighteous members, without respect to person,

that they are without Christ and have no promise, and would not baptize

their children, he would not long remain a preacher at Emden, nor enjoy

his easy, careless life in peace.

He further writes, That Paul testifies that baptism has taken the place

of circumcision, has the same signification and is called the

circumcision of Christ.

Answer. In this instance Paul himself rebukes him, that he has mistaken

his word; for he says, "Beware, lest any man spoil you through

philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the

rudiments of the world, and not after Christ, for in him dwelleth all

the fullness of the God?head bodily; and ye are complete in him, which

is the head of all principality and power; in whom also ye are

circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off

the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ. Buried

with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the

faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead; and

you, being dead in your sins, and in the uncircumcision of your flesh,

hath he quickened together with him,. having forgiven you all

trespasses," Col. 2:8?13.

My faithful reader, observe the word of the Lord; the doctrine of the

New Testament, and his sacraments treat of none but those who have ears

to hear and hearts to understand. For it is a service of the Spirit,

and not of the letter, as Paul says, 2 Cor. 3:6.

Inasmuch as the preachers ever point the poor, simple people to the

elementary water, bread and wine, and teach that baptism is our seal

which assures us that we are heirs of the covenant of grace; that God

operates through his sacraments, &c., and, since we find, however, that

neither the sealing, surety nor power are found in their hearts, as the

fruits testify, but that they are led by the preachers to a false

profession, vain hope and an unstable surety, under the semblance of

the gospel; therefore I would faithfully admonish all my readers and

hearers with these words adduced from Paul, not to be at all deceived

by such high?sounding, smooth words of the philosophy and artful

fictions of men, nor by the hypocrisy and worldly institutions of the

learned, but to follow after the perfect Institutor, Christ Jesus, in

whom is embodied the perfection of the God?head, truth, light, power,

righteousness, &c., and who therefore does not point to uncertain,

deceitful, dark and unrighteous ways, but in him all true christians

are perfect and full of his grace, Spirit, love and power.

He is the head of all principalities before whom every knee shall bow,

and whom all tongues shall confess that he is the Lord, and that

besides him there is no other, Isaiah 45:23; Phil. 2:10. Therefore his

word shall avail, and his command shall stand, and not that which the

world adds to his kingdom or church, in which all regenerated children,

who are of his Spirit, are not now circumcised unto Christ, with hands,

as wan the came with literal Israel, but the impure foreskins of their

hearts are circumcised with the Lord's word, Spirit and power, that

they may become in spirit a new, regenerated Israel and people of God,

by dying unto their sinful flesh, and by smothering the old man through

the circumcision of Christ, which purifies and changes their hearts

through his word and Spirit. For the penitent are buried with him in

baptism, die unto the old sinful life, and arise in the new life of

righteousness and virtue, by means of faith, through which God operates

by the preaching of his powerful word, and the inspiration of his Holy

Spirit. The faithful God and Father who has resurrected his Son from

the dead, has also bestowed his power upon us, poor sinners, and has

graciously resurrected us, who were dead in so many gross sins and

tresspasses, into a new life with him; has called us from darkness unto

light, and has placed us with him in a celestial being, in Christ, Eph.

2:1; 1 Pet. 3, &c.

Behold, dear reader, this is the proper ground and meaning of the words

of Paul, by which Gellius tries to show, that baptism has taken the

place of circumcision and is called the circumcision of Christ.

Judge now, if you fear God, whether you find a word in the writings of

Paul, that has reference to unconscious infants. That this saying of

Paul has reference to the believing and penitent, and not to

unconscious children, all reasonable, to say nothing of spiritual

persons, must acknowledge and admit. Notwithstanding, he writes that

this saying implies that baptism has taken the place of circumcision

and is called Christ's circumcision. He does, or will not observe that

the circumcision of Jesus Christ to which Paul alludes, is done without

hands, and that he daily serves with his hands the infant baptism which

he calls the circumcision of Jesus. Behold, thus lamentably does he

satisfy Paul, and thus violently break the word of God.

If he seeks an evasion to adorn his cause, and say, that God works

through his sacraments invisibly in the heart, which the sign

represents, then the deceit will be more distinct. For how shall God

operate through a sign which is an abomination before Him? I say an

abomination, because he has not commanded it, and because neither

doctrine, confession, faith nor repentance precede it, which these

signs represent, in the New Testament. Then, also, the sign and the

signification must be one and the same, which never was nor ever will

be the case unless the letter becomes spirit. This is incontrovertible.

Yea, my reader, how the baptized children are circumcised with the

circumcision of Christ Jesus in the foreskin of their hearts, which is

the circumcision of the New Testament, the deeds and the fruits of the

world, alas, plainly show.

In the fourth place he writes, As in the Scriptures, which testify that

women are participants in the merits of Christ, and are disciples, a

command is implied that the Holy Supper shall be dispensed to them, so,

also, a command is implied in the Scriptures, which testify that

children are of the church of Christ and of the Kingdom of God, that

they should be baptized.

Answer. The words of Gellius prove clearly that women are participants

of the Lord's Supper; for he acknowledges that they are disciples. If

they are disciples, as they are in fact, then it is manifest that they

hear the word of God, be. lieve, repent, suffer themselves to be

baptized, and that they are gifted of God in power with the

representation of the Holy Supper, and that they are participants of

his mystery no less than the men. Since they are believing and penitent

disciples, as heard, therefore it is reasonable and right that they

should partake of the sign, whereby this mystery of faith and of the

holy gospel are represented to the believing, and admonished to the

repenting. As we cannot deny but that the believing, repenting women

understand and realize the representation of the Holy Supper?namely,

the remembrance of the offering of the flesh and blood of Christ, the

love of God and one's neighbors, &c., for which purpose it was

instituted by the Lord, therefore they should have a place at the

Lord's table, as believing, penitent disciples and guests. Now,

Gellius, to make his infant baptism of effect, must prove and show to

us by works, Scriptures and truth, that little, unconscious children

realize the effect of holy baptism, namely, faith, repentance,

obedience to the word, a clear and peaceable conscience, &c., for which

purpose the sign of baptism was instituted of the Lord, as the

believing, penitent women realize the signification of the. Holy

Supper. But if he? cannot prove this, then it is sufficiently plain

that this, his assertion and argument are not according to .the

Scriptures, but that it is ? deceitful, false, and contrary to God's

word.

He further says,. If such a command to baptize children is not

sufficient, as the one he has adduced from the Scriptures, then he

wants us to point him out a prohibition (as he says), or sufficiently

prove that God wills that we shall not baptize children.

In the first place, I reply: Gellius herewith openly betrays that his

reference to the command of infant baptism can, in his own opinion not

stand, according to the Scriptures. For he turns from the doctrine of

commands and wants us to point out a prohibition, never observing that

if one wants to partake of anything (that is a ceremony), he must first

adduce and point out the command of the institution.

If he wants to make good the infant baptism which he teaches and

practices, then he must prove that it is commanded, and not ask us to

point out or show where it is prohibited.

We practice baptism in a manner as the mouth of the Lord has commanded,

for we know that it stands written, "What things soever I command you,

observe to do it; thou shalt not add thereto nor diminish from it,"

Dent. 12:32; Prov. 30:6. Yea, my reader, I would say to Gellius and the

learned that if they ?can find an instance in all the Scriptures where

the pious and faithful servants of God have changed a word of the

commands, and ceremonies, and practiced them differently than God had

commanded them, then we will further reflect upon the matter. But we

know it to a certainty that it cannot be done.

The Lord commanded Israel that they should circumcise their male

children on the eighth day; t4ere was no command that they should not

do it on the fifth, or on any other day. Yet they never circumcised a

female; nor did they circumcise on any other day but the eighth. For

the ordinance and command of the Lord was on the eighth play, to the

male children, and not on the seventh or ninth; nor to the female

children as has been heard.

If they, now, had circumcised the females, or if they had circumcised

the males before, or after the eighth day, although it was not

expressly forbidden, they would have committed an abomination, as did

Nadab and Abihu with the strange fire, and circumcised without God's

word; by the grace of God, no man can Scripturally convince me to the

contrary.

It was also commanded Israel that they should eat the Passover in

remembrance of their deliverance and departure out of Egypt, on the

fourteenth day of the first month, in the evening; it had to be a male

lamb, without blemish, of the first year, &c., Ex. 12: S. Israel did

just according to the command, and never offered a female lamb, but in

every instance a male, although the Lord had not expressly prohibited

the offering of a female lamb, for if they had offered a female, they

would have offered contrary to the command, which stipulated that it

should be a male.

In the second place, I would say that I would refer to the testimony of

the Almighty and great God, who says, "This is my beloved Son in whom I

am well pleased, hear ye him," Matt. 17:5. If Gellius, now, can point

to a single word of divine truth and unadulterated testimony of the

Holy Scriptures, that this Son of God, Christ Jesus, the Father's

eternal Truth and Wisdom, has taught or commanded one word of infant

baptism, or that his holy apostles and missionaries have taught or

practiced it, then I will recall my doctrine, willingly submit to

dungeons and bonds, confess my guilt, repent and stand before the whole

world conquered and abashed; this I promise in sincerity of heart.

But, if he cannot do so, as he never can, and still professes that

infant baptism is apostolic and right, whereby he forsakes the

ordinance of Christ and the apostles doctrine and usage; consoles the

people in their impenitence?then it is manifest that he is a deceiver

of the poor souls and an adulterer of the holy word, who would be wiser

than the Son of God himself; for he says that it is a sealing of the

covenant of grace, an embodiment into the church of Christ, &c. And the

great Lord has not at all commanded that he should reprove the Holy

Spirit which has not manifested unto us in the Scriptures this doctrine

and usage; nor the apostles that they did not at all disclose unto the

pious such an important matter, as he says, and that they have not

given a word in all their writings, in testimony thereof, and thus

manifested it unto their descendants.

In the third place I would refer Gellius, and all his preachers, to

Luther, who writes very clearly that we should renounce not only that

which is contrary to the word of the Lord, but also that which is

beside it, and advises every body, although, alas, he himself did not

follow the advice, to follow certainties and not uncertainties; for the

Scriptures admit of no addition nor diminishing, by which he has caused

quite a rupture in popery. If the Scriptures admit of no additions, and

we find nowhere a word in Scripture commanding infant baptism, as

Luther himself admits, then I would leave it to the impartial judgment

of all who have understanding, whether infant baptism is not

prohibited.

In the fifth place, Glellius writes, They say that the children have no

ears to hear; and cannot distinguish between good and evil. But it does

not follow from this, he says, that the sacrament of the embodiment

into the church should not be practiced upon children; for the children

of the ancient church had no such ears that they could hear, and they

could as little distinguish between good and evil, as our children can.

Answer. If Gellius will show us the command, ordinance or usage of the

Lord, that we shall take them in by such sign, then we will consider

the matter further. But he cannot do so.

We say with holy Paul, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus

Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly

places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the

foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame

before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of

children by Jesus Christ to himself, as cording to the good pleasure of

his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace," &c., Eph. 1:3??6.

My faithful reader, understand well what these words of Paul paean.

This paternal adoption unto membership; .this great favor, love and

grace through Christ Jesus; this holy, unblamable life in love, of

which Paul speaks, is taught by the gospel. All who rightly believe

this, and who are, through faith, truly converted, changed, renewed and

born of God, and have the Holy Spirit, are children of the covenant,

are graciously accepted of God, and are blessed with all spiritual

blessings in heavenly places in Christ; even before they have the sign

of baptism.

Behold, thus we are, by God's choice through faith in Christ Jesus, and

through the inspiring power and renewing of the Holy Spirit, embodied

into the body of Christ, which is the true church, and become flesh of

his flesh and bone of his bone; and not through any outward sign.

But this rule does not apply to unconscious children; for they have no

ears to hear nor hearts to understand. They are, however, in grace,

children of the kingdom, participants in the promise; not through any

outward sign, I say, but in the adoption of Grace through the

reconciliation, mediation and merits of the death and blood of Christ,

as the Scriptures teach. The New Testament treats with those of

understanding minds, and its sacraments belong to the penitent. Let

this be to you a sure and eternal reference and doctrine.

All those who give a different meaning to the signs of the New

Testament, by their philosophy, and teach you that they should be

dispensed before faith, deceive you, however much they may adorn it

with choice words, such as, sealing, sign of grace, embodiment, &c.,

for it is in fact, nothing but human wisdom, deceiving of souls and

hypocrisy. If the children under the old covenant were incorporated by

circumcision, and the children under the new covenant are incorporated

through baptism, as he says they are, then we are forced to conclude

that the children which died before the eighth day and those who were

left in the wilderness, besides, all the females, were not in the

Israelitic church, and consequently had no share in the grace, covenant

nor promise.

The same would also apply to our children which are hindered from

baptism, through death. O abomination and blasphemy I If that is not

attaching God's selection, grace, favor, love, kingdom, covenant and

salvation, to the element, water, and to works, I will leave to the

judgment of all the godly and pious.

In the sixth place he writes, and says, We have ever received, in

return for our assiduity and clear, convincing explanation of the

Scriptures, yea, for our solicitous care, to again gain them, nothing

but anathemas. For what else do we hear from them than that we are

wolves, blood?hounds, deceivers, &c., who run their own course and

bring forth no fruit?

Answer. All those who rightly seek our salvation, who rightly teach the

word of the Lord, and who walk before us with an unblamable life,

understand, according to the doctrine, Spirit, and example of Christ

Jesus, are not reproved by us, nor by the Scriptures; but we sincerely

thank and love them and will by the grace of God, never despise their

fraternal assiduity and paternal solicitude, but will, in sincere love

and very thankfully, accept them, and as much as we, in our weakness,

are able to do, follow them. But we are not to blame that Gellius and

the preachers are called deceivers, false prophets, ravening wolves,

men guilty of blood, &c., by the Scriptures, but they themselves, are

the cause; because they so lamentably adulterate the Scriptures, reject

Christ Jesus and his Spirit, word and walk; because they preach

according to their own pleasure, seek improper gain; because they teach

and walk to suit the world, destroy the poor sheep by their false

doctrine and deceiving practices; and because they upbraid, blaspheme,

belie, betray the pious, faithful hearts and thus deliver them to the

sword of the magistracy and executioner, as may, alas, be too clearly

witnessed at many different places.

Yea, reader, if he cannot bear to be called by such hard names, of

which he is guilty, according to the Scriptures, then he should

reasonably consider how shamefully he accuses, in his writings and

conversations, the poor, miserable souls who are quite innocent, as

being ungodly heretics, apostles of the devil, deceived conspirators,

hedgepreachers, sneaks, adulterators, &c., and how he, by his

rebellious, fiendish, bloody doctrine, deprives the innocent of their

property, welfare, honor, blood and life; and instigates the unmerciful

cruel tyrants to robbery, imprisoning, banishing and murder. My

faithful reader, reflect, and see if I do not write the truth.

In the seventh place he writes, The example of the apostles shows that

it is a command; for the Holy Spirit testifies that the apostles

baptized whole families; no children are excepted, which, surely, would

have been excepted if it were wrong to baptize them.

To this I reply, in the first place, that Gellius hereby testifies that

there is no command for infant baptism; for he here founds his doctrine

and faith upon presumption and not upon. imperative words, according to

which all things should be judged that are to be a pleasure in the

sight of the Lord. In the second place I would say, that the Holy

Spirit has testified in plain words, that the three families of which

the Scriptures make mention in particular, to have been baptized, were

all believing persons as may be plainly understood from reading Acts

10:16.

But as to the house of Lydia, it is plain that she at that time had no

husband; for the house is called after her name, which is neither the

custom of the world nor of the Scriptures, if the husband is alive.

Since the New Testament, then, makes mention of but four households in

particular, to have been baptized, and three of them were believing,

and the fourth, as appears, had no husband; as has been heard, how much

then should we rely on it, that there were little children in these

households, both nature and the Scriptures teach us.

He further writes, That it cannot be gainsayed that the children, all

through the Scriptures, are always included in the household, for a

household or family includes both young and old; therefore also

children should be baptized because the Scriptures mention that whole

households were baptized, which includes children.

I reply: If Gellius proves to us, by the testimony of God's word, that

the unconscious children have faith, then we would gladly include them

in the believing, baptized households and allow them to be baptized.

But as he cannot possibly do so, we would faithfully admonish him and

all the preachers to take heed, how and what they say concerning this

matter; for all they philosophize and teach about it, is mere deceit.

Besides, I would yet ask, if we can also cause unbelief in small

children by false doctrine, or, if we can teach them faith, through

God's word? If he answer in the affirmative, then his answer is

contrary to all the Scriptures, common sense, and contrary to his own

words; for he admits, that they, through their feeble understanding,

can not comprehend the word. But if he answer in the negative, then he

admits, himself, that his including both old and young in one

household, is contrary to Paul. For Paul says, that the vain talkers

and deceivers subvert whole houses, Tit. 1:10, something which cannot

be done to little children, on account of their not having sufficient

understanding, as he himself admits. He also says that we too boldly

exclude the children, which the Holy Spirit has not excepted, &c. To

this I reply: The Holy Spirit has commanded and ordained that we should

teach the understanding, and baptize the believing, and this ordinance

we follow. Therefore, it is not boldness, but obedience to do as the

mouth of the Lord has commanded us. But whether the preachers are not

boldly opposing the Holy Spirit, who reject his doctrine, advice and

ordinance as heretical and sectarian, and institute instead a doctrine

and ordinance to suit their own taste, of which we find not a single

word in the Scriptures, I will leave all the pious to judge according

to the word of the Lord.

As to his reference to Tertullius, Cyprian, Origenes and Augustinus, I

would reply: If these writers can support their assertions by the word

and ordinance of God, then we will admit that they are right. If they

cannot do so, then it is a doctrine of men, and condemned by the

Scriptures, Gal. 1:8. In the second place I say, Rhenanus annotates on

Tertullius that it was customary with the ancients to baptize adults

with the bapof regeneration.

Cyprian left infant baptism optional.

Erasmus writes that the ancients have disputed much concerning infant

baptism, and never came to a conclusion.

Zuinglius writes, Although we are aware that the ancients baptized

children, yet it was not practiced so commonly as it is, in our times.

They were openly instructed in faith; and when they verbally confessed

their faith which was imprinted in their hearts, they were allowed to

be baptized. This doctrine (he says) I wish to have again resuscitated,

Lib. Art. 18.

Bucer writes that the ancients generally baptized adults and not

children.

Oecolampadius writes, I, in my weakness, cannot yet find Scriptures

which command infant baptism.

Luther admits that they have no express command to baptize children.

What Martin Cellarius and others write, concerning this matter, is too

lengthy to be here reproduced.

Since it is plain that few children were baptized of the ancients, as

the above mentioned Rhenanus, Zuingli and Bucer show; that Cyprian left

infant baptism optional, and the others acknowledge that there is no

express command for it; how can Gellius, then truthfully write that

they received infant baptism from the apostles; that it is an

incorporation into the church, and a sealing of the covenant of grace?

Yea, my reader, if infant baptism has the virtues which Gellius

ascribes to it, then our ancestors grossly sinned to have baptized so

few children; and also because they left optional that which (he says)

the apostles practiced and taught to be an incorporation into the

church, a sign of grace and a sealing of the covenant of grace.

In the third place I answer, If we consider the confession and doctrine

of the learned in regard to infant baptism, we find it to be such a

Babel that we are forced to acknowledge that it is not of God. For some

of the ancients (not the apostles) as appears, baptized some children,

but not a considerable number. Some said they had received it from the

apostles; others, again, denied it. Some have, and some still baptize

them to wash off hereditary sin; others because they are children of

the covenant. Some baptize them for the sake of the faith of the

church; others, again, for the sake of the faith of their parents. Some

on the strength of the faith of the patriarchs; others on the strength

of their own faith; and again, others that better care Rhall be taken

of their education. Behold, thus the defenders of infant baptism are

divided among themselves.

Inasmuch, then, as they do not teach one doctrine and are not of one

mind in regard to infant baptism, therefore it is manifestly proven

that they baptize them without the word of God. For if their cause had

a foundation in Scripture; then they would baptize to the same purpose

or end, according to the same ordinance, rule and doctrine. This is

incontrovertible.

In the eighth place he writes "that it is not prohibited at all, in

Scripture, nor testified that infant baptism is wrong. And that the

Lord Jesus Christ testifies that it is not his word and will, but the

will of his Father who is in heaven."

Answer. Peruse all the Scriptures?Moses and the prophets, Christ Jesus

and the apostles, and diligently meditate upon them, and you will find

different instances that God was not only displeased at unbidden

ceremonies and worship, but that he has often severely punished such.

O, dear Lord, what blind reasoning! If they can, with a clear

conscience do so because it is not expressly forbidden that infants

shall be baptized, then they may as well accept holy water, candles,

palms, clocks, confession before a priest, masses, the building of

convents, altars, the becoming of monks, pilgrimages and the praying

?for the departed souls, &c., as just and right; for there is not a

word to be found in the Scriptures which expressly prohibits these

works; or which says: You shall not do these things.

If he should say that the circumstances of Scripture and its fruits

testify that they are contrary to the word of God; then I would again

say: Still clearer do the circumstances of the Scriptures and the

fruits testify that infant baptism is contrary to God's word. For the

mouth of the Lord has not commanded so at all. All those who practice

it, misuse the name and ordinance of God, and act hypocritically, and

those that receive it, console themselves, when they come to years of

understanding, that they are baptized children, although their whole

walk is manifestly, for the greater part, quite impenitent, ungodly,

earthly and carnal.

In the second place I answer: Christ Jesus has testified and said, "Go

ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creaturo. Ho that

believeth and is baptized, shall be saved," Mark 16:15, 16. Behold this

is the express, eternal and unchangeable ordinance of the Lord, which

he has commanded and left for his church to follow. Also have the

apostles so taught and practiced it.

If now the unconscious children have faith, that is, if they are

penitent, Rom. 6; have circumcised the foreskin of their hearts by the

circumcision of Christ, Col. 2:11; if they have a clear conscience

before the Lord, if they have a new mind, which are all the result of

faith, and which are represented by baptism?then baptism can not be

refused them. . But while it is plain that they have not one of the

beforementioned qualities, therefore we say that infant baptism is a

self?chosen superstition, an abuse of the glorious and holy name of

God, an adulteration of the ordinance of Christ, a vain, hypocritical

consolation to the impenitent, a sacrament of the church of

anti?christ, nay, an open deceit, blasphemy and idolatry.

Notwithstanding all this, this thoughtless man writes that it is the

word and will of the Father, and then uses the eternal Father and his

beloved Son and Holy Spirit, together with the chosen, holy apostles,

as a cover for his deceitful abomination and wicked blasphemy. O Lord!

In the ninth place he writes: "That they have the promise, that God,

the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, a true and living God, is powerful in

his command and works; and will, through his power, sanctify the

children of the church and bestow on them his Spirit."

Answer. If he could prove that infant baptism was commanded by the word

of God, by apostolic doctrine and usage, or by the example of Christ,

as he pretends that it was, then we would gladly admit it to be a holy

rite, and pleasing to God, and that it would be a blessed, admonishing,

useful, fruitful and powerful thing, for God commands nothing in vain.

But since it cannot be proven that it was commanded, and since baptism

cannot apply to little children, because the signs of the New Testament

are applied to the penitent, therefore we say again, that it is not a

God?pleasing ceremony, but according to all Scripture, a wicked

blasphemy and abomination, as has already been heard. And how

powerfully God works through such abominations, may be plainly seen in

the cases of Nadab, Abihu, Jeroboam, Uzza and others.

The pious reader should also know that the children of the churches are

not sanctified by means of ceremonies, words and water, but solely

through the grace, favor, merits, blood and death of the Lord, and by

no other work nor means, at all. But as to his writing that God bestows

upon the baptized children his Spirit, we would say that we would have

him consider more deeply and learn to know what the work of the Spirit

is, before he teaches such doctrine.

Is it not deeply to be regretted that such people dare take upon

themselves the care of souls, while they have not yet learned what is

the nature, fruit and power of the Holy Spirit? For wherever the Holy

Spirit is, there also must be its fruits; this is incontrovertible. And

what fruits we find in children when they begin to become of

understanding minds, we may, alas, educe from their words, works and

life.

I would further say, that if the Spirit is bestowed upon children,

through baptism, as he says, and since the Scriptures teach that the

Holy Spirit is given to the believing, then it must follow therefrom,

since the children do not believe, that the Holy Spirit is not given

them through faith, but that it is given through the merits of the

ceremony of baptism, which the preachers practice. And what is worse,

such a spirit, which in every respect is without knowledge,

intelligence, inspiration, power, fruit and work, as may be seen. O,

great blindness and error!

In the tenth place he writes: " The Lord Jesus Christ commanded that

the children should be brought to him (which the anabaptists do not at

all) and that he embraced them, laid his hands upon them and blessed

them, that is, baptized them with the Holy Spirit; and all this, done

by Christ, is not powerless."

Answer.. Here I would ask Gellius, and all who practice infant baptism,

Firstly, If all the believers brought their children to Christ when he

was preaching? If they answer in the affirmative, then they ought to be

ashamed; for they can not prove their assertion by the Scriptures. But

if they answer in the negative, then they acknowledge that they in the

first place, are wrong to teach and practice that children should be

brought to him, that is (according to their understanding), to baptize

them.

In the second place I ask, whether in any part of Scripture bringing to

Christ is called baptism 3 If they answer in the affirmative, then they

can not produce proof. If they answer in the negative then they admit

that they, in the second place, adulterate the word of God, by

explaining and construing bringing to Christ to mean baptizing.

In the third place I ask, whether Christ baptized the children, brought

to him, with water 8 If they answer in the affirmative, then I would

answer with John, that Christ, himself, did not baptize, John 3:5. But

if they answer in the negative, then they acknowledge, in the third

place, that it is a false doctrine to try to defend infant baptism on

the strength of this bringing to him.

In the fourth place I would ask, because he says that Christ baptized

the children with the Holy Spirit. If, then, baptizing with the Spirit

is the same thing as baptizing with water? If they answer in the

affirmative, then Spirit must be letter, or letter, Spirit. But if they

answer in the negative, then they, themselves, pronounce sentence

against infant baptism; that Christ's action with the children does not

teach nor imply it.

In the fifth place I would ask, How we are to understand this bringing

to him?in a carnal, or spiritual way? If they answer in a carnal way,

then I would say, that it cannot now be the case, since Christ, in

body, is taken from us and removed hence, where we cannot approach in

the body, 1 Tim. 6:16. But if they answer, in a spiritual way, then I

would again ask why Gellius so shamefully abuses the pious, whom he

calls anabaptists, by writing that they do not at all bring their

children to Christ (something which could not have been written in

purity of heart), while many of them are so solicitously caring for the

salvation of their children by teaching, admonishing and punishing

them, and by having a constant solicitude for them, as God's word and

the love of their children command and teach all christian parents to

do.

O, that God would grant that Gellius and his followers would more

deeply consider this spiritual bringing to Christ, as I trust that many

of ours do, by the grace of God; and that they would abandon this

unscriptural infant baptism, of which they make so much ado. This, in

my opinion, would be a very desirable thing. For, as a general thing,

they abandon their children, from the cradle on, to the wiles of the

devil, by educating them in ignorance, blindness, pomp, splendor,

vanity and idolatry, as their fruits plainly show to all of

understanding minds. Behold, my reader, from these questions and

answers you may conclude whether Gellius and the learned can stand on

the strength of the saying, " Suffer: the little children to come unto

me," with their doctrine and practice of infant baptism, which they

practice so indiscriminately, and about which they make so much ado?

Observe, too, that Gellius, by his writing that we do not bring our

children to Christ at all, not only judges and disgraces us but also

Christ Jesus, because he has no commanded us such bringing to him; hE

also judges the holy apostles who have no testified nor taught us a

word in regard tc this matter neither by word nor practice it the whole

Scriptures.

In the eleventh place he writes: Since Luke testifie that John the

baptist was sanctified in his mother' womb, and leaped in the presence

of Christ (which, hi says, doubtlessly, was caused by a spiritual

movement) and as also Jacob, &c, therefore it is manifest that fioi

also works in the children of the church according tc their measure,

through his Holy Spirit, and that infant baptism is a command and has

the promise.

Answer. If these particular miracles o: God, which were wrought in the

case of John and of Jacob, are to be a common rule, then these

following miracles were also common rules, namely, that Sarah and

Elizabeth, two barren women, conceived in their old age, and that

Balaam's ass spoke: Num. 22:28; and, therefore, all aged, barren women

should conceive, and all asses speak. O no. That such miracles of God

were no common rule things, maybe educed from the floating of iron at

Helizeum; from the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea, and

from the standing still of the sun and moon, 2 Kings 6:6; Es. 14:21;

Joshua 10:13.

I would further say, if, according to the doctrine of Gellius, it

follows from the case of John, that all the children of the church, or

of the believing members, have the Holy Spirit, then the greater part

of his fellowbelievers of the German nation (whom alone, he esteemed as

faithful servants, and who, with him, are of the same calling, office

and service) are greatly contemned in their doc, trine, faith and

usage; for he writes that the children of the holy church have the Holy

Spirit, and they believe and teach that they have the evil spirit, for,

before they baptize them, they say, Depart thou evil spirit, and give

room to the Holy Spirit.

Behold, thus it is generally with all who teach and practice this

shameful doctrine. And, although they are unanimous in the practice,

yet they are so divided in opinion as to the grounds of this doctrine,

that we are forced to say that it is nothing but a vain mask and

infernal mockery. Notwithstanding he writes that infant baptism is

commanded, and that it has the promise; while he well knows that he

cannot advance one plain word from all the Holy Scriptures, to show

that the wisdom of God has commanded it, or that the apostles have

taught or practiced it; or, moreover, that its signification,

penitence, regeneration, &c., can apply to children. To say nothing of

the author mentioning that the primitive, incorrupt church did not

practice it, as has been heard

Is not this adulterating the word of God, breaking the Scriptures,

perverting truth into lies, stealing the honor and praise of God,

killing souls and defending the church of anti?christ ? I say again, as

I did before, I have never read a word in the Scriptures with such

misunderstanding.

In the twelfth place he writes: "That, according to Matthew, baptism

was not first instituted by Christ. For it was before commanded of John

and practiced by the disciples of Jesus Christ; so that we are not

obliged to follow one rule."

Answer. Let every one take heed, and observe what the word of the Lord

teaches. Gellius, alas, is not at all ashamed to deny the plain word of

God, and writes: "That we are not obliged to follow one certain rule

in. regard to baptism; that Christ did not command to baptize the

believing persons alone; nor that his heavenly Father did, when he

commanded John that he should baptize; and that it was not Christ's

meaning that such and such persons should be baptized." Behold, thus

the Lord's holy word is perverted.

Inasmuch as Gellius so degrades his Lord's mouth, and so lamentably

adulterates his word, therefere I will place the words of Christ,

according to Matthew and Mark, before the reader, that he may see what

rule and law he has made concerning baptism, and .what command he has

given. Christ says, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them (understand,

whom you make disciples, by your doctrine) in the name of the Father,

and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all

things whatsoever I have commanded you," Matt. 28. Again, " Go ye into

all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that

believeth (namely, the gospel) and is baptized, shall be saved; but he

that believeth not shall be damned," Mark 16:1C, 16. Behold, this is

the word and ordinance of the Lord, how and when we are to baptize. I

think these words are too plain to admit of perversion by fine words

and accuteness?preach the gospel and baptize those that believe.

But that John taught and practiced baptism before Christ, is evidence

for us and not against us, for he practiced upon those who confessed

their sins, Matt. 3:6, and not upon unconscious children, as the

disobedient, offensive preachers do.

Since John did not baptize any but the penitent, before Christ; since

Christ commanded it at the confession of faith, the apostles taught and

practiced it so, and, also the primitive church, as heard, therefore,

the reasonable reader may reflect, in the fear of God, how miserably

and lamentably the poor souls are deceived by these degenerated men who

so boldly adulterate the pointed, plain words of Christ concerning

baptism, and his pleasing, salutary ordinance, and thus destroy it and

found it upon an unstable foundation and wrong meaning.

But his writing, "That the apostles were commanded to gather unto

Christ a church, from all nations, and to teach them, not that which

Moses, but that which Christ had taught," we admit. Yet through no

other command nor ordinance than that they should preach the gospel,

make disciples through the doctrine, baptize these disciples, and thus

to gather unto the Lord a peculiar people, who should walk in Christ

Jesus in righteousness, truth and obedience, as the regenerated

children of God, and give eternal praises to his great and glorious

name. And with such a people, who walk in his fear, love, word,

ordinances and commands, he will be, always to the end of the world.

But of infant baptism not a word is mentioned.

In the thirteenth place, he writes, "That the apostles, some of whom

were baptized of John, and those who came to him from the cities and

from Jerusalem were indiscriminately baptized of John, and could not

have had much knowledge of Christ, or a true, strong, sincere faith in

him."

Answer. If I understand him aright, he would conclude from this, that,

as the baptized disciples were not, before baptism, thoroughly fitted

in the doctrine, faith and repentance, but had to exercise themselves

in continual penitence, and to die unto sin, as baptism represents,

that also the children, although they have no faith before baptism,

will, after baptism, when they become of understanding minds, study the

doctrine, repent, die unto sin, and walk in newness of life.

To which opinion (if this be his opinion) I would reply: The prophets

prophesied of John, Isa. 40:3; Mal. 3:1. His birth was made known by an

angel; Christ testified of him, that he was the second Elias, a shining

light, not clothed in soft raiment and not like the waving reed; that

he was the greatest of all children born of woman, &c. From which it

may be safely educed that he was no light?minded nor reckless preacher,

but that he earnestly and valiantly executed his office, according to

the pleasure of God, and that he rightly practiced the commanded

baptism according to the ordinance. And, although his disciples were

not so thoroughly instructed in all things, yet he did not baptize any

but those who confessed their sins, as said, Matt. 3, Acts 19.

But, as to his explanation of. the words: "If thou believest with all

thine heart," which Philip spoke to the Ethiopian, that they mean to

believe without deceit and hypocrisy which he rightly asked of the

Ethiopian; and of Luke, to leave an example to all servants of the

church, how those of mature years should be baptized, he has rightly

pointed out, since he also had arrived to years of maturity. We say,

that this is right. We would also state what we desire of all

baptizers, is: That they first examine well the faith and foundation of

those who wish to be baptized, before they baptize them, that they, in

their work and service, may not prove hypocrites.

I think that this is a plain example that the servants of the church

should not ask the confession of faith from others, but from those,

themselves, who wish to be baptized, as also Otto Brunsu. says

concerning this: He says not (he writes), If you do believe or answer

for your child, it is then permitted to be baptized.

Since Gellius refers us to the disciples and to those baptized of John,

and, as appears, would thereby demonstrate that baptism does not

require true faith, and that it makes no difference whether faith comes

before or after; and, since we, also, are called anabaptists by him,

therefore I in my weakness, would ask him, If the command of Christ and

the example of the eunuch are not sufficient to show that faith should

precede baptism, and that baptism requires true faith, and why Paul

re?baptized the disciples of John, who had before been baptized with

the baptism of John, while John's baptism was not of men, but from

heaven? Matt. 21:25. He cannot, scripturally, answer it otherwise, than

that it was done because they had never known that there was a Holy

Ghost. Inasmuch, then, as these disciples were once baptized in their

years of maturity, with divine baptism, and lacked nothing but that

they did not have an understanding of the Holy Ghost, and were, on that

account, re?baptized of Paul?therefore Gellius should consider whether

or not true, christian baptism requires true faith, and whether he does

not wrong us by contemptuously calling us anabaptists because we

re?baptize those who were not baptized with a divine baptism, as were

the disciples of John, but with as anti?christian baptism, without any

knowledge, faith, command or word, as the reckless, ignorant world, in

pact, can judge and see.

If we, then, are anabaptists because we re?baptize those who received a

baptism instituted of man and which was practiced upon those who had no

knowledge whatever, how much, then, was Paul an anabaptist since he

re?baptized those who were of understanding minds and baptized with a

baptism which was from heaven and ordained of God.

In the second place I would ask, since he calls us anabaptists, as has

been heard, Why he still adheres to Cyprian, together with both the

Concilions?the African and the Nicene? which unanimously resolved:

"That heretics have no baptism, and that therefore those, who have been

baptized of heretics, should be baptized with the true baptism." If he

says that it is according to the Scriptures and right, then he admits

that he was not baptized with the right baptism, and that we are right

in re?baptizing those who have been baptized of such who are not alone

by Scripture, but also by Luther, Zuingli and the learned, pronounced

anti?christian servants and the root of all heresy, before the whole

world, as we may on every hand see in their writings.

But if he pronounce it offensive and sectarian, then he thereby

testifies, in the first place, that the church, or at least a great

part of it, was at that time offensive and sectarian.

In the second place, That he couples God's Spirit, word, work,

ordinance and command with the anti?christian and heretical service and

works.

In the third place, That he is an antichristian and heretic himself,

since he was baptized with an anti?christian and heretical baptism, and

that he yet defends it as the true baptism.

O, my reader, that Gellius had but half an ?understanding of the word

of God, and could but see a little of the truth, he would, all his

life?time lament to God that he has so lamentably profaned the Lord's

express command and ordinance, given through John, Christ and the

apostles; that he has so inimically slandered the pious, and that he

passes such a thoughtless and ungodly sentence, by his writings that he

not only pronounces us, but also Cyprian, all the African bishops, the

Nicene Fathers, besides also, holy Paul himself open anabaptists, nay,

heretics.

In the fourteenth place he writes, '� That it is with baptism as it was

with circumcision. As God commenced circumcision with Abraham, upon

preceding instruction,?and, for the purpose of the sealing of the

promise, it was practiced upon Abraham's seed and children?so John, the

baptist and the apostles commenced baptism with those of mature years,

and it was gradually practiced upon the children, since it could not be

otherwise on account of circumcision."

Answer. That it is with baptism as it was with circumcision before,

namely, in this respect; that it was commenced on previous

instruction?is our ground and doctrine; for Christ Jesus has so

ordained it and his holy apostles have so taught and practiced it. But

that it should, by the command of Christ and by the teaching and

practice of the apostles, gradually have been practiced upon the

children, is mere conjecture and not Scripture.

For if it were so, then the apostles did wrongly that they did not,

according to the manner of circumcision, commanded of God, baptize both

the believing and the children (something which they did not do), as

Abraham circumcised himself and his house together with the males of

eight days old after him, according to the command of God, and did not

gradually institute circumcision, as Gellius maintains, and would make

us believe, that the apostles should have done with baptism.

But that he writes that this should have been done on account of

circumcision is conjecture and not Scripture; for as the apostles and

also John served on the believing ones of the Jews the sign of baptism,

why not, then, on their children, if God had so ordained and commanded

it, as Gellius pretends he did?

No, no, the command of the Lord concerning circumcision expressly

applied, first to Abraham and his household, and then directly to the

males of eight days old, Gen. 17:14; but this is not so with regard to

baptism, for it applies only to the believing and not to the

unconscious children, Matt. 28; Mark 16. Therefore baptism was not

gradually practiced upon the children, as Gellius pretends; but it was

afterward instituted without the word, ordinance and command of God, by

disobedient and selfconceited men, who, alas, have considered a wrought

ceremony above the Lord's command and its representation, as is

generally the case with the learned and worldlyminded.

Again, as to his writing "that the promise is sealed by baptism, and

that it is given not only to the aged, but also to the children "?the

reader should observe that the promise of the grace of God, and of the

eternal covenant, is not sealed, now any more, by the perishable blood

of oxen and rams, nor by visible water and ceremonies, but solely by

the precious blood of Christ on the cross. Blessed is he, who believes

it, and cordially accepts it. This promise is made to the unbaptized

children, no less than to the baptized believing, so long as they are

clothed with childish innocence. and continue in simplicity. But when

they come to maturity and accept the dispensed gospel of grace through

faith, then the Scriptures teach us that we should baptize them, Matt.

28:19; Mark 16:15. But if they reject grace, and lead an easy,

impenitent life, neither Christ's blood nor death will avail them; much

less will word and water avail them. For, "he that believeth not" (the

Scripture means those of understanding minds) "is condemned already,"

John 3:18.

In the fifteenth place he writes, " They err abominably, because they

conclude, from the Scriptures and esamplea which have reference to

those of mature years, to a certainty, that it is an ordinance of God

that the children should not be baptized, notwithstanding that there is

not a tittle in the whole New Testament which forbids it. And therefore

they are no less wrong than I should be if I would not feed my children

that cannot labor, because Paul says, he that does not labor shall not

eat, which is incontrovertibly spoken in regard to those of mature

years, and not to children.

Answer. In my opinion, Gellius wilfully intends to uphold the things

contrary to Christ and truth, that he may execute the office of an

anti?christian preacher, according to the pleasure of the world. For,

when he should write that we act rightly according to the Scriptures,

and that there is not a tittle in the New Testament that children

should be baptized?he writes that we err abominably, and that there is

not a tittle that forbids infant baptism, &c.

Inasmuch as he so willfully and violently contends against the Lord and

his truth, and since he in various ways seeks to give his cause a fine

appearance by the use of many borrowed words, lies, conjectures and

perversion of the Scriptures, and says that we err abominably, &c.,

therefore I would briefly state: That if he can at any time prove to us

by the unadulterated, divine Scriptures and truth, that John the

Baptist practiced infant baptism any where; or that it was commanded of

Christ and taught and practiced by the apostles;. or, that it was,

through the ordinance of the Lord, gradually practiced upon children,

as he writes it was; or, that bringing to him is called ed baptism and

baptism bringing to him, in the Scriptures; or, that Christ and the

apostles have baptized the children that were brought to them; or, that

Christ baptized them with a spirit that was powerful in works (the

Spirit of God is never idle); or, that small children have faith, or

that they are penitent, that they bury their sins and are circumcised

through faith and thereby arise with Christ in newness of life; or,

that circumcision is called baptism, and baptism circumcision; or, that

they have the answer of a good conscience; or, that baptism, anywhere

in the Scriptures, is called a sign of the covenant of grace, a sealing

of the promise, and an incorporation into the church, or that

unconscious children speak with tongues as the believing members of the

house of Cornelius did, of whom Peter says, " Can any man forbid water,

that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost

as well as we" Acts 10:47, or, that the true, primitive church

practiced it by the apostolic doctrine, usage or command; or, that God

is powerful through works which he has not ordained, then we will lay

aside our pen, repent and confess before the whole world that our cause

is mere deceit, and nothing but falsehood, in this respect.

But if he cannot do so, as it is impossible for him to do, then I would

faithfully admonish and fraternally beseech him to consider earnestly

and thoroughly how shamefully he refiects on Elod, the Father, Son and

Holy Spirit, John the Baptist and the apostles, in this matter of

infant baptism; how lamentably he adulterates the plain Scriptures and

deceives the poor souls; what gross falsehoods he teaches the poor

people; how deceitfully he teaches the accursed abomination and passes

it for a holy, glorious work; and also, how unjustly he accuses us of

abominably erring, we, who clearly have on our side Christ's plain

word, the apostolic doctrine and usage, the signification of baptism,

and the usage of the true, primitive churches; while he cannot show by

a single word of all the Scriptures, that his infant baptism has any

foundation in the ordinance and command of God. My faithful reader,

beware; fear Good; act justly; search the Scriptures; shun falsehood

and follow the truth.

Again, by undertaking to draw the saying of Paul, " That if any would

not work, neither should he eat," into his argument, he contradicts

himself, and is unworthy of a reply. For, as Paul thereby commands the

idlers and busy?bodies to earn their own bread by honorable labor, lest

they become an offense, and troublesome to others, and since such

cannot apply to children, therefore such labor was not thereby

commanded them. Neither does Paul say, he who does not work, &c., as

Gellius writes; but he says, "If any would not work, neither should he

eat." So, too, baptism is not commanded to be practiced on unconscious

children, but it is commanded in the Scriptures to be practiced upon

those who believe the word of the Lord, lead a penitent life and who

have a sound understanding and comprehension of baptism, as has been

said several times.

In the sixteenth place he writes, "That in Christ Jesus no respect of

persons or time is made. For the glory of the kingdom of Christ is not

limited to any cities, times or persone; so, neither to any age nor

gen. eration."

Answer. Herewith, if I understand it, he would assert that, although,

according to his assertion, baptism has taken the place of

circumcision, and the males only were circumcised in Israel, that

notwithstanding this, both males and females are to be baptised, now,

be they believers' children, and born of believing parents or not. If

that is his meaning and foundation, then he should know that as the

grace, favor, love, covenant and promise of God under the New

Testament, extended to both men and women, so, also did it extend to

all under the Old Testament. For, if God had coupled his covenant of

grace and all to signs, whether it be circumcision or baptism, and if

those alone were in the church who had received the sign, then the

Israelitic women and maids, and also the children of the primitive

churches, were in a bad situation; since the first, according to the

Scriptures, were not circumcised, and the latter, according to the

ancient authors, were not baptized, as has been already said.

No, reader, no. Abraham and all his seed, I mean both men and women,

young and old, were the Lord's people and church. But the males only,

were circumcised, and not the females, the male children of eight days

old, and not the female children, according to the ordinance of God;

yet, they all, both men and women, were members of the church under the

covenant of God, and were children of the promise, although, I repeat

it, the males only were circumcised, and not the females.

So it is under the New Testament. The gospel is "preached, and all who

believe it and are baptized, shall be saved; be they males or females.

They are members of the church of Christ under God's covenant and

grace; they are joint heirs of the kingdom of God, and children of

eternal life; also the children, although they are not baptized, Mark

16:16; Acts G:14; 1 Cor. 12:13; Rom. 8:14.

For, as God would have his ceremonies under the Old Testament, such as

circumcision, the passover, sin?offering, burnt?offering, B;c.,

practiced just as he ordained and commanded them through Moses, in the

same manner he will have his signs, under the New Testament, such as

baptism and Supper, practiced in no other way than he has commanded and

ordained through his Son.

For he says, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye

him." If, now, this Son had ordained infant baptism, then we should

practice it, if we would be his disciples; but since he has not done

so, we pronounce it, according to the Scriptures, accursed, as said,

Gal. 1: S.

I further say, If they, now, place the children of both believing and

unbelieving parents, on the same foundation; which, according to my

opinion world not be contrary to the Scriptures, then they must recall

their doctrine whereby they, before, applied the grace and covenant of

God, with many words, to the children of believing parents, and admit

that their doctrine in regard to Abraham and his seed, whereby they

make baptism take the place of circumcision, has no similarity to, nor

connection with it, at all; for it was not commanded of Abraham to

circumcise all the children round about him, who were not his seed, but

only those which were of his seed, as may be learned from Genesis 17.

In the seventeenth place he writes, would to God that they could once

rightly understand the 5th chapter,of Paul's letter to the Ephesians,

wherein he describes the church, saying, Christ loved the church, and

gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the

washing of water in the word, or as Erasmus says, through the word.

Then he goes on and says, This incontrovertibly includes the children

along with their parents, that is, the believers and their seed, nay,

the whole church. How should they, then, be excluded from the word,

while it reads, He has cleansed the church with the washing of water by

the word!

Answer. I trust that we, through the grace and enlightenment of the

Lord, in our weakness, do not misunderstand these words of Paul, but

that we do rightly understand the meaning. We offer Gellius and all the

learned, the use of all the Scriptures, besides all reason and

experience, if they can show one tittle in the Holy Scriptures to prove

that reason and experience teach, that we can teach little children the

word of God, from which originates the true cleansing of the heart, or

that the Scriptures of the New Testament any where apply the word and

sacraments to them; if they can, then we will admit that they are

cleansed by baptism through the word, or in the word. But, if they can

not do so, then it is already proven that these words of Paul are not

written in regard to little children.

It is true, Christ has so loved his church, that he has given himself

for her, and has sanctified her through the power and meritsof his

innocent blood, and cleansed her by water, which is a sign of a new and

penitent life, but not otherwise than in the word, or through the word,

which, preached in the power of the Spirit, and accepted in true faith,

is followed by the ordained baptism as commanded.

Christ said, "Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto

you," John ls:3; not, my reader, that they were clean on account that

it was outwardly spoken unto them, but because they believed that which

was spoken unto them. For God does not cleanse the hearts through any

literal water, word or ceremony, but through faith in the word;

otherwise all who outwardly hear the word and receive the outward sign

of the water, would be holy and clean; this is incontrovertible.

In the eighteenth place, He advances an argument and syllogism.

Whatever pertains to the church, also pertains to the members of the

church. Baptism pertains to the whole church, both old and

young?therefore baptism pertains to all the members of the church.

Answer. In my opinion it were better for Gellius, since he boasts

himself a preacher of the holy word, to leave his logic to the wise of

the world, who, alas, seek their own praise and honor more than they do

God's: and satisfy himself with the true doctrine, foundation and truth

of Christ, and with the unpretentious, plain testimony of Matthew, the

publican, and of Peter and John, the fishermen, &c., that he does not

deceive the unlearned by such accute reasoning and lead them off the

true way.

As to his major proposition (as he calls it), I would say, that if

Gellius had applied it to grace, reconciliation, promise, eternal life,

&c., which were bestowed upon the whole church, young as well as old,

for Christ's sake, and not upon the ordinance of the church, then he

would have been right; but as it is, he will have to admit that it is

wrong, and contrary to the word of God. For, as regards the ordinances

of which he speaks, in which baptism is included, I would say, that all

the members of the church are not of one and the same calling, service

and work, and are not under one and the same ordinance; for the Lord

has ordained apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and servants, in

his church, and all are not, on that account, apostles, prophets,

evangelists, pastors and servants. Thus it is with the ordinances of

baptism and the Holy Supper, in his church; not that we should

therefore serve them to the unconscious children, but only to the

believing and penitent, according to the Scriptures.

As to his minor proposition, I would say, our doctrine, belief,

foundation and confession is, that our unconscious children, so long as

they live in their innocence, are, through the merits, death and blood

of Christ, in grace, and joint heirs of the promise, as has already

been heard. The doctrine of the New Testament, which is a doctrine of

the Spirit, does not include them with those who are ruled and governed

by the word and sacraments of God, and who are properly called the

church of Christ in Scripture.

That the children should be counted into the church on account of the

promise, we consent to, but we controvert that they should be included

in the ordinances of the church; for this is contrary to all Scripture

and common sense, as we will prove by Christ's own words. He also

openly reproves Christ and the apostles, together with the Holy Spirit.

For he writes, " Baptism pertains to both young and old;" while they

have not left us a single example, nor one word in all the Scriptures

whereby it is taught or commanded, as may be seen.

Since both his major and minor propositions are not consistent with the

word and command of God, as shown, how then, his conclusion, that

baptism pertains to all the members of the church, can be consistent

with the word and ordinance of God is sufficiently clear to the kind

reader.

I would further say, that if this, his syllogism, is right and true,

namely, Whatever pertains to the church, must pertain to all the

members of the church, &c., which, however, is not so, then it would

also be true that as doctrine, faith, knowledge of Christ, true

repentance, a regenerated, new life, the circumcision of the ueart, a

clear conscience, baptism, Lord's Supper, the love of one's neighbor, a

living hope, ardent thankfulness, &c., pertain to the church ?therefore

they pertain to all the members, both young and old.

If he denies this first proposition of mine, then he denies his own,

for it is like his. If he denies, besides, the second, because

children, on account of their weak understanding, as he admits, cannot

understand the word, and that they, therefore, cannot repent nor be

admitted to the Supper, &c., then he testifies that the children do not

belong to the church which is governed by the Lord's word and

sacraments; and that his syllogism, wherewith he includes all the

members of the church, both young and old, in one and the same

ordinance, is wrong and false, nay, contrary to God's word. This is my

answer to the argument of Gellius and his fellows. How they can stand

with this, according to the Scriptures, you may reflect upon in the

fear of your God.

In the nineteenth place, he makes a long discourse in regard to the

child which was, according to Mark and Luke, called to Christ; and will

thereby prove and teach that children believe, or if they do not

believe, that they are accounted as believing, be they of whatever age

they may. He further writes that a child of two, three or four years

old may be corrupted by bad examples; and that we are too timorous

because we dare not baptize those whom Christ accounts as believing (as

he says).

Answer. If Gellius and the learned had received but a little

understanding of the nature, power and properties of true faith, they

would be ashamed all their lifetime to have such a poor idea of that

precious faith which is a power and gift of God. Moses says that the

children have no knowledge of good and evil. The ? wise man says, that

they have no understanding. Paul says, "Brethren, be not children in

understanding," 1 Cor.14:20, and yet Gellius dares write that they

believe; as if faith were but a dead thing that has no motive power or

work.

O no, true faith, which avails before God, is a living and saving power

which is through the preaching of the holy word, bestowed of God upon

the heart; that moves, changes and regenerates it to newness of mind;

that smothers all ungodliness; that destroys all pride, ambition and

selfishness; that in malice, makes us like children, &c. Behold, such

is the faith which the Scriptures teach us, and not a vain, dead and

unfruitful conjecture, as the world pretends it to be. And that such

faith is not to be found in children of two, three or four years old,

both the Scriptures and common sense teach US.

O, dear Lord! what great blindness, that this thoughtless man does not

observe that he and his like preachers, some of whom have grown already

gray, who daily read the Scriptures after their manner, are yet so

unbelieving that they dare, for the sake of a piece of bread,

adulterate the plain word of God, lead the poor, miserable souls to

hell, in great numbers, upbraid, slander and hate all the pious, and

innocently heap upon them slanderous lies and disgraces, incite the

magistracy to tyranny and blood, and that they delight in pomp,

splendor, the lusts of the flesh, avarice, &c., which is such clear

proof that they are not alone unbelieving, but that they are also quite

earthly and carnally?minded; and yet they assert that a child of two or

three years of age has faith. O, folly and error!

The reason that Christ called unto himself the child, and placed it in

the midst of his disciples, was because the disciples were casting

about as to who would be the greatest. He set the child as an example

to them, and said, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and

become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of

heaven." And that we must inherit the kingdom of God, as a child (in

malice, understand), as Mark and Luke write. Paul says, "In malice be

ye children." Christ says, "Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as

this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven; and

whoso shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me. But

whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it

were better for him that a mill?stone were hanged about his neck, and

that he were drowned in the depth of the sea," Matt. 18:4?e. Behold,

Christ himself explains to what children we should apply this.

As to his writing that children are accounted believing, is merely a

conjecture and opinion which cannot be substantiated by a single word

of the Scriptures. Again, as to his assertion that a child, two, three

or four years old may be offended, I would say, first, If we were to

apply, ?as Gellius does, this saying, " Whoso shall offend one of these

little ones which believe on me," &c., to young children (to which I,

on my part, do not consent), then the whole world might well be

astounded at these words, from the inmost of their souls. For how they

educate their young children, and with what ungodly, offensive life

they walk before them, their disgraceful ill?manners and roguery, alas,

teach us, both in city and country. O, reader, that the world would

take to heart the salvation of their children, and not, from the cradle

on, lead them in the way to hell, by their doctrine and example; what a

blessed thing it would be for their souls at the day of judgment!

Second, If the preachers and magistrates would rightly understand this

saying of Christ, and believed it just and true, then, in my opinion,

the offensive, deceiving doctrine would soon be at an end, and the

tyrannical sword be put into the sheath, by which, now, alas, hundreds

of thousands of souls, are offended to everlasting destruction, and

consigned to the kingdom of the devil. O, Lord! "Woe unto the world

because of offences," says Christ, God's mouth and wisdom.

To his writing that we are too timorous, because we dare not baptize

children, I would say this, that the Scriptures teach us not to do that

which we see proper, but that which is commanded us, Dent. 4:2; 12:32.

Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, offered strange fire before the

Lord, which he commanded them not, And there went out a fire from the

Lord and devoured them, Lev. 10:1, 2.

Jeroboam was chosen king of the ten revolted tribes of Israel,

worshipped in a manner not commanded of God, and therefore he was told

by the prophet that God would take away the remnant of his house, as a

man taketh away dung, till it be all gone, 1 Kings 14:10.

Uzziah was smitten for life because he burned incense upon the altar of

incense, to which the Lord had not called him, 2 Chron. 26:18.

Luther writes in his preface to Isaiah and says, " God will not be told

how he is to be served. He will teach and lead us. His word should be

our guide; for without his word it is all idolatry and vain falsehood,

however fine and pleasing it may appear." Again, in the 3rd chapter of

Daniel, II Worship without God's word is ever idolatry."

I would further say, All those who seek God, and sincerely fear him,

obey his ordinance and word.

Israel never circumcised a female, nor offered a ewe for the passover;

for God ordained that the males should be circumcised on the eighth

day, and that rams should be offered, Gen. 17:11; Egod. 12: S, as heard

before.

Since we clearly learn from the Holy Scriptures that Moses and the

prophets and besides, the Father, himself, unanimously point to Jesus,

who is Wisdom and Truth, to obey him; and since we surely know, by the

grace of God, that he is the true Prophet and perfect Teacher, whose

word is truth, and whose command is eternal life, and since he has not

commanded us a single word of infant baptism, nor his true witnesses,

the holy apostles have taught it or left an example, and since we also

find that the signification is not applicable to children, and besides,

that the Scriptures do not admit of strange worship, self?chosen

ceremonies, nor addition, nor subtraction, and that Goal has several

times punished such self?chosen righteousness and worship, as heard;

and further, that the primitive church did not practice infant baptism,

as has been often heard, therefore we are so timorous, that we dare not

baptize our little children; for these cases to which we have referred,

together with the unfeigned love of salutary, divine truth, the sincere

fear of our God, and the power of our faith, although in weakness,

prevent us.

O, reader, would God grant that our opponents could rightly understand

what frightful abominations they commit on every hand with their infant

baptism, and how they practice it to the dishonor of God and corruption

of their neighbors, then, I trust, this matter would soon be reformed,

and by the help of God, he changed to a scriptural usage.

In the first place, they falsify God and the Holy Scriptures by their

infant baptism; for they assert that it is God's ordinance, while there

is not a single word or example to be found in all the Scriptures, that

teaches infant baptism.

In the second place, they thereby destroy the true church of Christ,

and establish an anti?Christian one which bears the name and semblance

of the christian church; although it hates and despises its doctrine,

spirit, ordinances and usages, taught by the Scriptures.

In the third place, they thereby console the world in their

unrighteousness; for however ungodly, adulterous, perjurious, covetous,

pompous, envious, blood?thirsty, greedy, drunken, carnal, idolatrous

and hypocritical they be, yet they boast that they are baptized

christians.

In the fourth place, they hate and persecute all those, who, out of

pure, godly zeal, avoid this deceitful abomination, reprove their

damnable worship, and point them to Jesus and his word alone. Nay, they

are called their apostate anabaptists, apostles of the devil, deceived

heretics, offscourings and booty.

In the fifth place, although they, and their authors, in the past, have

condemned unto hell the institutions and commands of men, and have

written one volume after another against it, yet they, alas, altogether

adhere, to this abhorrible abomination, because they want to avoid the

cross, and gain the favor of the world; they act hypocritically in all

things, and do the things which are pleasing to the world; they heap

one abominable error upon another; hang crosses upon the child's breast

and forehead; they conjure and ask the parents if they believe, &c.,

drive out devils, and commit other disgraceful acts; so that we are

forced to say that all the infant baptizers are hypocrites of all

hypocrites, and that infant baptism is an open incorporation into the

church of anti?Christ, the beginning of all deceit, anal an accursed

blasphemy and enchantment, which is not only contrary to the plain word

and ordinance of the Lord, but also against all reason, nature and

common sense. For who that has read the word of the Lord at all, does

not know, that a cross made with the fingers cannot help or save a

child g That the innocent creature, the unconscious child, which is

cleansed by the blood of the Lord, is not possessed of the devil, and

that one cannot insure the faith of others, since it is a gift of God?

Say, kind reader, What worse mockery and hypocrisy could be imagined,

than to ask of one in the name of another: Do you believe? Do you

renounce Satan, &c. I and on an affirmative answer, to baptize an

unconscious child that knows nothing of neither yes nor no, of God nor

devil, of truth nor falsehood, of life nor death? O blasphemy and shame

!

O, Lord 1 O, dear Lord! I how long shall this gross deceit and vile

abomination be practiced I I think it were high time that the world

should take heed, and learn to know such open deceivers and their

doctrine, baptism, supper, life and fruits, and that they would pay

more attention to the ordinance, will, word, ways and works of the

Lord.

In the twentieth place, he accuses us of a false security, as he calls

it, because we, or ours, say that we are assured in our hearts that

they err, and that we are right, &c.

Answer. The Lord speaks through Moses, "Whosoever will not hearken unto

my words which he" (that is Christ) " shall speak in my name, I will

require it of him," Dent. 18:19.

The Father says, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;

hear ye him," Matt. 17: s.

Christ says, "Teach 'them to observe all things whatsoever I have

commanded?you," Matt. 28:29.

Paul says, " Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other

gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be

accursed," Gal. 1:8.

John says, "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of

Christ, has not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath

both the Father and the Son," 2 John 1:9, and other like Bayings.

Since all the Scriptures point us to the Spirit, gospel, command,

ordinance, usage and example of Christ; and since we, in our worship,

do not follow conjectures, our own desires, false explanations and

doctrines of men, as we are accused of, Christ's plain word and

command; the doctrine and usage of the holy apostles, and of the true,

primitive church; and, as they (our opponents) are no more commanded to

baptize children than Israel was to circumcise females, or that they

should found churches, altars and places of worship on hills, or in

dales, or that they should offer their children as burnt?offerings, or

that the papists should baptize bells as they are accustomed to, and

since they call and persecute the baptism ordained of Christ, as the

baptism of heretics, and esteem and practice infant baptism, which was

instituted through hypocrisy, as a christian baptism, and since they,

besides, boast that they do right by not abandoning this practice;

therefore I would gladly leave it to the judgment of all reasonable and

impartial readers, who of us are the Sanherib, Holofernes, Pharisaical,

and deceiving sects, mentioned as trusting in false security.

He further writes, What else has deceived the anabaptists in the past,

that they took. up the sword, than just such security. They imagined

that they, as the people of (sod, were marked with the sign, Tau;

should subdue the whole world, and bang us preachers, who they said

knew better, to our own door?posts?

Answer. Reader, observe, What else does he hereby say than, Beloved

lords, will you yet be merciful unto such an offensive people and

wicked heretics? Persecute, imprison, banish and destroy them. They are

deserving of it. You may consider and .judge whether the Holy Spirit,

in the Revelation does not call this the sting of scorpions, Rev. 9:10.

Further on he says that our church was originated by me; something

which, as will be hereafter shown, I do not admit. He knows very well

that I never was found in the company of the rebellious; but that I

reproved their doctrines and abominations with the word of the Lord, as

much as I ever did those of the preachers. Notwithstanding, he accuses

us of these ungodly practices and wicked deeds; that he may thereby

make us, who are innocent, suspicioned of all the world, and deliver us

unto the sword of the magistracy. I will leave it to the consideration

of all the pious and good-fearing, if this is not seeking the blood of

the innocent.

O, that he would have sufficient discretion not to mix the innocent

with the guilty. For what else does he seek than to change Simon Peter

into Simon Magus, and John and James into Judas

If I should say, I have known some infant baptists which were open

perjurers and thieves, therefore Gellius and all the infant baptists

are perjurers and thieves. Would not that be wrong? O, faithful reader,

how justly has holy David portrayed such slanderers, saying, The wicked

murder the innocent in secret places; his eyes are privily set against

the poor. He lieth in wait secretly, as a lion in his den; he lieth in

wait to catch the poor, &c., Ps. 10:8, 9. For, by such murderous cries,

it is caused, that in different places, the pious and faithful hearts

?men and women, youths and virgins, the gray?headed, the lame and halt

are pitilessly and mercilessly imprisoned and robbed, their children

sent abroad in the world, homeless and penniless, as the most wicked

upon earth. Some are thrown into boiling oil; others are hanged,

racked, drowned, strangled, burned, beheaded or tortured by some other

heathenish and tyrannical means. Behold, such are, alas, the

consequences of the deceiving and false writings of such blood?thirsty

preachers, in some countries.

Would to God, that he and his preachers, together with all the papists

and monks, who are guilty of innocent blood, may find mercy and grace

before the eyes of the great and Almighty God, in the day when the

fearful sound of the last trumpet shall sound, and that the innocent

blood of which they are guilty, be not counted against them. This is my

sincere wish and prayer. But if they continue in their present minds,

and do not turn from ungodliness, then, says the Spirit of God, the

fiery pool will be their reward and part, Rev. 19:21.

Further, I would say, Just as we hate and reprove (understand this in a

gospel like way) the bitter and inimical heart, and the bloody and

fiendish crying and writing of Gellius and all the contentions?so,

also, do we hate and reprove those that take up the sword, steal, rob,

or in airy manner wrong any one on earth, be he friend or foe. In this

we should pay no respect as to persons, be it father, brother, emperor,

king, neighbor, friend, great or small, baptized or not baptized. All

those who shed human blood against the word of God, who act contrary to

love, who wrong, offend or afflict their neighbor, can not be our

brethren, for they plainly show that they are not christians.

We must ever hear that the rebellious and their aiders at Munster,

have, in the past, alas, taken up the sword, contrary to God's word, as

if we were one with them in that abomination; although we are quite

innocent in the matter. But they do not see that they arm whole

countries and corrupt them; that they destroy one principality after

another, that they use all manner of violence, and thus cause

affliction, misery and sorrow, every where. Yea, this is, alas, called

doing right.

Since it is manifest that not only France, Italy, Spain and Burgundy,

`but also all the German nations, and the rest of the world who boast

of the word are guilty of the same deeds, as regards fighting, warring,

robbing and shedding blood; why do they, then, reprove the crimes of

the rebellious, while they are so far from being innocent, yea, have

done the same criminal deeds as those they reprove? Paul says,

"Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art, that

judgest; for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for

thou that. judgest, doest the same things," Rom. 2:1.

In the last place he writes, Our eyes have seen better than the eyes of

the anabaptis'ta in regard to wilful sinning, because they have made

many doubtful and caused some to recede, &c.

Answer. If he aims this at us, then he should know that he has written

more than he should have done. For I can say with a clear conscience,

that I never was troubled concerning this matter by the brethren, and

that the doctrine has not been broached among us in my time.

I have ever taught that all sins which are repented of are pardoned in

the blood of the Lord, be they what they may. David's adultery and

shedding of innocent blood, is to me a sure testimony. Yet everybody

should take heed that he sincerely fears God, acts rightly, and that he

does not wilfully sin against his God, that he does not pervert

falsehood into truth, nor truth into falsehood, as did the scribes. For

who knows but that he who wilfully sins against his God, will never

truly repent and receive grace? Christ says, "Whosoever committeth sin,

is the servant of sin," John 8:34.

I fear that if his imperial highness were to present to me many costly

gifts, and I should ungratefully squander them, or trample upon them,

or cast them from me, his imperial highness would, undoubtedly,

severely punish me for such ingratitude, and would probably not again

offer me such favors and costly presents.

Therefore, take heed that you do not wilfully despise and adulterate

your Lord's word, nor walk according to the pleasure of a carnal mind;

lest the manifest grace at once be withheld from you, and you are led

into perverse ways. Qui timst Dewm, recedit a malo, he that fears God,

shuns evil.

As Gellius exerts himself to adulterate, by his false doctrine, the

word of the Lord, to render of no avail his precious blood, and to

harden and console the impenitent, reckless world in their wild and

wicked ways, under an appearance of the holy word; so he also exerts

himself, in my opinion, to root out the salutary, pure truth from

earth, and to deliver the pious and godly children into the hands of

the executioner, by all manner of false defamations and criminal

accusations. If I am wrong rebuke me.

If the name, " grasping kite, 11 is not more applicable to him than a

gathering hen, by which name he would like to be called, I will leave

to himself and the Lord.

But the Lord, who is the shield and surety of all the oppressed,

defends them against the ungodly. He destroys the liars. He abhors the

bloody and deceitful; "There is no faithfulness in their mouth; their

inward part is very wickedness; their throat is an open sepulchre; they

flatter with their tongue," Psalm 6:9.

Therefore they shall not stand before the storm; their light shall be

extinguished, and their glory shall vanish. For the Lord is strong, who

shall judge them, and he will require the poor, deceived souls, and the

innocent blood at their hands, and he will give them their reward.

Behold, dear reader, from this you may see that the doctrine and

confession of the preachers in regard to infant baptism, can not stand,

according to the Scriptures; that it is not founded upon the Lord's

command, nor upon the doctrine or practice of the holy apostles, as is

the baptism of the believing, but merely upon logic, opinion,

conjecture, falsehood, borrowed names and custom. If you be of

reasonable mind, then let the infallible and true word of the Lord, and

your impartial heart judge between us and the learned.

I would hereby, for God's sake, beseech all readers not to think hard

of it that I reprove falsehood, according to the Scriptures; defend

truth with truth, point out the right way, seek the salvation of your

souls, controvert the false prophets, expose their deceiving, secret

snares and defend the Lord's praise. He who seeks the Lord in sincerity

of heart, read and judge.

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[2] German Translation

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THE LORD'S SUPPER.

WE will very briefly review and reply to the treatise of Gellius on the

sacrament called the Lord's Supper, because we have published our

foundation and belief of this matter, and referred to many Scriptures,

in the past. Whosoever finds a delight in the truth, may read them and

reflect on them in the fear of God. Yet we would, in our weakness,

remind the pious reader, before we commence our reply to Gellius'

publication, that it is written, " For we, being many, are one bread

and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread," 1 Cor.

10:17. Since we learn from the Scriptures that the Holy Supper was

instituted of the Lord as a sign and testimony, not to the world but to

the church of Clod, that all of us who are one bread are members of one

body, namely, of the body of Christ; and since we plainly see that both

the dispensers and partakers of the worldly supper, are not true

members of the Lord's body, because the dispensers are all hirelings,

thieves of the honor of God, and murderers of our souls, who retain the

thoughtless, reckless people in all manner of unrighteousness,

blindness, and in an unbridled, carnal life, by their promises,

philosophy and logic; who deceive all the world and hate, upbraid,

belie, apprehend, banish and exterminate the pious, who renounce evil,

follow the word of the Lord, and ever eat of his bread; and because the

partakers, generally, are an impenitent, light?minded and vain people,

nay, worldlings, part of whom not only little regard the Spirit, word

and knowledge of the Lord, but trample it under foot, as may be

seen?therefore we abstain from their supper; for the sincere fear in

our hearts, caused by the word of God, prevents us from partaking of it

with such dispensers and partakers, lest we also partake of their

deceiving actions and abominable abuse, and, at the day of Christ,

receive the same reward with them.

He boasts a great deal of his admonition, yet all his admonition is

nothing but vain boasting, without all power; for how can he and his

like preachers rightly teach Christ, and admonish others, while they

are yet filled from the top of their heads to the soles of their feet,

with all manner of unrighteousness, blindness and disgrace?

They would do well to reflect upon the words of Sirach, and rightly

learn to know themselves, because many of them are as yet such useless

people, that they are more fit to be herders of swine than to be

shepherds of the sheep of Christ, as he writes. And because Gellius is

not only an adulterer of the Scriptures and deceiver of souls, but also

a very cruel, profane and defaming man, as may be very clearly educed

from his writings.

He writes that they admonish them in the first place, what should be

the qualifications of the partakers, according to the doctrine of the

law, and especially of the holy gospel.

Answer. Wherever the law is preached rightly and taken to heart,

through faith and manifested in Spirit and power, there we find a

subdued mind, a penitent, humble heart, and a conscience which trembles

be, fore the word and true fear of God, and which allays and disperses

sin, as Sirach says.

This is the real intention and object of the law: To reveal unto us the

will of God, to discover unto us sin, to threaten us with the wrath and

punishment of the Lord, to proclaim death and to point us to Christ,

that we may, before the eyes of God, be humbled in heart, die unto sin,

and seek and find the only and eternal medicine and remedy for our

souls, Jesus Christ.

In the same manner it is in regard to the gospel. Wherever it is

preached in true zeal, according to the pleasure of God, and unblamably

in the power of the Spirit, so that it penetrates the hearts of the

hearers, there we find a converted, changed and new mind, which

joyfully and gratefully gives praises to his God for his inexpressibly

great love towards us, miserable sinners, in Christ Jesus, and thus

enters into newness of life willingly and freely, by the power of a

true faith and a new birth.

If Gellius would knock at the innermost heart of his followers, and of

himself, with the hammer of the law, and zealously enkindle in them the

fire of the holy gospel, so that they would, in true repentance, change

their unclean, obdurate hearts, and abandon their heathenish pomp and

splendor in their houses, and clothes, their vain show of gold and

silver, their extravagance, avariciousness, drinking and carousing, and

would enter with Christ into newness of life, then I would admit that

that which he has written here concerning the Lord's Supper, did well

compare with their walk. But as it is, he consoles the poor with an

empty purse, only, and acts in a manner entirely contrary to that in

which he should. For the signs of the New Testament are in themselves

quite powerless, vain and useless, if the signification, namely, the

new, penitent life, is not there, as has been said above in treating of

baptism.

He further writes, that they, in the second and third place, admonish

them (their hearers) that it is not enough to know and understand the

doctrine, but that it should be, also, manifested in their walk, yea,

at the risk of body and life, that they should be prepared for the

cross and temptation, that they should patiently and obediently bear

it, and follow their bridegroom, for the devil dislikes such confession

and therefore hates and persecutes them.

Answer. Caiaphas said unto the Pharisees and Scribes, " It is expedient

for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole

nation perish not," John 11:50.

His intentions sounded right, yet his cruel, blood?thirsty heart did

not perceive that it was he, who, through bitter zeal, sought the life

of the king of all glory.

We do not controvert but that Gellius and his fellow preachers

sometimes talk of a pious life, according to the Scriptures, and

admonish their hearers of the cross; but how they love true

righteousness, which true ?doctrine brings forth, and how they treat

the confessors thereof, may, alas, be educed from their indiscreet and

disgraceful writing and crying.

Since he writes that he thus admonishes them, as heard, and that it is

plainly manifest that he not only hates the true righteousness, power,

fruit and obedience which true preaching brings forth, but also

crucifies it, I fear, by his indiscreet and disgraceful writing,

therefore, the godly, pious reader may consider if he is not like unto

the Scribes and Pharisees, in this respect, who, although they

understood the law, yet so hated righteousness, that they, by their

connivance and advice, crucified him who was promised in the law, the

Fulfiller, Christ Jesus.

Dear reader, understand what I write. Outward preaching, hearing,

baptism and Supper do not at all avail before God; but before him avail

teaching and believing, faith and works, outwardly baptism and Supper,

according to the letter, and inwardly according to the Spirit and

truth. Behold, this is what God's word and ordinance teach us.

So long as such impenitent, carnal people are the dispensers, and such

vain, pompous, covetous, extortionate, carousing and drinking people

the partakers, so long, I say, it is not the true Supper of the Lord,

but it is a supper of the impenitent, an encouragement to the

unrighteous, and an enchanting mockery, however much it may be adorned

and decked, before men, with high?sounding words and praises; for

outside of the church of Christ, which is a gathering of the penitent,

there is neither baptism nor Holy Supper. Again understand that which I

write, Neither water, bread nor wine avail in Christ without true

repentance, if they were, even, served by the apostles themselves;

before him avail, alone, a new creature, a converted, changed and

broken heart, a sincere fear and love of God, unfeigned love of one's

neighbors, a sober, humble, peaceable and converted life, according to

the word and example of the Lord. Where there is such a new being, lo,

there is true baptism, and the true Supper. But to be baptized

outwardly and partake of the Supper, according to the letter, and not

inwardly before God in Spirit and truth, I repeat, is nothing more nor

less than a shadow, vain mockery of God's work, nay, hypocrisy and

deceit.

Is it not a lamentable blindness, that these poor, misled people attach

so much value to the outward, visible sign, and do not observe that

they are, with all their heart inimical to the invisible signification,

for which the visible sign was commanded in the Scriptures i as if God

had a special pleasure in the mere elements, water, bread and wine, and

not in the proper signification, which is represented and admonished

thereby.

O no, reader, we can not please nor serve God with mere water, bread

and wine; for by his hand, it was all created. But we can serve and

please him with the signification of his baptism and Supper, namely,

that we thereby testify our faith and obedience, that we will walk in

continual and eternal penance, that we will remember his inexpressibly

great love and blessings, that we are thereby admonished that he has

offered for us his spotless, pure body, and that he has shed his

precious blood for the reconciliation of our souls, in his ardent love

for us; that we will ever walk with him in unity of the Spirit, and

follow him; that we will love, assist, console, reprove, bear, admonish

and serve each other as members of one body; and that we will prove

ourselves unto death, as the newly born children of God in all

righteousness, holiness and truth. Behold, dear reader, for this

purpose the signs of the New Testament were instituted. If Gellius and

his like preachers were to use the Holy Supper in such heart and

spirit; if the signification, fruit, spirit and power, although in

weakness, were found in them and their disciples, as it is represented

and taught by the sign, then we would, by the grace of God, soon meet,

and not dispute about the use of the sign. But so long as they walk on

the broad road, practice and uphold infant baptism, defame the baptism

of the believing, do not separate their disciples and church from the

world, and teach an unblamable doctrine and life, so long we cannot

unite with them in doctrine and sacraments, whether this is attended by

prosperity or adversity, as God pleases. For we know to a certainty,

that the Lord's invincible, strong truth is on our side; and the

damnable, weak falsehood on theirs.

My faithful reader, reflect upon what I write. Our separation from the

doctrine and sacraments of the preachers is principally for two

reasons. In the first place, because we can plainly see, from the

Scriptures and by their actions, and are assured, that they are not

pastors but deceivers. All the Scriptures teach us that we shall not

hear, but shun such preachers. For if we are afraid of thieves,

murderers and wolves, according to the flesh, how much more should we

fear those who so miserably devour our poor souls, who retain us in

darkness, deprive us of the light of Christ, and fearlessly lead us to

the frightful, indissoluble darkness of everlasting and infernal

torment, for the sake of a meal of bread. For God's sake, dear reader,

do not think hard of me. Behold, before God it is true what I write.

The second reason is, that we may, by such shunning, testify to you and

all others, by open deeds, that you are outside of the Spirit, word,

kingdom and church of Christ, that you walk upon the wrong way ?and

that you are miserably deceived by your preachers?so that you may yet

awaken in time, depart from evil, walk in truth and be eternally saved.

If you are of reasonable minds, then consider well what we hereby seek,

and think not that we are so thoroughly deprived of reason that we walk

this narrow way, through contentiousness and partizanism. O, how gladly

would we save our weak bodies, our wives and small children, our

possessions and lives, and live peaceably with the world, if we were

not constrained by the love of God, and the eternal salvation of your

souls and our own. But, as it is, we should, for the two mentioned

reasons, sacrifice all to robbery, and, if the case require, to death,

in sincere, genuine love. For, as a general thing, truth is maintained

dearly; and sincere, faithful love crowned with a crown of thorns. O,

Lord!

In the last place he writes, "From this, every pious christian may

educe, how unreasonably these people, who accuse us of enmity,

contention and discord, and who quarrel about the articles of faith

among themselves, and thus sow enmity, contention and discord, as said,

Yea, who never thoroughly searched our doctrine, and who have scarcely

seen us partake of the Supper, notwithstanding, they reprove us of our

Holy Supper, and leave the assembly of Christ's church."

Answer. To. this I would reply in the first place: The unrighteousness

which shuts us out from the kingdom, church, body and Supper of Christ,

is not merely included in enmity, contention and discord, but also in

all other kinds of works of the flesh, such as, pomp, splendor,

avariciousness, drinking and carousing.

Although enmity and discord are, by the use of their supper, partially

appeased among some of them, as he writes, yet all the other abominable

sins and unrighteousness remain untouched as may be very plainly and

publicly seen by their fruits. The heathens, too, conclude peace among

themselves, when they are at variance with each other, yet they are not

the right grains of the Lord's bread, and the true members of his body.

Let every one of sound mind reflect upon what I say.

In the second place I say, He can not with truth substantiate his

accusation against us, that enmity, contention and discord exist among

us.

But as he and his fellows berate our christian doctrine and faith, our

sacraments and actions before the whole world, cause much trouble and

affliction; and we, by the grace of God, do not treat them inimically,

but patiently bear with them, teach, reprove and admonish them;

maintain truth with truth; and in sincerity of heart, show and point

out to them the right way, at the risk of blood and life, for which

they so hate us, so also, some raise up among us, as was the case in

the times of the apostles, who would rather follow their own opinion

than the Scriptures; who again return to the broad road, seek honor and

a name, and therefore make unscriptural pretensions. With such we

entreat and reason, admonish and reprove them, as the. Scriptures teach

us, and I trust we do this reasonably and in love. If they suffer

themselves to be taught, change their ways and strive after peace, then

we thank the Lord for his blessing. But in case they despise fraternal

admonition, remain obdurate in their ways and cause contention and

discord, then they cannot be our fellows and brethren, until they

acknowledge their faults, and return to the Lord's people in peace, 1

Tim. 6:5; 2 Tim. 2:17; Tit. 3:11. If this should be called causing

contention, enmity and discord about the articles of faith, or whether

it should be called purification of the house of the Lord, all the

right?minded may judge, both by their common sense and the Scriptures.

In the third place I say, the reason why we do not hear their doctrine,

and do not see their partaking of the supper, as he complains, is,

because we have for a long time witnessed by their fruits, that their

doctrine is vain and powerless, and their sacraments are not according

to the word. For of what spirit both their preachers and disciples are,

may, firstly, be educed from the dishonest, infamous, biter, false,

spiteful and incentive writings of the preachers, and, secondly, from

the abominable show of clothes, the extravagance about their houses,

and from the superfluous, carnal life of the best of their disciples.

What does their fine appearance, their ornamental logic avail, while

they, in fact, forsake the Scriptures and the signification, fruit and

power of the holy sacraments, nay, hate and persecute it? If I do not

write the truth, reprove me.

In the fourth place I would say, Gellius accuses us that we forsake the

church of Christ. But I say that we, according to the teaching of the

word and ordinance of God, and to the example of the holy, apostles,

forsake the world and their false prophets, and that we, through the

Spirit and grace of God, rid the church of Christ from snares,

faithfully, admonish her members, and in our weakness, establish and

edify them, according to the command of the holy word, Isaiah 52:11; 2

Cor. 6:17; Acts 2:40; Rev. 18:4. What shall this poor man say and boast

of the church of Christ, while she is yet quite unknown to him? I

voluntarily make this offer: If they allow me a discourse with them

under safe conduct, either privately before witnesses, or publicly,

before a full assembly, and if I cannot prove or maintain, by the power

of the truth that the preachers, in general, are deceivers and not

pastors, and that their pompous, avaricious, extortionate swearing and

cursing disciples, are of the world and are not christians, then I will

publicly acknowledge before all the world, that we not only have

forsaken the church of Christ, but also lamentably destroy her and

cause many a pious heart much misery, affliction and trouble, in vain.

But, as we can substantiate these assertions by the power of the truth,

why, then, must we yet hear so many evil words? It were, indeed, high

time that the preachers would quit their deceiving, that they and their

disciples, who, where and what they be, would awaken, that they would

tremble at the wrath and punishment of God, would repent, conform

themselves to the Spirit, word and example of the Lord, and establish a

true christian church, in accordance to the command of the Scriptures,

and that they disclaimed and abjured their borrowed names and false

boastings, as evangelical teachers, faithful shepherds, soulsavers, and

preachers of the holy word, which they, to the dishonor of God, merely

claim in appearance.Behold, reader, I write to you the truth and lie

not I seek nothing, before my God,, but that I may gain Gellius and all

the preachers, wherever they may be, to Christ, by the Spirit and word

of? God; or that I may be vanquished of them and stand abashed before

all the world, as an open deceiver. If they, now, be of christian

disposition, and preachers of the holy word who are desirous of unity,

as they pretend to be, then let them agree to what I desire they

should, namely, a free discussion of the grounds and doctrines of both

sides; that thereby the pure, saving truth of Christ may be maintained,

and the impure, damnable falsehood of anti?christ be destroyed.

But in ease they refuse this, as they have before twice refused me, and

continue their infamous defamation and upbraiding as they have ever.

done before, and accuse us with all manner of accusations before the

common people, that we forsake the church of Christ; that we are a

misled, deceived people, and that we pervert good into evil; what else

can we then do but leave them to the Lord and his judgment; and

willingly submit to the cross, as we have done, possess our souls in

patience, admonish those of unperverted heart, as much as possible,

minutely consider what kind of preachers and pastors they have, what

great injustice they do us, poor miserable ones; how scornfully they

reject truth, and maintain falsehood, since we, in all humility and

true love, invite them to this free, christian discussion of the

Scriptures, to the praise of Almighty God, and his eternal truth, and

to the beneficial refreshment of all the oppressed and afflicted souls.

But they refuse us this, and besides, slander and defame us by their

infamous publications without discretion, and without all foundation

and truth, and thus, disgracefully accuse us . before the whole world,

and cause many pious, innocent children to be deprived of their

possessions, honor and lives, even, as may, alaP, be witnessed in many

different localities of the Netherlands.

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EXCOMMUNICATION, BAN OR SEPARATION.

BEFORE I commence a reply to Gellius' excuse why they do not practice

Excommunication, Ban or Separation in their church, I would briefly

refer the kind reader to different passages of the Scriptures to show

that the Excommunication, Ban or Separation was not always practiced in

the same manner, nor according to the same ordinance, by the Lord's

people. The ban of Moses was punishment with death, Dent. 13; Lev. 16;

Numb. 31; Josh. 7. This ban was in force until the Roman dominion. At

that time a change was made; for, under the Roman scepter, they were

not allowed to put the law in force, in regard to capital punishment as

before. But they separated those who disobeyed the law; that is, they

ejected them from their synagogues and assemblies, shunned their daily

intercourse, neither ate nor drank with them, as maybe learned from

many of the Scriptures of the apostles, Luke 15:2; Matt. 18:17; 1 Cor.

G:11; 2 Thess. 3:6?14.

To this shunning, rule and usage, the doctrine and example of Christ

Jesus, and the holy apostles unanimously point us; and these two

following benefits are derived from them.

In the first place, that we be not deceived by the erroneous doctrine

of false spirits, and weakened by their carnal, vain life, 2 John 1:10.

"Know ye not," says Paul, "that a little leaven leaveneth the whole

lump 3 Purge out, therefore, the old leaven," &c., 1 Cor. 6:6, 7.

Yea, my reader, wherever this excommunication, ban or separation is

zealously and earnestly taught and maintained in the fear of God,

without respect of persons, there, doubtlessly, the church of the Lord

will be maintained unprofaned, in salutary, pure doctrine, and in an

offensive life. But where this is neglected, we find nothing but vanity

and worldliness, as may be plainly observed by all the churches and

sects which are not of us:

Reader, observe, so long as the literal Israel, in this respect,

followed the Ordinance of the Lord, and punished those deserving of the

ban, according to the word of the Lord, they remained upright and

pious; but when they neglected it, inclined their ears to falsehood,

and gave way to false prophets, they deviated from the way of life, and

degenerated into all kinds of wickedness and idolatry, as the

prophetical Scriptures, on every hand, complain and testify.

It was also the case with the primitive church; for so long as the

pastors and teachers strictly required a godly, pious life, served

baptism and Supper to the penitent alone, and rightly practiced

separation, according to the Scriptures, they remained the church and.

community of Christ. But as soon as they commenced to seek an easy,

careless life, and to shun the cross of Christ, they laid aside the

rod, preached peace to the people; gradually abandoned the ban; and

thus established an anti?christian church, a Babel or worldly church,

as may, alas, be noticed, to look back over the last several centuries.

Yea, my reader, if we had not until now strictly maintained this means

ordained of God, then, we and ours, at this day, would have been a

reproach and curse to the world, while, now, I trust, they, in their

weakness, will be, by the grace of God, an example and a light to many

men; although the world will not acknowledge it. In short, a church

without ban or separation, is like a vineyard without an enclosure and

trenches, or a city without walls; for the enemies have free ingress

into it to sow and plant their pernicious tares unhindered.

In the second place, that the wicked, by a reasonable admonition, and

separation from the pious, may, at heart, become ashamed, humble

themselves and sincerely repent before God and the church. Therefore;

Paul delivered the Corinthian unto Satan for the destruction of the

flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus, 1

Cor. S: S. He also thus delivered Hymeneus and Alexander, that they

might no longer blaspheme, 1 Tim. 1:20. At another place he writes, "If

any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no

company with him, that he may be ashamed; yet count him not as an

enemy, but admonish him as a brother," 2 Thess. 3:14, 15.

Behold, reader, here you have it briefly stated of whom, how, and to

what purpose, the ban or separation is ordained in the house and church

of the Lord. Judge, now, if you fear God, if it is not an especially

noble and necessary institution of pure love, which is ordained of the

God of love to a service of love, although the unenlightened and

refractory judge and consider it as enmity. For its ultimate design and

fruit is, that the church may remain sound in doctrine, and unblamable

in life; and that the erring, either in doctrine or life, may be

converted, and again return to the pasture and flock of the Lord. But

how far, yea, how very far, are all the preachers and churches of the

world from this God?pleasing ordinance and very necessary practice.

His first excuse that separation is not practiced in their church is,

That the papistical abomination has so abominably destroyed the

ordinance of the churches and the right usage of the ban, by their

abuse, that it cannot be immediately re?established.

Answer. If we diligently search the writings of the historians and

compare the actions of the church; to which they refer, with the

Scriptures, then, I think, that we surely find that there was not among

all the German nations, a true, apostolic, christian church which stood

right in doctrine, sacraments, ordinances and life; but that they were

all founded upon the papistic foundation and abominations, and remained

so, these many years.

Since, then, the church is not founded by the apostles upon the

foundation of Christ, but is founded of the Pope, upon his own

foundation, and is in every respect a papistical, and not a christian

church, and since it is palpable that it has at this hour, neither

teachers, communion, life nor sacraments conformable to the ordinance,

doctrine and example of Christ, therefore he can not practice the ban

until he separates himself, because he is an adulterer of the

Scriptures and deceiver of souls, and then all the church, because they

are generally impenitent in life and outside of the command, ordinance

and word of Christ in doctrine, as may be plainly noticed. Cqgita quae

dico, Qui male faoit, non videt Dewm, 3 John 11. Remember that it is

spoken, "He that doeth evil hath not seen God."

In the second place he writes, " We admit that in many churches

negligence is found, which we cannot commend; which is caused in some

places by the punishment of all open transgressions by the magistracy,

so diligently that the pastors esteem it unnecessary to put the ban in

force."

Answer. In my opinion it is high time that the preachers would quit

their trifling with the souls of men; that they would unreservedly

acknowledge that they are not the church of the Lord, but a poor,

erring and worldly flock; and then would earnestly commence to learn to

know themselves and next, to preach rightly the word of sincere

repentance, in the power of the Spirit. All those who would accept it

in sincerity of heart and truly repent, should serve the sacraments of

the Lord, according to the ordinance of God, and those who would

stubbornly reject it, should, by virtue of the holy word, be

excommunicated, without respect of persons; then they might gather a

church unto Christ, and rightly practice the ordinance of the Lord,

according to the Scriptures.

But so long as they baptize unconscious children, esteem all those who

are baptized as christians, dispense the bread to the impenitent, and

admit all .the avaricious, extortionate, pompous, drinking and

carousing, in the communion of their churches, the world will be their

church, and their church the world. In such a state of affairs they may

preach and admonish all their life?time about separation, and the true

church ordinances, but never establish them, since it is evident that

all their doctrines and sacraments are nothing but a vapor, vain and

powerless, for they are not the rightly called preachers, their

sacraments are not the true sacraments and their disciples are not the

Lord's church and people.

Say, beloved, how shall a house be built without workmen, timber, iron,

stone and mortar? Qui sanicordis est, cogitet quae dico. He who is of

sound mind, may ponder on what I say.

I would further say, that if Gellius rightly understood Christ and his

word, he would be ashamed all his life?time; and for these two reasons:

Firstly, because he undertakes to excuse the neglect of the pastors, by

saying that the magistracy punish open trasgressions, as if therefore

it were not necessary. I think that hundreds of pastors can be found in

Germany, who never in their life knew that the avaricious, drunken,

adulterous, &c., should be excommunicated; nay, what is worse. that the

greater part of them are themselves guilty of such infamous doings.

In my opinion it is as clear as day?light that his covering up and

decking this ignorance, nay, negligence and disgrace, with the excuse

that the magistracy punish the transgressors is nothing less than to

willfully defend falsehood and oppose truth.

Secondly, because he complains that the magistracy do not grant

authority or hearing to the pastors. Say, kind reader, where, in all

the days of your life, did you read in the apostolic Scriptures, that

Christ or the apostles requested the authority of the magistracy to

punish those who would not hear their doctrine or obey their words I

Yea, reader, I know to a certainty, that wherever the magistracy is to

maintain the ban by the force of the sword, there are not the true

knowledge, Spirit, word and church of Christ. If .this is not rightly

called by the papists, Invocare brockiwm seculare, that is invoking the

assistance of the world, I will leave to the judgment of the discreet

reader.

Also, observe here his hypocrisy and his pernicious flattery of those

in high standing; for where do we find, alas, more ungodliness than

among those in authority. Notwithstanding, he wants the ban to be

maintained by them, as if they were the true and faithful members of

the church of Christ and children of his community; and never observes

that if the pastors would rightly judge, according to the holy word,

the magistrates, next to the preachers themselves, would be the first

who should be, according to the Scriptures, separated and excluded from

the communion of the pious.

Since he, in this instance, so openly wheedles the magistrates and

those of high standing, and thus flatters them, against all the

Scriptures, therefore I cannot neglect to admonish all magistrates and

subordinates, and in faithful love to warn them, to consider how

miserably they are deceived by the preachers. Beloved lords, observe.

You all boast that you are christians and have the word of God, while

it is manifest that so many of the lords and princes, daily shed human

blood like water, by their ungodly warring and tumult; that they rob

many innocent people of their homes and property, that they cause many

afflicted orphans and helpless children to be made; and that many of

them drink and carouse day and night; abuse the creatures of God above

measure, namely, wine, beer, victuals, clothes, &c., all of whom are

deserving of excommunication and can not stand the test of the

Scriptures, as, I presume, many of the learned and preachers

themselves, well know; yet they connive at such, desire their authority

and assistance; they act hypocritically with them, they talk so as?to

please them, do not separate and punish them, however wickedly they

behave; dispense to them the bread and wine as if they were members of

the body of the Lord and brethren of his church. By this they so

comfort and encourage them in their wickedness, that they never stop to

inquire into the fear and ways of the Lord; for it is all peace, peace,

whatever they preach, as the prophet complains, Jer. 8:8; Ezek 13:22:

Beloved lords, take heed; they lead you straightway to the abyss of

hell; therefore, beware. I tell you the truth in Christ Jesus, they

deceive you. Again, I say, beware, they deceive you.

On the other hand, they hate and upbraid above measure, all those who

seek the Lord sincerely, who strive after his holy word, in their

infirmity, and who would gladly, in their weakness, lead a pious, godly

life, in the fear of the Lord; because they point them to Christ; and

in true, godly zeal, and brotherly love, reprove and admonish them, to

their own good, of their false doctrine, false sacraments, hypocrisy

and indifferent life, according to the teachings of the Scriptures.

Nay, we are called apostles of the devil, apostates, anabaptists,

conspirators and heretics, by them.

Behold, thus they connive at and flatter those of high standing,

although they, generally, are upon the broad way; and thus they

shamefully upbraid the innocent who never harmed them, and who would

gladly lead a pious life. Yet they boast that they are preachers of the

gospel and teach the word of God.

In the third place he writes: The disrespect to the servants of the

church, has, everywhere, become so prevalent, through the doings of

these devilish conspirators and heretics, that few churches submit

themselves, in unity of spirit, to their pastors, which is necessary.

Answer. That the disrespect to the preachers has become so prevalent,

is caused by nothing else but their own, exceeding wickedness, deceit,

avarice, blasphemy and shamelessness, as the prophet says, "Behold, I

will corrupt your seed, and spread dung upon your faces, &c." "Ye are

departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye

have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the Lord of hosts; Therefore

have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people,

according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the

law," Mal. 2:3, 8, 9.

Yea, dear reader, they have become so sinful, and have so trafficked

with the souls of men, that the just and great God could no longer

endure it; he therefore graciously inspired some pious hearts with the

Spirit of his divine knowledge, in his great love, and has discovered

unto them the decked, Babylonian woman, the preachers and their

churches, with all their fornication, abominations and

blood?guiltiness, and thus made manifest their inhuman disgrace. And

these, on account of their warning, all, in unfeigned love, against the

deadly, enchanting poison of her cup, by doctrine, life, example, blood

and possessions, by which they seek nothing but the praise of God and

the salvation of their neighbors, are called devilish conspirators and

heretics. O, Lord 1 O 1 never heard of blasphemy! O disgrace of all

disgrace!

All, my reader, my faithful reader, if we could reason with them, how

soon would it be shown who are the devilish conspirators and heretics!

But what does it avail? The Scribes and Pharisees sat upon exalted

seats, but Christ had not whereon to lay his head. Besides, he had to

hear, that he was possessed of the devil, and wrought his miracles in

the name of Beelzebub.

Is it not a perverse, lamentable hypocrisy, that this man undertakes to

blame us for their not practicing the ban, while it is known and

manifest to the whole world, that the greater part of the preachers are

such an indifferent, blind and carnal people, that they neither

acknowledge God nor his word, and seek nothing else than that they may

satiate their carnal appetites and continue in their careless easy

life? What kind of christians their churches or disciples are, what

knowledge they have, and how they fear God, may, alas, be educed from

their words and works, in city and country.

In the fourth place he writes, It is a fact well known to the whole

community (he refers to the community at Emden) that we have for

several years, assiduously labored to again establish the christian

ordinance of the ban.

Answer. The world acknowledges no ban, but when such a transgression

has been committed, that the executioner bans them with the sword,

noose or fire, for the sake of their evil?doing. Or, if one sincerely

repents and returns to God, abolishes the wicked, sinful life, in true

fear, and puts on the new life of true repentance, that they, along

with the papists, often deprive such an one of honor, possessions and

life, or exile him and thus drive him into the mouth of the gaping

lions.

But that they should, according, to the Scriptures, shun the misers,

drunkards, fornicators, &c.; that they should neither eat nor drink

with them, they do not know, since they are, as a general thing,

unchanged at heart, earthly?minded and full of all manner of avarice,

pomp, extravagance and carnal works.

Therefore I say again, they will admonish all their life time,

concerning the ban, but never establish it according to the word of

God; for how can one avaricious person shun the other, one drunkard the

other and one deceiver the other, according to the Scriptures, and

separate him from the communion of the church, while they are

altogether earthly?minded and without the communion, Spirit and word of

the Lord, as has been heard.

In the fifth place he writes,;"The example of the anabaptists frightens

us, who so practice the ban with discord, hatred and irreconcilable

anger one against the other, that it tends more to the destruction than

to the edification and gathering of the church, among them."

Answer. All that I read and see of him, is a benighted vision, wrong

judgment, wheedling of those of high standing, upbraiding and

slandering the pious, excusing perverseness and adulteration of the

Scriptures.

O, how little? does he, as appears, fear God; for here he undertakes to

cover up his fleeing from the cross and his disobedience, by citing the

example of others. Reader, remember that the word of God should teach

and govern us; that some refractory persons take offense at us, we

cannot prevent. We act as the word of God has commanded us.

All those who once enter into the obedience of the word, and afterwards

live or teach contrary to it, can not be permitted to continue with us

as brethren and sisters, if they will not hear our admonitions. In this

case, neither greatness nor littleness, riches nor poverty avail. With

God there is no respect of persons; they must all bow to the Spirit,

word and scepter of Jesus, or else they cannot remain our brethren.

Since it is manifest that the Spirit of the Lord becomes extinct in

such as seek the broad road, and are desirous of the freedom of the

flesh, of money and possessions; and that they offend the pious by

their light?mindedness or self?conceit, therefore, they should, though

reluctantly, be separated from the intercourse of the godly, when there

are no hopes left of their reformation. If they take offense at this,

because they hate to bear this shame, which is visited upon them in

love, for no other purpose than for their reformation, and therefore

slander and upbraid us, as, also the preachers; do because we dare not

hear their teaching, and partake of their sacraments, we cannot help

this; nor can we prevent that some of them become Davidists [3] and

Epicurians [4] (as Genius calls them), in spite of all our faithful

admonitions, assiduity, labor and brotherly, service.

The fact is, the seed did not fall on the right kind of soil, but by

the wayside, on rocky ground and amongst thorns, Matt. 13:6.

I repeat it. We have applied to them the faithful service of our

brotherly love, from our inmost hearts; admonished and entreated them,

and have patiently borne with some for one or two years, still waiting

on, their reformation, and in truth have not hastily separated them, as

he accuses us, without all foundation. Since we follow and practice the

ordinance of the Lord, in this respect, if he feared the Lord, he

should reasonably commend our action, because we do rightly, follow the

commands of God, at the risk of possessions and life, and because we

act according to the Scriptures, without all respect to persons; and he

would acknowledge the truth, and confess that not our example frightens

them, but the fear of the cross. For if they would justly act and treat

with kings, dukes, lords and princes, and also with their drunkards,

misers, vain?showers, &c., then it would be quite a different thing

with them; this I dare unreservedly say, and could prove it by facts.

In the sixth place he writes, '� If they think that they do much good

by their banning, toward the edification of the church, then let them

point out from the several hundreds which they have banned, not ten,

but only five, whom they have banned in love, and reformed through

their brotherly love, or whom they have brought to order and saved by

their banning."

Answer. He seeks all kinds of causes to blaspheme the word and work of

God, that he may give some appearance of reality to his cross?fleeing

and hypocrisy. Inasmuch, as he says that separation tends more to

destruction than edification, therefore the reader should know that we

daily find, by experience; that the following benefits are derived from

separation, among us: Firstly, that we thereby obey God's word.

Secondly, that we thereby rid the community from false doctrine,

discord, and offensiveness, as has been said. Thirdly, that the

disobedient are thereby, daily admonished to reflect, repent and

return. Fourthly, that we thereby testify that we do not consent to,

nor unite with the Munsterites, and other rebellious sects. Fifthly,

that we thereby admonish all preachers and their churches, that they

are without the ordinance and word of God, in this respect. Sixthly,

that thereby the whole world may learn from us that the advice,

doctrine, ordinance and command of God should be maintained and obeyed.

Behold, dear reader, these are the fruits which true separation, daily

brings forth, by the grace of (lod. But these, the preachers, ~ alas,

do not regard. If it were true that few are reformed thereby, as he

imputes, they must still admit that these beforementioned results are

obtained thereby.

Reader, take notice that however we may, act, it is of no avail with

the perverse; for if we had disregarded this means and divine

ordinance, as the preachers do, and had left every body to follow his

own mind, from which the great Lord ever preserve us, how loudly would

they cry that we were rebels and Arians [5] . But while?we separate

them, according to the Scriptures, from the communion of the church, it

is called a destructive means and a hasty ban. Behold, thus they seek,

on every hand, to destroy truth and uphold falsehood.

In the seventh place he writes, "It is better not to use the ban, than

to abuse it, to the destruction of the church.

Answer. If it were true as he asserts, then, still a good thing should

not be abandoned for the sake of some. If the ban is a means of

destroying and rupturing, the church of Christ, then ,Christ and the

apostles have very much deceived us in this regard, to have taught us

this ordinance, openly, both by word and example, as may be read in the

Scriptures. But what does it avail? He might briefly state his point

thus: We do not separate and ban, for we are, as a general thing, all

led by an erroneous spirit, and members of the body of anti?christ.

In the eighth place he writes, "None have proved a greater obstacle to

us in re?establishing the ban, than the anabaptists, who have caused a

disturbance in the edification] of the. churchtiof Christ, and in its

right course; who have brought the servantg into disrepute, and have,

under semblance of truth, drawn many, zealous.hearts from the church

(on whom it was to be practiced) and led them into falsehood."

Answer. If I had not learned to know Gellius from his other writings,

this excuse of his, in regard to the ban, would more than clearly teach

me what kind of a man he is. O, dear Lord? It is nothing but hypocrisy,

falsehood and deceit, whatever he says I He writes that we obstruct the

ban; yet, if he would confess the truth, he would be forced to admit,

that we do not obstruct him, but his own unbelief, carnal?mind and his

cross?fleeing flesh, as said before.

He writes that we have disturbed the edification of the church, while

it is manifest that we point out to all the churches of the world, by

doctrine and life, by the periling of possessions and blood, the right

way to a true worship and ordinance, and that they are those who, with

all their strength, disturb the course of the edification of the church

of Christ, by their light?minded doctrine, false sacraments, and vain

life.

He writes that we have brought the servants into disrepute, because we

reprove them, in unfeigned love, and point them by doctrine and life to

Christ's example, Spirit and word, while he acknowledges above, that

some are more fit to be herders of swine than shepherds of the sheep of

Christ.

He writes that we have, in semblance of truth, drawn many zealous

hearts from the church, and led them into many errors; while the facts

show that we do not separate them from the church but from the world,

and that we lead them, by the hand and help of God, into?eternal truth.

I would further say, Their doctrine has been preached for over thirty

years, in Germany, and there are whole kingdoms, principalities and

cities where not a single anabaptist, as he calls them, is to be found.

Who is it that obstructs the pastors there in re?establishing the ban?

In all the time that they have preached and taught their doctrine, they

have never yet banned an adulterer, drunkard, miser, &c., and excluded

such an one from the communion of their churches; notwithstanding he

writes that we obstruct and hinder them. O, dear Lord! thus are the

pious everywhere evil spoken of, although they seek God sincerely, and

would gladly see a christian church, true in doctrine, sacraments,

ordinances and life.

In the ninth place he writes, " For two reasons we could not so soon

establish it (he means the ban) as the anabaptists did. Firstly,

because our gatherings are open and consist of many hundreds, whom we

cannot all know; while their gatherings are secret and consist of but

few. Secondly, because we do not establish sects, as they do, which is

a work of the flesh, and befriended of the devil; but we establish an

eternal church unto Christ, which is beguiled and robbed by the devil."

Answer. Above he has partly acknowledged that many of their hearers are

of the world. Here he writes that their gatherings consist of many

hundreds, and that they gather an abiding church; yet they never came

to the point that they separate their disciples and church from the

world, and conform to the divine ordinance. The reason is because they

are of the world.

But to his writing that their assembly is large and kept in public, and

that ours is small, I would, with the word of the Lord, reply in this

manner, "Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to

destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is

the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life and few there

be that find it," Matt. 7:18,14.

Yea, my reader, if you attentively read the Scriptures you will find

that the number of the chosen ones ever was small and the number of the

unrighteous was always great. The pure and true gospel of Jesus Christ,

the true knowledge of eternal truth, never was so appreciated by the

world that the true believers can be counted by many thousands in any

country or city. Christ Jesus and his eternal truth must ever abide

with few, in retired places; but anti?christ and his falsehood can go

abroad undisturbedly and in public, and count his followers by

thousands.

Again, by his writing that they cannot know all on account of their

great numbers, he testifies that brotherly love is very scarce with

them; for where is there a christian pastor who does not know his sheep

I and where is the christian brother who does not know his neighbor I

If the preachers do not know all, on account of their great numbers,

still one brother should know the other; they should teach, admonish,

comfort and reprove each other; they should seek each other's

salvation; for this the word and unction of God teach us.

Reader, observe. He pretends " that they cannot possibly know all;" and

I, who am most of the time, keeping myself in retired places, could

point them out in great numbers. Let him, once travel through city and

country where they boast of the word, and let him take a close

observation, and he will find out how they dare heap one falsehood upon

another, and one ungodly act upon another; how they dare swear by the

Lord's sacred flesh, blood, death, wounds and sacrament, and how they

are decked with different, vain ornaments. Let him take a view of the

taverns, fencing?schools, the houses of ill?repute, &c., of which there

is no lack in Germany; let him examine the courts of kings and princes;

and into the ways of the nobility, and I presume he will find thousands

doubly deserving of separation. But an earthly mind and perverse heart

has, alas, little regard for the ordinance and word of the Lord.

Again, to his assertion that they do not establish sects, as he says we

do, and that it is a carnal work, I would reply thus: I do sincerely

wish that Gellius and all the Papists, Lutherans, Zuinglians,

Davidists, &c., could appreciate this matter, for it is written of

heresies and heretics, that they shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

It is a small matter to us to be called heretics by the world; for the

children of God, in the apostolic times, were also called the same.

Notwithstanding, we, in our humility, would say this in regard to this

matter, that we point to Christ Jesus, God's eternal Wisdom, Truth and

Son; for he is the One on whom to rely, and we unreservedly refer to

his doctrine, ordinance and usage. If any one under the whole canopy of

heaven, can convince us with the infallible truth that we are wrong and

act contrary to his word, then we will gladly hear it and obey the

truth.

But in case they cannot do so, they must confess that we are the

apostolic christian church, and that they are the deceiving, carnal

sects.

But that sectarians are raised amonst us, and not amongst them, is also

a strong proof that we are the church, and that they are not. For Paul

says, " There must be also heresies among you, that they which are

approved may be made manifest among you," 1 Cor. 11:19. John says, "

They went out from us, but they were not of us," 1 John 2:19.

Say, beloved, why should Satan beguile these with heresies, who are

already heretics and his adherents I But those that turn to the Lord,

such he beguiles and seeks to devour them, Gen. 3:15; 1 Pet. 5:8.

In the tenth place he writes, If they only said that we do not teach

the ban, it might insult us and many teachers and churches, and they

might almost be disgraced thereby. But they say that we neither have,

hold to, nor practice it.

Answer. In my opinion it would be well for him not to ridicule these

things, but to closely observe the word of the Lord. Before God, the

literal teaching does not avail; but before him, avails action in power

and truth. If they should say that this would cause a disturbance, then

I would ask what kind of protectors and shepherds they are, if they

neglect the will and word of God on account of the disturbance of the

world. Let all the right minded judge this according to the Scriptures,

Matt. 10.

In the last place he writes, But, admit it to be true that this failure

exists in all of our churches, although the contrary is true of many of

them, for in the German church in London, England, one is banned,; and

it is not altogether neglected herein Emden. Would the church on that

account lose its name and henceforth, as they say, be no longer the

church of Christ? Then, truly our body, to which the church is likened,

would lose the name of body on account of some blemish or wound.

Answer. I think this is posuimus mendac?ium spem nostrcam, to make lies

our refuge. For he says, the contrary is true of many churches; yet he

can point to only one, of the many kingdoms, principalities, cities and

towns, who is banned, namely, at London, England. I have never, in all

my life time heard of a more ridiculous assertion. How manifestly does

the great Lord turn their wisdom to foolishness and their understanding

to nothing, 1 Cor.1. Yet the blind, ignorant world does not see it.

Reader, reflect, afid see if these are not the mockers of which Peter

and Jude prophesy, 2 Pet. '3:3; Jude 8. The whole German nation or

people, nay, all countries, are so replete with ungodliness,

abominations and wickedness that we should stand dumb?founded. Yea,

that the righteous, who fear the Lord, are as scarce as the grapes of a

vintage which has been diligently gleaned, and in which few are left to

pluck and use, as the prophet laments, ?Mich. 7:1; and out of so many

hundreds of thousands, he points to one who was banned at London, that

it may be said that they practice the ban, and thus that they thus may

give a semblance to their disobedience.

I think that they act so awkwardly, that the whole world must see that

it is nothing but hypocrisy, falsehood and deceit. O, Lord, how long

will this mockery be endured ! But to his writing that if the church

should lose her name on account of an error, that then, also, our

bodies would lose its name on account of a blemish or wound, I would

reply: If this was the only error in their church, then there would yet

be hopes of a reformation; but their failures and short?comings are so

numerous, that they would better be compared to a dead body, than to a

body that has but? one blemish or wound, as he pretends to say.

I think that?in this instance the cunning of the fog which destroys

.God's vineyard (which he, in his writing imputes to us) is plainly

discernable here. For how cunningly they flee from one latibulo

(hidingplace) to another, lest they be caught, may, alas, be clearly

educed from this frivolous excuse of the ban.

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[3] Davidists are the followers of David George, a eect of quiet

mystics in the sixteenth century, who were accused of very erroneous

sentiments.

[4] Followers of Epicurus, an ancient Greek philosopher.?Webster's

Royal Octavo Dict.

[5] Arians, followers of Arius, a presbyter of the church of

Alexandria, about 315, who maintained that the Son of God was totally

and essentially distinct from the Father; that he was the first and

noblest of those beings whom God had created?but inferior to the Father

in nature and dignity. also, that the Holy Ghost was not God, but

created by the power of the Son. ?Buck's Theol. Dic.

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CONCERNING THE CHURCH, AND AN INSTRUCTIVE COMPARISON HOW

WE MAY DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST,

AND THE CHURCH OF ANTI?CHRIST.

Gnus complains that we destroy and leave the church of God, and that we

are devilish sects and conspirators; and, on the contrary boasts that

they gather an abiding church. Therefore, in my opinion, it is

necessary, in the first place, to compare the churches with the

requirements of the Scriptures, that the pious reader may know the

difference, and see which and what the Church of Christ is, and also

what the church of anti?christ is; how long they both have existed; of

whom they are; of whom they are brought forth; to what purpose they are

begotten; of what disposition or nature they both are; what their

fruits are; and by what signs they may be known, lest he be deceived by

the preachers, and mistake the church of Christ for a heresy and

conspiracy, and the church of anti?christ for the church of Christ.

In the first place, it should be taken into consideration, that the

community of God, or the church of Christ, is an assembly of the pious,

and a community of the saints, as is represented by the Nicene symbol;

who, from the beginning have firmly trusted and believed in the

promised seed of the woman, which is the promised Prophet, Messiah,

Shilo, King, Prince, Emmanuel and Christ; who accept his word in

sincerity .of heart; follow his example, are led by his Spirit, and who

trust in his promise in the Scriptures, Dent. 18:18; Gen. 49:10; Jer.

23:5; 33:15; Isaiah 7:14.

Such are now, generally called christians or the church of Christ,

because they are born of Christ's word by means of faith, by his

Spirit, and are flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone, as the

children of Jacob, on account of their natural birth, were called the

house of Israel, Rom. 9:7?9.

On the contrary it should be observed that the church of anti?christ is

a gathering of the ungodly, and a community of the impenitent, who

reject the aforementioned seed, Christ, and his word, and oppose his

will, and for that reason are called the anti?christian community or

church, because they, through the spirit and artifices of anti?christ,

although in semblance of the word, and in the name of Christ, teach,

believe, act, and establish a strange worship, contrary to the Spirit,

word, example and ordinance of Christ.

In the second place, it should be observed that the church of the pious

is from the beginning; yet, it had not always the same ordinance; nor

was it always called by one name in the Scriptures. For, before their

departure from Egypt, they had no particular, written law; yet they

feared the great and powerful God, faithfully served Him, offered

burnt?offerings, and walked in his ways, as may be seen in the case of

Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and others; they were, at that time,

called God's children. Afterwards, Abraham was commanded to circumcise

himself and his household, and all the males after him, on the eighth

day after their birth, Gen. 17:10. About four hundred years after that,

Moses gave the law; and from that time they were generally called the

people of God, or the house of Jacob and Israel. At last Christ Jesus,

the Messiah of all the world appeared, to which all the Scriptures

point. All those who hear him, believe his word and follow him, are now

called christians, or the church of Christ, as heard, Isaiah 58:2, 4;

Jer. 23:5.

Although at different times she was under different ordinances and

?usages, and, although the church is called by different names, as

said, yet all, before, under and after the law, who, in sincere, true

fear of God, walked, and continue to walk according to the word and

will of God, and trust in Christ, are one community, church and body,

and will ever remain so; for they are all saved by Christ, accepted of

God, and gifted with the Spirit of his grace. It should also be

observed that the church of the ungodly, which is the church of

anti?christ, commenced first with the ungodly, who were inspired with

the spirit of the devil, which is envious of all good things; and will

be unto the end. For the anti?church has generally existed, from the

beginning, side by side with the christian church, and is the most

numerous; and till the deluge, it is spoken.of, in the Scriptures as

the"' children of men," Gen. 6:2; John 8:44. But from the flood until

the circumcision of Abraham they are called Gentiles. After the time of

the circumcision they are called Gentiles or uncircumcised, Gen. 17:11;

Rom. 15:9.

They did not know the true and living God, but they worshipped and

served the handiwork of men, wood, stone, silver and golden gods,

besides, dragons, serpents, oxen, fire, the sun, moon, &c., until the

apostles preached the gospel unto all the world, and gathered a church

unto Christ, Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:16; Rom. 10:17; Col. 1:23, which

church has been in the meantime so destroyed by anti?christ, that the

greatest number have degenerated into open Gentiles and idolaters,

although, in appearance they call themselves christians; for they bend

their knees to rods and blocks, and require the assistance of the

artificer. Others, and these are the best minded of them, seek

consolation and their salvation in wrought ceremonies, water, bread,

wine, and absolutions; so that we are forced to say that they are the

church of the impenitent, and the church of anti?christ.

In the third place, it should be observed that the christian church is

of God, as Paul says, " For both he that sanctifieth, and they who are

sanctified, are all of one," Heb. 2:11. For as Christ Jesus, who is the

true Savior, is of God, nay, God's only begotten and firstborn Son, so

also are all those who, in sincerity of heart, believe his word, and

are actuated by his Spirit. John says, "But as many as received him, to

them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe

on his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the

flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," John 1:12, 13.

Again, " Every one that loveth, is born of God," 1 John 4:7. On the

other hand it should be observed that the church of antichrist is of

the evil one, as the Lord said unto the Pharisees, " Ye are of your

father, the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a

murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there

is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for

he is a liar, and the father of it," John 8:44. " He that committeth

sin, is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning," 1 John

3:8.

Reader, observe. By these words the spirit of truth has already judged

all liars, blood?shedders, avaricious, perjurers, adulterers,

drunkards, pompous, idolators together with all the unrighteous that

they are of the devil; that is, that they are the devil's community.

Nevertheless they boast that they are the church of Christ, as also the

Pharisees boasted that they were Abraham's seed and children, John

8:39??44.

In the fourth place it should be observed that the church of Christ is

begotten of sincere, pious preachers and christians, who are actuated

by the Spirit of Christ; arid who are, as Moses, Samuel, Isaiah,

Jeremiah, Peter, Paul, John, &c., unblamable in doctrine and life; who,

in pure and faithful love, seek the salvation of their neighbors, and

who can, in sincerity, say with Paul, "Be ye followers of me, even as I

also am of Christ," 1 Cor. 11:1; who preach the word in the power of

the Spirit; who are shining lights before all men; and .who with all

their strength strive with their received talent, and may make a great

gain to the treasure of the Lord, Phil. 2:15; Matt. S; 16. For it was

God's way and will from the beginning, to proclaim the doctrine of

repentance through pious and unblamable servants, as has been

sufficiently shown above under the head of the " Calling of the

Preachers."

On the other hand it should be observed that the church of anti?christ

is brought forth by faithless preachers, who are actuated by the spirit

of anti?christ; who with Korah, Dathan and Abiram seek the applause of

the people, Num. 16:2, who with Balaam seek inordinate gain, Num.

22:24; and who with the prophets of Jezebel seek choice victuals. Who,

with Hananiah flatter the people, Jer. 28:11; who, with the false

prophets preach Peace, Ezek. 13:16; who are earthly and carnally

minded, and seek nothing but world, ease, honor, belly and gain, Phil.

3:19; Rom. 16:17.

O, reader, how the greatest and highest esteemed preachers of our day,

whose names have become wide spread, seek the poor, naked and crucified

Christ Jesus, and the souls of men with their gospel, may, alas, be

educed from the accursed, ungodly pomp and splendor about their houses,

and from the vain and curious ornaments, chains, rings, silk and satin,

of their women and children. Notwithstanding their doctrine is called

the evangelical theology, and they, the servants of the holy word.

In the fifth place, it should be observed that the church of Christ is

begotten by the Spirit and word of Christ. For as an honorable woman

can bring forth no legitimate children but from the seed of her lawful

husband, so, also, the bride of Christ, namely, the church, can bring

forth \_:Lio true Christians but from the legitimate seed of Christ,

that is, from the unadulterated word, rightly preached through the Holy

Spirit, and conceived in the heart of the hearers. Paul says, "In

Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel," 1 Cor. 4:15;

James says, " Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth," Jas.

1:18; also read Rom. 10; 1 Pet. 1.

On the other hand the church of antichrist is begotten of deceiving

doctrine, through the spirit of error. Paul says, "Now the Spirit

speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the

faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

speaking lies in hypocrisy," 1 Tim. 4:1. Yea, reader, what else has the

church of Christ abolished, and the church of anti?Christ

re?established, but the false doctrines of the learned, the many

inconsistent concilions, decrees, statutes, doctrines and commands of

men? What else blinds the German nation, to?day, and what else retains

them in their ungodliness, but the lightminded doctrine of the

preachers, the ungodly, infant baptism, the unscriptural, idolatrous

supper, and the neglect of the Lord's ordinance (separation), as it was

practiced by the apostles?

The prophets on every hand complained that Israel inclined their ears

to false preachers, Isaiah 30:9; Jer. 8:8;14:14.

Christ Jesus, and his holy apostles faithfully warn in many Scriptures

against false prophets; for they deceive you, says Christ; they serve

their bellies and not the Lord Christ, says Paul; they promise others

liberty and are themselves servants of corruption, says Peter. They

turn the grace of God unto lasciviousness, Jude 4, and they are of

anti?Christ, Matt. 7:16; 16:9; 2 Pet. 2:19. O reader, reflect

diligently on what I write.

In the sixth place it should be observed that the church of Chat is

begotten for the purpose of hearing the Lord, to fear, love, serve,

praise, honor and thank God sincerely, as Moses says, "And now, Israel,

what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy

God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord

thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul; to keep the

commandments of the Lord, and his statutes," Dent. 10:12.

Again, "Ye shall walk after the Lord your God, and fear him, and keep

his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and

cleave unto him," Dent. 13:4. Peter says, " Ye are a chosen generation,

a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should

show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into

his marvelous light," 1 Peter 2:9.

Behold, the church of Christ is begotten that his great miracles, his

Almighty Majesty, his inextinguishable love, and his adorable, high and

holy name may be eternally glorified.

But the church of anti?Christ despises, hates and reviles God, as the

prophet says, They transgress my covenant, as Adam did, by which they

despise me. Yea, all who reject the Lord's will, word, advice,

admonition, chastening, grace and love, hate him and will not be ruled

by him They do not his will, but their own; they say in their hearts

Depart from us, we will know nothing of thy ways; who is this Most

High, that we should serve him ff Behold, thus they boldly despise the

Almighty, eternal God, who is the Creator, Messiah and Lord of all the

world. May the dear Lord grant them eyes that they may see their great

faults; and hearts to realize them; this is my sincere wish for them,

Amen.

In the seventh place it should be observed that the church of Christ in

her weakness, is disposed and minded as Christ; for Paul says, "If any

man be in Christ, he is a new creature," 2 Cor. 5:17; he s led by the

Spirit; and acknowledges through this Spirit that he abides in God and

God in him; he partakes of the divine nature. Yea, dear reader, the

true church hates that which Christ hates, and loves that which he

loves; for she is his Bride, flesh of his flesh, and " made to drink

into one Spirit." Therefore she can not be otherwise minded than Christ

is minded, for she is begotten of his word and abides in him and he in,

over, and through her, 1 John 4:12; John ls:4?7.

Compare this with the church of antichrist, and you will find that ' it

is of ?like nature as her father of whom she is begotten, namely,

proud, envious, murderous, false, disobedient, self?conceited, earthly

and, carnally minded, selfish, avaricious, bold, proud, pompous,

superfluous, impure, and altogether opposed to Christ. For all things

that Christ prohibits, they do; and that which he commands, they

despise; whatever he hates, they love, and whatever he loves, they

hate; notwithstanding they boast that they gather an abiding church, as

has been heard, 1 Cor. 8:6; 1 John 3

24; 4:13. He that hath ears?let him hear, and judge whether or not I

speak the truth.

In the eighth place it should be observed that the church of Christ

brings forth the fruits of Christ, as he says, "I am the vine, ye are

the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth

forth much fruit," John 15:6.

Every tree bears after its own kind; all who are born of God, and

partake of the divine nature, fear, love, serve and praise God with all

their heart; walk unblamably; fraternally teach, admonish, reprove,

uphold, and comfort their neighbor; daily die unto the flesh and its

lusts; conform their, ways according to the word of the Lord and

continually lament over their being such poor, weak and frail sinners,

Matt. 7:17.

They strive to become conformable unto the death of the Lord that they

may arise from the. death of their sins, and that they may attain unto

a perfect being in Christ. Not, my reader, that they have already

attained or become perfect. By no means; but they strive, with Paul, to

follow after, if that they may apprehend that for which also I am

apprehended of Christ Jesus, Phil. 3:12.

On the other hand look at the fruits of the church of anti?christ.

Their preachers falsely teach; boldly deceive, and live an easy,

superfluous life. The magistracy behave as if they were born for no

purpose but to make war and tumults; to torture, murder, destroy cities

and countries; to make vain show, drink, carouse, and to live in all

manner of lasciviousness, yea, many act so that they, alas, would

better be called Leones rugientes (roaring lions) and lwpi ves pertini

(howling wolves) than human! (human beings) and reasonable persons to

say nothing of christians.

The common people drink, carouse, curse, swear, grasp, tear, lie, and

cheat. In short, we find such behavior on every hand, as if God was a

chimera, and his word a fable. Behold, such are the fruits of those who

boldly boast that they are the church of Christ. Oh! would to God that

they could see what Christ Jesus, after whom they call themselves, and

his holy apostles, have taught them in plain words, and what example

they left them, that they might yet be saved. For as it is they only

play with the letter, cry and boast; but, alas, no spirit, work, power

and fruits are apparent.

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THE SIGNS BY WHICH BOTH CHURCHES MAY BE KNOWN.

ALTHOUGH I think, kind reader, that the difference between both

churches may be fully perceived in the foregoing comparison, yet I

will, for the sake of greater clearness, briefly present the following

signs by which the one church may be known from the other, that truth

may be the more fully testified and manifested.

The first sign by which to distinguish the church of Christ is the

salutary and unadulterated?doctrine of his holy and divine word. God

commanded Israel to abide by the doctrine of the law and not to deviate

there from, neither to the right hand nor to the left, Dent. 5:32.

Isaiah admonished them to conform themselves to the law and its

testimony, or they would not receive light, Isaiah 8:20. Christ

commanded his disciples, saying, " Go ye into all the world, and preach

the gospel to every creature," and "teach them to observe all things

whatsoever I have commanded you." The prophets testify on every hand

that they spoke the word of God, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, they

say; again, the mouth of the Lord says; again, thus speaketh the Lord

God who has led you out of the land of Egypt, and other like

testimonies. Paul also says, "But though we, or an angel from heaven,

preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto

you, let him be accursed," Gal. 1:8. In short, where the church of

Christ is, there his word is preached purely and rightly; but where the

church of anti?christ is, there the word of God is adulterated; there

we are pointed to an earthly and unclean Christ and to means of

salvation which are strange to the Scriptures; there we are taught a

broad and easy way; there the great are flattered, truth perverted into

falsehood; there easy things are taught, such as the poor, ignorant

people will gladly hear. In short, there they are consoled in their

unhappy state, that they may underrate it, and say, " Peace, peace,

when there is no peace," Jer. 8:11. They promise life to the

impenitent, while the Scriptures say, that they shall not inherit the

kingdom of God, 1 Cor. 6:10; Gal. 5 21.

The second sign is the right and Scriptural use of the sacraments of

Christ, namely, the baptism of those who, by faith, are born of God,

sincerely repent, who bury their sins in Christ's death, and arise with

him in newness of life; who circumcise the foreskin, of their hearts

with the circumcision of Christ, which is done without hands; who put

on Christ, and have a clear conscience, Tit. 3:5; Rom. 5:4; Col. 3:11;

1 Pet. 3:21. Again, the dispensing of the Lord's Holy Supper to the

penitent, who are flesh of Christ's flesh, who seek grace,

reconciliation and the remission of their sins in the merits of the

death and blood of the Lord, who walk with their brethren in love,

peace and unity, who are led by the Spirit of the Lord, into all truth

and righteousness, and who prove, by their fruits, that they are the

church and people of Christ.

Where baptism is practiced without the command and word of Christ, as

those do who not only baptize without faith, but also without reason

and consciousness; where the power and representation of baptism,

namely, dying unto sin, the new life, the circumcision of the heart,

&c., are not only not upheld, but also quite hated by those of mature

age; and where the bread and wine are dispensed to the avaricious,

pompous and impenitent; where salvation is sought in mere elemefits,

words and ceremonies, and where a life is led contrary to all love,

there is the church of anti?christ; this all intelligent person' must

admit. For it is manifest that they reject Christ, the Son of God, his

word and ordinance, and place in its stead their own ordinance and

works, and thus establish an abomination and idolatry.

The third sign is obedience to the holy word, or the pious, christian

life which is of God. The Lord says," Ye shall be holy, for I, the Lord

your God, am holy," Lev. 19.:1. Christ says, "Ye are the light of the

world." Paul says, "Be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without

rebuke, in the midst of .a crooked and perverse nation, among whom, ye

shine as lights in the world," Phil. 2:16. John says, "He that saith he

abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked," 1

John 2:8.

But how holy, the church of anti?christ is, how her light shines, how

unblamably and purely they. walk, and how their life conforms to

Christ's life, may, alas, be educed from their words and works, on

every hand.

The fourth sign is the sincere and unfeigned love of one's neighbor,

for Christ says, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples,

if ye have love one to another," John 13:35. Yea, reader, wherever

sincere, brotherly love is found without hypocrisy with its fruits,

there we find the church of Christ. John says; "Let us love one

another; for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God,

and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love,"

1 John 4:7, 8.

But whether the church of anti?christ is not there where brotherly love

is rejected, where they hate, defame, strike and beat each other, where

every one seeks his own interest, where they treat each other

deceitfully and faithlessly, curse, swear and slander, where they

defile their neighbors' maiden, daughters and wives, deprive each other

of honor, possessions and life, commit all manner of recklessness,

abominations and malice against each other, as may, alas, be seen on

every hand, all intelligent persons may judge according to the

Scriptures.

The fifth sign is, that the name, will, word and ordinance of Christ,

are unreservedly confessed, in spite of all the cruelty, tyranny,

uproar, fire, sword and violence of the world, and that they are upheld

unto the end. Christ says, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before

men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven,"

Matt. 10:32. "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me, and of my

words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the

Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with

the holy angels," Mark 8:38. Paul, also, says, "For with the heart man

believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made

unto salvation," Rom. 10:10.

But what kind of a church is found, where they are papistic, when with

the papists; Lutheran, when with the Lutherans, &c., now build up, and

anon demolish and act the hypocrite to suit the magistracy, every one

may judge who is enlightened by the truth, and taught of the Holy

Spirit.

The sixth sign is the pressing cross of Christ, which is taken up for

the sake of his testimony and word. Christ says unto his disciples, "

Ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake," Matt. 24:9. "All

that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution," 2 Tim.

3:12. Sirach says, "My .son if thou come to serve the Lord, prepare thy

soul for temptation. Set thy heart aright, and constantly endure, and

make not haste in time of trouble. Cleave unto him, and depart not

away, that thou mayest be increased at thy last end. Whatsoever is

brought upon thee, take cheerfully, and be patient when thou art

changed to a low estate. For gold is tried in the fire, and acceptable

men in the furnace of adversity," Eccl. 1:5. Also read, Matt. 5:10;

10:23; 18:24; Mark 13:13; Luke 6:22; John 16:2; Acts 14:18; 2 Tim. 2;

Heb. 11:37; 12:2.

That this very cross is a sure sign of its being the church of Christ,

has been testified not only in olden times by the Scriptures, but also

by the example of Jesus Christ, of the holy apostles and prophets, by

the primitive and unadulterated church; and also, by the present pious,

faithful children, especially ?in these our Netherlands.

On the other hand, the ungodly, heathenish, lying, hating, envying,

upbraiding, blaspheming, and. the unmerciful apprehending, exiling,

robbing and murdering, as may be witnessed in different localities, are

plain signs of the church of antichrist. For John saw that the

Babylonian "woman was drunken with the blood of the saints, and with

the blood of the martyrs of Jesus," Rev. 17:6. He also saw that to the

beast which arose from the sea, a mouth was given, speaking great

things and blasphemy against God and his holy name, and his tabernacle

or church, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to

make war with the saints, and to overcome them, Rev. 13:5, 6, 7. 'lea,

dear reader, this is the proper way and work of the church of

anti?Christ, To hate, persecute and put to the sword those whom she

cannot enchant with the golden cup of her abominations.

O Lord!, O, dear Lord! grant that the wrathful dragon devour not

entirely thy poor, small number; grant that we, by thy grace, may, in

patience, conquer by the sward of thy mouth; and may leave an abiding

seed, which shall keep thy commandments, preserve thy testimony, and

which shall eternally praise thy great and glorious name. Amen, dear

Lord, Amen.

Herewith I will ?abbreviate the doctrine of the churches, and conclude

this subject with the following questions and answers, which, I trust,

by the grace of God, will enlighten the diligent reader considerably.

Quest. What is the church of Christ?

Ans. A community of saints.

Q. With whom did she originate ?

A. With Adam and Eve.

Q. Of whom is she?

A. Of God, through Christ.

Q. Of what kind of servants is she begotten?

A. Of those who are unblamable, in doctrine and life.

Q. Whereby do they beget her?.

A. By the Spirit and word of God.

Q. For what purpose do they beget her ?

A. That she shall serve, thank and praise God.

Q. Of what mind is she?

A. Of Christ's mind, in weakness.

Q. What kind of fruits does she bring forth?

A. Fruits which are conformable to the word of God.

Q. What is the church of anti?Christ?

A. A community of the unrighteous.

Q. With whom did she originate?

A. With the first ungodly.

Q. Of whom is she?

A. Of the evil one, through anti?Christ.

Q. Of what kind of servants is she begotten ?

A. Of such as are blamable in doctrine and life.

Q. Whereby do they beget her?

A.. By the spirit and . doctrine of anti?

christ.

Q. For what purpose do they beget her l

A. That she may despise, forsake and

hate God.

Q. Of what mind is she g

A. Of an earthly, carnal, and devilish

mind.

Q; What fruits does she bring forth?

A. Fruits contrary to the gospel.

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THE TRUE SIGNS BY WHICH THE CHURCH OF

CHRIST MAY BE KNOWN.

I. By an unadulterated, pure doctrine, Dent. 4; 6; 5; 12; Isaiah 8:5;

Matt. 28:20; Mark 16:15; John 8:02; Gal. 1.

II. By a scriptural use of the sacramental signs, Matt. 28:19; Mark 16;

Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12; 1 Cor. 12:13; Tit. 3:5; 1 Pet. 3; Matt. 26:25;

Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19; 1 Oor. 11:22, 23.

III. By obedience to the word, Matt. 7; Luke 11:28; John 7:18; 15:10;

Jas. 1:22.

IV. By unfeigned, brotherly love, John 13:34; Rom. 13:8; 1 Cor. 13:1; 1

John 3:18; 4:7, 8.

V. An unreserved confession of God and Christ, Matt. 10:32; Mark 8:29;

Rom. 10:9; 1 Tim. 6:13.

VI. By oppression and tribulation for the sake of the Lord's word,

Matt. G:10; 10:39; 16:24; 24:9; Luke 6:28; John 15:20; 2 Tim. 2:9;

3:12; 1 Pet. 1:6; 3:14; 4:13; 5:10; 1 John 3:13

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THE TRUE SIGNS BY WHICH THE CHURCH OF ANTI?CHRIST MAY BE KNOWN.

I. By a light?minded, easy and false doctrine, Matt. 7:16; 15:9; 16:4;

Rom. 16:26; 1 Tim. 4:2; 2 Tim. 2:16, 17.

II. By an unscriptural use of the sacramental signs, as infant baptism

and dispensation of the supper to the impenitent, 1 Cor. 11:19, 20.

III. By disobedience to the word, Prov. 1; Tit. 1:15, 16; Matt. 7:26;

25:26.

IV. By hatred of the brethren, 1 John 3:15.

V. By hypocrisy and denial of the name of God and Christ, Matt. 10:33;

Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26.

VI. By tyranny and persecution against the godly, John 15:20; 16; Rev.

12:13.

Behold, dear reader, we have?here shown you the foundation of both

churches; what they are, of whom they are, and by whom they are

begotten; of what mind they are, what kind of fruits they bring forth;

and by what signs they may be known.

Whoever does not willfully err, to him a plain way is hereby pointed

out. If you, then, would be a true member of the church of Christ, you

must be born of the word of God; be of a christian mind; bring forth

christian fruits; walk according to his word, ordinance and command;

die unto the flesh and the world; lead an unblamable life in the4ear of

God; serve and love your neighbors with all� your heart; confess the

name and glory of Christ, and be prepared for all manner of

tribulation; misery and persecution for the sake of the word of God and

its testimony, John 3:3, 4; 15:4; 8:31; 1 Pet. 1:23; Phil. 2:15; Rom.

8:14.

But if you refuse this and remain unchanged in your natural state; lead

an impenitent, easy life, lay aside the word and ordinance of the Lord,

act the hypocrite with the world, and refuse the cross, then you cannot

be a member of the church of Christ; or else the word of God must be

false and fallible; for on every hand the Scriptures teach faith, love,

the fear of God, repentance, obedience, dying unto the flesh,

selfdenial, a new life, and the cross. Therefore, sincerely fear God,

deny yourself, search the Scriptures, follow the truth, and take heed

lest you be deceived and eternally lose your soul for the sake of

temporal life and its enjoyments, Mark 1:15; 8:36; John 1:3; 13:14;

Luke 13:24; 9:25; Rom. 6:8; Col. 3:9; Gal. 6:1; Matt. 16:25.

Having given a scriptural explanation of the difference between the two

churches, I will now turn to Gellius' argument by which he would prove

their church to be the christian, and ours the heretical and

conspirator's church. This, I trust to be enabled to show by the word

of the Lord, so that the impartial reader must clearly see that he

(Gellius) strives, with all his power, to suppress the salutary and

plain word of God, together with his church; and to excuse and uphold

as well as he can the deciving serpent and his church.

In the first place he writes: " The saints at Corinth and of the church

of Galatia,, whom Paul reproves on account, of their abominable sins,

still continued to hear the ?word of God, and to receive the sacraments

from their bishops and pastors."

Answer. If Gellius and the preachers would conform their doctrine and

life to the Scriptures; would rightly serve out their sacraments, would

separate their church from the world, according to the Scriptures, then

we might talk of listening to the preachers. But so long as the

preachers remain deceivers, use their sacraments contrary to the word

of God, and their disciples are of the world; so long as they practice

neither ban? nor punishment as the Scriptures ?require, it is, in my,

opinion, of no use to say much in regard to this, for it is manifest

that they are without Christ and his word.

Reader, understand this matter rightly. Paul did not bear with the

ungodly state of affairs in the before mentioned churches, as the

preachers of the present day, do; but he rebuked them, in severe terms,

especially those of Corinth, and pointed the obedient to the

separation, if they, at his coming again, had not reformed themselves,

2 Cor. 12:13.

Gellius should, reasonably, also do this and should not console the

poor, reckless people with the idea that other people, in the past,

have also sinned; for this is surely what Sirach calls, excusing with

the example of other people; neither can it help his cause; for, in the

first place, these churches were rightly built, but afterwards some of

them were misled by false prophets and heretics, and led into byways.

Some of them, as appears, have again given themselves to an easy,

carnal life, as is generally the case with those who turn their backs

upon the truth, delight in new doctrines, discord and disputation, as

experience, alas, has sufficiently taught me for these last, several

years, Jude 19; 2 Pet. 3:3.

Paul calls the disturbers at Corinth, contentious and heretics; and

those of Galatia lie calls deceivers; he desires and commands that they

be separated from the church, lest the whole lump be leavened by this

leaven, 1 Cor. 5:6; Gal. 5:9.

Since the beforementioned churches, being rightly established, in the

first place, and being afterwards made contentious by the heretics and

carnal who arose among them, were reproved of Paul, because they

suffered such contentious persons, with their open abominations, to

remain in the church; how, then, can Gellius make good their cause by

their example, while he and his preachers never were the true

preachers, and their churches never were separated from the world, and

therefore were not the church of Christ, as heard?

In the second place, he writes: Zachariah, Elizabeth, Joseph, Mary,

Simeon and Anna, together with other saints, heard the?word of God in

the church of the Jews, among whom were the murderers of Christ; and,

the, disciples of the prophets did not separate the murderers of the

prophets from the church."

Answer. These words of Gellius show that the Jewish synagogue, although

many pious persons were among them, as Zachariah, Elizabeth, &c., was

not the christian or apostolic church, and that they had not the

ordinances of Christ and his holy apostles, nor used them; for it can

never be shown that the apostolic church, so long as she remained the

apostolic church, were persecutors and murderers of the pious, or that

she suffered such, as was at that time the case with the Jewish

synagogue. Therefore he answers and judges himself, for he does not

claim that their church is the Jewish synagogue in which such

abominations were found, but he claims that they are the christian

church, which never thought of such things, much less practiced them.

Again, we should not follow the beforementioned church in such

abominable abuses and sins, but should be thereby admonished how we

should, according to the doctrine of Paul, treat such, which ever arise

among the pious; and that we should not, on account of such, mistrust

the promises of the Lord, as if we were not the church of Christ; for

we are thereby taught that in the church of Christ, which is ever

beguiled by her opponents, offenses, blasphemies and heresies will

arise; that, however, we should separate such whenever the case

requires it, after proper admonition; whereby she openly testifies

before God and man, that she is clear of such offenses and deceivings.

This the worldly church does not do; they suffer and retain them as

members, against the word and command of God, against the ordinance of

the Holy Spirit, and against the example or usage of the holy apostles;

notwithstanding they well know that the institution and command of the

Lord does not admit it, yet they willfully do this. Therefore they can

not be Christ's church and community so long as they continue to do so;

or else the express word of God must be fallible and false. O, reader,

reflect upon this matter.

But from his writing that the disciples of the prophets did not

separate them from the church, among whom were the murderers of the

prophets, I understand him to say that their church still remains the

church of Christ, notwithstanding numbers of wicked and ungodly persons

are found among them, and suffered to remain among them, directly

contrary to the evangelical Scriptures and the usage of the apostolic

church. O, no, reader, beware, this cannot be. So long as the

transgressors and willful despisers are unknown to the church, she is

innocent; but when they are known and not excluded, after proper

admonition, but suffered to remain in the communion of the church,

then, in my opinion, she ceases to be the church of Christ. For she

transgresses willfully, and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ;

she despises the word and ordinance of God, because she will not bear

the cross of Christ to the praise of God and to the service of their

neighbors, and, because she does not want to lose the favor of men; and

makes herself guilty of the t sins of others, therefore she, according

to John, has not God in power and in truth, 2 John 1:1; 1 Tim. G:22;

Dent. 17:2; Lev. 19:17; Matt. 18:15.

In the third place he writes, \*' That they are plainly the church of

God and Christ who publicly assemble, keep the word, accept and preach

it; who with open confession and in the holy, divine name, dispense and

partake of the sacraments, and who banish the offensive criminals and

obdurate sinners."

Answer. If to meet publicly, although in all manner of vanity, pomp and

splendor, to preach as the world likes it, to baptize infants, to break

the bread with the impenitent, feignedly to pray, and exterminate

thieves and murderers with the sword, constitutes the church of Christ,

then, also, all the papists, together with the Arians, monks, &c., were

Christ's church; for they all have done these things publicly. This is

incontrovertible,, Oh no, no! But where they meet in the name of

Christ, where the unadulterated word of God is preached, be it in

secret or public, where the baptism and Holy Supper, are served in

accordance with the ordinance of the Lord, where not merely the

criminals, who are judged by, the law of the emperor, but also

drunkards, whores and adulterers, avaricious and extortioners, are

excluded?from the communion of, the pious, according to the doctrine

and example of the apostles. Behold such. is the, visible church which,

is attested by the Scriptures.

In the fourth place he writes, "That they, invisible to the eyes of

man, which cannot? search the heart, but only before the. eyes and,

judgment of God, are the true church of Christ and of God, which are

found in the visible church. that is; among the number of the elect

since God, through the preaching of his holy gospel and through the use

of his holy sacraments, powerfully works in them, and whereby many are

again born unto life everlasting, who are only known to Him who knows

his people, and who searches the hearts of men. These are the true

bride of Christ."

Answer. In part I admit this to be right, however with, this

understanding; that the visible church, in? which the; invisible (as he

calls them) should be included, must be salutary in doctrine,

sacraments and ordinances, and unblamable in life before the world, so

far as man, who is able to judge only that which is visible, can see.

Since it is as clear as day that Gellius and his like preachers are

blamable in every thing, because they adulterate the word of God, abuse

the sacraments, flatter the world, upbraid the pious, do not separate

their church from the world, and none of their disciples reprove such

open transgressions and abuses, but every one is satisfied with his

doctrines and sacraments, follows and maintains them; therefore they

all act the hypocrite, walk upon the broad way, hate the cross of

Christ and lay it upon others. Notwithstanding all this, that the

invisible church should still be among them, I cannot admit; and for

this reason; for I know to a certainty that it never fails, that where

the true church of Christ is, there she will be made manifest among

this wicked and perverse generation by words and work, for she can as

little be hidden as a city upon a hill, or a candle upon a

candle?stick, Matt:5; 14; Phil. 2;15.

In the fifth place he writes,,". That the churches at Rome, Corinth,

Ephesus, &o.; and also the strangers here and there in Ponto, Galatia,

Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, are called, by Paul and Peter, saints

and chosen. For the church,:he writes, is called after .the better part

of its members, and is called the church of Glod or.of Christ, holy,

pure, and unblamable."

Answer. Think not, kind reader, that all those who lived at Rome,

Corinth, Ephesus, Ponto, Galatia, Cappadocia and? Bithynia, are called

the church of Christ, of Paul and Peter, as, all those who live in

Meissen, Duringen and the German countries are called the church of

Christ by the preachers. By no means. But they meant the small number,

who, begotten by the word of the divine power, separated themselves

from the world, and with open confession willingly placed themselves

under Christ and his covenant. If I should write, the chosen children

and saints of God at Antwerp, Ghent, Leeuwarden, add the strangers in

the German countries, here and there, I would not mean aft those that

live at those places mentioned. By no means. For they also live there,

who persecute and trouble the chosen children of God; but I would refer

to those who confess Christ Jesus, through true. faith and are obedient

to his holy word.

Behold, reader, if 'the preachers, in the same manner, would separate

their church from the world, would preach the word of God in purity,

would use the sacraments in accordance with the Scriptures, and would

strive with their churches, after a pious and christian life, then he

might truthfully boast that the chosen, which he calls the invisible

church, are included in their church, as he pretends they are.

In the sixth place he writes, "If they should say, your church is not

believing, holy and unblamable, then I would refer them, first, to the

Jewish church, from which we may learn that they, at the time of Elias,

Jeremiah, Daniel and all the prophets, of John the Baptist, of Christ

and 4he apostles, were not all holy; this the Scriptures of the

prophets and of the apostles sufficiently teach us. But that they,

notwithstanding both people and magistrates were for the most part

wicked, were called the church of God and of Christ, and were thus

called on account of some pious persons, to whom God sent his

prophets."

Answer. If the preachers would rightly discharge the duties of their

office, as Elias, Jeremiah and the prophets did; and if some were found

in their church who follow the word of the Lord, as in. the .time of

the prophets, then this might help the case of Gellius. But they are

not, such as Elias, Jeremiah and Daniel, nor the teachers who are led

by the Spirit of Christ; but are such preachers and teachers as were

reproved of Jeremiah, as may be seen in many of his Scriptures; such as

were destroyed by Elias, and against whom we are faithfully warned of

Christ and his apostles not to hear them, Jer. 8:14; 23:27; Matt. 7:18;

John 10:3.

I would further say, Israel was the literal people, and had the promise

of the fathers, on account of their birth after the flesh. The law was

given them that they should serve God, and walk according to his

commandments; when they transgressed the law and did not observe that

which God had commanded them, they yet remained the literal people; and

God, ever mindful of the covenant made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,

has awakened his faithful servants, the prophet, and often sent them to

reprove them earnestly, out of the word of the Lord, to point them

again to the law, and boldly threaten them with punishment for their

sins, Gen. 15:17,18; Deut. 5:82. This is not the case with us at

present; for we are not the literal race, brought forth from the loins

of Abraham and Isaac, but are begotten of the word of God, through the

Spirit. If we again forsake this birth which isof God, do not abide in

the word of Christ, and again enter into the broad way, then we do not

remain his church and community, 2 John 1:9. Behold, reader, it being

manifest that Gellius and the preachers of his class, together with

their churches, never were the spiritual people, because they, as

appears, are not born of God in truth but are earthly and., carnally

minded, live according to the lusts of the flesh, did not enter in at

tile right gate, teach . an impure doctrine, and use strange

sacraments, where by no abiding church can be gathered unto Christ, as

has been heard; and, besides. they act altogether contrary to the

Spirit, word and will of Christ, nay, hate and despise them; how then

can they be likened ii the fall; unto Israel, who were the people and

church, on account of the patriarchs while this people and church never

were the church of Christ in Spirits as has been heard? Lastly I would

say; All the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments, on every

hand, point us to Christ Jesus, that we shall hear him, Matt. 17:5;

Mark 9:7; Deut.18

15. Whosoever does not hear him, it will be required of him. Therefore

take heed. As I have said before, although all the pious, from the

beginning, were the community, church or body, yet at different periods

they have had different doctrines, ordinances and worship.

Moses gave the law and Israel had to obey it, until Christ appeared,

who was promised. We are now directed to his Spirit,. word and

ordinances. If it can be proven to us by his word, that his Spirit

suffered drunkards, avaricious, pompous, adulterers, blasphemers,

tyrants and murderers (understand, such as do not repent), in the

communion of the apostolic churches; and also that his Spirit ordained

open deceivers and worldly minded persons to be bishops and pastors,

then I will admit that they are the church of Christ; but if they

cannot do so, as it is impossible for them to do, then they must

confess that their church, which is full of such people: aye full, is

not the church of Christ, as they boast it to be; but that it is a

disorderly, refractory and disobedient people, nay, that it is the

church of antichrist, and of the world; and that their pretensions in

this respect are nothing but open seduction, falsehood and deceit.

Reader, observe, I testify this unto you in Christ; believe it if you

will; I write the truth unto you.

In the seventh place he writes, "In the second place I refer them to

the church of the Corinthians, whom Paul, in the first place, reproves

on account of their dissensions," saying, " I, brethren; could not

speak unto you as unto spiritual but so unto, carnal," 1 Cor. 3:1.

Answer. Heretofore I have said that this church was first rightly

taught of Paul, and won unto Christ; but, being deceived by

philosophers, who despised the doctrine of the cross, and by false

apostles, they became divided; for which they were reproved and

fraternally instructed of Paul, and admonished to separate the

unfaithful and carnally minded; for the Scriptures command and instruct

us to do this, namely, that such should first be admonished, and if

they do not repent, that they should be unanimously separated from the

communion of the church. Judge now, what Gel. lies can substantiate

hereby; since he and his, never having been separated from the world,

are not the church of Christ. Yea he, good fellow, does nothing more

nor leak than that he hereby manifests his cross fleeing and open

disobedience, and that he covers up and defends the abominable

transgressions of his disciples, however gross they be, with the

precedents of others,

In the eighth place he writes, "In the third place I refer them to the

parable of Christ, of John the bap, tist, and of Paul. Christ likens

the church unto a field in which the tares grow with the wheat until

the harvest. Again, she is likened unto a net in which both good and

bad fish are caught. Again, unto the virgins, of whom five were wise

and five were foolish. Moreover, unto a royal wedding, where the good

and evil are gathered together, one of whom is found by the king, to be

without a wedding garment."

Answer. This first parable is explained by Christ himself, saying, "He

that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world"

(understand it rightly, Christ says, It is the world, and not the

church, as Gellius claims); "the good seed are the children of the

kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; ? the enemy

that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and

the reapers are the angels," Matt. 13:37'?39.

Reader, understand it rightly. Christ, the Son of man, sows his seed

(God's word), through his Spirit, in the world; all who hear, believe

and obey it, are called the children of the kingdom. In the same manner

the opponent sows his tares (false doctrine,), in the world, and all

that hear and follow him are called the children of evil. Now, both

wheat and tares grow together in the same field, namely, in the world.

The husbandman does not want the tares to be plucked out before their

time, that is, he will not have them destroyed by rooting them up, but

wants them left until the harvest, lest the wheat be destroyed with the

tares., Matt:13:29,30.

O, reader, if the preachers rightly understood this parable and feared

God, they would not cry so loudly against us, who, alas, are every

where called tares, heretics and conspirators, " Down with the

heretics;" oven if we were heretics, from which God save us. Oh 1 what

noble wheat they destroy 1 Brut what does it avail 9 Satan must rebel

and murder; for it is his nature and work, as the Scriptures teach,

Gen. 3:4; John 8.

Some of the other parables, as of the net in which good and bad fishes

are caught; of the wise and foolish virgins, and their lamps; of the

wedding of the king's son and the guests, and of the threshing floor

with wheat and chaff, although the Lord spoke them in allusion to the

church, yet they were not spoken for the purpose that the church should

knowingly ?and willfully accept and suffer open transgressors,

drunkards, carousers, defilers of women, avaricious, robbers, gamblers,

and usurers, in their communion; because, then, Christ and Paul would

differ in doctrine; for Paul says that we should avoid and shun such.

But they were spoken because many intermix with the christians, in

semblance only, and place themselves under the word and sacraments,

who, in fact, are no christians, but are hypocrites and enemies before

their God; and these are likened unto the refuse fish; unto the foolish

virgins who had no oil in their lamps; unto the guest without a wedding

garment, and unto the chaff, which will be cast out by the angels, at

the day of Christ. For they pretend that they fear God and seek Christ;

they receive baptism and the Lord's Supper, and outwardly act in

semblance, but, in fact, no faith, repentance, true fear and love of

God; no Spirit, power, fruit nor work is found in them.

But, as to the two kinds of laborers in the vineyard, Matt. 2:28, 29,

and as to those called to the great supper, Luke 14:16, the reader

should know, that they have a different meaning and cannot conform to

his sentiments. Whosoever loves truth, may examine them, and judge by

the Holy Scriptures what their proper meaning is. Again, as to his

citation of the vessels to dishonor, I will let Paul's words explain

them. He says, "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall

be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meet for the Master's use, and

prepared unto every good work," 2 Tim. 2:21.

Behold, dear reader, hero you may observe how miserably he perverts the

word of the Lord, that they may, apparently, be the church of Christ,

although they knowingly and willfully admit open transgressors to the

communion of their church, against the Scriptures. But the flaming eyes

of the Lord, which search every thing, cannot be blinded by such

sophistry.

In the ninth place he writes, " � The church, now being perplexed by

such evils as these which she has to suffer unto the day of judgment,

as some of these parables imply; nay, that it never was her lot to be

entirely rid of evil ones and bypockites, however strictly she used the

ban, therefore they are wrong, and grossly sin by condemning us, and

saying that we are false teachers, and not the church of God, as was

the church of the patriarchs, prophets and Moses; and by maliciously

and wrongfully calling our church, which is founded by our faithful

service upon the true foundation, according to the example of all the

messengers of God, and which is daily increased and built up, upon the

chosen cornerstone, an unbelieving, unholy and blamable church, against

all the Scriptures, and thereby not only bringing our church into

disrepute, but also all the churches of the German countries, nay of

all the christian world, which have and must have a different doctrine

from their church, which they call holy, pure, unblamable and spotless

on account of their dreadful ban."

Answer. If he should have said that the church is troubled with such

evils, and that she must suffer them, in such a manner as to mean that

the true church must suffer the enmity, rebellion, violence and tyranny

of the wicked, and ungodly actions of the perverse, then he would have

written the truth. But since his meaning is, that since the church ever

has hypocrites among her number, that therefore the evil ones, that is,

open despisers and transgressors should be tolerated; therefore he

writes contrary to the word of God; for Paul says, "Therefore put away

from among yourselves that wicked person," that is, separate from the

communion of your church him who is wicked, 1 Cor. 5:13.

Again, to his writing, "that we grossly sin by saying that they are not

the church of God," and to his boasting " that they build their church

upon the corner stone," I would say that his boasting is false; for

their light?minded doctrine, false sacraments, reckless life and his

indiscreet writing, alas, prove too plainly, that they do not build

their church upon the true cornerstone; it being manifest that they, on

every hand are at fault, adulterate the word of God, abuse the

sacraments, practice no separation, and for the greater part, both

teachers and hearers walk upon perverse ways; whether we therefore sin,

because in faithful love we admonish them for their own good, and in

humility show them that they, under such a state of affairs, are not,

neither can be the church of God, the reader may judge. We know to a

certainty that where there is no pure doctrine, no pure sacraments, no

pious, christian life, no true, brotherly love, and no right minded

confession, that there is no christian church; let' them boast ever so

much.

Again, in regard to his complaint, " That we not only call them, but

all the churches of the German countries, nay, of the whole christian

world, unbelieving, unholy and condemn them, the reader should know

that we condemn no one; for he, Jesus Christ, to whom the Father has,

given it, will do that. Yet we say, and teach it verbally and by

writing, that all those who are not born of God and his word, are not

actuated by the Spirit of Christ, are not changed into his nature and

disposition, however high and fine an appearance and name they may

assume. In this case, neither emperor, king, doctor, licentiate, pope

nor Luther will avail. All who would be in the church of Christ, must

be in Christ, must be of his mind, and walk as he walked, or else

Christ Jesus, John, Paul and all the Scriptures must be false; this is

too clear to be denied, John`5:?2z; 1 John 2:6; Rom. 8:14; Phil. 2:5.

Since he accuses us that we condemn all the churches of the German

countries, and of the whole christian world, as he boasts, therefore I

would answer with a few plain words: If the German churches and the

beforementioned world were born of God, were of Christ's mind, walked

as he walked then the accusation of Gellius would be right, since we do

not acknowledge them to be true churches. But as they prove by deeds

that they are without Christ, walk and act against his word and will;

as they are quite earthly and carnally minded, therefore, they are not

judged of men, but of the word of the Lord, for Christ says, "The word

that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day," John

12:48.

Further, by his writing that the said churches have. and must have a

different doctrine, he judges himself that they are not the church of

Christ. For Christ will, that his church should keep and follow his

word, ordinances and commands, whether it be to the joy or to the pain

of the flesh.

Behold, dear reader, since it is doubly plain that the Scriptures

teach, both by words and examples, that open transgressors should be

excluded from the communion of the church; and since the preachers, who

fear men more than God, and serve their bellies more than the praise of

the Lord, neglect this on account of the cross, which might result from

such action, therefore their public actions testify that they are not

the bride and sheep of Christ; for they do not hear his voice, neither

do they follow his doctrines and commands, 2 Thess. 3: (3; John 10:28.

Again,. to his writing that we consider our church holy, pure and

unblamable, on account of the,cruel ban, this is my simple reply: We do

not at all boast but of the grace of our God through Christ Jesus. Our

frailty is great, our stumblings are many, and we feel with Paul, that

nothing good dwells in our flesh. Notwithstanding all true members of

the church of Christ strive after the unblamable, holy being, which is

in him; they conform their walk to the word of the Lord; they follow

his commands and ordinances;' and separate those who are separated key

the Scriptures, which he, alas, calls a fearful ban. O, Lord.

O God! Thus the precious word is esteemed as unworthy by this

thoughtless man. For, by this abominable, unseasoned blasphemy, not

only we, but also the Son of the Almighty and living God, together with

the Spirit of eternal wisdom, by whom this ban was commanded, and also

all the apostles and the primitive church, who so diligently taught and

earnestly practiced it, are adjudged fools. If the ordinance is

foolishness, then the Institutor, and all who teach and practice it,

must be fools; this cannot well be denied.

Observe, reader, if this may not be called hating the word and will of

God, despising his commands, and speaking blasphemies against the Most

High, you may reflect upon, and judge by the Scriptures. O, reader,

awaken. Beware, and learn to know your preachers, and of what spirit

they are the children.

In the tenth place he writes, "Thus they are given to a wrong

understanding, prejudge without knowledge, and leave the church from

motives of spiritual pride and fancy of righteousness, more than from

motives of sincere righteousness; they have no other reason to leave

the church, than that they, according to the manner of the Pharisees,

would justify themselves by despising others."

Answer. I fear that it would weary the reader to reply to all his false

accusations minutely. Yet I would say, in regard to this, If I could

speak with Gellius before the public, I have no doubt but many, through

the grace of God, would begin to see that it is not us? who have a

wrong understanding, but them; that they prejudge us, indiscreetly;

remain outside of the church of Christ, from motives of pride; and not

only despise us, according to the manner of the Pharisees, but also

often deprive us of possessions and life, as may be witnessed in

different localities. But we must suffer, bear, and console ourselves

with the saying, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and

persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely,

for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward

in heaven.; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you,"

Matt. 5:11, 12.

In the eleventh place he writes, "They will probably say that if we

would be the church of Christ, we must verify the saying of Christ;"

"The gates of hell shall not prevail against it;" and ask where our

church has existed, inviolated by the devil, anti?christ and heresies.

He further writes, "Since the church, which is not limited to certain

boundaries, but is scattered over the whole world, has this article of

faith," '1 I believe in the holy, christian church, the communion of

saints," "and that she will endure unto the end of the world, therefore

we are forced to acknowledge, that God, true to his promise, saves his

church, and has always saved her, although the old serpent, the devil,

deceives her by the lusts of the flesh, the pomp of the world and by

many sects; and, although she is combatted, persecuted and disturbed,

by the potentates of the world, until she, inattentive to her cause,

drowsy in her prayer, indifferent to the will of God, and ungrateful

for the word of God, or, until found apostatical of Christ, so enrages

God that he takes from her the light of his word, and lets her fall

into weighty errors, and adhere to idolatry, adultery, whoredom, and

other sins and disgraces and follow after them, so that the church in

such case, almost destroyed and ruined, scarcely is worthy of the

name."

Answer. I would beseech the diligent reader earnestly to observe how

the words of Gellius sound, which I have here cited at length. He

admits that the church, deceived and enchanted by the devil, the lusts

of the flesh, the pomp, sects and potentates of tile world, has become

?drowsy, inattentive, ungrateful, and an apostate of Christ, has

enraged God, and fallen into all manner of wickedness and sins; yet he

claims that she remains the church of Christ, as if the church was

inherited by one generation from another, and did not consist in faith,

Spirit and power. I would not know what poorer excuse he could find.

Therefore observe that which I write, and let it be unto you a certain

rule, namely, where the Spirit, word, sacraments and life of Christ are

found, that there the Nicene article comes in, "I believe in the holy

christian church, the communion of saints, &c. On the other hand, where

the Spirit, word, sacraments and life of Christ are not to be found,

but where the spirit, doctrine, sacraments and life of anti?christ are

followed, there, also, is the church of anti?christ, and not the church

of Christ, although we might say a thousand times, "I believe in the

holy christian church." For without, or against the Spirit, word,

sacraments and life of Christ, there can never be a christian church,

however much we may pervert the truth. The word stands immutable.

"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ,

hath not God," 2 John, 9.

In the twelfth place he writes, "Because God, in his grace, has made an

eternal covenant with his church, and has promised her that the gates

of hell, although they may rend and weaken her, shall not thoroughly

prevail against her, therefore he will, at all times, preserve a shadow

of the evangelical doctrine and of his sacraments, upon which the

church shall be upheld; and he will also preserve some members upon the

true foundation, who will grow up amidst the thistles, thorns, wolves,

bears and lions, and deliver them as in a violent .hurricane, from the

elements, as Noah was saved from the deluge."

Answer. Where they conform themselves to the Spirit, word, sacraments,

ordinances, commands, prohibitions, usage and example of Christ, there

the holy christian church is found, as has been heard, and there is

also the promise that the gates of hell will !, not prevail against

her. For although she grows as a rose amongst thorns, as he expresses

himself, keeps herself amongst wolves, bears and lions, and as a ship

cast about by wind and waves, she must suffer much tribulation, yet she

cannot be capsized, that is, she cannot be turned from Christ

(understand this to be the true christian church); for she is built

upon a rock, Matt. 7:24.

That this is the truth, the Scriptures and their examples teach us on

every hand; and we also have found it so by facts, within the last few

years. For, however fiercely the lions, bears and wolves have roared,

raved and torn, for the last few years, by their frightful mandates,

apprehending, torturing and murdering; and, although the waves often

roll up to the clouds, yet the manifested truth remains with the humble

and pious children; and however sharply the thistles and thorns may

sting, yet this noble and beautiful rose daily grows, and, praise be to

God, increases in size and strength, whereby it is made manifest unto

many reasonable persons, that God's promise to the church stands firm,

and it is the miracle and power of the Most High; for neither death,

nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things

present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other

creature shall be able to separate them from the love of God, which is

in Christ Jesus our Lord, Rom. 8:38, 39.

Yet this thoughtless man thinks that they are the true, christian

church, and does not observe that the beforementioned thistles, thorns,

wolves, bears and lions, by which the true church has been so much

troubled, and still continues to be, are members of the very church

which he claims were and yet are the true church of Christ. For they,

during the last few centuries, have used one sacrament, and,

unseparated, were greeted as the children of grace, and were admitted

and accepted in the communion of these churches.

He, besides, also consoles the poor people that the Lord has, at all

times, preserved a shadow of the evangelical doctrine and of his

sacraments upon which to support his church; as if God was well pleased

with such a dead shadow of false preaching and of infant baptism; and,

as if the church of Christ, the bride of God and of the Lamb, could be

supported by adulterated doctrines and unscriptural sacraments. O, dear

Lord' How long shall such errors yet endure Who cannot understand such

palpable deceit! He must have an extremely obdurate and perverse heart,

or he must be a very ignorant and blunt man, I think.

In the thirteenth place he produces two arguments whereby he means to

prove that their church is the gen eral church (as he calls it).

wherewith God has so dealt. And in the first place writes," in which

church antichrist was seated; for, according to the prophecies o1 Paul,

he had placed himself therein and eaaltedhimseli above God; and asserts

that it is the true church ?to which God has given the promise,

although she was dreadfully stained and miserably torn up. In our

church the anti?christ has been seated, and placed himself as a God,

and has exalted himself above all that is of God and religion?therefore

our church is the true church and temple of God, to which the promise

of God. is given." "This argument he proves with these words: "The

first proposition is true; for Paul calls the church in which the

anti?christ would place himself, the temple of God; the other is also

too clear to be denied, from the prophecies of Paul and the teachings

of experience. For in the churches which baptize infants, he,and all

the violent tyrants have exercised their power and violence, and

trampled under foot all religion and worship. If both propositions now

are true, then it follows, also, that the conclusion is true; and shows

the anabaptists, in what a fearful condition they are, since they have

let us and our church."

Answer. By the side of this I will place my syllogism: Where true

religion and worship, as required of the Scriptures, are trampled under

foot, there is not the church of Christ. Anti?christ has, Gellius

testifies, trampled under foot the true religion and worship required

by the Scriptures, in the church of which Gellius speaks; therefore,

the beforementioned church is not the church of Christ. All Scriptures

teach that my first proposition is true; for Moses says, " Whosoever

will not hearken unto my words which he" (meaning Christ) " shall speak

in my name, I will require it of him," Dent 18:19. Christ says, "If ye

continue" (mark, "continue"), "in my word, then are ye my disciples

indeed," John 8:31. Again, Paul says, "If any man preach any other

gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed," Gal.

1:9. John, also, says, " Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in

the doctrine of Christ, hath not God," 2 John 1:9.

My second proposition, Gellius admits to be true; for he says, that

anti?christ has trampled religion and worship under his feet, as heard.

Since, then, that the first proposition can be substantiated by the

Scriptures, and the second is acknowledged by Gellius to be right,

therefore, my conclusion must also be right, namely, that the church to

which he refers, is not the church of Christ. For she does not accept

the word of Christ, but a strange gospel; and does not abide in the

pure doctrine of his holy apostles; therefore they have not God in

power, and are not the disciples of Christ; or else the cited sayings

must be wrong and false.

As regards the first proposition of Gellius, Paul testifies in plain

words, that it is false, for he says, " That day shall not come, except

there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the

son of perdition," 2 Thess. 2:3. Here Paul teaches in tolerably plain

words that the falling away of faith would first come as was also the

case here, 2 Thess. 2:3.

Since Paul openly testifies by the Spirit of God, that the falling away

would come before the day of the Lord, and also shows through whom it

would come, namely, through the man of sin (son of perdition); and

since it is clearly visible that this son of perdition has placed

himself in the temple of God, that is, in the hearts of man, or rather,

in the stead of God in the beforementioned church, and has quite

demolished and destroyed it, and through deceit has changed it, under

the semblance of the name of Christ, from the doctrine and ordinances

of God to his own doctrine and ordinances, therefore, I would leave the

attentive reader to judge if this church, which is quite demolished and

destroyed by him, can be called God's temple. If he judge that it

cannot be so called, then he judges rightly; otherwise many passages of

the Scriptures would be fallible and false; and, as a consequence, God

and the devil, Christ and anti?christ must have been seated in one

temple, and reigned in one church. But, if they deny this; then I would

again say that Luther and the learned have done wrong in bringing about

such a disturbance, tribulation and misery in the world by their

doctrine and change, since they, according to Gellius, still remained

the church of Christ, although the anti?christ had quite destroyed and

demolished the true religion. Reader, reflect upon this, and judge

whether I write the truth or not.

In his second proposition he judges himself; for he writes, that

anti?christ was seated in their church, which baptizes children; has

placed himself therein as a God; trampled under foot the true religion

and worship; he also acknowledges, above, under the head of the

separation, that the papists are no christians; for he says, "that

those who leave us would sooner become papists than christians again."

Kind reader, observe closely what I write. Since it is manifest that

the Roman anti?christ has, for a number of years, reigned in peace in

their church; has given them to drink from his cup of abominations; has

destroyed the true religion, and re?instated his abominations; and

since he himself admits that the papists are no christians, therefore,

it is certain and plain that their church was not, as he claims, the

general christian church and temple of God, to which the promise of God

was given. For it cannot be that they can be the disciples of

anti?christ and then yet remain the christian church and temple.

Now consider, if the pious, whom he calls anabaptists, are so much out

of way, by renouncing all the anti?christian abominations, false,

condemned sects and churches; anc4 if they place themselves in such a

frightful position, as he sighingly complains, by humbly submitting

themselves to the only, eternal Messiah, Christ Jesus, and by placing

themselves as an example of all obedience and virtue, in their

weakness, before all the world.

His second argument is this: "In and with all churches which teach the

doctrine and faith of Christ Jesus; are not altogether fallen away; do

not altogether reject and profane Christ and his holy gospel and which

do not altogether trample upon the use of the holy sacraments and

neglect them, as under the reign of Mahomet, there still remains the

name of the holy church. In and with our church, which has the infant

baptism as an apostolic ordinance, the doctrine and faith of Jesus

Christ, as taught by the apostles, never was altogether fallen away, as

it was with the Turks; although abominably adulterated and weakened by

anti?christ; therefore, the name of the church remains with our

community and has true members in it."

Answer. If his first proposition was consistent and right, then it

would also be consistent and right to say, The doctrine and faith never

were entirely fallen away with the Arians, Circumcellians, Munsterians

and other sects; the gospel was not altogether rejected and profaned,

and the sacraments altogether trampled upon by them, therefore, the

name of the church remains with them, and true members of the church

are found among them. We are, therefore, also wrongfully called "

devilish heretics, conspirers, and apostate anabaptists," by him, for

we so highly prize the gospel and the sacraments of our Lord Jesus

Christ, that we daily sacrifice our possessions and blood for their

sake, as may be seen.

If he should say that the before mentioned sects did not act and teach

in accordance with the Scriptures, and that they therefore were not in

the communion of the christian church; then he judges himself still

more markedly. For the papistic church to which he refers, did not do

this; if they did rightly act and teach, then he very unjustly says

that they are not christians, as has been heard that he did.

Again, by his writing, " There still remains the name of the holy

church," he openly testifies that his assertion is without all

foundation in the Scriptures; for he does not refer to the

unadulterated doctrine, to the salutary use of the holy sacraments, nor

to the pious, unblamable life, which should ever be found in the church

of Christ; as if the name could keep the church in God and could bind

it to the promise, without the Spirit, word, sacraments, faith and

obedience of Christ. No, no, reader, no. "I know," says the First and

the Last, "the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not,

but are the synagogue of Satan," Rev. 2:9. If the name alone

constituted the true church, then all the raving tyrants, enemies of

christian truth, all murderers, perjurers, whoremongers, avaricious,

pompous and unrighteous, would be members of the church of Christ, for

they call themselves after the name of Christ. This is

incontrovertible.

As to his second proposition, I would say in the first place, Since he

says that their church has infant baptism, as an apostolic ordinance,

that he thereby heaps open falsehood upon the holy apostles, the

upright, pious testifiers of eternal truth; for he never can prove by a

single word in the Scriptures, that they taught or practiced infant

baptism, as has been sufficiently shown, above.

In the second place I would say, That the church to which he refers,

was not only adulterated and weakened, as he calls it, but has become

so estranged from God, that she has worshipped, honored and served

wood, stone, gold, and silver gods, and, besides bread and wine; as

has, alas, been seen these, many years, in all the temples and houses

of worship, throughout Europe; and, as may yet, daily, be seen in many

kingdoms, cities and towns. Yet, Gellius asserts that their church ever

was the church of Christ. I have never heard more inconsistent

reasoning. Therefore, dear reader; beware, and do not listen to the

smooth talk of the learned, for they deceive you. But hearken unto him

who says, "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not

walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life," John 8:12, and

then you will never be deceived.

Reader, understand what I mean; we do not dispute about whether or, not

there are some of the chosen one's of God, in the beforementioned

churches; for this we, at all times, humbly leave to the .just and

gracious judgment of God, hoping there may be many thousands who are

unknown to us, as they were to holy Elias; but our dispute is, in

regard to what kind of Spirit, doctrine, sacraments, ordinances and

life, Christ has commanded us to gather unto him an abiding church, and

how we should maintain it in his ways.

Behold, reader, these are his most important arguments with which to

maintain his assertion, " that their church is the true one," namely,

because they sprang from the papists, and practice infant baptism. Just

hear how strangely he writes. In my opinion, he pens all that comes in

his mind, if it has but a little semblance, that it may tickle the ears

of the thoughtless people, and console them in their impenitent, easy

life. If these adduced assertions of his were true, then it could not

be otherwise than that hitherto the church of Christ must have been the

church of anti?christ, or that of anti?christ must have been the church

of Christ; also, Christ and anti?christ must have both reigned in one

church; infant baptism must have been called apostolic, without the

Scriptures, and the mere name constitutes the church of Christ; this,

by the grace of God, no one can successfully rebut; let him garble and

twist the matter as adroitly as he pleases.

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CONCERNING SOME ACCUSATIONS AGAINST US.

In the first place Giellius accuses us, saying, "\* They (he means us),

falsely, adorn and deck themselves with the sanctity of the church.

For, since the Holy Spirit, which sanctifies the church both by the

remission of sin, and dying unto the old man with all his lusts, and

also by the nullifying of the sins in the flesh, is given through

faith, therefore I cannot see how they can receive the Holy Spirit,

together with true sanctification, and be the true, holy church, while

they so bitterly contend among themselves about the divinity of the

Holy Spirit (which, besides other evidence, sufficiently proves his

divinity by the work of sanctification), se well as about many other

articles of faith."Answer. Zuinglius formerly taught that the will of

God actuated a thief to steal, a murderer to kill, and that their

punishment was also brought about by the will of God; which, in my

opinion, is an abomination of abominations. Now, if I conclude that

because Zuinglius taught so, all preachers teach it, it would be a

wrong conclusion. Athanasius could not prevent Arius from teaching that

the Holy Spirit was a creature of the creature of Christ.

Reader, understand my meaning. I never have thought that God's Holy and

eternal Spirit was not God, with God and in God; yet, he would accuse

us, who are not guilty, of denying the sanctification, grace, fruit and

power of the Holy Spirit, because some, who have been separated from

us, have erred in this respect, and probably still err; although he

plainly sees and palpably feels the sanctification and power of the

Holy Spirit in us, namely, that it smothers the old man with his lusts,

and destroys the sins of the flesh; something which he calls the

sanctification of the Holy Spirit, as has been heard. Behold, thus he

upbraids and accuses the guiltless. Whether this is not the Parisaic,

envious and disgraceful spirit, which explains away the good intentions

of Christ and his disciples, and thereby inflamed the thoughtless

populace against them, I will leave to his own reflection.

In the second place he accuses us, saying, "They have an obdurate

faith; one half of which is founded upon the merits of Christ, and the

other upon their own merits. For Obbe Philips, who has a great many

followers (as he says) does plainly assert that the justification of

man is not brought about by faith alone, but by faith, love and good

works."

Answer. I would humbly ask Gellius this question: Does it follow that

because Obbe Philips formerly taught this doctrine, Menno and the

others also teach it? If he answer in the affirmative, then I would say

that he does us an injustice, as, alas, he often does. For our doctrine

and publications abundantly testify that we and the church of God are

not thus minded, but that we seek justification alone in the righteous

and crucified Christ Jesus.

But if he answer in the negative, then I wish he would have the

kindness and virtue in him to make a difference and not mix the

innocent with the guilty; and, I also wish that he would say no more

than the truth; for he writes that the before mentioned " Obbe Philips

has a considerable number of followers," and I make the assertion that

he cannot find more than six or ten who believe as he does.

In the third place he accuses us, saying, "How can they be a holy

church who disagree among themselves about the head of the church; do

not suffer him to be the true God, and thereby resuscitate the old

Arian heresy."

Answer. We may well sincerely thank the Most High, that he so manifests

unto us his paternal grace and great mercy, that even our most adroit

and acute opponents cannot accuse us but by. such puerile, and, for the

greater part, false reasoning. If he would consult natural honor, not

to mention love and truth, as much as he, alas, consults bitter and

envious feeling, how loth would he be to think that which he now is not

ashamed to publish in writing, indiscriminately saying that we

resuscitate the old Arian heresy, while he and his like, well know that

such have no part in the communion of our churches, so long as they do

not renounce such errors, as heard.

O dear Lord, how long will such bitter and envious accusations and

false backbitings continue! Would to God that the magistrates would

have a little fear of the Lord, and consider what. they are doing, and

that they would hear and compare the different parties, so that they

would once learn whom and for what purpose they persecute, and what

kind of people and teachers they?are whom they daily maintain and

encourage in their injustice and abominations, by their violence.

In the fourth place he accuses us, saying, "If they are the true, holy

church, the spiritual bride of Christ, pure, holy, and unblamable, then

let them prove the unity of the Spirit, especially concerning the

twelve articles of faith, which are the foundation of the church; then

the one should not be Mennonite, the other Adam Pastorite, the third

Obbeite, the fourth Dirkite, arc. For although they may ban one

another. as much as they please, it still is evidently true that they

are all anabaptists and enemies to infant baptism, and thus still

continue to conspire and fanaticize against the churches of Christ."

Answer. I trust that we, by the grace of God, are so wedded to our Lord

and Bridegroom, Christ Jesus, that we are prepared to sacrifice our

lives for the sake of hearing his holy voice. We do not boast of our

holiness and piety, as Gellius accuses us, but of our great weakness. I

also trust that we, who are grains of one loaf, agree in not only the

twelve articles (as he counts them), but in all the articles of the

Scriptures, as regeneration, repentance, baptism, Holy Supper,

separation, &c., which we, .long with Isaiah, Peter and Paul, Isaiah

28:18; 1 Peter 2:6; Eph. 2:20, accept as the only foundation of the

churches, as preached by Christ's own, blessed mouth, and left and

taught us in clear and plain words; and not only the twelve articles as

he does.

Neither are we so divided as he says; for Dirk (Dietrich Philip) and we

are of the same mind, and I trust, through the grace of God, we will

ever remain so. But that Obbe has become a Demas, and that Adam Pastor

has separated from us, is not our fault. Such things, also, often

happened in the apostolic times. God reclaim them at his will; they

have taken their leave, and are, alas, no more counted among us, so

long as they do not repent.

His writing "that we still conspire and contend against the church of

Christ," and other like bitter and resenting words, show that he is so

actuated by the spirit of envy, that he cannot write or speak a

discreet and reasonable word about us; but he must call us fanatics,

conspirators, hedge preachers and sneaks; and he never observes how

different of opinion, and how divided in doctrine the baptizers of

infants are, who claim to be the true church; and into how many

different sects they are divided. One party is papistic; the other

Lutheran; the third Zuinglian; the fourth Calvinistic, &c.; and,

although they violently quarrel among themselves, disgrace, condemn and

ruin each other, as much as they please, yet it is still evidently true

that they baptize their children, are unfriendly to the baptism of

Christ, continue to conspire against the truth, and persecute it and

the church of Christ. O, reader, that the world would once learn to

know who are the fanatics and conspirators; then we might hope for the

better, but as it is, it is hidden from their eyes.

In the fifth place he accuses us, saying. "If they are the holy church,

then, let them hearken unto the voice of Christ; which says that the

word of the holy gospel and its sacraments should not be preached and

dispensed in secret nooks and corners, but in public."

Answer. If we are not the true church of Christ, but if Gellius and his

like are that church, as he pretends, and would yet have us publicly

proclaim our doctrine, why has he then twice refused a public

discussion with me, under safe conduct, to which I have invited him,

while he well knows that I have to endure so much for the sake of my

doctrine and faith? It would be reasonable, if we err in some things,

from which God preserve us, that he should go with me before the

public, vanquish and convince me of our errors, for God knows that I am

willing to be vanquished if I can be convinced by stronger Scriptures

and more powerful truths; that he might thus receive the applause of

his fellows (which he, in my opinion, very much strives after), and,

besides save my soul and the souls of many others.

If he is a true preacher, and a member of the true church of Christ,

why does he, then, desire us to go before the public, while he well

knows that I could not do so without the loss of blood and life? I

freely offer my. self, if he can show one plain passage in the

Scriptures, that the apostles and prophets have publicly taught at such

places where they knew that the people had resolved upon their death,

as, alas, they have every where resolved upon our death, and, by the

grace of God, we will do the same.

I know to a certainty that he can find no such examples nor Scriptures

in the Bible. Yea, dear reader, if he would be straightforward in

assigning the reason why he ever desires us to go and preach in public,

he would confess that he seeks nothing by his hypocritical and artful

pretension, other than to make our cause suspicious with the people,

that his cause shall make a good appearance, and that he is very

desirous and thirsty after the blood of the innocent, while he, I say,

against all reason, love, and Scriptures, desires us publicly to

proclaim our doctrine, well knowing that in all Germany, not a place

can be found where this could be done without imprisonment, violence,

or rebellion. If he, now, were in the truth, as he would like to be

considered, namely, an upright, unblamable preacher, how loth would he

be to think of such gross disgrace, which he now, alas, dares loudly

proclaim both by speaking and writing. David says, " The Lord will

abhor the bloody and deceitful man," Ps. 5: e.

In the sixth place he accuses us, saying, `� As they want to be the

true church of Christ, they would do well to look back to the origin of

their church and see how it agrees with the origin and age of the true

church. That their church is not of the origin and times of Adam,

Abraham, or David, is proven by their wrong opinion and abominable

error in regard to the incarnation of Christ, whereby they make him

neither God nor man, and rob us of our Messiah, Also, above, under the

head of the Calling, he writes, It is an abominable fruit that they

have resuscitated, and again introduced into the world such a

disgraceful error in regard to the incarnation of Christ. For if Christ

was not of our flesh (of which he was not, .unless he received it from

the woman), then the law was not fulfilled in our flesh; then the

righteousness of God is not yet acquitted, which without the ransom

would not leave us unpunished.

Answer. The learned ever slander us and complain because, we, with the

angel Gabriel, Luke 1:32; with John the Baptist, John 1:15?36; with

Peter, Matt. 16:16; with Martha, John 11:2'7; with the apostles, Matt.

14:33, and with the eternal Father himself, acknowledge Christ, both

according to his divinity and humanity, as the true and only begotten

Son of God; and we dare not teach and believe more nor otherwise than

the word of the Lord teaches us of him. I would therefore beseech all

readers and hearers to consider well the following brief answers and

references. I trust that, by the grace of God, I will be able to

explain the matter so clearly in a few words, that the reader will

plainly see that they not only rob us of Christ, the doctrine,

sacraments, Spirit, life, ordinances and usage of our Savior, but also

rob him of his most holy origin, glory, honor and person; and, that

they, by their deceiving comments and reasoning, render Christ a

divided, impure and inconsistent Christ, both according to nature and

the Scriptures. Whosoever has ears to hear let him hear, and whosoever

has a mind to understand let him understand.

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THE CONFESSION OF THE LEARNED CONCERNING CHRIST.

The Confession of the Learned concerning Christ, is, That the eternal

word, the second person in the Godhead (these are their words), the

eternal Son of God, has taken unto himself the nature of our flesh.

Yea, that the whole man, Christ, who was sacrificed, and who died for

us, is the natural seed of the woman, of Abraham, and of David. The

seed of the woman (they say) according to the ordinance of God, Gen. 3,

with which seed, namely, Mary's flesh and blood, the beforementioned

divine person, the eternal Word and eternal Son, has united himself;

and thus became one person and Christ. Or that the whole person, Christ

Jesus, with body and soul, is the natural fruit of the flesh and blood

of Mary, in which the eternal Word dwelt. The man, Christ Jesus, died,

but the Word remains whole and intact."

Answer. It seems very strange to me that the learned never cease to

upbraid us by their indiscreet words, and cause us more and more

tribulation, by the bloodthirsty; we, who have plainly and

incontrovertibly on our side, the firm and immutable foundation of the

holy apostles and prophets, nay, also the blessed word and testimony of

Christ; while they have neither common reason nor the Scriptures on

their side, as may be seen. For, that all the following weighty and

intolerable improprieties and abominable errors result from their

confession, is as clear as day.

First, A divided Christ; of which one half must have been heavenly and

the other earthly; as some, even dare boldly assert that the person of

Christ consisted of two principal parts, namely, God and man.

Secondly, An impure and sinful Christ, for the defense says: C'hristum

non alterius ullius carnis participem factwm esse, quana quae and

peccato (ut tentaretwr) and morti simul obnoxia esset, &c., that is,

Christ partook of no other flesh but of sin, that he might be tempted

and subject to death. At another place the defense says, in regard to

Christ: Si sanctus (inquit) quomodo sub peccatum in Patrisjudicio

candemnaturl that is, If Christ is holy, why is he then judged in the

judgment of the Father because of sins I this agrees perfectly with the

writing of Gellius; that the righteousness of God would not leave us

unpunished, without the ransom.

Reader, observe, How could they speak more blasphemously of the most

holy manhood of Christ, nay, of the Son of the Almighty and eternal

God, than they thereby do? For if Christ was flesh of our sinful and

death?guilty flesh, and if he was thus tempted of his own flesh, then

the sin, of which he was tempted, must have dwelt in his flesh, and

then he died for the sake of duty, and not for the sake of grace; this

is too clear to be refuted. Nor could it be otherwise, if we assert

that Christ's flesh was of Adam's sinful flesh.

Again, If his holy, precious flesh was such a ransom as Gellius claims,

how could the righteousness of God be fulfilled and acquitted thereby,

according to the holy will of God? If this may not be rightly called,

preaching an impure and sinful Christ, and robbing our most holy Savior

and Messiah (something of which they accuse us), I will leave all

right?minded and reasonable people to reflect upon in a scriptural

light.

Thirdly, Two persons in Christ, namely, the one the second person in

the Godhead, and the other the man of Mary's flesh, in which human

person the divine person dwelt. Which error is not alone controverted

by us, but also by Luther, saying, "Beware, beware (I say) of the

Alleosi; it is the devil's mask; for it will ultimately establish such

a Christ as I would not be called after; namely, that Christ henceforth

is no more, and that his suffering avails no more than the suffering of

a common saint. For, if I should believe that alone human feeling

suffered for me, then that Christ would be a poor Savior; he would

stand in need of a Savior himself. In short, it is unspeakable what the

devil seeks and intends by this Alleosi. We say, God is man and man is

God; we cry against them that they divide the person of Christ, as if

it were two persons."

For, if the Alleosi shall stand, as Zuingli teaches it, Christ must be

two persons, one divine, the other human. This he says, "Reader,

observe, to what kind of Christ they teach and point us.

Fourthly, Two sons in Christ; of which the first is the Son of God

without a mother; the second, the son of Mary, without a father; in

which son of Mary, the Son of God should have been embodied, and thus

have been united, as they claim. Just behold what a monstrosity they

produce I

Fifthly, The person, Christ Jesus, then was neither the first nor only

begotten Son, but the third son of God in order, who was not born, but

created of God; and would be, as Pomer says, the accepted son of God,

Quod & Bonosianorwm five Xonosolitarwm hceresis est. I say He would be

the third in order. For the first is the Word; the second, the first

Adam, Luke 3:38, and the third, the man of Mary's flesh, who should

have been accepted as a son of God, as heard.

Sixthly, Then we are not redeemed and delivered through God's first and

only begotten Son, but through Mary's son, created of Adam's impure and

sinful flesh, as also the defense and his followers dare assert, in the

face of all the Scriptures, saying, that the nature imbodied in the

loins of Adam, which committed the transgression also, according to the

righteousness of God will requite and remit the same.

Seventhly, If we are thus delivered through Adam's flesh, as they

claim, then we should not only give thanks to the Father for his Word,

but also to Adam's flesh, through which our deliverance is caused;

this, all right?minded persons must admit.

Eighthly, If the man Christ was a creature of Adam's flesh, and we were

delivered through him, as the learned claim; and since God speaks

through the prophet, That he will not give his glory to another, Isaiah

48:11; and since it is manifest that we should honor our Redeemer,

Christ, no less than we honor the Father, therefore it must follow that

God either did not speak truly through his prophets, or else they were

all idolaters because they gave divine homage to a creature of Adam's

flesh; something which is so strictly forbidden in the Scriptures, and

which often was severely punished of God. Behold, reader, such an

inconsistent, impure and divided Christ he is to which the learned

point and teach you by their sophistry and garbled Scriptures A christ

composed of two persons and two sons; of which one person and son

should have dwelt in the other; and of which one person and son should

have suffered and the other not; and the one that suffered should have

been the son of Mary and not of God. I think this may well be called

forsaking the Lord who has bought them, and preaching a strange christ

whom the Scriptures never knew.

O, reader, dear reader, how lamentably the deceitfulness of the old

serpent robs us, through the reasoning of the learned, of this noble,

exalted and precious Messiah, and points us to an impure, sinful,

earthly and created being; never minding that the Holy Spirit openly

testifies that the Word of God was made flesh, John 1, and that this

same incarnated Word is our Emmanuel, and our God, Matt. 1:26; the Lord

who justifies us, Jer. 23; the first and only begotten, John 1; God's

own Son, Rom. 8; descended from heaven, John 3:13; the living bread

from heaven which was not his invisible godhead, as the learned say,

but his visible flesh, as he himself testifies, John 6:51; come forth

from God, John 16:30; the first and last, Rev. 1:11; who humbled

himself and did not assume the form of a great emperor or king, but of

an humble servant; came down to the level of man; assumed the form of

man; obeyed his Father unto death, nay, unto the death of the cross;

truly God and man, man and God. God at all times, of God and in God;

God's eternal word, who, in due time, according to the promise made to

the patriarchs, became a miserable, suffering and mortal man in Mary,

the pure virgin, who was of the seed of Abraham, and married to a man

of the house of David, named Joseph (upon which Joseph, the evangelists

base their genealogy); not divided, as the learned teach, but an

undivided, only Christ and Son of God; pure and spotless; planted in

her of the seed and Word of his Father, by the Holy Spirit of God;

conceived of her through faith; fed and nourished in her virgin body

and in due time became man, as Isaac was brought forth of Sarah, and

John of Elisabeth; born of her according to the promise; obedient to

the law; a light to the world; a preacher of grace; an example of

righteous?. ness; and at last, not on account of his own sins, for he

knew not sin, but for our sins, he was innocently condemned to death,

nailed to the cross, died, buried, arose, and ascended to his Father in

heaven, where he dwelt before; and there he is our only and eternal

Mediator, Advocate, Intercessor, Expiator and High Priest, with God,

his Father, Mark 16; Acts 1; John 6; 16; and thus the Almighty and

eternal God, our merciful, heavenly Father, alone receives the honor

and praises, through this his Christ, our eternal Messiah, his first

and only begotten Son and eternal word; and not through the impure and

sinful flesh of Adam, as the learned teach.

Observe, reader, which of these confessions is the most powerful and

has the strongest foundation in the Scriptures; and in which of the two

the greater love of God, and higher honor to Christ is perceptible.

Whether God had taken a man of the seed. or flesh of Adam, as the

learned teach, or whether he had given his eternal word, power, wisdom,

nay, the heart of his own body, (to make a common expression), in

death, for us, as all the Scriptures teach us that he did.

O what an inestimable word is this, " God so loved the world that he

gave his only begotten Son, &c., John 3:16. Again," In this was

manifested tile love of God towards us, because that God sent his only

begotten Son into the world," and again. "Herein is love, not that we

loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the

propitiation for our sins," 1 John 4:9,10. Mark, he has sent his Son

and not a man of the seed of Adam who had no father. Paul says, "He

spared not his own Son," Rom. 8:32, and other explicit sayings.

!!!Amos add a translation of some one...

Here, in the original works of Menno Simon, follows a brief argument,

in reference to the incarnation of our Lord, which the publishers have

deemed proper to omit, for the reason that they felt that the book

would be more edifying to the general reader without it.]

In the seventh place, he accuses us, saying, "That, secondly, their

church has not existed since the time of Abraham; and that she ie,

therefore, not the true church, is clearly visible from the fact that

they, in disobedience to the will of God, refuse the seal of the

eternal covenant to the children of the church, which has, since the

time of Abraham, been practiced and maintained in the churches."

Answer. Abraham was commanded of God that he should leave the land of

his fathers, and of his kinsmen, and that he should leave his father's

house, and remove to a land which the Lord would show him. Abraham

believed in the Lord, and departed as the Lord had commanded him, Gen.

12:4?6.

Again, the Lord commanded him that he should offer Isaac, whom he

loved, his only begotten of the free woman, as a burnt offering.

Abraham believed in God; he was obedient, and prepared to do whatever

God commanded, Gen. 22; Rom. 8:32.

In the same manner he was commanded to circumcise himself, his son

Ishmael (Isaac was not yet born) and every man child of his household,

and all the males after him, at the eighth day after their birth.

Abraham believed in God, and did as the Lord commanded him.

Behold, thus Abraham believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for

righteousness, Gen. 15:6; Rom.' 4:3. In the same manner God has spoken

unto us in the New Testament, not only by angels and prophets, as he

did unto Abraham and the patriarchs, but also by his Son, which Son has

thus commanded, namely, That the gospel should be preached to all the

world; to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews; and whosoever believes

it should be baptized, Mark 16; even as it was commanded Abraham to

circumcise all males, Gen. 17:10?13.

This command we have received from the mouth of Christ, therefore we

believe in it, even as Abraham believed in his time. We believe it, I

say, and do accordingly; we teach those of understanding minds, and

baptize those that believe, not in disobedience, as Gellius says, but

in obedience to the clear, plain and express ordinance and command of

Christ, God's own Son.

Dear reader, observe. The Lord, Christ, thanked his Father, and said,

"This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God,

and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent," John 17:3. At another place he

says, " If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed."

Mark, he says, "If ye continue," John 8:31. And, while the merciful and

affectionate Father, through his great kindness, has discovered unto us

the glorious knowledge, and the wonderful, deep mystery of his beloved

Son, and, besides has given us such a fruit through his Spirit, that we

dare not willfully and knowingly deviate one hair's breadth from his

holy word, ordinance and command, as is testified and shown by our

tribulation, misery and deprivation, to the whole world, yet, alas,

according to the judgment of Gellius, and of the learned, we are not

the believing church, nor the disciples of Christ, as may be seen by

their writings.

Behold, thus the righteous judgment of the Almighty and great God is

passed upon the wise and learned of this world, that the clear and

plain signs, by which the true disciples and church of Christ may, and

must be known, are esteemed an abomination and error?that they who have

received light from above, through grace, are not accounted christians,

by them as has been related.

In the eighth place he accuses us, and says," They must admit that

their church has existed but sixteen or seventeen years, that is, since

the time Menno Simon commenced preaching. For they do not want to be

counted at all, of the Munsterites, Amsterdamites, and Oude

Kloosterites, among whom Menno lost a brother, lest they be called

seditious or the seed. of sedition."

Answer. We point to Christ Jesus our only and eternal Prophet and

Messiah, sent of the Father, who is the only true Cornerstone in Zion,

the true Teacher, Law?giver, Commander, Intercessor and Head? of his

church, together with all his angels, apostles and prophets, through

whom he, in former times, spoke, and also his Spirit, word, ordinances,

commands, prohibitions, usage and example?and if Gellius, or any other

person under the canopy of heaven, be he learned or not, can convince

us by divine truth that we teach or maintain any thing contrary to his

word and ordinances, then I, for myself, sincerely desire to correct

the wrong, and to follow that which is right. This he knows who has

purchased me; for I want to be saved. But if they can not do this by

the truth, but only in appearance of truth, and thus blaspheme it, as

all the perverse do, and have to leave our testimony unbroken, then it

is sufficiently proven that our hated, despised, and small church is

the true, prophetic, apostolic, and christian church, which was began

with the first righteous who walked according to the will of God; and

not with me, as Gellius, alas, maliciously says.

Secondly, I would say, since he has accused us, at different times, of

the errors and sedition of the Munsterites, of which we are clear and

ever have been, before God and man, therefore, I would beseech him to

take a view of his own infant baptist church, of which he is a teacher

and head, and see how abominably they have, for years, rebelled amongst

each other; how they have afflicted countries and nations with their

accursed, ungodly wars, and have given the blood of innumerable human

beings, together with their poor souls, to the prince of hell, and have

placed them as an offering upon his altar; of which, alas, the learned,

by their seditious writings, together with the priests, monks, and

preachers, were the principal cause, which is as clear as day to many

reasonable persons.

Thirdly, I would say, that in my opinion, he here so indiscreetly

alludes to the error of my poor brother, for one of these two reasons:

Either, that he thereby would make me suspicioned with the reader, that

I, formerly, also was of the same feeling with my brother, or, that he

would thereby injure my reputation. For my brother is no longer subject

to the punishment of man which he once suffered in the flesh, but alone

to the judgment of God. It seems that Gellius cannot master this envy

and bitterness of his heart; for nobody can be corrected or taught

righteousness by such a course.

If he did so for the first reason, namely, to make me suspicioned, then

all those who formerly heard me, when yet of the papal church, and all

who have ever heard me until this hour, and also my published writings,

will be my testimony, that he wrongfully suspicions me; for I never

thought of such a thing, much less taught it.

But, if he did so for the second reason, namely, to blemish my

reputation, then he should know that I and mine, I trust, never harmed

him nor his in the least; and also, that my poor brother, to whom he so

cruelly alludes, did no greater wrong than that he erroneously, alas,

defended his faith by force of arms, and retaliated the violence

committed against him, as all the learned, preachers, priests, monks

and all the world do. I presume that I have merited this cruel allusion

by nothing less than by my faithful love, because I have, in sincerity

of heart, pointed him and all the preachers to the divine truth of the

word, and because I have admonished them to their own wellbeing. And

how this allusion, which cannot have been made but in envy, agrees with

honorableness, and with the fear of God, all reasonable readers may

judge by the Scriptures and the common rules of decency. May the kind

Lord grant that he may rightly learn the heart from which this

unmerited allusion comes, that he may purge it and sincerely repent;

this is my revenge and punishment which I invoke on him.

In the ninth place he accuses us, and says, "That we cannot prove that

infant baptism is an anti?christian abomination; nor show from the

anti?ehristian ordinance who was the institutor thereof. It can also be

proven, he says, that infant baptism was practiced ever since the

apostolic times; long before the violence of anti?christ, which was yet

unknown, or, at least, very weak, at the time of Augustine."

Answer. We teach and practice such a baptism as was commanded by Jesus

Christ, God's own Son; as was taught by his faithful witnesses, the

apostles, in clear and explicit terms, and as was transmitted to us by

their practice; which is the baptism of the believing, Matt. 28:19;

Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 8:36; 10:48; 16:33; 19:6; Rom. 6:3; Col. 2:12; 1

Cor. 12:13; Tit. 3:5; 1 Pet. 3:21. Whosoever, now, will teach and

practice any other baptism, must show by the Scriptures where it is

commanded. But if they can not do this, as is impossible to do, then it

is already proven that it is not Christ's baptism, but that of

anti?christ, however finely it may be ornamented with learned words;

this is too clear to be denied.

But, as to his assertion, that the violence of anti?christ was yet

unknown at the time of Augustine, or that it was at least feeble, is

too absurd to admit of an answer. Whoever will, may read history, and

he will find in great clearness, that anti?christ was, at the time of

Augustine, in full honor and that he reigned with his doctrine, in the

hearts of men.

In the tenth place he accuses us, said says," If they were the true

messengers of God, who are to purge ani deliver the church of Christ

from such abominable anti?christian errors, they should not be a

separated sect; for the prophets, and all the faithful servants o: God,

by whom God has often purged his church, did not separate themselves

from the church and establish e church of their own, but they remained

with the churcl and bestowed their faithful labor upon the church, a~

the peril of their lives."

Answer. Whatever Gellius does, it seems that he must slander. I say

again, take Christ Jesus and all his prophets, apostles; Spirit, word,

ordinance and life, and if he can thereby convince us, that in any

article we are at fault and contrary to their teaching (his slandering

amounts to nothing), of that we do not conform thereto, or, that, in

our weakness, we do not agree therewith-- I will give up that we are a

separated sect. But if he can not do so, as it is impossible for him,

and yet calls us a separated sect, he shows thereby that he is no

better judge of the church of Christ, than Tertullus was when before

Felix, and the Jews at Rome, before Paul.

I would further say, that if he can prove to us that the faithful

prophets intermingled with the worshippers of the calf of Jeroboam;

with the servants of Baal, and the abominations of Israel, which they

so zealously reproved; and remained united with those who disobeyed the

law; and, also, that the holy apostles admitted the Pharisees and

Scribes, together with other refractory persons, in the communion of

their churches?then we admit that he has a good cause to reprove us,

and to write as he does. If they did not do so, (and they have not),

but, on the contrary, reproved, by the power of the Spirit, the

abominations that crept in from time to time, according to the pure

word and ordinance of God, at the peril of their lives, then he must

admit, that he accuses us without cause, since we do not otherwise than

according to the example of the holy apostles and prophets, reprove all

false doctrine, unrighteousness and abominations with the pure,

apostolic teaching, Spirit, ordinance, and word of our Lord Jesus

Christ (without which no true church of Christ can exist); avoid that

which is wrong, and, faithfully, in love and purity, teach and

promulgate the salutary, christian truth, verbally and by writing, to

all the hungry hearts, at the peril of life and possessions.

Lastly, I would say, Since he calls us a excluded sect, because we do

not unit with them, why have he and his follower seceded from the

Papistic and Luthera churches? If he answer: Because of their

abominations. Then I would again say, that we do it for the same

reason. For they forsake the Son of the true and living God and point

us to an earthly creature of the unclean and sinful flesh of Adam as

being our Savior; besides, they do not follow the command and ordinance

of God in regard to baptism, Holy Supper, and separation. We will

never, at any risk, desire to be of one church with those who seek

their reconciliation and salvation in the sinful flesh of Adam, who

reject God's testimony of his Son and his ordinance; but we desire to

be of one church and body with those who give the praise to God through

his word; with those who confess the whole Christ as the only, and

first begotten Son of God, and who abide unchangeably in his holy

ordinances, example, Spirit and word. Let those of understanding minds

understand that which the word of the Lord teaches, John 10.

In the eleventh place he accuses us, saying, " From this it follows

that the calling of their doctrine is wrong, and that their whole

church, service, and walk, cannot aid to salvation, but can only lead

to the corruption and destruction of the true Churches; and therefore

they do not suffer as innocent and harmless christians, but as

busy?bodies in other men's matter (he refers to 1 Pet. 4), except that

they want to suffer for such a cause of which they must be doubtful

themselves, and for which no martyr ever suffered."

Answer. As the Spirit of Christ, and of unfeigned love, accepts all

good and godly actions as right and godly, so, also, the spirit of

anti?christ, and of bitter envy explains every thing that is right and

godly, as wrong and ungodly. For it is testified to with possessions

and life that we dare not willfully and knowingly deviate one hair's

breadth from the word and example of the Lord, but judge every thing

according to the doctrines and usages of the apostles, so far as the

Lord gives grace. We, in our weakness, would gladly conform our lives

to the requirements of the Scriptures, and gladly seek the praise of

God and the salvation of our neighbors, at the peril of possessions and

life. Notwithstanding this, he dares write that the calling of our

doctrine is wrong, that our walk and aG tions are not conducive to

salvation; that we cause all manner of corruption and disorder, and

that we do not suffer as christians, but as evil?doers, who are

busybodies in other men's matters. Behold, thus all good offices of the

godly, are ever explained to the reverse.

O, reader, beloved reader, that the poor, ignorant world would

sincerely accept this, our despised doctrine, which is not of us but of

Christ, and that they would faithfully obey it; for then they might

change their deadly swords into plow shares and their spears into

pruning hooks; they would level their gates and walls, dismiss their

executioners and hangmen, for all those who accept our doctrine, in its

power, by the grace of God, will not desire to injure any one upon

earth, not even their most bitter enemies, much less wrong or harm them

by works and actions; for they are the children of the Most High, who

sincerely loves all that is good, and, in their weakness, avoid that

which is evil, nay, hate it and are inimical thereto. Yet we must hear

that we suffer for the sake of wrongdoing, as has been heard.

But in regard to his assertion "that we suffer for a cauae of which we

must be doubtful ourselves, and for which no martyr ever suffered," he

should know that if we at all doubted our faith, we would not so deeply

impress the seal with our possessions, and blood, as we do; for a house

built upon the sand cannot withstand such torrents of water and

wind?storms as visit us daily, Matt. 7:25.

Neither do we suffer on account of an uncertain cause as he says, but

for the sake of the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; for the sake of his

holy, precious word and ordinances; for the sake of the sincere

confession of God and Christ; for the sake of obedience to the

Scriptures, for the sake of which all have suffered, from the

beginning, who have rightly suffered according to the will of God, as

may be plainly and clearly educed from profane and sacred history.

In the twelfth place he accuses us, saying, "That they are the church

and Israel, is false, since they stain the true church of Christ by

many errors which they daily produce and bring forward as from the

abyss of hell; destroy the true sheep of Christ; unreasonably adorn

themselves with the sanctity of the church; cause strife and dissension

concerning the articles of faith; are carnal, sneak about and preach in

secret, and do not agree with the elders of the churches, as said

before."

Answer. If the spirit of truth had been the writer in this case, the

game would have, doubtlessly, been reversed, and this accusation laid

on our opponents; for they still maintain and uphold some gross errors

which were formerly brought forward by anti?christ from the abyss of

hell (to use his own expression), both by doctrine and force; and

thereby cause the godly much affliction and tribulation, cause many a

pious child to be deprived of possessions and life, adulterate truth,

preach falsehood, are carnally minded, and in fact deny that the man,

Christ Jesus, is God's only and first begotten Son, while we, with our

small, despised number shun and forsake all the anti?christian .

abominations and errors, build up the church of Christ and again place

it upon the true foundation, again publish and proclaim the clear and

plain truth, to many, both verbally and by writing, at the peril of

life and the displeasure of the world, confess the whole Christ, as the

true, only and first begotten Son of God, as did the angel to Mary,

John the Baptist, Peter, Martha, and the Father from high heavens

himself, and rightly use his ordinances of baptism, Supper and

separation, as all those did from the beginning who rightly, knew God,

and acted according to his will.

Behold, reader, these are the most important accusations charged

against us by him; and that they, for the most part are artful

fabrications, false explanations, false suspicions, false accusations

and partial charges, whereby he obstructs the course of divine truth,

maintains falsehood, insults the godly, and consoles the impenitent in

their easy life, is fully proven in this our replication.

In the last place he writes of us, saying, " Experience fully teaches

that their teachers and prophets are not the teachers and prophets of

God. And that they are not the people of God, I have, perhaps, already

proven too powerfully. From which, then, it is clear that our

magistracy are right not to let them proceed in their wicked course,

but to stop them; and they might, in pastoral an paternal faithfulness

or solicitude for the church of Christ, speak and act a little harder

towards them, lest the church be quite destroyed. But then we would be

their persecutors and blood?hounds."

Answer. Jeremiah, Micah, Elias, Christ Jesus and Paul could not be

called the true prophets and servants of God; nor can we. But the great

Lord shall, in due time, make it manifest who are the faithful prophets

and servants of God and who are not.

Again, to his saying that we are not the people of God, we answer with

holy Paul that it is a very small thing that we should be judged by the

judgment of men; and especially of such men who are so diametrically

opposed to the ordinance, will and word of God, as may be seen in the

case of Gellius, by his writing. Yea, kind reader, if he and his like

preachers acknowledged us to be the people of God, they would thereby

testify that they are not; something which an ambitious, carnal person,

who seeks reputation and fame, never will do.

Again, in regard to his approval of the magistracy hindering our

course, which he calls wicked, I would say that the longer and the more

he writes, the more indiscreet and offensive he becomes, and the more

he manifests his blindness. If he be a preacher called of the Spirit of

God, then let him show a single word in all the New Testament, whereby

he can prove that Christ or the apostles have ever called on the

magistracy to defend and protect the true church against the attack of

the wicked, as, alas, he calls us. No, no. Christ Jesus and his

powerful word and Holy Spirit is the protector and defender of his

church; and not the emperor, king, or any worldly potentate. The

kingdom of the Spirit must be protected and defended by the sword of

the Spirit, and not by the sword of the world. This is too clear to be

controverted, according to the doctrine and example of Christ and his

apostles.

I would further say, If the magistracy rightly understood Christ and

his kingdom, they would, in my opinion, rather choose death, than to

meddle with their worldly power and sword in spiritual matters, which

are not subject to the judgment of man, but to the judgment of the

great and Almighty God alone. But they are taught by their pastors that

they should proscribe, imprison, torture and slay those who are not

obedient to their doctrine, as may, alas, be seen in many different

cities and countries.

In short kind reader, if the merciful Lord did not, in his great love,

temper the hearts of some of the magistrates, but would let them

proceed according to the fiendish instigation and blood?preaching of

the learned, no pious person could endure. But some are yet found, who,

notwithstanding the crying and writing of the learned, suffer and bear

with the miserable, and, for a time, show them mercy, for which we will

forever give praise to God, the Most High, and for which we feel very

grateful and thankful to such kind and discreet regents.

But, to his writing that in paternal and pastoral solicitude and

faithfulness they might use harsher means against us" I would say this:

If he had entered in at the right door with Christ, who is the Prince

and Head of all true pastors, and if he could taste in his heart, of

the friendly and amiable Spirit, nature and disposition of Christ, he

would not at all think of such a resolution against the blood of

others, much less advocate and invoke it. This I know to a certainty,

for the Spirit of Christ is not thus natured, John lU:2; 1 Pet. 2:3.

Reader, observe that he, in this instance, does not write plainly that

the magistracy should put us to the ~ sword; this a does, because he

does not want to be called a blood?hound or persecutor; nevertheless he

makes it understood that if they should do so, he would call it a

praisworthy thing. Whoever is not quite destitute of understanding,

well understands what he hints at in this instance. O, a doctrine of

blood!

O, that he could comprehend the force of the word which the Lord says,

"Ye are of your father, the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will

do. He was a murderer from the beginning," John 8:44. For, since he

encourages the blood?thirsty by such writing, and I have myself heard

from his own mouth that it is right to persecute and kill one on

account of his faith (understand, such faith as they think to be

heretical), he, therefore, has thereby burdened the innocent blood on

his soul. I say innocent blood, for neither he nor anybody else upon

the face of the earth, can, by the grace God, convince us by the force

of truth, that we act or do aught against Christ or his word; or that

we deserve the punishment and sword of the magistracy.

He should further know that this blood doctrine of his, is not only

contrary to Jesus Christ, God's own Son, and that of his servant, Paul,

but also contrary to the doctrine of Luther, see his book, " De

sublimion muwndi potestate." Besides contrary to the doctrine of

Hieronimus, Augustine, Theophilactus, Anselmus, Remigius and others,

who unanimously agree that the heretics should not be killed, but

admonished and convinced, and if they do not repent after admonition,

that they should, according to the word of God, be separated from the

communion of the church, and shunned.

Besides, this stone thrown by him might light upon his own head. For

what greater and more terrible heresy, deception and blasphemy can be

imagined than to assert that the pure and holy flesh of Christ, is a

ransom for sin, to adulterate so sadly his ordinance and the apostle's

clear and plain doctrine of baptism; to neglect Exclusion as required

by the word of God; to slander the pious, and to console and encourage

the impenitent and carnal minded by garbling the Scriptures, as he has

constantly done in his writings from beginning to end.

If we were thus to resolve against those who are wrong in doctrine or

faith, as he says we should, then we would have to commence with him,

because he is a defender of such great errors, as may be plainly seen

by comparing both our writings.

May the merciful, dear Lord permit him and all our opponents to see the

right foundation of truth; understanding hearts to understand it

rightly, and a willing, free and new mind to believe and follow it with

sincerity, Amen.

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CONCLUSION.

HERE, dear reader, you have my forced answer to the unseasoned,

blasphemous writing of Gellius, which he has published and printed, A:

D. 1652, against the unadulterated truth of God and his scattered

church; whereby he so lamentably adulterates the salutary doctrine of

Christ, and so miserably accuses the innocent, pious hearts, before the

whole world, that I could not neglect to do so, by virtue of my office,

to which I was unworthily ordained of God, through the pious. I had to

controvert him with the word of the Lord, and publish it through the

press, as he in the first place has done against us, to the praise of

God and his truth, to the justification of the innocent, and to the

instruction of the humble.

Whoever seeks and strives after truth may find it; for it has been

shown with great clearness; but whoever despises it, does not despise

us, but Christ Jesus, who has taught it unto his church through his

holy apostles, and who has bequeathed it to us by the testimony of the

Scriptures through his Holy Spirit.I hereby offer myself to you and to

the whole world, if these writings are not sufficient for you, to let

me have safe conduct to an open and free discussion with Gellius and

the learned; and if I cannot maintain my doctrine and faith by virtue

of the Scriptures, and if I cannot prove their doctrine and faith as

deceiving, then I will not refuse to acknowledge my fault before the

whole world, to retract my doctrine and to consign myself and my

writings to the fire. But if I can substantiate my doctrine, then I

desire and ask nothing more than that they acknowledge their fault,

discontinue to deceive the people, repent, teach the truth to the

people and flee from falsehood. Herewith I commend you to God; he will

guide your feet upon the way of peace, and lead you all in the

unadulterated, pure knowledge of his eternal, saving truth, Amen. The

grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all who sincerely seek and fear

him, Amen.

MENNO SIMON. blank page

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A

VERY HUMBLE

SUPPLICATION

OF THE

POOR, DESPISED CHRISTIANS,

TO ALL THE PIOUS, KIND AND REASONABLE MAGISTRATES; CONCERNING

THE ABOMINABLE CHARGES, UPBRAIDINGS, BACK?BITINGS AND

CLAMOR OF THE LEARNED, WHEREBY THEY ARE, ON

EVERY HAND, SLANDERED AND TROUBLED, AS

MAY BE HEARD AND SEEN.

BY

MENNO SIMON.

"If a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him," "He

shall be

unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself,"

Levit.19:33,34.

ELKHART, INDIANA:

PUBLISHED BY JOHN F. FUNK AND BROTHER.

1871. To all the pious, kind and reasonable magistrates, lords, princes,

regents and commanders, we, poor, despised and scattered children wish eternal

happiness, a happy reign, and every blessing of God our heavenly Father,

through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior, Amen.

"Amend your ways and your doings;" "For if ye thoroughly amend your

ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute judgment between a man

and his neighbor; if ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and

the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk

after other gods to your hurt, then will I cause you to dwell in this

place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever,"

Jer. 7:3, 5?7.

"Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the

poor that are cast out, to thy house? when thou seest the naked; that

thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

Then shall thy light break forth as the morning," Isaiah 58:7, 8.

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A VERY HUMBLE SUPPLICATION

OF THE POOR, DESPISED CHRISTIANS.

IT is well known to many persons, noble, honorable and kind lords, that

many are more diligent and zealous to execute the law of Theodosius

(although this law was formerly forced from the good emperor by the

blood thirsty bishops), the mandate of Charles the fifth, and the

decree of the Ro. man empire, passed against those whom they call

anabaptists (issued in our times); than they are, to have the word of

God obeyed; never minding that these laws and decrees were made, not on

account of baptism itself, but on account of the ungodly errors and

abominations which were committed by the doctrine and doings of the

baptized; for, if the beforementioned law, mandate and decree were

issued on account of baptism, and not on account of the crimes

committed at different times by those that were baptized, then were

also Christ Jesus, the apostles, Cyprian the Martyr, all the African

bishops, the Nicene concilion, and beside, the great apostle, Paul,

thereby adjudged as public criminals. This is incontrovertible.

Since we are opposed to the Donatists, Circumcelliones, Munsterites,

and to the errors, abuses and abominations of all uproarious sects,

committed in our times (on account of which, formerly the law of

Theodosius was passed, and in our times the imperial mandate and the

condemnation of the empire, were issued); also were opposed to them

from the beginning of our doctrine and faith; and, since we, before

"God and his angels, seek nothing upon earth but that we may, humbly

and obediently follow the express and clear word, Spirit, example,

command, prohibition, usage and ordinance of the Lord, according to

which we should judge every thing pertaining to the kingdom and church

of Christ, if we would please God, as is testified and shown on every

hand, by our tribulation, oppression, misery, anxiety and

blood?therefore it is, before Clod and man, unchristian, nay,

manifestly wrong and detestable, to impose the same penalty and

punishment on us that is imposed on the Circumcelliones, on account of

the baptism, alone, which we have maintained in conformity with the

word of God, with the apostolic doctrine and usage, and against all

human philosophy and inventions. To treat us, I say, the same as they

did the Circumcelliones, who, according to history, committed such

detestable, cruel tyrannies, and also the same as they treated the

Munsterites, who, contrary to the word of God, to all the evangelical

Scriptures, and, also, contrary to sound policy, established a new

kingdom, rebellion, polygamy, and such like things; all of which we

unflinchingly oppose and reprove, as may be seen by our open actions

and doings.

We would, therefore, in the first place, for the sake of Christ humbly

beseech your Excellencies, and honorable Wisdom, to consider, in pity

and paternal solicitude, how lamentably your miserable subjects, who

are created, with you, of one God, and were purchased with the same

treasure, and who will at last appear with you before the same

judgment, are, without their faults, belied, derided and slandered of

the whole world, and especially of the preachers; and how, in many

places, they are pitilessly and unmercifully destroyed as the worst

criminals upon earth, and are given as food to the fowls of the air;

how they are (as our predecessor, Christ), with the criminals, put to

the stake and on the wheel; and how many of us, with our wives and

little children, are driven from our country and possessions, must roam

in foreign countries, naked and destitute; and all this for no other

reason, God knows, than that we do not agree with the inordinate way of

living of this world, and . do not commune with the preachers who

oppose the ?word of the Lord by their doctrine, sacraments and life;

that we rightly use baptism and the Lord's Supper, shun all idolatry,

self?righteousness and abuses, according to the Scriptures; and that we

would gladly, in, our weakness, fear the Lord, and follow in

righteousness.

We beseech your Excellencies and Honors to consider, in the fear of

God, what he requires of you, namely, That you shall rightly judge

between man and man, without all respect of persons, and that you shall

deliver the oppressed from the hands of the oppressor, The Lord says, "

Execute judgment between a man and his neighbor;" " Oppress not the

stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood."

Consider this; that your despised servants and miserable subjects, who

fled from the roaring lions, may, in peace and quiet, serve the Lord,

and earn their bread according to the Scriptures, under your paternal

care and merciful protection, Jer. 7:6, 7; 22:17; Isaiah 59.

Secondly, we desire that your Excellencies and Honors would weigh, with

the infallible word of God, with the living example of Christ, and with

the pious, unblamable life of the saints, how a true christian should

be disposed according to the Scriptures. If reading, singing, water,

bread, wine, name and boasting, would constitute true christianity,

then there would be a great number of christians. But no, beloved

lords, no. The word of God knows no christians but those who are born

anew in Christ of the living seed of God, through the pure doctrine of

Jesus Christ, which, being preached in the power of the Spirit, is

accepted in true faith, by the grace of God and through the operation

of the Holy Spirit; who, by virtue of this birth, bury the old sinful

life, and arise with Christ in newness of life; who, in their weakness,

gladly obey the holy will, word, example, ordinances and commands of

the Lord, and who sincerely die unto every thing contrary thereto; who

diligently combat all licentious, vain thoughts, and besetting sins

which flow from the inherited Adamic nature; and who daily sigh and

mourn before the Lord, on account of their human weakness, errors and

short comings, with an humble, broken heart; who are prepared to take

upon themselves the cross of Christ, and to forsake father, mother,

husband, wife, children, possessions and self, for the sake of the

testimony of his holy word, when the honor and praise of God require

it. In short, they are minded as Christ Jesus; are in Christ and Christ

in them; they are led by his Spirit; and they abide immutably in the

word of the Lord, through true faith, firm confidence, and a living

hope, in all temptations and perils, Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12; Gal. 3:27; 2

Tim. 3; Matt. 10:38; Luke 14:27; Phil. 2:3.

Inasmuch as it is found in fact that our faithful brethren and sisters

in Christ Jesus, the beloved companions in tribulation, and in the

kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ,? Rev.1:9, so sincerely fear and

love the Lord, their God, that they would rather give their reputation

and money, goods, flesh and blood, and every thing of which human

nature is desirous, as a prey to the blood?thirsty, than willfully and

knowingly to speak a false word or to act hypocritically, contrary to

the word of God; therefore we would beseech your Excellencies and

Honors to consider whether they are such pernicious and dangerous

people as, alas, they are called by many, and adjudged by all. Yea,

dear lords, all their pleasure is in the word of the Lord. Their mouths

flow with wisdom, their love smells like the precious ointment on the

head of Aaron, their prayers are as the noble incense before the ark of

God; their life enlightens as the golden candlesticks in the temple of

the Lord, and they seek nothing on this earth, but, that they may serve

the whole world unto righteousness, both with body and spirit, and that

they may deliver many from the destruction of their souls, and win them

unto Christ, through the grace, Spirit, power and word of the Lord;

and, that they may thus, with the gracious help of God, improve the

short time of their earthly existence, in Christ Jesus, to the praise

of God, and to the service of their neighbors, and be eternally saved,

Jer. 17:8; John 1:8; Ps. 133:2.

If this is heresy and devilish deceit, as the preachers cry, then the

Son of God, Christ Jesus, together with all the prophets, apostles and

testimonies of God, were open heretics; and then all the Scriptures

which teach nothing but reformation, and point us to Christ, are

nothing but deceit; this can not be denied; for they, in their

weakness, conform in all their doings, to the word, Spirit, life,

command, prohibitions, ordinances and usages of the Lord, as their open

actions testify before all the world, Ira. 1:17; Luke 9:36; Deut.

18:16.

Since, then, they and we walk in unity of spirit, and, before God, seek

nothing in Christ Jesus, but that we, in our weakness, would gladly

follow Christ, as has been said, and we also trust, by the grace of the

Lord, that your excellencies will never perceive anything else in your

poor servants (we write of those who are united with us in faith and

life), therefore, we beseech your Excellencies and Honors, again, for

Christ's sake, to discard all' prejudice against us miserable orphans,

to believe us to be sincere in our profession, and never think that we

have any other intentions, if we should become as numerous as the

spears of grass upon the fields, or as the sands on the sea shore

(something which will never be verified, since the way is narrow and

the gate is strait); for Christ, whose name we bear, has taught so with

his own mouth; his holy apostles have preached it unto all the world,

and have testified it with the holy gospel, and have promulgated it at

the peril of life, Matt. 7:13; Mark 16:15; Rom. 10:18.

Thirdly, we desire that your Excellencies and Honors would earnestly

consider how the Scriptures are being verified in regard to those who

boast themselves christians; how mortally the sword of wrath cuts on

every side, and how the hand of divine punishment is laid upon us;

great and many are our sins; great and severe is the punishment of the

Lord; the fire of wrath is enkindled; unless the Lord in his grace;

quench it, it will devour both the green and dry trees, according to

the word of the prophet. The prophecy of Christ concerning the latter

days; also, of Daniel and of the apostles, are fast fulfilling. The

flesh consuming sword of the Lord glitters every where, and his bloody

darts are flying in every country; one kingdom has risen against

another; one principality against another; one city against another,

and one neighbor and friend against another. Some are put to the sword,

some are imprisoned; cities and villages are leveled and destroyed; the

poor, despised people who are, in part, innocent, are exhausted,

profaned, taxed, burned and rained, without mercy; numbers are rendered

adulterers and rogues; one pestilence and epidemic follows another; and

one panic another. Storms, hurricanes, misery? and tribulation sweep

over land and water. In short, the continual severe punishment show

that the Lord is angry; notwithstanding the wicked world does not

reform, but yet daily degenerates more and more, Deut. 32:23?3G; Eaek.

21:1?F; Matt. 24:4.

All of them, in general, boast themselves to be christians, and that

they have God's word, although their seeking and doings are quite

contrary to Christ and his word. For, if we turn to the magistrates,

whom we should reasonably expect to know the ways and judgments of the

Lord, as Jeremiah says, we find that they have broken the yoke and rent

asunder the bands. If we turn to the preachers, we find there the envy

of Cain to all those who fear the Lord, an insatiable love of money, a

Balaamitic avarice, a light minded, easy doctrine, idolatrous

sacraments, and a lustful, vain, careless life, as maybe openly seen.

If we turn to the common people, there we find extortion, hoarding,

drinking, carousing, lying, cheating, cursing and swearing; some commit

adultery and fornication, others are marauders, pillagers, thieves and

murderers, nay, they lead, alas, such a life that we may well, in

anguish, sigh with Hosea, that "There is no truth, nor mercy, nor

knowledge of God in the land; by swearing, and lying, and killing, and

stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth

blood," Hosea 4:1, 2; with Paul, " They are all gone out of the way;

they are together become unprofitable," " and the way of peace have

they not known," Rom. 3:12, 17, and, that their sins have reached unto

heaven, Rev. 18:5. O, dear Lord, how long will this dreadfully ? great

blindness, blasphemy, deceit, abomination, bloodthirstiness and

recklessness continue I

Noble lords, reform; do works meet for repentance, such as can stand

before the Lord; humble yourselves with the king of Nineveh; take off

the ungodly, tainted coat of sin; repent in sackcloth and ashes; cry

out unto the Lord with a broken heart: rend your hearts and not your

garments, as the prophet says; let the pious Josiah be your pattern,

who turned himself unto the Lord, with all his heart, and soul and

strength, as soon as the law of God was read to him, from the book

which was again found, John 3:7; 2 Kings 22:11.

Dear lords, seek, fear, and serve God with all your strength; do

justice unto the widows, orphans, strangers, and all the forsaken;

cleanse your hands of blood, rule your countries in wisdom and peace,

and let all your thoughts, words and actions be conformed to the

crucified Christ Jesus; follow his footsteps; for "Though your sins be

as scarlet they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like

crimson, they shall be as wool;" "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," Isaiah 1:18; Ezek. 33:11; 18:32.

Inasmuch as those who boast themselves the church, are so estranged

from Christ, that they are no more than nominal Christians; and,

inasmuch as the salt, which is the preachers, has wholly lost its

savor, that it does more injury than good, for they flatter more than

they reprove, if they can make some earthly gain thereby, and do not

seek the praise of the Lord; by which they all, both preacher and

hearer, are led upon the broad road which leads to destruction, and

since there are, alas, none to stop them in their career, as the

prophet complains, and, since we, God knows', would gladly see all men

awaken, fear the Lord, sincerely repent and be saved, that thus the

fallen city, which is the church, may again be built upon her old

foundation, that is, upon the firm foundation of the apostles, and upon

the pure doctrine of Christ Jesus, and that such repentance may !, be

verified unto the world by a pious, penitent, christian life, according

to the Scriptures; behold, therefore we are so hated of the learned,

that by their slanderous crying and clamoring,?we are often robbed of

our possessions, and our bodies given to the executioner. Some of us,

through necessity, sire forced to seek refuge in foreign lands, on

account of their persecution, as has been said. Therefore we, poor,

miserable outcasts, pray your Honors and Excellencies the third time,

earnestly to reflect upon this matter, for Christ's sake, and

faithfully compare the doings of the preachers and the tenor of the

following writing addressed to them, and the matters and things therein

set forth, that our apology may be rightly understood, and the truth

explained according to the word of the Lord?; and that the guilty may

no longer be protected in their unrighteousness. Yea, beloved lords, if

this was impartially done, in the fear of God, you would soon find, by

the grace of God, in great clearness, with whom the truth or falsehood

is; and that the doctrine, sacraments and life of the preachers are not

in accordance with the Scriptures, but that they are deceitful and

contrary to the word of God.

O, beloved, noble lords, we beseech you not to despise our reasonable

and christian prayer, but to consider it in love; for it concerns the

praise of the Almighty God, his eternal word and truth, and the eternal

salvation of all our souls, which are so much desired and so dearly

purchased with his precious blood. O, consider the difference, to live

eternally with Christ Jesus in the kingdom of heaven, or eternally to

die with all the devils in the abyss of hell.

Dear lords, we are in great anxiety and tribulation, and are terrified

in two ways. For, if we follow the truth, which we ever intend to do in

our weakness, by the grace of God, then we are made a prey to all the

world. If we deviate, and again enter into the broad way, from which

the merciful Father save us, then we fall into the hands of God and

must bear his eternal punishment. The salvation of our souls is worth

more than man can comprehend. The sweet?sounding, precious word will

once be heard: " Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom

prepared for you;" and also the fearful word which is threatened to all

who are disobedient to Christ, which pierces body and soul, if well

realized: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared

for the devil and his angels." Happy they, who are awake at that time,

who have their lamps prepared, and saved their wedding garments. Yea,

blessed are they who are called to the Lord's Supper

Dear, noble lords, it is no flattery not vain display of words; but

that which we write, we mean, as our sore persecutions testify.The

merciful, great Lord, Jesus Christ, who is Lord of lords, and King of

kings, grant that your Honors may acknowledge the truth, faithfully act

in accordance therewith, and that you may rule the people, cities and

countries entrusted to your reign, in peace and prosperity, to the

praise of your God, and to the salvation of many souls. This is our

sincere desire. Amen.

"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." Be merciful,

as your Father is merciful. "Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did

it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me," Matt. 5:7;

25:45. The humble and obedient subjects of your Excellencies and

Honors, in all things, we can do according to the will of God by his

grace.

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A LETTER OF CONSOLATION, ADDRESSED TO AN AFFLICTED WIDOW.

GRACE and peace be unto you, and kind greeting, sincerely beloved

sister in the Lord, whom my soul loves. The merciful Lord having called

you to widowhood, my paternal and faithful admonition to you is, as a

father to his children, to bear with your lot as becomes holy women,

and to serve the Lord, with the pious Hannah in the holy temple, that

is, in his church, or a new and upright conscience, with fasting and

prayer, night and day; treat, at all times, the needy saints, as the

virtuous widow of Sarepta in Zidon, treated the faithful Elijah, at the

time of the drouth and panic, when she received him in her house, and

fed him with her handful of meal and a little oil; and the meal of the

holy, divine word, from the measure of your conscience, and the joyous

oil of the Holy Spirit shall not be withheld from you. And, if the new

son of your spiritual birth, do sicken a little and lose his breath for

a time, through the weakness to which a widow is naturally subject ?yet

our true Elias, Jesus Christ, will again animate him through his grace,

and again restore you to cheerfulness; for, as the Scriptures teach,

you receive, love and serve him in his members.

Beloved sister, understand me aright.I speak of the needy saints, and

no further. Those who have enough of their own, do not need your aid

and services. True Christians should not put each other to unnecessary

expenses. Faithful sister, walk prudently; fear your God sincerely;

crucify your flesh and its lusts; withstand the enemy and all his

enchantments; bear every thing piously; do not imprudently cause

anybody trouble; diligently attend to your occupation, household and

children; carefully shun all unchastity, vain babbling, pomp and

splendor; earnestly avoid being led by the temptations of the flesh,

that you do not become like the widows who lost their first faith, and

followed after the devil, as Paul says; from which may the merciful

Father ever save you. Receive in love, this, my brief greeting, written

to you in true, paternal affection, and reflect upon it diligently. The

saints here, greet you. Greet all pious friends. Pray for me. The

eternal, saving power and fruit of the precious blood of Christ, be

with my chosen much beloved sister, in eternity, Amen.

Your loving and well wishing brother,

MENNO SIMON.

May 18th. blank page

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A BRIEF

Complaint or Apology

OF THE

DESPISED CHRISTIANS

AND

EXILED STRANGERS,

TO ALL THE THEOLOGIANS AND PREACHERS OF THE GERMAN NATIONS,

CONCERNING THE BITTER FALSEHOODS, SLANDERS AND ABUSES WITH

WHICH THEY, WITHOUT TRUTH, BURDEN THESE SUFFERING CHRIS

TIANS AND EXILES, TOGETHER WITH A FRIENDLY REQUEST TO

HAVE A FREE DISCUSSION OF THE SCRIPTURES, IN ACCORD

ANCE WITH THE RULES OF CHRISTIAN LOVE.

BY

MENNO SIMON.

"The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to

teach, patient," 2 Timothy 2:24.

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus

Christ," 1 Corinthians?8:11.

ELKHART, INDIANA:

PUBLISHED BY JOHN F. FUNK AND BROTHER.

1871. WE, poor and despised christians, Who have to endure and suffer so much,

on account of the testimony of the word of the Lord, wish to all theologians

and preachers of all countries who boast of the gospel, whoever and wherever

they are, a new, penitent heart; a true, active faith in Christ Jesus; an

unfeigned, ardent love; a salutary doctrine; a sound doctrine according to

truth, and a pious, unblamable life, in the fear of the Lord, of God our

heavenly Father, in the operation and power of his Holy Spirit, through Christ

Jesus, his beloved Son, our Lord and eternal Savior, Amen.

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A BRIEF COMPLAINT OR APOLOGY.

IT is a fact well known to all, dear men and brethren, how very much

the pure, divine truth is disregarded in our Netherlands, caused by the

envious crying and clamor of the Papists and Monks; and that the

innocent blood is shed like water; on account of which we, miserable

children, are forced to flee from the sword of the tyrants, and to seek

refuge in foreign lands, with our weak women and little ones, and to

earn our bread in tribulation and misery, according to the prophecy of

God's word. Many of you,, it appears, cry against us, perhaps with good

intentions, through misunderstanding, and instigate the magistracy

(part of whom should be reasonable and discreet) to persecution, by

false accusations, and contrary to all reasonableness and christian

love; and you warn every body against us, as being disposed like the

Munsterites; that we would take countries and cities, if we had the

power; that we are rebels, and use the sword; steal; are polygamists;

have our women and possessions in common; will not obey the magistracy;

that we murder our children bodily and spiritually; are anabaptists,

and profaners of the sacraments, deceivers, and hypocrites; that we

boast of being without sin; self?complacent; heaven ?stormers; who

trust in being saved by our own good works and merits, that we are

ungodly heretics and conspirators, new monks, rogues, miscreants and

possessed of the devil. In short, we are alas, portrayed by you in such

colors, that all who are not acquainted with our foundation and faith,

must shut their months and noses at the sight of us, and must have a

horror of us; although, before God and his angels, we seek nothing upon

earth, but that we, in our weakness, may be cordially united in the

Spirit, word and example of the Lord, through his grace, as all the

Scriptures teach and imply.

The Almighty, great Lord, who knows all hearts, knows that we are

clear, before the Lord and his judgment, of all the beforementioned

abominations and slanders, of which we are ever accused by you; also,

that we are clear and innocent before all the world. Yea, if any one

under the whole canopy of heaven, can prove, by the firm truth, that

we, and our adherents, are guilty of one of these capital crimes, or

that we were ever guilty thereof, then we will lay our hands upon our

months and will be bound by life and possessions to the accuser, all

our days; with this exception, however, that we do not wish to obey the

magistracy, when they command things contrary to the word of God. Is it

not a deplorable thing that we are slandered and accused of such

inhuman disgraces, while we never even thought of doing them, and much

less commit them

O, dear men and brethren, if you knew what we seek, and how, by the

grace of God, we are disposed towards you all, you would not have such

hard feelings against us as you have had hitherto; or else you are

abandoned to a state of ungodliness and perversity; something which, we

trust, is not true of many of you.

Since you are so lamentably mistaken in our intentions, heap one

falsehood upon another, and since, alas, we are not allowed at any

place, verbally to defend ourselves, therefore we are forced to present

a defense in writing, and would humbly pray, and fraternally admonish

you all to consider these four things

First, that you would consider in sincerity of heart, that lies are of

the devil, that the lying month killeth the soul, that a liar has no

part in God's city, that the backbiters are deserving of death, that

they shall not abide in the tabernacle of the Lord, and not dwell in

his holy hill, Psalm 15:1.

Secondly, that nearly all of your accusations against us are capital

crimes. If we did not fear the Lord, but would strictly ask our rights,

according to the law of the world; and retaliate, what would at last

become of us; since you publicly accuse us of such accursed

abominations, which no man ever can prove against us by the power of

the truth.

Thirdly, that this, your action, is directly opposed to all nature;

reason, christian love and the word of God; for where was there ever a

person of pious nature who did not pity the outcast and sympathize with

the afflicted? All the Scriptures teach that we shall receive, serve,

protect and console the afflicted and strangers, in love; and you see

plainly how lamentably we poor, pitiable people are every where hated,

despised, banished, oppressed, and in some places judged and murdered;

yet your hearts are not so much moved as to accost us once with a

friendly word, in our sore temptations and tribulations, and to examine

our foundation, faith and actions, in a paternal spirit, according to

the word of the Lord. But you still cause more enmity against us, that

we may find no rest upon earth. You cry, write, falsify, upbraid,

clamor, add tribulation to tribulation, drag us to dungeons and

prisons, as if you never had read a syllable of the word of the Lord,

with understanding minds, nor received a spark of his Holy Spirit. We

will leave to your own judgment, if this can. be called acting in

accordance with unfeigned, christian love, with the doctrine and usage

of the apostles, and in accordance with the Spirit, word and example of

the Lord.

Say, beloved, where do the Holy Scriptures teach that we shall rule the

consciences and faith of others, in the kingdom and church of Christ,

by force of the sword, violence, and tyranny of the magistracy

something which is left entirely to the judgment of God? In what

instance has Christ and the apostles ever done, recommended or

commanded this I

Christ says, "Beware of false prophets;" and Paul commands that we

shall shun an heretic after one or two admonitions; John teaches that

we shall not greet nor receive the transgressor into our houses, who

does not bring the doctrine of Christ, Matt. 7: iG; Tit. 3:10; 2 .John

1:9; they say not: Down with the heretics, accuse them before the

magistrates, imprison, exile and cast them into the fire or water, as

the Romans have done for many years, and as many of you would do, you

who pretend to preach the word of God.

Fourthly, we would sincerely pray you, for Christ's sake, to consider

and examine whether your spirit accords with the Lord's Spirit, and

whether your faith accords with his holy word; whether the Spirit of

the Lord, and the love of your neighbor constrain you to the service,

or whether it is the love of gain and the temporary sustenance of your

bodies; whether you preach the pure word of God in sincerity of heart,

use his sacraments aright, and whether you lead a pious and unblamable

life, as the Scriptures teach; andwhetheryoushun open transgressors,

the pompous, drunkards, misers, extortioners, liars, deceivers,

contenders, adulterers, fornicators, swearers and unrighteous, and

separate them from the communion, without respect to persons, according

to the word of the Lord. For we see such living and acting, O, Lord, as

if neither prophet, apostle, Christ, nor the word of God, was ever upon

earth. Nevertheless you men, want to be called the holy christian

church, and preachers of sound doctrine, as if Christ did not require

more of his church than mere reading, singing, crying, infant baptism,

breaking of bread, and calling themselves after his name; and, as if

spirit, knowledge, faith, love, repentance, righteousness, works, power

and truth were no longer necessary.

No, no; dear men, no. This is required of the church of Christ, to

preach his unadulterated word in the power of the Spirit, to believe it

sincerely, and to obey it in every particular; to use hikr holy

sacraments, such as baptism and the Holy Supper, according to his own

command and ordinance; to seek, fear, love and serve God sincerely; to

be born of God; to love, serve, console, help and protect his neighbor;

to shun all false doctrines and works of darkness; to die unto carnal

lusts, which are contrary to the word of God; to forsake ourselves and

the world; to lead a pious, peaceable, chaste, sober and humble life,

in righteousness, according to the truth. In short, to be of one mind

with Christ Jesus. For it is incontrovertible, that where these are,

there are also the kingdom and church of Christ. But the deceivers,

hateful, liars, slanderers, backbiters, rebellious, bloodthirsty,

avaricious, unmerciful, cruel, proud and impenitent, are of the wicked

one. The Scriptures teach that their part shall be weeping and gnashing

of teeth, eternal death and everlasting fire, prepared for the devil

and his angels, John 15:12; 3: fi; Mark 7:15; Tit. 3: S; 2 John 9;

Matt. 16:23; 13:42.

O men and brethren, if you would take to heart this brief reference, in

the sincere fear of God, and would reflect thereon, and judge according

to the Spirit of the Lord, you would doubtless find such a great beam

in your own eye, that you would not regard the small splinter which

may, perhaps, be in your brother's eye (for we are all of Adam's seed).

But to know ourselves is understanding, and to conform ourselves in all

things to the Lord's word, is a salutary understanding and wisdom.

Inasmuch as we are thus indiscreetly and falsely accused by you, and as

you boast to be servants of God who teach his word anti works,

therefore we would pray you all, for the sake of the blood of Christ,

with which we are besprinkled, to consider how you treat us, poor,

afflicted ones, that you no more sin by such open falsehoods and

tyrannies, as you have hitherto done; but that you may show such a

paternal disposition as conforms to the divine operation, and to the

christian name; for we testify before him who knows our hearts, before

you, and before the whole world, verbally and by writing, by our

possessions, and blood, life and death, that we, in our weakness, are

prepared and willing to obey the word and will of God, from the

innermost of our souls; and we shall ever be prepared as we ever have

been from the commencement of our faith and actions, willingly to hear

and obey any one who can instruct us in a more powerful spirit and

truth, and who can point out a more godly life; but if he can not

instruct us for the better, then we ask again, for Christ's sake, to

leave us undisturbed in the truth, and not persecute and afflict the

pious who walk in it. We hereby give notice to you all, that we are

desirous to meet, at any acceptable time and place, with one or two of

our members (no matter whether teachers or not), with you before a full

assembly, or before twenty or thirty reasonable and pious witnesses,

just as you choose, to discuss the following points (for herein we

differ), according to the point's word, life, example, command,

prohibition, usage and ordinance of God, in sincerity of heart, namely:

Of the right evangelical preachers and teachers?how they should,

according to the word of God, be minded and fitted, before they can

rightly preach the word of God and serve his sacraments.

Of the doctrine of Christ and his apostles?that it does not change, but

must remain unchanged until his coming again.

That Christ is a perfect teacher, and that his offer is a perfect

offering.

Of true regeneration; what it is, of whom it is, and what are its

natural fruits and disposition.

Of true evangelical faith and love; their proper qualities, power and

operation.

Of God's commandments and their keeping.

Of true ehristian baptism?how it was commanded of the Lord, and how

taught and practiced by the apostles.

Of the Lord's Holy Supper?what it is?by whom it was instituted and

ordained, and what it implies and represents.

Of the true apostolic Ban or Separation?its proper fruits and

usefulness.

Of the pious christian life which is of God.

If you have anything else to discuss, you may present it, and have it

criticized according to the word of God.

Behold, dear men and brethren, this is what we would gladly have you

accept, if it can be obtained in sincerity of heart, under safe

conduct, without any trickery and strategy, according to the rules of

christian love, and the word of God, as Origen, Augustin, Hilarius and

others have done in their times, with those who were suspected in their

doctrine. You can not think hard of us for asking safe conduct and

freedom, for it is evident that they cry vindictively and madly against

us, on every side.

If you are servants of Christ, and seek the praise of the Lord and the

salvation of your brethren, as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Peter and Paul, did in

their times, then you would rejoice; praise the Lord; again restore our

respect with the people; and henceforth leave off such slanderous

language, as has been mentioned; you would reform your life, accept,

and advise and aid in the offered discussion, in christian faith;

because we do not propose to have the discussion judged according to

human philosophy, wisdom and ideas, as some do, but according to

Christ's own Spirit, word, command, prohibition, ordinance, usage and

example. But, in case you reject and refuse it, and still continue in

your bitterness, falsehoods, slanders; upbraiding, backbiting, and

disgrace as you have hitherto done, then we poor, miserable souls, must

leave it to the Lord, as has been hitherto done; and possess our souls

in patience; suffer ourselves to be punished, and console ourselves

with this saying, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and

persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely,

for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward

in heaven," Matt. S:11, 12. But you must fill the measure of your

fathers, and make yourselves manifest, that you seek not the sheep, but

merely their milk, wool and fat, Ezek. 34:3. There are but two ways

open, namely, You must either cease your false accusations, and

slandering, and enter into a discussion with us, or you must

acknowledge that you are not the true teachers, and 'let go your gospel

fame and christian name.

We would herewith commend you all to the Lord, and desire to say that

none should take offense at this; for we have done so for the

advancement of the holy word, and for the defense of our

respectability, and we would reiterate, that we are, at all times,

prepared, and willing for the discussion, on the conditions mentioned.

May the merciful Lord grant you all a sincere, pious heart to love the

saving truth of Christ, and to walk in accordance therewith, to the

praise of God, and to the salvation of your souls. Amen.

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DESCRIPTION OF A TRUE PREACHER.

"A bishop, then, must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant,

sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach." He "must

be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry,

not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre. But a lover

of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;

holding fast the faithful word, as he hath been taught, that he may be

able by sound doctrine, both to exhort, and to convince the

gainsayers," 1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:7?9.

By us despised strangers and scattered christians, for the sake of

God's word and its testimony. A. D. 1552.

A

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A

TREATISE ON,

AND

Scriptural Explanation

OF

EXCOMMUNICATION,

FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL PIOUS AND GOD FEARING CHILDREN.

BY

MENNO SIMON.

"Evil men understand not judgment; but they that seek the Lord understand all

things," Prov. 28:6.

"Whoso walketh uprightly shall be saved; but he that is perverse in his ways

shall fall at once," Prov. 28:18.

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus

Christ," 1 Corinthians 8:11.

ELKHART, INDIANA:

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A SCRIPTURAL EXPLANATION

OF EXCOMMUNICATION.

Menno Simon wishes to all fellow?believers, brethren and sisters in

Christ Jesus, the grace and peace of Clod our heavenly Father, through

Christ Jesus his beloved Son, our Lord, who loved us and has cleansed

us of our sins in his blood. To him be the honor, praise, kingdom,

power, and ,glory, for ever and ever, Amen.

Dear brethren, since I find. that, for some time, much strife has been

occasioned in regard to the ban, and this so violently and

indiscreetly, therefore, I fear brotherly love, christian peace and

unity, with some, are more diminished than augmented, as was the case

in olden times; and it appears that some, through ambition and

self?conceit, are desirous of such corrupting disputation, that they

entertain the opinion, in this matter that not the 'banned ones

themselves should be shunned, but only their false doctrine and

offensive life, not observing that they have already become entangled

in false doctrine; for thereby they nullify the plain ordinance of

Christ, " Let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican," and

also the plain words of the holy apostles, Matt. 18:17; Rom. 16:16; 2

Thess. 3:14; Tit. 3:10.

Others think that the ban should not be practiced, further than that

which pertains to the evangelical usages, as the breaking of bread and

the kiss of peace; and garble the plain sayings of the Scriptures, to

make their opinions good, namely: Do not keep company with such; with

such not eat; "Let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican,"

and other like sayings, 1 Cor. 6:10; Matt. 18:17.

Again, there are some who acknowledge the ordinance of Christ, and the

doctrine of the holy apostles, in regard to excommunication, as right

and just, yet they do not observe it; some, I presume, from being lake

warm, some from motives of carnal love and favor of the .apostates, and

others on account of being neighbors, or relatives, or perhaps on

account of former attachments and favors.

And, since the express ordinance of Christ and his holy apostles, in

regard to excommunication, is lamentably weakened, obscured and

garbled, by the first mentioned, and visibly transgressed and

dishonored by the latter, and thus the door is opened wide to all

corruption, and since they thus act against all love; First, against

the love of God and Christ, for they thereby despise and disobey his

holy word, will and ordinance; Secondly, against brotherly love: For by

such perverseness and disesteem, they offend and afflict their

brethren; Thirdly, against the love of their own souls: For, thereby,

they willfully expose themselves to the danger of being corrupted;

Fourthly, against the love of those deserving the ban: For they despise

the advice of the Holy Spirit, and do not seek to shame them unto

repentance; Fifthly, also against common love: For, by communing with

the apostates, they make the worldlings suspicious that we are one and

the same people with the apostates and perverse; and, since the

precious word of God and his holy church, is thus blasphemed and

profaned by many, on account of their recklessness and disobedience

?therefore, in a christian spirit and brotherly love (of which God is

my witness), I have endeavored to explain, for the benefit of my

beloved brethren and fellow believers in Christ Jesus, the proper

grounds of the ban, according to divine truth; how the ban is

instituted of Christ; how it was taught and explained by his holy

apostles, and what its fruits and benefits are. But this explanation I

will leave to the judgment of those who seek and fear God with all

their hearts, and who are enlightened and taught by the Spirit of God.

Whoever seeks God and the good of his neighbor, will acknowledge that

this explanation is in accordance with the foundation, meaning, word

and will of God.

Dearly beloved brethren and sisters in Christ Jesus, I, your poor,

unworthy servant and co?partner in the faith and tribulation of Christ,

trust and pray, for the sake of the precious blood of my Lord Jesus

Christ, and, for the sake of love to all, that none willfully, and

knowingly contend against Christ Jesus, and against his holy word; nor

against his own conscience, for the sake of maintaining his error, so

that he may avoid the disapprobation and shame of the world.

I trust that they, as christians, grudge not one against another, but

that they seek to win again to Christ their erring brethren. In the

same manner, that if the God fearing errs, he is anxious to return

again to the right way; if he falls, he is desirous to rise, and if

wounded he would be again healed, James G:19; and if, by the grace of

God, he be again delivered from his error and misunderstanding, through

the word of the Lord, he is not ashamed, but is exceedingly glad, and

praises and thanks his God that he is led from the crooked to the right

way, and from his error to a true and sound understanding. He earnestly

seeks to deliver and disentangle those whom he has formerly led astray

and deceived by his false doctrine and misunderstanding; for true love

does not seek self, but God and her neighbor. Whosoever has ears to

hear, and a mind to understand, let him hear and understand what the

word of the Lord teaches us in respect to excommunication, in great

clearness.

Christ Jesus says, " Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against

thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall

hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother; but if he will not hear thee,

then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three

witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to

hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the

church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican. Verily I

say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in

heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in

heaven," Matt. 18:16??18.

Here, faithful brethren, stands the firm foundation of God, as an

immovable rock or mountain, at which all will be wounded and hurt, who

try to overturn and nullify it, namely: That we shall shun and avoid

the apostates, if they take no heed to all the brotherly services and

admonitions which have, in faithfulness of heart, been rendered unto

them, according to the doctrine of Christ, and the dictates of pure

love, if they obstinately continue in their errors, as the Jews ~

shunned and avoided the heathen and publicans, at the time of Christ.

In the first place, the Jews did not admit the uncircumcised heathen to

their Passover, by command of the Lord, through Moses; nor to their

divine service, as appears from the acts ,of the apostles, for they

were strangers to the citizenship of Israel, and Israel was alone the

church.

In the second place, they so avoided daily intercourse with them, that

they considered it as impure for them to enter their houses, or to eat

and drink with them. This also applied to the publicans. As the Jews,

then, did not admit such heathen and publicans to their worship, nor to

their daily intercourse, but shunned and avoided them, so also, would

Christ have us shun and avoid an apostate, unrepenting brother, as was

said above. And that this is the proper and natural foundation of these

words of Christ, as well explained by holy Paul, 1 Cor. 2, of which

more will be heard hereafter.

Behold, brethren in the Lord, all who would rightly understand the

meaning of the words of Christ, above cited, should know that Christ

does not point to the Jewish custom, in regard to the heathen and

publicans in the time of Moses and of the prophets, but to the custom

of his own times; and, he should first, make a distinction between the

heathen and publicans, and not consider them as one people; and then

well consider, and judge according to the Scriptures, how those two

classes were dealt with at the time of Moses and the prophets, before

the scepter was taken from them, and they were placed under the yoke of

the Romans.

In the first place, it is incontrovertible, that the heathen were not

of the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; that they were uncircumcised,

without God and religion, and without law, nay, a people that was no

people, as Moses says, Dent. 32:27. Thus it is, in the second place,

incontrovertible that the publicans and sinners were of the Jews. For

Luke says, That the publicans came to John, that they might be

baptized. Again, That the publicans justified God, and that they were

baptized with the baptism of John. Again, All the publicans and sinners

came to Jesus to hear him, but the heathen did not come to John and to

Christ. Therefore it is manifest that the publicans and sinners were

not heathen, but Jews. It is also apparent from the case of the sinful

woman and from the publican, Matthew, who was chosen an apostle of the

Lord; and no apostles were chosen from the heathen. This is manifestly

true, Eph. 2:12; Luke 3:2; 7:29; 15:1.

Inasmuch as the Gentiles and Publicans were two distinct people as has

been said, and we should turn to the law to ascertain the freedom of

the Jews, in regard to the Gentiles, then we must also, in the same

manner, ascertain the action of the Jews in regard to the Publicans,

after the law; for the one word is as valid as the other, because they

are both produced and attested by the mouth of the eternal Wisdom.

We are aware, beloved brethren, that Moses, in his law, allowed a great

deal of liberty to the outward Israel; to have intercourse with the

Gentile nations, as in buying, trading and usury. But, besides, we also

know, that he rigorously judges the willful and open transgressors, by

?the testimony of two or three witnesses, unto death, without mercy,

according to his law, Dent. 17:6; 2 Cor. 13:1. If we were to understand

the beforementioned words of Christ, Matt. 18, as being of the same

nature and rigor as those of the law of Moses, then it would follow,

first, from the word heathen that we were at liberty to deal with the

apostates, as far as regards daily intercourse, as Israel was at

liberty to deal with the heathen. And secondly, from the word publican

it would follow that we should stone and kill the apostates when their

apostasy was established by two or three witnesses. But it would not be

proper to take too much liberty with them, and to put them to death.

Taking life, is also quite inconsistent with the nature and doctrine of

.Christ, "For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to

save them," Luke 9:56.

Let every one take heed; for if he take the word heathen alone, and

judge that according to the law of Moses, and except the word publican,

then he does not wrong man, but the Son of God, and disgracefully

annuls his holy word and truth. For he says not, Let him be unto thee

as a heathen, but " as a heathen man and a publican." Christ says,

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

Therefore it is very advisable not to break the word of Christ Jesus;

but to set aside human understanding; to acknowledge the truth; give

heed to Christ Jesus; and believe and obey him; for then he will be

likened unto the wise builder; if not, his house will fall, and "great

will be the fall thereof."

Further, most beloved brethren, we understand that there are some who

comprehend these words of Christ, so that we are not bound to shun an

apostate and impenitent brother, further than the Gentiles now shun the

Gentiles, or fornicators shun adulturers and drunkards, whom they,

perhaps, call the publicans. Such, I would earnestly beseech and

exhort, first, to consider this matter well, before they accept,

believe and teach it as a true foundation; to consider to what class of

people Christ was sent from the beginning, and among what class he

commenced building and establishing his church. This, Christ

sufficiently explains; saying, "I am not sent, but unto the loss sheep

of the house of Israel," Matt. 15:24, Paul, also says, "Now I say that

Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to

confirm the promises mad( unto the fathers." Since he then, was, from

the beginning, sent unto the Jews, and preached unto them and taught

them, and not to the heathen, therefore these words of Christ should

not be understood as meaning that we should deal with an apostate as

the believing heathen now deal with an unbelieving heathen, but to deal

with them as the literal Jews dealt with them at the time of Christ.

For Christ, I say, did not preach unto the heathen, but unto the Jews;

and therefore he did not point them; by these words, but to the Jewish

ban; namely, how they shunned the heathen and open sinners in his

times.

In the second place, I pray that every God?fearing heart consider what

the word Gentile implies; and see if not all fornicators, adulterers,

avaricious, unbelievers, perjurers, idolators, murderers and drunkards

are included in the word Gentile, Yea, Paul says that they are without

Christ; have no God, are dead in sins, and that they are children of

wrath, Eph. 2:11, Since, then, all sinners and Gentiles are expressed

in the word " Gentile," for the Gentiles who have not Christ, are also

sinners; and without grace, and since Christ her( speaks as well of

open sinners, as of Gentiles, and, moreover, as every word of Christ

has its full weight and measure?therefore, the word of Christ can not

be explained as meaning that we should deal with an apostate brother as

we would with other Gentiles, who never received nor acknowledge the

word of the Lord.

In the third place, I hope that no true brother, who is called after

the name of the Lord, will knowingly and willfully adulterate the word

of the Lord, but that he will give it its due praise and honor, and

acknowledge that these publicans and sinners, of whom the evangelists

speak, were not of the Gentiles, but of the Jews, as is apparent from

Matt. 9:10; Mark 2:17. Since it is incontrovertible that the

beforementioned publicans and sinners were of the Jews, and were

adjudged to death, according to the law; and since Christ points us as

well to the publicans, as to the Gentiles, therefore it must follow

that it should not be explained as having reference to the times when

Israel yet exercised their liberties with the heathen, which liberties

were allowed to them, by Moses, in his law; for at that time the

transgressors, on proof, were adjudged unto death, according to the

law. It would also follow that the lives of the apostates, on proof,

should be taken at our hands. O, no, for we know that such a bloody ban

is an abomination before God, neither is it known to christians, much

less practiced.

If any one should assert that it applies to the present time, that is,

of treating an apostate as we now treat a Gentile, and not to the time

of Christ, as the Jews then treated a Gentile, he must also

re?establish the Jewish people with their law and religion, and their

open transgressors, which is impossible. This every one must confess.

Since the word Gentile can not be understood as applicable to the time

when the Gentiles were not yet so strictly shunned by the Israelites,

for then we should have to adjudge the apostates unto death, according

to the word "manifest transgressors;" nor as applicable to the present

time, for now we have not the Jewish transgressors?therefore no one can

successfully contradict, according to God's truth, otherwise than that

it applies to the time of Christ, at which time they did not put

transgressors to death, but separated and avoided both the publicans

and heathen alike, by means of the same ban.

Having sufficiently proven to the pious and God fearing, by the above

mentioned reasons, that Christ spoke those words as applying to his own

times, and to no other, we will now show in plain language, first, the

proper cause why they so scrupulously avoided the heathen, and,

secondly, why they shunned the open transgressors, and did not inflict

capital punishment upon them.

It is well known to all readers of the Bible, that the Lord God

faithfully warned Israel that they should not make an alliance, nor

terms of friendship, with the Canaanites, Hittites, and others; nor to

intermarry with them, lest they should be led astray by them, and

follow strange Gods, Deut. 7. Joshua says, "Take good heed therefore,

unto yourselves, that ye love the Lord your God. Else, if ye do in any

wise go back, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations, even these

that remain among you, and shall make marriages with them, and go in

unto them, and they to you; know for a certainty that the Lord your God

will no more drive out any of these nations from before you; but they

shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and

thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the

Lord your God hath given you," Josh. 23:11,13.

Israel, not taking to heart this paternal warning of God, but, contrary

thereto, befriended and intermingled with these strange nations, the

menace of the Lord God threatened through his faithful servants, Moses

and Joshua, was verified. They became quite degenerated by the strange

women and idols, with which they intermingled, and were severely

scourged and punished of the Lord. Yea, so that the talented Solomon,

whose wisdom was far?famed, was so enchanted by the heathen women, that

he became unfaithful to the Lord, his God, (who twice appeared unto

him), and inclined his heart to strange gods. I think, beloved

brethren, this is the just recompense of those who despise the counsel

of the Lord.

And they, deceived by the artfulness of the heathen, often sinned

against their God, and being, therefore, so often chastised of God,

with his just punishment, they, at last, took to heart the warning of

God, given through Moses and Joshua, more than they had formerly done;

they quit their intercourse with the heathen, altogether, so that they,

as appears, also abandoned some liberties, which Moses had allowed

them, Yea, so that they considered it as improper to enter into their

houses, or to eat with them, as may be plainly observed. And this, for

the purpose that they should not, as formerly, be led astray, and

turned away from their God. For this reason, the Jews so entirely

avoided intercourse with the heathen. If this reason was of weight,

every theologian may ,judge and weigh with the words of God, Num.

33:35; Judges 3:13; 1 Kings 11:1; 3:12; 9:2.

Again, the reason why they shunned the public sinners, and did not

punish them with death, is this: Because the prophecy of the patriarch

Jacob was now verified that the royal scepter, taken from Judah by

Pompey, the great, was now in the hands of the Romans, and that they

had officers of their own in Judea, who obeyed their superior; and

therefore, the Jews did not punish with death, according to their law,

those who willfully transgressed; for they were, at that time, subject

to the scepter of the Romans. That this is the truth, the Jews declared

before Pilate, when they said, "It is not lawful for us to put any man

to death." According to the law they were permitted; nay, it was

strictly commanded them; but the lost scepter, now, made it unlawfal;

for the Roman servants, Herod, Pilate, &c., who, at that time, swayed

the scepter in behalf of the Romans, did not want to judge according to

the law of the Jews, but according to the rights and statutes of the

Romans, in whose name they ruled, and to whom they were bound by oath.

When any Jew trespassed the law of Moses, and not the Roman morals, the

beforementioned functionaries did not inflict capital punishment,

because the law of Moses required it. And since the Jews were not

allowed to punish him according to the law, for the above mentioned

reasons, they separated him from their communion, and excommunicated

him from their synagogue and shunned him.

Behold, faithful brethren, for the beforementioned reasons, the Jews,

at the time of Christ, shunned both the heathen and the jewish

publicans. They shunned the heathen, lest they should be led. astray

and deceived; but the publicans, because, according to the law, were

deserving of death, Gen. 49:10, and yet were not allowed to kill and

destroy them on account of the Roman dominion: Perhaps some will ask,

Why then, did they scourge the apostles I Stone Stephen

and why were many saints put to death?by Scull Why was their community

destroyed, since they were not allowed capital punishment 8

To this I answer: That all this did not transpire without the consent

of the Romans, for they, themselves, confessed before Pilate, saying,

"It is not lawful for us to put any man to death," John 18:31. The

stoning of Stephen was not done lawfully; but merely in a riot, as Luke

declares, saying, Exclamaantes autem voce magna, continuerunt cures

suss, and impetwm fecerunct unanimiter in mm; and this the Zurichans

have also thus translated into the German: "They cried with a loud

voice, and stopped ,their ears and ran upon him with one accord," as

they also intended to do with Christ, and also with Paul, Acts 7:57;

10:31; 21:30; 23:12; 28:10; Luke 4:29. Again, that Saul or Paul

destroyed the church, and put to death many of the saints, as he

related before Agrippa, we may be sure that he did not do so without

the consent of the magistracy; for it is manifest and incontrovertible,

that the scepter did not allow them to put any one to death, and, for

this reason they said, "It is not lawful for us to put any man to

death;" the scepter was taken from them, and came into the hands of the

Romans, as has been explained above. If they had been allowed to

practice their own law of blood, they would not have delivered Christ

unto Pilate; Lucius would not have taken Paul from the tumultuous Jews;

Herod would not have imprisoned Peter, nor killed John the baptist, and

James; for this would not do; in the worldly adjudication, for one to

grasp the jurisdiction of another; such a policy would, doubtlessly,

soon fail, Acts 21:2740; 24:7.

We are well aware, beloved brethren, that there are some who call this

Jewish shunning, or ban, to which Christ has directed us, a pharisaic

leaven, and frankly say, We do not want to be pointed to a leaven,

without the Scriptures. Whosoever these may be, we pray them for the

Lord's sake, first, to consider well what they say; for, in my opinion,

they do not understand their own words. Does not Moses say, "Whosoever

does not hearken unto my (God's) words, which he shall speak in my

name, I will require it of him," Dent. 18:19. Does not Jeremiah say,

That he "shall execute judgment and justice in the earth p" Does not

the Father from high heaven, say, "This is my beloved Son in whom I' am

well pleased; hear ye him 9" Does not Paul say, "In whom (Christ) are

hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge q" Jer. 23:5; Matt. 17:5;

Col. 2:3. I am sure that the word and teaching of Christ is Scripture

enough for all the pious. He it is, I say, and not I, who points his

believers to the use of the ban. Tu quis es, qui ex adaerso respondes

Deog That is, Who art thou that wouldst answer God with perverseness

If there be any brother under the whole canopy of heaven, who can show,

by the divine truth, that these words of Christ apply to any other time

than to the time of Christ, without violating the Scriptures, then I

will gladly hear him, and open my ears to the truth; for I desire not

to contend against the truth, which is my testimony, but I desire to

uphold it. For, for the sake of truth, I have had to hear and suffer

much, these many years; and am yet prepared unto death, by the grace of

the Lord, to testify to the truth. But I know, and am convinced, that

it can not apply to any other time, without violating the word and

Scriptures of Christ, as we have sufficiently ehown and proven, to the

reader, above, by abundance of reasons and Scriptures.

Secondly, I desire, for God's sake, that my beloved brethren will weigh

with the balance of the Scriptures, what leaven is, and what the

Scriptures mean by it, before they call this beforementioned ban, to

which Christ directs? us, a pharisaic leaven. It implies, first, the

word and its power, or rather, faith and its power. Secondly, it

signifies a corrupting, ungodly being or man. Thirdly, a deceiving,

leavened, corrupting doctrine. If the Jewish ban and shunning, to which

Christ points us; was a leaven, as some mistakenly assert, then they

must show, by virtue of the Scriptures; what leavening and corruption

it has caused in the pure word, and in the hearts of the .

Jews; for, although God, the Lord permitted some liberties to Israel,

through Moses, in their temporal transactions, as said at the

beginning, yet he did not expressly command that they should deal with

the heathen, but rather warned the Jews against them. They now

scrupulously observed the faithful warning of God, being taught them

through many perils, and for that reason, probably, they did not make

use of the privileges granted them, in regard to dealing with them,

lest, by these means, they should be ensnared and corrupted in their

hearts by the heathen. Let the spiritual judge, now, whether it can be

called leaven, by the Scriptures, since they did not neglect the law

and command of God thereby, but, in fact, left it unchanged and whole

and were thus shielded against the corrupter.

Sincerely beloved brethren, if we are to esteem as a leaven, this oft

mentioned jewish ban, to which Christ directs us, because they, for

their consciences' sake, abandoned some of these liberties (for

liberties are of a nature that we can enjoy them, or not, at our

option; else they would not be liberties), not contrary to the law, but

rather in conformity with the faithful warning, advice and admonition

of God, contained in the law?then the holy prophet Jeremiah might, for

good reasons, have reproved the Rechabites as leaven, because they, on

account of the command of their father Jonadab, would not drink wine,

plant vineyards, sow the soil, nor build houses, although all this was

free to them, according to the law of God; for to them, with Israel,

were the possession of the land, and the other blessings promised, Jer.

35:14. O, no, the Lord did not reckon it as leaven unto them, but it

was accounted to their honor to have honored the command of their

father, and thereby they obtained? the promise of the Lord.

I would further say, that if it is to be called leaven, if we do not

partake of our freedom for conscience' sake, or for the sake of the

brethren?then freedom cannot be called freedom, and Paul must have been

an impure leaven to have taught that we should, if necessary, deny

ourselves the liberty, for the sake of the brethren, Rom. 14:14;1 Cor.

8:13; 9:14; 10:23.

From all this, it is evident, according to my understanding of the word

of the Lord, that it is a frightful blasphemy, unknown to a God?fearing

christian, thus to undertake to master and instruct Christ, the eternal

Wisdom of God, how he should teach us, and what he should command us;

and to call that which, he commands us, leaven, although it is a strong

and consolatory shield against corruption and deceit; and therefore,

not contrary to the law, but in conformity therewith; of this we are

convinced, for if it were leaven, contrary to the law, as some say it

is, then Christ Jesus would, by no means have approved of it, commanded

it and .said, "Let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican,"

since he, in other places, has diligently warned his followers against

the leaven.

Some, perhaps, will contradict me by saying that the shunning of the

heathen by the Jews, that is, not to eat with them, when the victuals

were clean, was openly contrary to the express command of the law. For

Moses had commanded Israel that they should keep the feast of the

weeks, and the feast of the tabernacles, unto the Lord their God, with

a tribute of free?will offering of their hands, which they should give

unto the Lord, their God, &c., and that they should rejoice before the

Lord, their God, they, and their sons, and their daughters, and their

man?servants, and their maidservants, and the Levite that was within

their gates, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that

were among them. To such, I would reply, that these strangers also had

to keep the Sabbath; to enjoy the tenths of the third year, the first

fruits of the land, the gleanings of the field, olive trees and

vineyards with the Levites, the widows and orphans.

The stranger also had, with Israel, an offering for their sins of

ignorance; also, the same punishment with Israel; they had to hear the

reading of the law every seventh year, in the solemnity of the year of

release. Therefore, it follows from these and other like Scriptures,

that these beforementioned strangers were citizens among the

Israelites, and not uncircumcised heathen. For they were already among

the Israelites at the time they yet journeyed in the wilderness.

Moses says, " Ye stand this day, all of you, before the Lord your God;

your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, with all

the men of Israel; your little ones, your wives, and thy stranger that

is in thy camp, from the hewer of thy wood unto the drawer of thy

water, that thou shouldest enter into covenant with the Lord thy God,

and into his oath, which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day,"

Dent. 5:14; 16:13, 14; Ex. 20:10; 23:12; Dent. 14:29; 24:19; Num.

16:27; Lev. 4:13; Num. 9:14; Dent. 29:10?12.

I think, brethren, that the cited passages sufficiently show and prove

that they were called strangers, because they were not of the seed of

Israel, and had no part in the distribution of the land; therefore,

Moses commanded the Israelites to allow them the right to the tenths of

the third year, to the gleanings of the field, of the olive trees and

vineyards, and the first fruits of the land, as we have shown and

explained from the writings of Modes.

In the second place, it might be asked, why we should shun the

apostates, since Christ said, "Let him be unto thee as a heathen man

and a publican," and since it is manifest that Christ, himself, did eat

with the publicans. To this I reply: What kind of sinners they were,

with whom Christ ate, is well explained by the evangelists. For, when

the Pharisees murmured, Christ said, "They that be whole need not a

physician, but they that are sick; but go ye and learn what that

meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice; for I am not come to

call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." What kind of sinners

Matthew, the sinful woman, and Zaccheus were, after they had heard

Christ is not a mystery, Matt:9:12, 13.

Again, Luke says, that all the publicans and sinners came to Christ to

hear him, and with such did he eat, and therefore did he say to the

murmuring Pharisees, " What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he

lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine," &c., Luke 15:4.

Again, that he ate with the Samaritans, is no wonder at all, for they

received his word and believed on him; but that he should have sought

hospitality in a Samaritan city, is not rightly translated, according

to the Latin text. Thus it reads in Latin: Misit nunciosante conspectwm

scum, and ewntes intraverwnt in civitatum, Scvmaritanorwm, ut pararent

iLZi and non receperwnt ewm, quia facies ejus erat ewntis Hierosolymam.

Which being translated reads, He "sent messengers before his face, and

they went and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready

for him, and they did not receive him, because his face was as though

he would go to Jerusalem," Luke 9:62.

What kind of preparation is hereby meant, may, in my opinion, be

clearly learned from the case of the seventy, related in Luke 10:1;

whom he sent before his face by two and two, to make preparation for

him in all the cities and countries whither he himself would come, not

to prepare a place for sojourning, but for the teaching of the kingdom

of God. But here they did not receive him. He says not that the master

of the house did not receive him, but they, that is, the inhabitants of

the city, to whom he had sent them to preach, did not receive him;

because, as Luke says, he was going to Jerusalem; for the Samaritans

and the Jews always have had a severe strife between them in regard to

worship and religious matters. Yea, so much so, that the Samaritans

were considered by the Jews as being deserving of the ban, John 4:9;

and if it were true, that he desired to find a lodging?place, yet it is

apparent that the Samaritans were not Gentiles, but a remnant of the

ten tribes of Shalmaneser; for the Samaritan woman said unto Christ, "

Art thou greater than our, father Jacob 3" That Jacob was not the

father of the Gentiles, is manifest. She also looked for the Messiah,

whom the Gentiles did not know, she said, "I know that the Messiah

cometh, which is called Christ," John 4:26. Again, after Stephen was

stoned, Philip came into a Samaritan city and preached Christ unto

them; and at that time they could not yet conscientiously preach the

gospel unto the Gentiles and go amongst them. From this it may be

safely educed that the Samaritans, who claimed the patriarch Jacob to

be their father, who looked for the Messiah, and to whom they had

already preached the gospel, before they were conscientiously at

liberty to go among the Gentiles, were not heathen, but a remnant of

the Israelites, as said before; therefore it is no wonder that he

requested to sojourn with them. Neither did he say, Let him be unto

thee as a Samaritan, but as a "heathen man and a publican."

Behold, dearly beloved brethren, however we turn these words of Christ,

they cannot be made to apply to any other time than that of Christ;

namely, that, as the Jews at that time dealt with a heathen and

publican?so we may also, now treat an apostate who, either through

false doctrine, or through an unclean, shameful life, dishonors,

rejects and disgraces Christ Jesus and his holy word. I wish, most

beloved brethren, that every christian would diligently consider, since

we have given our understanding of these words of Christ, whether not

also Paul understood these words as meaning the same as we have

explained. Yea, he who closely considers this matter, will find that

Paul, in his doctrine of separation, has, in every way conformed to

this rule of Christ.

Thus Paul says, " It is reported commonly, that there is fornication

among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the

Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up,

and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be

taken away from among you," 1 Cor. 5:1, 2.

In another place, Paul teaches how Christ loved the church, and gave

himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing

of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious

church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it

should be holy and without blemish, Eph. 5:25. If we admit such open

profaners as this fornicator, and, moreover, adulterers, drunkards,

contentious, avaricious, upbraiders and idolaters, and do not shun

them, then we must ever hear this reproof of Paul, that we are "puffed

up" and do not rather mourn to separate such open transgressors from

us. O, brethren, brethren! I fear that this admonition of Paul is not

sufficiently weighed by some. Paul says further, " For I verily, as

absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I

were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed. In the name

of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit,

with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such a one unto

Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in

the day of the Lord Jesus," I Cor. 5:3, 4, 5.

These words of the apostle teach us three things: First, The great love

of the faithful servant, Paul, toward his disciples and children; for

although he was not present there, yet as present in spirit, he was

paternally solicitous for them, and ever taught, admonished and advised

them to their own good.

Secondly, In whose name, how, and by whom this separation, shall be

practiced, namely, in the name, that is, by virtue of the command and

ordinance of our Lord Jesus Christ. For Paul did not undertake to do

any thing that he had not first received of Christ, as he says. Yea, if

Christ had not first instructed Paul to do so, he would not have dared

to command the Thessalonians, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

that they should separate themselves from every brother who walked

disorderly, and not according to his ordinances. For this may well be

called doing things in the name of Christ, when it is done in

conformity to his holy word and will.

Again, It shall be practiced by the church; that is, every one shall

not separate at his own pleasure; but it should be done by the

congregation of God, after proper admonition in love, diligence and

faithfulness, with the power of Christ, that is, with the binding or

closing key of the Holy Spirit. For if it be practiced without the word

and Spirit, without love and brotherly affability, whether it is

through bitterness, anger, or a false report, not conformable to the

word, for reasons not deserving of the ban, then it is not a work of

God, no medicine to the soul, nor fruit of pure love; but a contention

of satan, a corruption and pestilence to the soul, and a manifest fruit

of the flesh: In short, a curse, abomination and stench before God. Let

every person well weigh these words of Paul, and he will, by the grace

of God, find how rigidly this separation is commanded in the

Scriptures, and how orderly it should be practiced in the church, with

the power of the word and Spirit of Christ.

Thirdly, That we should deliver an unrepenting transgressor unto satan.

Not, brethren, that he was not of satan before separation, for as soon

as he turned his heart away from the Lord and became ungodly, he became

the subject of satan, even as a penitent sinner is a subject of Christ.

But now the voice of man, through the church, tells him that he is

deprived of the communion of Christ and his church, and that he is now

delivered unto satan until he again brings forth true fruits of

repentance, before God and his church, that his adulterous, avaricious,

refractory and idolatrous flesh may be brought to reflection and become

ashamed and repentant by such judgment and shunning of the pious, that

he may thus suppress and die unto his flesh, that is, the lusts of his

flesh, and that he may by these means be brought to repentance and his

soul be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

Here the godfearing reader may observe in these words of Paul, the

first reason why the Holy Spirit ordained this ban to be practiced in

the house of God, namely; for repentance and not for corruption; that,

if the transgressor rejects as null and void, all fraternal services

and admonitions of faithful love that are shown to him, and remains

unrepentant?that, then, according to the advice of the Holy Spirit, the

judgment passed upon him, should, with sorrowfulness, be made known

unto him in the church and that he is separated from the church that he

may thus become ashamed unto repentance.

Again, about this shame, the apostle speaks in another place, "If any

man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man and have no

company with him, that he may be ashamed," 2 These. 3:14.

Take notice, brethren, that true, evangelical separation is an express

fruit of unfeigned love, and not a law of hatred, as some, very

wrongly, complain and pretend.

Ah, faithful brethren, if we rightly understood God, if we were

enlightened with the Holy Spirit, and loved our neighbors with divine

love, how diligently we would be engaged in this matter, to follow the

faithful advice of the Holy Spirit, in all reasonableness and love,

without respect of persons; no matter whether it concerns father,

mother, sister, brother, husband, wife, child, or any relative or

friend; for how can we show more spiritual love towards them i But as

it is, a great many do not seek that which is of the Spirit, but that

which is of the flesh; not their neighbors, but themselves. If they do

so through ignorance, then may the merciful Father enlighten them with

his Holy Spirit, and guide them into all truth; but if they do so

through willful perverseness, then we know that it is written, "To be

carnally minded is death," Rom. 8:6.

In the third place, Paul says, " Your glorying is not good. Know ye not

that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump 1 Purge out therefore the

old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even

Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the

feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and

wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth," 1

Cor. s: s?7.

Again, with these words Paul reproves, first, the Corinthians, and,

also, all other churches with them, who glory in being the church of

Jesus Christ and the spiritual house of Israel, and yet tolerate such

shameful, corrupting leaven, as the Corinthians and the like defilers,

in their communion. For how can we glory in the piety of the church and

reprove other churches on account of their ungodly doctrine and life,

so long as we tolerate the like leaven of doctrine and life among us,

without expelling it? If we are unleavened, Why are we not fearful of

the leaven? since the apostle tells us that " a little leaven leaveneth

the whole lump."

Secondly, He here gives us the outward Israel as an example. For when

they kept the passover, they did not= keep leavened bread in their

houses for seven days. Yea, if it was found in any house the souls

thereof had to be rooted out from among Israel. Neither was an

uncircumcised or unclean one to eat thereof. Oh, brethren, if the

figure and shadow were to be so pure how much more should the reality

be pureg For our passover is not a quadruped, but it is the spotless

Lamb of God, Christ Jesus. Nor does our passover last seven days, as

did the passover of Israel, but it lasts forever, namely, from the

offering of Christ until the last day; neither is it kept by unleavened

bread, baked of flour, but by the unleavened bread of righteousness and

by the word of eternal truth.

Therefore, beloved brethren, let us keep this passover holy and

unspotted, to the best of our ability, and let us, in the name of our

Lord Jesus Christ, separate from us the corrupting leaven, that is, all

those that walk in the foreskin of their hearts, and all impure in life

(understand, open, known transgressors), that we may be the holy Israel

of God, besprinkled with the blood of the lamb, free from the scourging

angel of God, and that we may thus rejoice before the Lord, in

sincerity and truth, and celebrate and serve it all the days of our

lives.

Further, all the pious may learn from these words of Paul, "Know ye not

that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" the second reason, why

this separation is so necessary and useful to the house of God, and

that it can not stand without it. This has been shown in Israel. Moses,

the faithful servant of God, strictly commanded the people of God, that

they should, without mercy, destroy from among them the wilful

transgressors, when proven by two or three witnesses; also, that if any

prophets should arise among them, with signs and miracles to lead them

to other gods, they should not hear them, but destroy them. Again, the

father should not excuse his child, the husband his wife, &c., but

their hand should be the first upon them. Also, they should level and

destroy any city which went after other gods, that Israel might hear

these things, fear God and no more practice such evil. I think this was

a rigid separation which was commanded Israel. If they had stood firm

and immutable in this, and had they followed the command, counsel,

teachings and admonition of God, according to the Scriptures, and

destroyed the false prophets and idolators, they would never have

become so estranged from God, and come to such deadly whoring and

degeneration (understand this as in the law). For the rejection of the

counsel and will of God will never go unpunished, Deut. 13: G, 7;

17:11; 19:15; Heb. 10:18.

But at present, the Holy Spirit does not teach us to destroy the

wicked, as did Israel, but that we should reluctantly separate them

from the church, and that in the name of the Lord, by the power of

Christ and the Holy Spirit; for a little leaven leaveneth the whole

lump. It is a common saying, One scabby sheep mars the whole flock. The

lepers were not allowed among the healthy, in Israel; but had to be

separated until cured. O, brethren in the Lord! the leprosy of the

soul, is a leprosy above all diseases, whether it is in doctrine, or in

life. It eats like a cancer, and, as Paul says, "leavenis the whole

lump." Therefore the Holy Spirit has abundantly taught us to separate

such from among us; not to hear the words of the false prophets, for

they deceive us; to separate from such who, contrary to apostolic

doctrine, cause offense and contention; to shun those who are not

pleased with the salutary words and doctrine of our dear Lord Jesus

Christ, but are contentious and desirous of quarreling, &c.; to guard

against dogs and artful laborers and the selfish; to flee the voice of

strangers; to shun an heretic or a master of sects, after having been

once or twice admonished; not to greet nor receive in our houses him

who does not teach the doctrine of Christ; and to withdraw from every

brother who acts disorderly and walks not according to the apostolic

doctrine. O, says Paul, that they be cut off who disturb you, Lev.

13:2; Jer. 23:16; Titus 3:10; 2 John 10; 2 Thess. 3:6.

I think, beloved brethren, the Holy Spirit of God has done well, and

fully performed the duties of his office, and his faithful service of

divine love toward his chosen people by admonishing, warning, teaching

and commanding, in Moses and the prophets, in Christ and the apostles,

in regard to the Shunning of heretics and apostates; but, if we through

obstinacy or perverseness, still associate with the leprous, against

the faithful counsel, teaching and admonition of God and intermingle

with them, then we will also be infected with the same disease. It is

the recompense of those who know the nature of the disease, and yet

neither fear nor avoid it.

Say, most beloved, is it not the greatest foolishness and recklessness

willfully and knowingly to run into the hands of the murderer, by

opening unto him your house and office; for what else can you expect

but stealing, robbing and murdering 3

O, that the pious reader would receive the command, teaching, counsel,

and admonition, so faithfully given by the Holy Spirit. Shun all

hereti: s (I refer to those who ?have been of us), and apostates,

according to the word of the Lord; whether it is father, mother, wife,

child, relative or friend, or whoever will try to turn you from God and

his word, and to corrupt you by doctrine or by life. Whosoever loves

any thing more than his God, cannot be the disciple of the Lord, Matt.

10:37; Luke 14:26. Therefore, believe Christ Jesus, and sincerely fear

him in his word, and you will follow his counsel and teaching; but if

you be offended thereat, then await your punishment, for, by the grace

of God, I know what it is to despise the word and will of God, and what

I have felt and seen in this respect.

In the fourth place, Paul says, " I wrote unto you in an epistle not to

company with fornicators. Yet not altogether with the fornicators of

this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters;

for then must ye needs go out of the world. But now I have written unto

you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother, be a

fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or

an extortioner; with such a one no not to eat," 1 Cor. 5:9?11.

From these words of the apostle we observe that he had on a former

occasion, admonished the Corinthians, in an epistle, that they should

shun the fornicators, covetous, &,c., but they had also understood it

as meaning the fornicators of this world. In this epistle, Paul

admonishes them that this was not his meaning; for if they should shun

such, and not have any dealings with them, they must needs go out of

the world. But he meant those who are called brethren, as he shows in

plain language, saying, "If any man that is called a brother be a

fornicator, or covetous," &c., with such an one do not eat; just as the

Jews did not eat with the Gentiles and publicans, at the time of

Christ; neither did they keep their company; for Christ and Paul are

one and no divided, John 4:9.

I think, brethren, that this text is so plain and clear that it admits

of no controversy; notwithstanding some violate and garble it:

First, they say, "Paul had no authority to burden us with any laws when

it was not first taught and commanded him of Christ." To this we

answer: Let every one rightly reflect upon, divide and consider the

words of Christ, "Let him be unto you as a heathen man and a publicans"

and he will find, by the grace of God, whether or not Paul first

received this doctrine of Christ.

Secondly, they say, " Since Paul makes mention here of. the Jewish

passover, and adds that we should keep the passover, not in the old

leaven," &c., so this passage, and also his sayings, "With such do not

company, with such do not eat," must be understood as meaning a

spiritual intermingling or communion. To such, we answer: Israel had a

passover of seven days, but we have an eternal passover. And, as the

Lamb of our Passover is eternal, and his offering eternal, so we must

now, perpetually sanctify and celebrate it, ever partake of its flesh;

ever be sprinkled with its blood, and ever be diligently guarding

against the ungodly, corrupting leaven of both doctrine and life. If

our feast and Passover then, is spiritual and not literal, eternal and

not temporal, how can this then be applicable to the Lord's Supper,

which eating does not last but for an hour or so?

In the second place, we answer: If these words were spoken of a

spiritual communion then it should read in the Greek text, choinonia,

and in the Latin, communicatio, for that signifies a spiritual

communion, as Christ communes with us, and the members of Christ

commune with Christ; also, community of property. But in the Greek text

is a different word, and in Latin it reads: conumiscemz siri

commerciuarz habere, which does not imply a spiritual communion at all,

but an outward, temporal communion; and it appears=the clearer from

these words of Paul that he here speaks of the temporal communion and

company, and not of spiritual. For he has prohibited this communion

with the apostates and allows the communion with the world, which has

no spiritual communion with us, nor can they have. This is

incontrovertible. Yea, if the communion or intermingling with the world

were prohibited, then we could not make use of the necessaries of life,

but we would have to eke out our life in poverty, destitution,

tribulation and misery, 1 Cor. 10:3; Acts 2:44; 1 Tim. 6:18; Heb.

13:16.

Thirdly,, we reply: That Paul had reference to common eating, and not

to the Lord's Supper; for he calls it in Latin, cibum capere (to take

food), and not, panwm frangere (to break bread); and it is manifest

that the Lord's Supper is, nowhere in the Scriptures, called cibwm

capere. And if it were spoken in reference to the Supper, as some very

mistakenly assert, then it would incontrovertibly follow that we are at

liberty to invite the world to the Lord's Supper, to greet them with

the kiss of peace and to be one body with them; for this intercourse,

unclean and prohibited with an apostate brother, is, according to Paul,

clean and allowable with the world. O, no, but as the Jews at that time

would not eat a common meal with the heathen and publicans, and Christ

having pointed his followers to that usage, so Paul follows the

doctrine and command of his Lord and master, Jesus; and says that we

shall not eat with such.

I think that it has been sufficiently shown to the pious, that these

words of Paul should not be understood as referring to spiritual

communion, nor to the Lord's Supper, but only to daily intercourse and

common eating. If, now, it is not allowed in outward or carnal

communion, it will be less so in inward or spiritual communion.

Dear brethren in the Lord, I would here pray and admonish you all, in

humility, to consider well what the proper meaning is of this word

commercium (intercourse), of which Paul speaks, and how we should

understand it, that you may not give too much liberty to the reckless

souls, to their own destruction, and that you do not too closely bind

the narrow minded, since you have no binding word. For I hear and see,

and have, alas, seen too much of it, these many years, that some, on

every hand, use no weight nor measure in this matter; and the result

is, that there is much dispute and trouble about this separation. May

the Lord grant his divine grace to the peace, unity and edification of

his holy church. Amen.

Inasmuch as I am an unworthy and humble servant, called into the house

of God, and sincerely seek the good of my beloved brethren and

co?workers; therefore I will briefly present my views concerning this

communion or intermingling, according to my talent, with which I desire

to appear before the throne of my Lord Jesus Christ, at the day of

judgment, and will leave it to the criticism of God's word, and all

theologians. Therefore, my understanding of commisceri or commercium

habere, (that is, to mix with or to commune), of which Paul here

speaks, is, that it implies daily communion, company, walk,

intercourse, presence, usage, conversation and dealing, and that it

does not mean accidental conversation, or necessary dealings, such as

dividing a legacy, liquidating debts, and such like incidental

dealings, or to be serviceable in times of need; for the word

commercium does not imply anything so strong. Therefore, in my opinion,

some err not a little by attaching the same strength to the phrase

"have no company with them," that they attach to "thou shalt not steal,

and thou shalt not commit adultery," of which Paul testifies that those

who are guilty thereof, shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven. Their

argument is, That nay is nay; yea, brethren, if this were the case, who

could stand before his God

Again, if the word commercium, which in our language, means an

intermingling or communion, is to be explained, that we are not to

speak a word with an apostate, not to have any necessary dealings with

him; then the word commercium would be violated; many a pious child be

retarded, many an unscriptural action done, and the faithful Paul would

be rejected. For he says, "Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish

him as a brother," 2 Thess. 3:15. Besides, it would make an evil report

of the gospel of Christ.

It is also incontrovertible, that the publicans and some heathen lived

in Judea, as, Herod, Pilate, Philip, Sisanius, Testes, &c., before whom

they had to appear at times. Again, they also had to pay tribute to the

Romans; and, therefore, were obliged sometimes, to speak to them, and

had necessary dealings with them; although they diligently shunned

their daily company, conversation, intermingling, eating, &c.

Dear brethren, take heed, and do not become masters and despisers of

the Holy Spirit, that you do not, through the good opinions of men,

make the way narrower nor broader, than the word, Spirit and example of

the Lord makes and limits it.

In the fifth place, Paul says, "What have I to do to judge them also

that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? But them that

are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that

wicked person," 1 Cor. 6:12, 13. Here Paul explains his former words,

that he did not apply them, in his first epistle, to those that are

without; for God judges them, and not we. We ought to put away from

among us the wicked persons, arid commend the world to God.

Behold, faithful brethren, how unanimously Christ and Paul agree in the

shunning of the apostates. And also, how earnestly Paul has taught and

maintained this separation. Yea, that he has six times enjoined to

practice this ban, in such a short chapter.

"Ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done

this deed might be taken away from among you."

"To deliver such an one unto Satan."

"Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump."

"I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators."

"With such an one, no not to eat."

"Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person," 1 Cor.

6:2, 6, 7, 9, 11,13.

All these are found in one short chapter; besides what he has taught,

commanded and admonished in this respect to the Romans, Galatians,

Philippians, Thessalonians, Timothy and Titus. John also has explained

himself briefly. I do not see how a godfearing heart can have doubts in

regard to this matter and how he can contradict it, since there are

such good fruits and utility derived from this shunning. But it seems

that this vine must have its worms.

Again, the refractory make another objection, and say, "When one is

separated from the church it is not necessary any more to shun him, for

he is no longer called a brother." To such we reply: That they should;

in the first place, consider that if such an one, who has acknowledged

the Lord's word and truth, and, for a time, led a pious, evangelical

life, and has thus received baptism, becomes apostatized and afterwards

sincerely repents, he is not rebaptized; for the Scriptures teach but

one baptism. But if those who are of the world repent they are baptized

after repentance; for before; they neither confessed word, penitence,

faith, righteousness nor baptism; and therefore it is a different

matter. At the day of judgment, it will also be more strictly required

of them than of the world, Luke 9:6; 2 Pet. 2:20; Matt. 24:48.

In the second place we say that the world, notwithstanding, esteem them

as brethren, and many of them would gladly be greeted as brethren;

therefore it is very necessary to shun them, that both the world and

they may know and understand that we can not accept such as brethren

who are so unclean and blamable in doctrine or in life, lest the word

of the Lord and his church be despised by the world, on their account.

In the third place we say, That Israel did not shun their open

transgressors, nor the Corinthians their fornicators until they were

separated from the church. It is neither a custom nor usage in the

Scriptures, to shun anybody so long as he is suffered in the church;

and therefore we should not shun any one, before separation; or else we

practice a ban neither known nor mentioned in the Scriptures.

In the fourth place we say, That if we commune and associate with an

apostate, after separation, then we show in fact that we despise the

word, command, counsel, teaching and admonition of God; that we do not

seek the reasonable shame of the apostate, which is to lead him to

repent; and also, that we do not guard against the corruption of our

own souls.

I trust that this is sufficient to appease every godfearing heart, in

regard to the words of Christ, Matt. 18:18, and in regard to the fifth

chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, and that no more

useless garbling, objections and artful excuses be made to turn it to

the lusts of the flesh, for they can stand no better than stubble

before the fire, and ice before heat. Yea, from these same words of

Christ and of Paul it appears clearly how, when, where, with what

spirit, of whom, on whom, and for what purpose this ban should be

practiced. I think this foundation to be so powerful that it cannot be

broken by christian reasonableness nor by divine truth. Let every one

fear and love his God with all his heart, and he will, doubtlessly,

receive the true knowledge of this matter, and will rightly follow the

scriptural and God pleasing usage.

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A CLEAR

INCONTROVERTIBLE CONFESSION

AND

DEMONSTRATION

FOUNDED ON THE POWER OF THE

HOLY SCRIPTURES,

THAT THE ENTIRE CHRIST JESUS, GOD AND MAN. MAN AND GOD, IS GOD'S

OWN, ONLY AND FIRST BEGOTTEN SON; NOT DIVIDED NOR SEPARA

RATED, BUT AN ONLY, UNDIVIDED PERSON, SON AND CHRIST; GOD'S

WORD DULY MANIFESTED IN THE FLESH, TOGETHER WITH

A THOROUGH CONFUTATION, REPLY TO, AND SOLUTION OF

THE PRINCIPAL POINTS OF THE DEFENSE OF JOHN

A'LASCO AGAINST US.

BY

MENNO SIMON.

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven; If any man eat of this

bread, he shall live for ever; and the bread that I will give, is my flesh,

which I will give for the life of the world," John 6:51.

" For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus

Christ," 1 Cor. S:11.

ELKMART, INDIANA:

PUBLISHED BY JOHN F. FUNK AND BROTHER.

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PREFACE.

To THE IMPARTIAL READER:?I see and observe, honest reader, that many

books, printed in Latin and also written German books, are circulated

and read, concerning the incarnation of the Lord, which, in my opinion,

so slander our reputuation, that those who read or hear them read, shut

their noses and mouths at our approach; therefore I feel myself

compelled, First, to reply to some accusations of John A' Lasco,

wrongfully preferred against me. Secondly, to advance my confession and

faith of Christ Jesus, the Son of God; and, Thirdly, to solve and

criticise according to divine truth, as far as the grace of God is

given me, his principal points with which he refutes our foundation and

faith. This I do not for my own sake, for I am well aware that my

truths, with him, are lies, and that I will remain, as did all the holy

apostles and prophets, the learned heretics and importers, even if

Christ spake in and through me, poor, ignorant creature, with the same

power as that with which he spake formerly through the apostles and

prophets. But I do this from the pure love of our Lord and Savior,

Jesus Christ, and his holy word; from love for my beloved brethren, and

also, from a heart inclined towards my opponents, that Christ Jesus the

Son of the Almighty and great God, may be made manifest as a true Son

of his heavenly Father; that the Scriptures may remain unbroken; and

that the afflicted, hungering consciences, which would gladly follow

the right, may see and know it and thus thank the Almighty and eternal

Father with cheerful hearts, through his first and only begotten Son,

Christ Jesus; that, also, the God fearing reader may know through whom

he is reconciled with his God; and that we establish our foundation not

otherwise than by the clear and positive Scriptures and

incontrovertible truth.

Behold, for this reason have I yet undertaken this labor before my

death. I, who in my weakness, every day look for the dissolution of

this earthly tabernacle with resignation; that I may leave behind me a

sure testimony and memento, how honestly or dishonestly, how highly or

how triflingly, how greatly or how insignificantly I have esteemed the

Lord Jesus Christ, my only and eternal Surety, Consolation, Refuge,

Deliverer and Savior, during the period of my service; for I am aware

how we are upbraided and slandered.

Therefore have 1 divided this book in three parts. The first part is a

reply to some articles and accusations without regard to the foundation

of our actions of which John A'Lasco accuses and blames us, without any

truth whatever.

The second part, is my confession of the origin and descent of the

flesh of Christ, demonstrated according to the power of the Scriptures.

The third part contains the principal objections, particularly of John

A'Lasco to our foundation, which are overwhelmingly answered according

to the word of God. I have so divided it, that the reader may not

become confused, but may obtain a better and more intelligent

understanding and sense of our writings.

I desire and pray all my readers, for the sake of Jesus, whether they

are learned or unlearned, favorable or unfavorable, to read my writings

with an unprejudiced , mind and attentively and intelligently; to read

them frequently; to compare them with the Scriptures, and weigh them in

the balance of the Scriptures; I pray them to believe the Scriptures,

and not the long and many writings, teachings and ? the colorings of

the learned; that they will examine the foundation without bitterness,

and believe the surest truth, and follow it in the fear of God, and

give him due praise, as becomes all reasonable people, according to the

christian name. I doubt not but that all those who read them with due

attention, will soon find that the foundation, doctrine and faith of

our opponents concerning Christ, the Son of God, is deceiving and

erroneous, and that our foundation is the foundation and testimony of

the Holy Scriptures; yea, that it is the power and the truth.

I would further pray, that the reader do not think hard of it if I call

falsehood, lies; and rebuke evil?doing. I trust, by the grace of God,

to do so without any bitter feeling, and with as temperate words as

possible; and further, not to become impatient if I sometimes repeat

the same words and matter, when necessary; and also that at the end, he

will not judge me without consideration and intelligence; and thus

become angry with me. For I do nothing more than reasonable purging,

according to the truth; nothing more than prove my faith and hope, to

be in accordance with the Scriptures, and uphold the honor and praise

of my Lord and Savior?something which I am? not only called to do

verbally, and with my pen, but also with my life?blood, if his glory

demand it.

May the beloved Lord, the faithful Son of the true and living God, to

whom be all honor and praise, grant all kind and discreet readers a

mind desirous to examine diligently, and enlighten the intelligent

hearts to understand rightly. Amen.

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A CLEAR,

INCONTROVERTIBLE CONFESSION, &C.

PART FIRST.

In the first place, John A'Lasco writes, "That I have magnified his

name so that I might, on account of the correspondence I had with him,

obtain greater honor, more consideration and authority among ours" (as

he calls them).

Answer. It is true that I called him the noble and highly?learned, &c.,

in my confession to him and the preachers; but I did this for no other

reason than simply to be polite. I did not picture him in such hateful

colors as he did me; he calling me a doctor or teacher of anabaptists.

Nor have I called him by such high names as he calls himself?Polonim

Baro. I have not sought through his name what alas, he ascribes to me.

I know, thanks be to the Lord, with holy Paul, that I can not be the

servant of Christ, if I seek to please men, Gal. 1:10. If I should

become more honored in the name of man, be it a king or emperor, than

in Christ, it would not be well with me in the end. For if I seek mine

own honor, and not the honor of God, it will not be my honor. But I

hope to obtain honor which will remain with me forever; men may judge

me as they will, they must confess before their God, in the day of

Christ. He who has eyes like aflame of fire, knows what I seek and do,

my coming in and my going out, my rising up and my sitting down. If he

knew nothing better of me than that which I am judged by man, then I

might justly exclaim: Woe unto me, that I was born:

In the second place, he Writes, "That I have unjustly attacked his

reputation, and profaned their church service."

Answer. I trust that nobody can truthfully show that I have said

anything but truth about John A'Lasco or his abettors and followers.

But if they feel hurt at the truth, of which he thinks so hard, for

this they may blame the truth and not me. I am willing to leave it to

the judgment of all reasonable people, whether I wrote justly or

unjustly, too much or too little in regard to his doctrine, sacraments,

church service, church or community, or that of the preachers of his

kind. If their doctrine and church service is of God and his word, why

are not their unreasonable and reckless disciples converted from their

ungodly ways and doings 3 For, according to the contents of the

Scriptures, it is infallible that the doctrine and service which is of

God, has her power and influence, Isaiah 65. But it is too evident from

their fruits, that there is nothing threshed from them but chaff. My

conscience tells me nothing but that I have j done them and their

church justice; for I have reproved them, with zeal, of the things

which all the prophets, apostles and faithful witnesses of God have

diligently done before me, namely: I have reproved their carnal,

impenitent lives, as is manifest before all the world. If I have done

wrong in this regard, then I may justly accuse Moses and the prophets

together with Christ and the apostles, of it, for they have earnestly

commanded me, unworthy creature, and all God fearing preachers to do

so, for which we, miserable creatures, have to suffer so much in this

wild, excited world. He who has created me, knows that I have done so

in sincere love to the conversion o1 their poor souls.

In the third place, he writes, '� I have been obliged to deliver our

doctrine of your slander, by authority of the divine word, which

doctrine you may garble among your followers, by your crying, but which

you cannot refute by authority of the Scriptures, notwithstanding your

boasting that you do so."

Answer. If it can be called slander to rebuke wrong, according to the

Spirit and word of God? Then not only have I slandered, but also

Isaiah, Jeremiah, and all the prophets, and also Christ Jesus, together

with all his apostles. I have rebuked their cause according to the word

of God; and by the grace of God, shown them that they are not the true

messengers of God, nor their church, the true one. But it will be hard

for John A' Lasco to show that our doctrine, which is not ours, but

Christ's doctrine, is wrong, and also that our rebuke according to the

Scriptures, is slander; and to prove before his Good, who judges all

things aright, that his doctrine is right in regard to the incarnation,

the baptism of infants, the calling of their preachers, their

separation and the unrestrained, reckless life of his church, I fear

that we will find plenty of philosophy, invention and coloring, but

little scriptural power, foundation, and truth. Yea, kind reader, I am

sure that if the violence of the world was ever withstood, as it

doubtlessly should be, we would soon find where the victory of the

Scriptures would stand.

In the fourth place he says, "If we prove our doctrine by virtue of the

divine word, then it will be manifest that we were innocently

slandered; and our innocence will be made manifest."

Answer. If he has proven his doctrine and sacraments to be right, by

virtue of the divine word, as he boastingly asserts, I will acknowledge

that I have unreasonably and wrongfully reproved them in this regard.

But it is nothing but consoling the poor people with falsehood, and

keeping them on the broad way by fictitious promises. Even if he could

prove his doctrine and sacraments, which, however, he can not do, to be

in accordance with the Scriptures, then his cause would still not be

half way right; for the doctrine and sacraments are useless if the

fruitful; active faith, and the pious, unblamable life, are not there;

for which purpose the doctrine was promulgated, and the sacraments

ordained. And what kind of life is generally led by their followers,

and also by the greater part of their preachers themselves, I will

leave to the judgment of those who can observe their daily actions and

walk, and who have an understanding of the Holy Scriptures.

In the fifth place he says, "If you would have sent your writings to us

all, as you promised to do, we might have answered you alone; but you

have circulated them first among your own, before sending them to us."

Answer. I do not recollect that I have promised them this; nor can I

see why I should have made such a promise, as I had nothing to write

but what was my proper faith and foundation; which I desire not only to

testify by writing in secret, but also with my life;?blood, before the

whole world, if only the Lord strengthen and uphold me by his grace.

But, as to his writing that I should have circulated it first amongst

ourselves, I would say, that he has said too much; for as soon as I had

withdrawn myself from them, I went to a secret place, as I have had to

do these many years, for the sake of the testimony of Christ and my

conscience, and simply compiled my faith and foundation in writing, and

without any delay, after our conversation, sent it to them. However,

out of respect, I handed it to M. H. G., he being, at the time, Baliff

or Burgomaster (Mayor). The Great Lord is my witness that this is the

truth, and since it is a fact as related, how could I have circulated

it among ours before it was sent to them, as he accuses me of doing;

and, even if I had done as he accuses me, were he and his followers

thereby wronged? Since it is not alone my foundation, but the

foundation and faith of us all, as is known to many.

But his own reason convinced him that it would seem unreasonable to the

reader to write such an infamous, bitter book, without cause, and

therefore he must pretend something, so that his writing against the

mute Menno, who, on account of the great tyranny, cannot answer before

the world, might seem reasonable. But whether it will stand before the

impartial Judgment seat of Christ, will be made manifest in his

declaration. May the beloved Lord not reckon it as sin; for I know that

I am not guilty.

In the sixth place he writes, "Your followers were the cause, that I

must publicly treat with you, for they have steadily circulated the

report in west Friesland, and also, in a great part of Holland, that

you are at liberty to teach your doctrine in our churches; and that we

are certainly conquered, and have nothing wherewith to gainsay."

Answer. I never heard a word of this until I read so in his writing; if

some of us have thus boasted, as he writes (which I cannot believe),

then it is evident that they have not spoken the truth in that regard,

but falsehood; which falsehood is a shameful thing, yea, it is of the

devil, and destroys the soul, John 8:45, 55.

If he has it from hearsay, it was not right in him to listen to such

partizans and liars, and to publish it in a book, to the everlasting

remembrance of all the world, and the great injury of his neighbors.

But if he did it of his own accord, and not from the persuasion of

others, which I do not presume he did, then he dishonors his famous

name and ruins his soul. For lying, I say, is a shameful thing, and

will not find a place in God's city.

Again I say, I do not presume that he wrote this of his own accord, but

I imagine that he was too desirous to listen to the liar, too quick to

hear, and too hasty to write. Be this as it may, I know that, according

to christian reasonableness and love, it does not apply to me; let him

adorn it as much as he can. The great Lord will make manifest in due

time what each one of us seeks and pretends, yea, maintains, teaches,

does and defends.

In the seventh place he accuses me and says, ' � That I made light of

two Latin syllogisms which he communicated to me; that I despised

learning and the skill of languages; that I upbraided them as

philosophers, and passed myself for simply a theologian, whereby I

catch the unlearned and simple, and cause myself great consideration.

That, however, my want of excellence is no meanness but rather

ignorance. Yea, he has set me forth in such colors that my remembrance,

although, alas, not much to my honor, will perhaps be with man as long

as the world endures."

Answer. The reason why he applies these epithets to me, is, because I

wrote to him and his abettors thus: Let us not controvert these things

with subtle syllogisms, nor with sharp, human cavilings, for we do not

profess them, but we contradict them alone by the clear, convincing

word which cannot be garbled by eloquence, nor broken by human

invention. These are my words, A. D. 1543, in my confession written to

him and his .preachers. Let those of a pious disposition judge now

whether .I deserve such bitter treatment. But I am aware that I did not

earn this crown on account of these words, just mentioned, but for the

sake of the poor, despised truth. Reader, do not misunderstand me.

Never in my life, have I despised learning and skill in languages, but

from my youth, honored and loved them. Although, alas, I never acquired

them, yet (thanks be to God), I am not so bereft of my senses, that I

should therefore despise or ridicule the knowledge of languages through

which the precious word of divine grace came to our knowledge. I wish

that all pious minded persons possessed this knowledge, if we would but

humbly use it to the praise of our God, and the service of our

neighbors, in the pure fear of God.

Is it not a shameful thing that they regard truth so little, and

continually try, although unreservedly, to reflect such falsehood upon

me. Yea, dear reader, if I would repay evil with evil, as the law of

nature teaches me, I would collect some false hoods, some of which were

spoken, and some of which were written against me, of which neither he,

nor any other man, can ever convict me. Whether this can be called just

and right, I will leave to the judgment of all impartial, reasonable

minds.

Would to God that he and all our opponents, would not act differently

with me, than I do with them, for I trust they do not desire my blood,

or at least the greater part of them. I rebuke and admonish them of all

the short?comings which I see, as love for them requires, although they

think hard of that. But that I should write falsehoods against them,

from this may the Lord save me. For I am well aware from which impure

fountain falsehood flows, and what will be the end of it. I am also

aware that it is not the seed from which we shall beget God's children,

and gather unto Christ a church. I would have them do the same (and not

differently), if I should, humanlike, fail in some things; that they

would admonish and reprove me according to the truth; that they would

uphold their truth (if they had any, which, alas, they have, not), by

force of the Scriptures; and that they would let. the seed of the

serpent use his falsehood, and the seed of Cain his violence, Gen. 3:4.

But as to my ignorance, of which he so bitterly accuses me, I am not

ashamed to acknowledge before all the world, that I am not only

ignorant, but altogether unlearned, and very little versed in the

languages. Yea, dear reader, I freely admit, as did Socrates, that I

only know one thing, as regards human skill and wisdom, and that is,

that I know nothing. But as regards heavenly wisdom, I am so far taught

of God, through the grace of the Lord, that I sincerely confess that my

Redeemer and Savior, Christ Jesus, is the only and first begotten Son

of God; that whosoever believeth in him hath everlasting life; that he

that believeth not is condemned; that a liar is of the devil; that

"whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer;" that unless ye repent, ye

shall all perish; that "the wages of sin is death," John 3:8; 1 John

3:15; Luke 13:6; Rom. 6:23. And from this unregarded wisdom (eternal

praise be to the Lord), I have obtained so much fear in my poor soul,

that my earthly, carnal mind is converted into a better; and that I am

so sorry that I cannot walk in Christ Jesus, with all my strength,

according to the will of God, and be a sincere, unblamable christian;

that I cannot bring the whole world from its obdurate, ungodly state,

into a new, repentant, christian life, with the Spirit, power, and word

of the Lord. For this is my only joy and ardent desire, that we may

rightly preach Christ Jesus, according to his holy word; that we may

seek, fear, love and serve his holy name. Yea, that we may become the

city of the living God, the glorious kingdom, to his honor, and the

temple of his Holy Spirit, 2 Cor. 6:16.

And this same wisdom which produces. such power and fruit, I esteem as

being the most worthy of all wisdom imaginable; even if taught and

restored by an unlearned cart?driver or coal?carrier?yea, it is the

only joy and desire of my afflicted heart; the only amelioration of my

misery; and will be to the end, by the grace of God, the glorious

ornament and crown of my honor. Of this noble, highly learned wisdom

and philosophy read in Solomon's proverbs, also Sirach and the Book of

Wisdom, and you will find which is its proper virtue, work and power.

Behold, reader, for the sake of this philosophic sweetness, honor,

virtue, fruit, love and' beauty, which I have not learned of famous

doctors nor in high schools, and for the sake of filling my soul with

its living power, I have rather chosen to be the ignorant and unlearned

fool of the world, that I may be found wise before my God, than to be

one of the most famous of the world, and at last be found a fool before

the wise God. And this is my short answer and excuse to his charges and

bitter upbraidings.

I say again, that in the simplicity of my heart I wrote the words "

subtile syllogism," and " sharp cavilings," without, at all, despising

science, and that I did not mean thereby to despise or curtail any one.

I praise science when justly used to the glory of God. But above all I

praise the humble, virtuous science and wisdom which is from above, for

it will never perish, but in glorious honor remain with all. the pious,

into eternal life.

This, now, is the first part of this book, and I would have preferred

to remain silent upon these things, if they bad not been published to

embitter some, to hinder the word, and to the affliction of the God

fearing. But as it is, circumstances have rendered it necessary for me

to do so. May the beloved Lord grant us his grace. Amen.

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OUR CONFESSION.

PART SECOND.

THE reason why we do not admit the foundation, doctrine and faith of

the learned, in regard to the incarnation of the Lord, but refute it

with the Scriptures and truth, is this: Because we clearly see and

palpably feel that they deprive us entirely of Christ, the Son of God,

and point us to an earthly, sinful creature, and a man of the impure

and sinful flesh of Adam; because their doctrine and pretensions are

quite inconsistent with the ordinance of God, and also with nature, the

Scriptures and the properties of the names, father, mother and son, and

because so many inconsistencies must necessarily be included in Christ,

as hereditary sin, condemnation, curse and death; because he would be

half man, if the woman, according to their confession, contributed as

much to the fruit as does the man; because there would be two

persons?one divine and one human, which they call two natures or two

parts; because there would be two sons?one the Son of God without

mother, and not subject to pain; the other Mary's son without a father,

and subject to suffering.

Again, because that if God shall be called a Father of the man, Christ,

he must be a creating and not a begetting Father of his Son, and Christ

must not be a born, but a created Son of his Father; because he would

be the offspring of Adam and his seed, not through the word by which

all must stand, but through his own flesh, which was subject to

condemnation and death, with which the word clothes him, and in whom

(while on earth), it has lived, and because of other gross

inconsistencies. Therefore I have deemed it necessary, before I proceed

with the confutation and dissection of the controversy, to propose to

the reader our faith and confession of Christ the Son of God, according

to the wholesome, genuine Scriptures, that he may find and understand

that the Lord Jesus Christ is not an unclean, divided Christ of two

persons and sons?but an undivided, pure Christ, an only person, yea,

God's first begotten and only Son. Let him who is of an understanding

mind, and who fears God, read and judge.

In the first place I advance the ordinance of God, Gen.l:28; 9:1, to

which John A'Lasco himself refers me, namely, "Be fruitful and

multiply," and prove from this same ordinance that the production of

man is brought about from the seed of man, through the woman, 1 Cor.

11:11, as will be enlarged upon hereafter.

To establish this assertion I would first refer to the conception of

Sarah, when the Lord spake unto Abraham, saying, I will bless thy wife

Sarah, and she shall bear thee a son; and thou shalt call his name

Isaac, Gen. 17:19. To understand these words rightly and also Gen. 1,

the reader should observe that Sarah, as she herself said, was .old and

it ceased to be with her after the manner of women, Gen. 18:11.

Nevertheless, through faith, she conceived and brought forth unto

Abraham a son in her old age.

This blessing of Sarah, according to my humble understanding, was that

she was made fruitful by the power of God, according to the promise

through the faith of Abraham. Behold, thus Isaac was conceived by Sarah

of the seed of his father, and a son was born unto Abraham, according

to the ordinance of God, Gen. 1:28; 21:2.

To this add the proverbs of Philon, of rather of the wise Solomon,

which reads thus: "I myself also am a mortal man, like to all, and the

offspring of him that was first made of the earth," &c., Wisdom 7:1.

Again, the Lord said unto Jacob, "Be fruitful and multiply; a nation,

and a company of nations shall be of thee; and kings shall come out of

thy loins," Gen. 35:11.

Again, Levi was yet in the loins of his father when Melchisedec met

Abraham, Heb. 7:10. Other clear proofs might also be added.

I now leave the philosophers to philosophize, and the students of

nature to argue as much as they please over this matter. God's

ordinance, the example of Abraham and Sarah; and the abundant testimony

of the Scriptures are sufficient proof for me on this point.

Again, I advance the words of the holy angel Gabriel, when he told Mary

that she should conceive and bring forth a son. " Then said Mary unto

the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel

answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and

the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that

holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God,"

Luke 1:34, 3O. Behold, here is the testimony of a true messenger, that

God the Father is a true Father of our Lord, Christ. I think that God's

own angel has here reproved the falsehood of those who say that the

crucified Christ Jesus has had no father.

Since we find from God's own ordinance and from so many sayings of the

Scriptures, that a true child takes its origin from the seed of the

father according to God's ordinance, as has been related; and since we

are so clearly instructed all through the Scriptures that God the

Father is the true Father of his Son, Jesus Christ; therefore we say

that we believe and confess, that the eternal Word of God, which is

also called the seed, in the Scriptures, came down from heaven, through

the overshadowing of the divine power, descended into Mary and

miraculously became, above all human understanding, through the working

of the Holy Ghost, a true, palpable, passive and mortal but

imperishable man, according to the immutable will and gracious promise

of the Almighty and heavenly Father; as John, both in his gospel and

epistles clearly testifies. A man, I say, like unto us in all things

except sin. Not, my reader that he came from the unclean seed and flesh

of Adam, and was, through the power of God, preserved from sin, as the

learned assert, without the word of God, for that which never knew sin

is the seed and origin of his flesh, as John says, "The word was made

flesh," John 1:14. Besides examine the passages of the Scriptures which

testify that Jesus Christ is God's first born and only begotten Son,

and you will find how grossly they err who dare say the man Christ has

no father, as they do.

Again of Mary, the Lord's mother, we believe and confess that the

Almighty, eternal God and Father graciously prepared her virgin body,

as he also did that of the aged Sarah, by the power of his Holy Spirit,

to receive his precious, eternal Word, through faith, according to the

promise of the angel, and that this same word became man; and thus

human?like, as Isaac, was nourished and fed on natural food, as a

natural fruit, to the certain testimony that he was a true man and no

phantasm; in due time, he was born into the world, an undivided and

true Son of God and Mary, as a natural child of its father and mother,

the carnalis intercursm alone excepted, as the Scriptures testify, Luke

8:10; 1:27; John 1:14; 1 John 1:2; Heb. 2:14; Phil. 2:7.

And behold, with such understanding we believe and confess that he is

the seed of the woman, of the seed of Abraham and David, who was given

of God the Father unto the whole world, through particular favor and

grace, for salvation and deliverance, as the highest surety and certain

testimony of his divine love, through faith, according to the sure word

of his promise; and that the above mentioned virgin, ordained of God,

conceived, as above stated, the Savior of the whole world, in Nazareth,

according to the word of the angel, and was delivered of him at

Bethlehem, according to the word of the prophets, Luke 7.:31; Micah

s:2.

Faithful reader, observe that Matthew and Luke show that Mary was made

fruitful through the Holy Spirit of God, yet they do not particularly

point out his genealogy, Mic. g; Luke?1:31. In the meantime some

sectarians arose in the church, as Cerinthus and Ebion, who, according

to history, have instituted gross deceptions.

Finally, John, at the prayer of the bishops of Asia, has written a

clear account of the origin of Christ. the Son of God, and that not

alone of his eternal divinity, as the learned say, but also of his holy

humanity, as may be clearly noticed on all sides, in his writings. And

he has, in clear and pointed words, written and incontrovertibly shown,

who and what he has been from eternity, saying, " The word was made

flesh." He says not; The word was made a man of our, or Mary's flesh,

and has installed itself therein, as our opponents say. Besides he

shows us whence he came, what he has taught, and what example he left

us; what we have received through him, and where he again went to, &c.

Whosoever, now, rightly believes the testimony of John, of Christ, the

Son of God, has life everlasting through his name, John 1:14.

But he who does not believe it, and rejects it, is not of God, and has

neither Father nor Son, but is an anti?christ and deceiver; and this is

our humble and plain confession of Christ, God's Son, as has been

heard, 2 John 7, 8, 9.

As I now enlarge upon our doctrine, faith and confession, the reader

should know that the Scriptures show on every hand that God, the

Almighty Father has created all things through his Word, Jn. 1:1; Ps.

33:6; that he rules all things, and upholds and maintains all things

thereby, Col. 1:16, and as it is manifest that Adam was created by this

same Word, and that he, through his disobedience was condemned, by the

justice of God, to damnation and death, together with all his

descendants; and that he of himself and through himself, could not be

restored again, he being, together with all his seed, corrupted in

nature, and condemned by the justice of God; therefore the eternal love

of God, if Adam and his seed were not to remain eternally cursed, had

to restore Adam and his descendants, by the same Word through which he

created him, from his deadly fall, condemnation and curse, that to him

alone be the honor, and that through his Word and Son, Christ Jesus,

his inexpressibly great love and grace be eternally praised. For if the

restoration had been brought about by any other means than the word, we

might reasonably give thanks and praise thereto. Behold, with this; our

confession, foundation and faith, the whole Scriptures accord, as, by

the grace of God, you will clearly see from the quoted Scriptures.

Thus speaks John, " In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was

with God and the Word was God," "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt

among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of

the Father), full of grace and truth," John 1:1, 14. This testimony we

believe to be true; we therefore leave it unbroken, that the whole

Christ remain, the Son of God; for we see with open eyes that it

accords, and agrees, as far as regards this subject, with all the

Scriptures.

We truly believe and doubt not the least, that the Holy Spirit, which

seeks to lead us into all truth, did not mean otherwise than he here

spoke through this faithful, plain fisherman, John. For if the beloved

messenger of the holy peace had not meant it, as he here writes, his

writing would not have pacified the churches, which, at that time, were

very much troubled about this matter; but it would have still more

estranged them than before, and would have pointed us, poor descendants

to an obscure and uncertain foundation. Oh no! His testimony is true

and plain; and will remain so in eternity. The word has become flesh.

This, our confession, is also authorized by the Lord himself, saying, "

I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of

this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my

flesh, which I will give for the life of the world," John 6:51.

Faithful reader, mark the word of your Lord. Christ says, that his

flesh came from heaven, and the learned say that it descended from

Adam's flesh. Here they are directly opposite. What now will the

Godfearing mind do H If he hold to the testimony and word of Christ,

then he must be the deceiver and heretic of the learned. But if he hold

to the testimony and word, then he makes Christ a liar. Since we surely

know that Christ and the learned are so antagonistic, and since we know

to a certainty, that Christ is the undeceiving truth, and that all men

are liars, therefore we must not turn from truth to falsehood, but from

falsehood to truth. Whatsoever the judgment of man may be, God's word

will remain forever, Ps. 116:,11; Rom. 3:4; Isaiah 40:8; 1 Peter 1:26.

Perhaps our opponents will here seek an excuse and say, Christ speaks

of his more honorable part, for his divinity is from heaven, and has

taken Adam's flesh. I answer: Let them read and believe the word and

testimony of Christ, and they will find that they explain it according

to their own inclination, and not according to the sense and truth of

Christ; for thus he speaks, "I am the living bread which came down from

heaven." Mark, he says, "Came down from heaven," " and the bread that I

will give, is my flesh." Mark again, He does not say, It is my

divinity, but "my ,flash, which I will give for the life of the world."

I think that Christ himself, has here sufficiently explained his words,

and therefore we do not need the explanation and garbling of the

learned. For Christ and John could not have expressed themselves more

plainly, in regard to the descending of his holy flesh, than they did

in the two mentioned Scriptures. Therefore let every one beware how he

garbles. For whosoever falsifies these dear, fundamental evidences,

does not falsify the word of a human being but the word of God. Neither

does he reject us, but the Son of God, together with his Holy Spirit,

and the exalted apostle John, who have left them behind, and taught

them in such clear and plain words.

Christ still farther declares this our confession, saying, "And now, O

Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had

with thee before the world was," John 17:5.

I think this also is dear evidence that Christ humbled himself, and,

that he, for our sake, abdicated for a time his divine dominion, right

and glory. For, although he was Justice and eternal Blessedness, he did

not refuse to become a sacrifice for sin, and a curse for us, Phil.

2:7; 1 Cor. 1:29; Gal. 3:13; 2 Cor. G:19.

Yea, kind reader, if he had remained in his first estate, impassive and

unchanged, as John A'Lasco and his followers assert; and if he had just

surrounded himself with a strange tabernacle of Mary's flesh, then he

would not have lost that which he again desired from his Father, while

he would have remained, not humbled, but unchanged in his first estate.

But now it is manifest that the eternal, indescribable and

inexpressibly glorious word, which from eternity has been with and in

the Father in eternal glory and clearness, but in an illegible manner,

has in due time left his glory, for a season, for our service, and

become a poor, despised, mortal man, and has died a bitter death for

us. And thus he again desired his first glory, which he had with his

Father before the world began, and which he had, for a time left, for

our sakes. This Scripture is too clear to be obscured by acuteness.

Therefore believe the word of your Lord, trust in truth and you will

not be deceived.

This our confession also accords with holy Paul, for he says, "Now that

he ascended, what is it but that he also descend!, ed first into the

lower parts of the earth 8 He that descended is the same also that

ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things," Eph.

4:9, 10.

By the side of this plain saying of Paul place also the word and

testimony of Christ, which he himself testifies in regard to his

descension. For he says, " No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he

that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven,"

John 3:13.

Ponder diligently upon these words of Paul. For if he spoke these words

alone in regard to his divinity, and not of his humanity, how would it

then accord with the testimony of Christ, just mentioned, who says, "

No man has ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven,

even the Son of man which is in heaven."

My reader, remember, Christ here calls himself the son of man, and

says, "That he came down from heaven." The son of Mary, whom the

learned say is of her flesh, did not come down from heaven, but must be

of the flesh of Adam, if the foundation of the learned were right. Oh

no. But the word came down from heaven, is become flesh or man, in the

lower parts of the earth, and afterward ascended' up far above all

heavens where he first was.

Inasmuch then, as Christ not only speaks in this Scripture passage of

his divinity, but also of, his humanity (since he says The son of man),

therefore it is manifest that the man Christ is not originally from

earth, but from heaven, for according to his eternal divinity, if that

should have been left thus unchanged, as the learned say, he cannot be

called the son of man. Again, according to his humanity, he could not

be in heaven at the time he spoke these words, if he was of Mary's

flesh and not of heaven. Therefore we must accept these Scriptures as

regarding the whole Christ, that is, both of his divinity and humanity.

From which it forcibly follows that the whole Christ Jesus, God and

man, man and God, is from heaven and not of earth, as also John

testifies at another place, and says, "He that cometh from above is

above all; he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the

earth; he that cometh from heaven is above all," John 3:31. Again,

Christ says, "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world;

again, I leave the world and go to the Father," John 18:28'.

From these it follows (if we will accept the testimony of Christ, John

the baptist and Paul, as true) that the Word came down from heaven,

became flesh in Mary, dwelt among man, fulfilled the Scriptures, again

ascended and sat down at the right hand of his Father, and is adored by

all the angels of God. Mark, reader, how the one Scripture exactly fits

the other, and ? how exactly Christ, John and Paul agree. Sure and

immutable stands the testimony, that the Word is become flesh.

Paul still further explains our confession, and says, "The first man is

of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the

earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and; as is the heavenly,

such are they also that are heavenly," 1 Cor. 16:4'7. Reader observe.

Although Paul properly speaks of the resurrection of the dead, and of

its future clearness, yet he testifies by this same Scripture, the

coming again, and the difference between the first and the second Adam,

when he says, " The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man

is the Lord from heaven." For, as the first man, Adam, is called earthy

on account of his being of the earth; so, also, the second man, Christ,

is called heavenly because he is from heaven.

If any one should contradict this and say, That Christ here is called

heavenly on account of his divinity, you should know that Paul rebukes

them with these significant words: The second man, he says "The second

man is the Lord from heaven." I cannot see how the great witness could

express himself more plainly. And since he is, then, such a heavenly

Being, and, be, sides, since he is again glorified of God his heavenly

Father, with his eternal glory which he had before the beginning of the

world, with God, therefore the holy apostle also calls all his true

members, after the resurrection, heavenly. Not that they are from

heaven, as Christ is from heaven, but because, by grace, through the

power of God, in the resurrection, they will partake of the heavenly

glory and of the nature of the angels, as Christ says, " The glory

which thou gavest me, I have given them" (his disciples), John 1'7:22.

Again, Paul says; "Our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we

look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile

body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according

to the working, whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto

himself," Phil. 3:20, 21. Read also what Christ says of such, Luke 20;

1 John 3.

For this reason Paul calls them heavenly and says, "As we have borne

the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly,"

"For this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put

on immortality;" " Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in

the kingdom of their Father" and as the stars of heaven in brightness

forever; yea, when we shall be like unto the Lord, and shall see him

face to face, as he is, 1 Cor. 1s:49; Matt. 13:43; 1 Cor. 13:12.

Again, at another place the Scriptures say of Christ, I am the First

and the Last, and the living One, and I was dead, and behold, I live

from eternity to eternity Rev. 1:8; Isa. 41:4; 44:6. In this instance

the Holy Spirit brings forward another indissoluble testimony, at which

all sharp disputers and famous masters of this world are made ashamed.

If they want to pervert this clear and plain Scripture according to

their own notion, by their deceitful reasoning, as they do the

Scriptures of John 1:14, and all the Scriptures, then they should know

that we do not follow and believe the sophistry of man, but the?word of

the Lord. If they leave it undisturbed, then their cause is already

lost, for the Holy Spirit testifies that the First and the Last, and

the living One, died.

That Mary's flesh was not the first and the last all intelligent

persons must admit. If then the man Christ had been of Mary's flesh, as

the learned say it is, which neither is nor can be the first and last,

and if it had thus died, then the Spirit of God, which is the Spirit of

truth, would not have spoken rightly. Yea, neither Christ himself, who

says, "I am the First and Last," was dead, and behold I am alive.

I would further say, That if the man Christ Jesus was a natural

offspring of Mary, and if the eternal Word only lived therein, as our

opponents say it did, and if this same man died, and the Word remained

unchanged, then Mary's flesh must be the First and Last; this is too

plain to be denied.

Since it is evident that Mary's flesh neither is nor can be the First

and Last, as has been heard, and since it is true, according to the

testimony of the Holy Spirit, that the First and Last has died,

therefore I conclude therefrom that the explanation of our opponents,

by which they point us to Mary's flesh, is deceitful and false, and

that the learned are badly mistaken when they say that the Son of God

remained unchanged,?and that the son of Mary died. I say again, the

word stands immutable, " The Word is become flesh."

Again, with this our confession, foundation and belief, all the.

prophets who have spoken of Christ, the Son of God, through the Holy

Spirit, agree. Micah says, "But thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be

little among the thousands of Judah, yet of thee shall he come forth

unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been

from of old, from everlasting," Micah G:2. Observe, Isaiah says,

"Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his

name Immanuel," which signifies God with us, Is. 7:14; Matt. 1:23.

He further says, " Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and

the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be

called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father,

The Prince of Peace," Isa. 9:6.

At another place he says, " Say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your

God." Again, Jeremiah says, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord,

that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign

and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In

his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this

is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS,"

Jer. 23:6, 6.

My reader, observe, Since the descension of this Prince has thus been

from eternity, as has been related, and his name is called, by the

Spirit of the Lord, Immanuel, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father,

Our Righteousness, &c.; and since the prophets describe him with such

significant words, as also the apostles, whence, who, and what he is;

therefore I conclude therefrom that the man, Christ Jesus, is not of

unclean, sinful flesh, but of the unspotted, pure seed and word of God,

his Father, as John says, " The word is become flesh." This, then, is

our proper faith and confession of Christ, the Son of God, namely: That

we are all created in Adam our father through the ineffable word, and

that we, in the same Adam, have become of a sinful nature and subject

to death; that we also, by means of this eternal, ineffable word, and

not by means of the sinful flesh of Adam, are graciously accepted of

God and mercifully called unto life everlasting, as Christ says, that "

God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that

whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting

life," Ps. 33:6; Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 15:3; John 3:16.

All Scriptures force us that we dare not divide Christ, the Son of God,

after the pretensions of the learned; but to confess him as being

entirely the true Son of the true and living God. The angel testified

of Christ, the Son of Mary, saying, "That holy thing which shall be

born of thee, shall be called the Son of God," Luke 1:35.

Again, the Father testified, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well

pleased," Matt. 17:5; Luke 9:35.

Again, John the Baptist says, "He that sent me to baptize with water,

the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending

and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy

Ghost; and I saw it and bare record that this is the Son of God," John

1:33.

Again, "Nathaniel saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God. thou

art the King of Israel," John 1:49.

Again, when Jesus asked his disciples, "Whom say ye that I am? Peter

answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,"

Matt. 16:15, 16.

Again, Martha said, "I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of

God, which should come into the world," John 11:27.

Again, the disciples, together with the others said, Verily, thou art

the Son of God.

Again, Christ said to the blind man, "Dost thou believe on the Son of

God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on

him; and Jeans said unto him, Thou hast both seen him and it is he that

talketh with thee," John 9:37.

Again, when the centurion, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the

Ghost, he said, " Truly, this man was the Son of God," Mark 15:39.

Again, Saul was with the disciples at Damascus, and preached Christ in

the synagogues, that he is the Son of God, Acts 9:20.

Again, John says, "We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the

Son to be the Savior of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus

is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God," 1 John 4:9.

Besides many other clear passages.

Inasmuch as the Scriptures so abundantly testify that also the man

Christ is the Son of God, therefore it is manifest that M. M. and those

of his mind, do fearfully err when they say, " The man Christ was not

the Son of God; he had no Father; but there are two sons in Christ?the

one the Son of God without mother, and impassive?and the other the son

of mankind, or the son of Mary without father, and he passive," &c. I

think this may be called rejecting the Son of God, in the face of all

these plain Scriptures, and pointing us to a divided Christ, yea, to an

unclean, sinful flesh and creature, guilty of death, whom the

Scriptures never knew and still less taught. , O detestibilem

blasphemiam (O detestable blasphemy).

!!!All who can be convinced rightly to believe that the word did not

take unto itself a man of Mary's flesh, but that, according to the

testimony of John, it is become flesh, have a true understanding of

Christ. They will not argue per Synecdocken, de parte ad totuwm, neqw

de toto ad partem. They will not point to the worthiest part in Christ,

nor to the communication or communion of the names; neither will they

unite two persons and sons in one person and son, as our opponents do,

but they will leave the Scriptures ungarbled in their place, and

acknowledge with John the Baptist, John 1:15; with Matthew 18:16; with

Martha, John 11:27; and with the whole Scriptures, that Christ Jesus is

God's first?begotten and only Son; an only and undivided Christ, God

and man, man and God, an only person and Son, who, in his flesh, has

fulfilled the handwriting of the law for us, as we could not, in our

flesh, on account of our weakness; and is, at last, judged and

condemned, as an innocent, spotless Lamb, to die on the cross for our

sins and guilt.

Behold, this is our foundation, faith and confession of the most holy

incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Mary; on

account of which, alas, we are so much upbraided by our opponents, and

have to pass for deceivers and heretics; and that for the reason, I

say, because we teach and testify with the Scriptures that the Lord,

Christ Jesus, is God's own and true Son, as has been heard.

Well, since it is so with them they must run their course; we cannot

prevent it until they are met by the angel of the Lord, and rebuked by

the ass, Num. 22; 2 Peter 2. They had, however, better beware, lest

they stumble too hard on the Rock of offense, Isaiah 8:14; Rom. g:33.

The time to give an account will soon arrive. As for me, I care not how

they judge me.

I trust to find my consolation in the Lord who has taken me by the

right hand, and who knows all my desires, intentions anddoings. He will

execute our cause to his honor; for he knows that we do not desire to

seek our praise, but his own. Therefore he will protect his own honor.

It might doubtlessly happen that through their writing and slandering

against us, and through their manifestly erring doctrine, in regard to

Christ the Son of God, it might be made manifest to some that they are

doubly what they would like to make us. May the great God grant them

grace, Amen.

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THE CONFUTATION,

PART THIRD.

BEFORE I proceed to the confutation of the arguments of our opponents,

I would first faithfully admonish the kind reader that he do not

mistake the shining clearness of the eternal God?head, through his high

soaring genius, and not have the audacity to undertake to fathom this

ineffable profundity?lest he, when he thinks that he has fathomed it,

at once dazzle his eyes and suddenly fall down the precipice. For it is

manifest that many smart and acute genii have been mistaken and made

fools of themselves by their high?soaring intellect.

The Tritheists held and taught that there were three Gods.

Arius divided the second as being the least of the first substances.

Macedonius said that the third being, namely: The Holy Ghost, was no

God; but a servant of God and the Son.

Etius and Eunomius taught that the Father, Son and Holy Ghost were

different things or beings.

The Origenists held that the Son could not see the Father, and the Holy

Ghost could not see the Son.

Maziminus feared that the Father was a part of God, and each person was

one?third of the trinity.

The Metangismonites said that the second person was in the first, as a

small vessel in a larger.

The Allogians said that John uttered a falsehood when he said that God

was the Word; because they could not comprehend the mystery of the

Word.

The Monarchians as also the Prageans and Victorians said that the

Almighty Father was Jesus Christ, and that he had placed himself at his

right hand.

The Sabellians made the person and the names of Christ and of the

Father, one; and are called Patripassiants; for they believed that the

Father had suffered. Behold thus, those save who undertake to search

things incomprehensible, and who want to soar higher than the

Scriptures teach.

Again Erasmus Roterod says, The Word was God. It was Almighty, out of

the Almighty, with the Father, not brought forth for that time, but for

all time. Thus proceeding from the paternal heart, and never leaving

it. He further says, That the Father has begotten unto himself, the Son

like unto himself in every respect; from eternity, to eternity. Again

he says in suo ecclesiaste, Christ is the word of God, Almighty, which,

without beginning and without end, ever comforth from the heart of the

Father.

Martin Luther says, The word is that which God speaks in himself, and

which remains in him and is never separated from him. We do not

controvert the testimony of Erasmus and of Luther; but we cited them

for the reason that it might be observed what diversity of opinion

exists.

Philip Mel. says, The word is begotten in thought, and is called the

image of God, for that which is thought is the image of the thing

thought of. Say, beloved reader, who dare build his conscience upon

such foundation and reasoning

Again, some councils resolved that there were three persons in the

Trinity, that is, three real substances, and these same were Homusii,

that is, of the same nature (co?essential); both of these, namely, the

persons and their natures have been suspected.

Behold, thus they follow their own opinions and inclinations, build

upon vapor and wind, look at each other, and not at the word of the

Lord, confuse the simple minds who are not versed in the Scriptures,

proclaim their opinions and not the word; and whoever cannot agree with

and follow them, is called a deceiver and heretic, by them; therefore I

pray you, for Jesus' sake, not to climb higher in this ineffable

Majesty than you have steps, and not to search farther than the word of

the Lord has taught, while many a piercing eye has been, and is yet

daily dazzled by this adulation. For you can understand as little of

the unspeakable beauty and conception, how, and in what manner it was

brought about from eternity, as you can form an idea of the

indescribable Father himself.

Therefore let not the opinion and flattery of the learned be the

foundation upon which you build your faith; but let the undeceiving,

plain word of God and the testimony of holy John be a sure foundation

whereon to build your faith.

He says, " In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,

and the Word was God," "All things were made by him; and without him

was not any thing made that was made," John 1:1, 3.

This same Word, which was from the beginning and which, in the course

of time became flesh, is called by Paul the Son, Christ Jesus, and the

first begotten of all creatures, Col. 1:15.

Yea, dear reader, if the learned had left unbroken the testimony of

John which he spoke of his eternal divinity; and if they had inclined

their intellects to the word of God, there would never have been such

dark confusion in the world, in regard to Christ, the Son of God.

Therefore I advise you in faithful love, take heed and beware; for the

testimony of John is too clear to be obscured by flattery, and too

strong to be broken by philosophy. Whosoever would rather drink the

precious, clear wine of divine truth, than the impure waters of human

adulation, let him hold to the word of the Lord, and let him abandon

the unscriptural, destructive explanations, garblings, opinions and

ideas of the learned:

This is sufficient of the eternal and ineffable divinity of Christ.

Now, by the grace of !i God, we will proceed, and maintain by the power

of the Scriptures, that those abominably err, who say, The word is not

become flesh, but it has taken unto itself our flesh or a man of our

flesh, as will be briefly and clearly shown in the following:

In the first place John A' Lasco writes, and says, "Divine justice

requires that that which we broke, through our flesh, included in

Adam's loins, should be punished in the same flesh. Or, as some say,

that the nature which inflicted sin, should be punished for such sin,

and that that which incurred death should also destroy it."

Answer. Since he and his followers would uphold their cause with the

justice of God, and pretend to say that the inflictor and institutor

should suffer punishment, then they should, by right, not use the words

"our flesh and nature," but "Adam aid Eve," in their writings (for they

were the first inflictors and institutors), and not the flesh and

nature of their descendants, as may be openly seen, Gen. 3:6.

The nature of man was first created pure and good; but was corrupted

through Adam's disobedience. And as he was thus corrupted in his

nature, so all his children were born corrupted; nevertheless, the

children were not the inflictors and institators, but Adam and Eve

were. If the justice of God, then, requires the punishment of the

inflicter and institutor, it would be but right, according to justice

that not any of the children should be punished; for they were not the

first that disobeyed; but Adam and Eve should receive the punishment,

fog they were the first that transgressed.

O, no, Adam? and all his seed could not be justified, through the

weakness of his flesh. They were guilty above measure, and had not a

penny wherewith to pay, but it was liquidated for Christ's sake, who;

through his eternal love and mercy (as Adam and his could not be

justified in themselves), appearing in the shape and form of sinful

man, fulfilled the justice of the Father, and tore to pieces the hand

writing of the law, and has effaced and paid for all that which Adam

had inflicted and broken by his transgression, by the sacrifice of his

precious blood, Rom. 8:3; Eph. 2:15.

Since they point to the justice of God, 7 deem it necessary to treat on

this a little further, that the intelligent reader may learn that this

assertion of theirs is quite powerless, nay, in every respect without

foundation in the Scripture.

It is manifest, kind reader, that Adam and Eve, together with their

descendants tempted by the serpent, fell into condemnation and death,

by the justice of God, Gen. 3: g: and that nothing can be born of them

but that which is condemned and guilty of death, Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 15.

Since Adam and all his seed, on account of his disobedience, became

condemned and guilty of death by the eternal justice of God: and if the

Lord Christ, according to his holy humanity, were a natural fruit of

the flesh of Adam, as they pretend, then the man Christ must be again

condemned and guilty of death, on account of his human birth. This is

too clear to admit of denial, or else our opponents must take back

their own argument, and acknowledge that God's justice is not eternal.

O, no, the flesh of Christ is holy, pure, spotless, knows no sin, makes

pious and saves, is a true bread of souls, as is the word, which, in

the latter days, according to the intention and purpose of the Father,

became a true, passive man, for the salvation and eternal deliverance

of all; and who died an innocent death for us.

It avails in no manner that they say that Mary was blessed, and that

her fruit was saved from sin by the power of God. We confess that Mary

was blessed, and that the fruit was without sin; but we deny that Mary

was without sin in consequence of the blessing; for Paul says, " The

Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of

Jesus Christ might be giver to them that believe," Gal. 3:22.

Again, if the man Christ were a flesh of Mary's flesh, then Mary would

have been blessed through her own flesh; and Adam would have been

reconciled through ME own flesh; the justice of God would have been

broken, and our condemnation, curse and death be dissolved and requited

through flesh, condemned, cursed and guilty of death.

O, no, the Scripture teaches plainly that we have all become sinners in

Adam, and that we have all, through sin, fallen under the judgment,

wrath, and condemnation of God, and become subject unto death, Rom.

5:8; 1 Cor. 15:22. And of Christ it testifies that he is the Lamb

without spot; that he has not known sin, and in his mouth no guile is

found. Inasmuch then as it is manifest that the Scripture entirely

concludes Adam and his descendants in sin, and entirely absolves

Christ, therefore the discreet and right minded reader may conclude

therefrom, that the holy man, Christ Jesus, is not of the unclean flesh

of Adam, but that he is the holy and pure word of God, John 1; and that

this saying of the learned, that the justice of God requires, &c., is

not the sure testimony and word of God, but merely human flattery and

fiction.

Oh, I wish that our opponents would once ponder what the justice of

God, in this respect, requires according to the Scripture. I trust they

would henceforth not hold so strongly to their foundation as they have

hitherto done; neither would they say that if any one does not accept

their doctrine he sins against the Holy Ghost; or at least think that

they might be mistaken.

In the second place he intimates that we should understand the

conception of Mary, of which Matthew and Luke speak, as far as regards

the mother, as is naturally due her, according to the ordinance of God,

Gen. 1.

Answer. It is surprising to me that a man as learned as he is, reasons

so indiscreetly, and dares ascribe the conception of Mary to nature,

while it is clearly shown all through the Scriptures that the

conception of Mary was brought about by supernatural causes, a

particular miracle of the Most High, and a glorious sign of the Lord

our God; as Isaiah says, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a

sign: Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call

his name immanuel," Isaiah 7:14; Matt. 1:23; Luke 1:31.

Again, Matthew writes concerning the conception of Mary, thus, "When as

his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she

was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph, her husband, being

a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to

put her away privily; but while he thought on these things, behold, the

angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou

son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which

is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a

son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people

from their sins," Matt. 1:18?21.

Again the angel said to Mary, " Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and

bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus; he shall be great,

and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give

unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the

house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then

said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a maul

And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come

upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee;

therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be

called the Son of God," Luke 1:31?35.

From all these it is very evident that the conception of Mary was

supernatural and a sign and miracle of the Lord; therefore it is all to

no purpose that the learned philosophize it as being caused by nature,

for it is irrelevant to the matter.

And if the conception of Mary were ascribed, in part, to nature, in the

face of these clear Scriptures, then, still it is apparent from the

ordinance of God and of nature, that the material, or origin of the

child is of the Father and not of the mother, as has been sufficiently

explained above in the confession, and also in my writing against

Gellius Faber. Therefore these innovations are nothing but philosophy

and human genius, without Scripture, and not worthy of an answer; but I

have briefly criticised them, and pray you not to despise my

references; but let a trial be given before the accusation, lest you

mistake yourselves, as Sirach says.

They further advance that the Scripture speaks of the Savior being

promised of the seed of woman, of Abraham and the fruits of the loins

of David.

Answer. In the first place I say that he who deduces from these

Scriptures that the man Christ was flesh of a woman, nay, the natural

seed of Abraham and David, who all descended from the unclean flesh of

Adam, must also add the unrighteousness, curse and sin of Adam.

If they should assert that he was free from the unrighteousness, curse

and sin of Adam, I again answer: That he was not of the natural seed of

Adam; for the seed of Adam was unclean, sinful and accursed therefore

nothing but unclean, sinful and accursed flesh could be begotten

therefrom; or else the unclean must beget the clean, the sinful the

holy, and the accursed the blessed; and therefore the hereditary

uncleanness, curse and condemnation be changed. This is too plain to be

controverted.

Yea, reader, if the incarnation of the Lord was, as our opponents say

it was, then it would be manifest that Christ Jesus was not so pure in

his incarnation as was Adam in the first creation. For if it is

asserted, as is true, that Christ was conceived in the virgin Mary,

then Adam had no other father on earth but God?wherefore he is also

called a Son of God, by Luke. Yet, Adam would, nevertheless have been

created of purer nature, and of God; but Christ, if he was of the

unclean seed of Adam, must be of less clean nature, that is, of an

unclean, human and earthly seed. This is too clear to be controverted.

In the second place I say, If the man Christ were a natural fruit and

seed of the impure, sinful flesh of Adam, then he would also be guilty,

through the eternal justice of God, of the judgment and death. And if

he was guilty, how could he redeem and liquidate ours 8 Or else we must

admit that God's justice was ended; and that the sinful had taken away

and atoned for the sinful; the condemned for condemnation, and he that

was guilty of death had taken away death.

O, no: No unclean animal was permitted to be offered as an offering of

reconciliation in Israel; but it must be without blemish. And if the

symbolic had to be entirely. clean and without blemish, how much more

so should be the true one, whereby the eternal reconciliation is

brought about??and whereby all symbolic offerings are fulfilled and

finished, Heb. 9:10; Exodus 12: S; Deut. 16:21; Mal. 1:8.

In the third place I would say, He who asserts that the man Christ is a

natural fruit and seed of Adam, Abraham, David and of woman, also

asserts thereby that there are two persons in Christ, two sons; the

father is no true father, the mother no true mother, and the son no

true son, as has been said before.

In the fourth place I say, If the man Christ was of the flesh and blood

of Mary, then it is manifest that he was not God's Son, but a created

creature, since he would not be begotten of the Father, but of the

flesh and blood of Mary, according to nature, as has been sufficiently

shown.

In the fifth place I say, If the man Christ, were of the flesh and

blood of Mary, as they pretend, then it is very evident that the birth

of man, according to the ordinance of God, can not be without father

and mother; and also that a child does not proceed from the mother, but

of the father; and ii the man Christ came without a father, from the

body of the mother, against the ordinance of God, then a new creation

must have taken place in Mary, which creation could not have occurred

without the Word. If such a creation did occur, then it is manifest

that the one half or part of Christ must be created by the other;

Mary's son by God's Son; and that the two, namely, the Creator and the

creature, thus became one person and Son. Dear reader, observe what

abominations they advance.

In the sixth place I say, As all men have both father and mother, and

as each has his generation?the father and the mother ?so, also, had

Christ Jesus both father and mother. His Father was an incomprehensible

Spirit from eternity, and will remain so to eternity; therefore he

could have no genealogy on the side of the Father; but the mother, who

was the true daughter of Adam, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, conceived him

in her virgin womb through the Holy Ghost, by his Father's word; and

she begat a true man in due time. Her genealogy was counted in the

Scripture; for when he became incarnate in a human being, he must have

a genealogy, of which he was born. And this is the word which Paul

speaks, Born of the seed of David according to the flesh, Gen. 22:18;

Ps. 132: il; Rom. 1:3; 9:5; Acts 13:23. Not that there were two sons in

Christ, the one without father, and the other without mother; one the

Son of God, and the other the son of man, as our opponents pretend. But

he who was God's Son also was the son of man; and he who was the son of

man, was also the Son of God. Not two, but an only and undivided Son,

as the ordinance of God, and the whole Scriptures teach and imply.

If you cannot understand this, then mark this parable: Charles the

Fifth is a son of Austria; he is also a son of Spain; not that he is,

therefore, one of two sons?but he is an only and undivided son. On the

side of the father he is a son of Austria, and on the side of the

mother he is a son of Spain. Thus also, is Christ Jesus a Son of God

and a son of man; the Son of God on the side of his Father, and the son

of man on the side of his mother. Not one of two sons ?but an only and

undivided Son. The Son of God and of Mary, as has been shown.

Again, if you are yet in doubt about the fruit of the loins of David, I

would first refer you to my "Confession," which I wrote to John A'Lasco

and his preachers, A. D. 1543, thereby admonishing you, to observe how

the throne and the Kingdom of David, were promised to Christ, by Isaiah

and the angel Gabriel; which was, however, not literally fulfilled in

Christ, but in Solomon, who was a figure and symbol of Christ, as were

also Isaac, Moses, Aaron, Joshua and Joseph.

Since the whole Scriptures teach us that his kingdom and throne are not

literal but spiritual, therefore we must, in the same manner, judge the

fruit and the king who shall sit upon the throne and reign; or else the

one word must be understood literally, and the other spiritually. This

is too plain to be controverted.

Secondly, observe what Christ asked of the Pharisees in regard to

Christ the Son of David, and how he answered them, Matt. 22:42.

Thirdly, observe that if the man Christ were a natural fruit of the

loins of David, all the insolvable, gross inconsistencies would be

included in him, which we have partly pointed out above, and upon which

we will enlarge if God permits.

Fourthly, observe that all the properties of God are alike perfect in

him. And therefore his perfect, eternal love and justice require it, as

Christ says, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten

Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have

everlasting life." Yea, says John, therein God's love appeared that he

sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we, through him might

live; for as he adjudged Adam and all his seed unto death, by his

eternal justice, on account of his disobedience, so, also, has he, on

account of the obedience of Christ, by his eternal love, promised life

to all who believe in him; for as his righteous punishment of the sins

of Adam's descendants who reject Christ, lasts forever, thus also his

paternal love to forgive sin through Christ, lasts forever to all those

who believe in Christ, and accept and obey the word of his grace, John

3:16.

In the third place, I find that it is said that my foundation is, that

Christ was begotten of the Holy Ghost.

Answer. It is very unreasonable that I am ever blamed of things of

which I am not guilty. In my first "Confession" I have plainly and

clearly shown in Latin letters that 'l do not believe that Christ was

conceived in Mary of the Holy Ghost, but through the Holy Ghost. Yet I

must hear that I teach that Christ was begotten of the Holy Ghost.

O, dear Lord, how lamentably I am slandered! What else do they against

me than the Scribes did unto Jeremiah, when they counseled about him,

and said: Come, and let us devise devices against him, and not regard

his reasoning, Jer. 18:18. Yea, I think that I am born to turn my ear

to the slanderer, and my back to the scourger. Nevertheless, I hope, by

the grace of the Lord, that the time will come when some of them will

yet awaken and acknowledge, in all humility, with penitent hearts that

they have not despised me, but the word of God, and that they have

scorned his Spirit.

In the fourth place he intimates "That I teach that the Word changes

itself into human flesh and blood in the womb of the virgin."

Answer. I presume that it will never be proven by virtue of the truth

that I have ever, at any place, said or written so; nevertheless they

dare say and write so of us. I have spoken thereof as the high apostle

has taught me, that the " Word became flesh." That testimony I leave

unbroken; and leave it to the Incomprehensible, to him, who, through

his omnipotent power so arranged it for the salvation of us all, how

much, and what was changed. Yet, I would, in my simplicity, add (if

they explain the testimony of John to which I. alluded in unchanged

letters, and conclude therefrom: Menno teaches, with John, that the

"Word became flesh," therefore his foundation must be that it was

changed into flesh, &c.), that they should know that change does not

always take away the first nature of the substances of which something

is wrought.

Adam was a man created of the earth; he was a man of the earth, and

remained of earth, as the Lord said, "Dust thou art and unto dust shalt

thou return," Gen. 3:19.

Again, in the resurrection of the dead, all those who have again

returned to earth, shall, through the power of God, be resurrected from

the earth. It is manifest that at first we were earth, afterward we

became flesh of the earth, again we became earth of the flesh, and

lastly we became flesh of the earth, out of the first flesh, but in

glory and brightness, as the Scriptures testify; and thus the first

substance, al. though changed, of which the thing changed was wrought,

remains, as has been heard

Reader, understand me rightly. I do not present this parable for the

purpose of asserting that the Word was changed into flesh and blood,

the same as the earth of which Adam was made was changed into human

flesh, but I have presented it for the purpose of showing to the reader

that, although if the Word was changed in being incarnated, it yet

remained the word, John 1:14; 8:23; 1 John 1:2; Rev. 19:13.

In the fifth place he writes, " The Lord Christ was a Spirit from the

beginning, unchangeable, holy and eternal. If he, then, was spirit and

unchangeable, how, then, has he changed his substance or his being, and

become flesh."

Answer. If I understand him aright, in Letter E, page five, he says,

That he has not yet rightly comprehended my meaning of the phrase

"factum est," f. e. become. If, now, he has not rightly comprehended

me, then I cannot see why he should blame me of such doctrine, unless

he cannot understand the testimony of John in any other way,

notwithstanding his flattery and corruption; as I have merely testified

to the same thing literally and unchanged.

Inasmuch as they verbally and in writing blame me of believing in such

change, from the testimony of John (although they never heard such

doctrine from my lips, nor read it in my writings), therefore I would

pray the reader, for Christ's sake, not to blame me of any thing in

regard to the change of the eternal Word than of what I hereby confess

and explain in plain words: I believe and confess that there is an

Almighty, eternal and incomprehensible God, Father, Word, and Holy

Ghost, who has lived in eternal glory and shall live so forever. And

that this same Almighty, eternal Father, before all creatures, yea,

from the beginning and from eternity, begets of himself this his

Almighty, eternal Word, in a divine and therefore incomprehensible

manner; and that this, his Almighty, eternal Spirit proceeds or flows

from him through the Word or Son; but I do not comprehend it.

I also believe and confess in the same manner, that this Almighty,

eternal Father, through his Almighty, eternal Word, which is the Son,

has, in the power of his Almighty, eternal Spirit, created heaven and

earth with their fullness, and that he, thereby, forever preserves and

maintains all things created therein and thereby, but I do not

comprehend it.

I further believe and confess that all human nature (at the sound of

the last trump), through the power of the Almighty and everlasting God,

shall again arise from the earth with a glorified body; and that the

children of God, who, here on earth, have walked before him in a firm

faith and in meekness, shall receive the glorious, promised kingdom of

honor, at the hands of the Lord?that, on the other hand, those who have

rejected the Lord and his word shall be eternally tormented with

unquenchable, everlasting fire, with the devil and his angels, under

the fearful, unbearable judgment of the Almighty and great God; but I

do not comprehend it.

Faithful reader, observe, that although I do not comprehend the

Almighty, only and eternal God in his eternal, divine being, in the

dominion of his glory, in the creation and preservation of his

creatures, in the reward of both the good and the evil, and in many of

his works, yet I do truly believe it, and for this reason: Because the

Scripture teaches so; in like manner I can not comprehend how, or in

what manner the incomprehensible, eternal Word became flesh or man in

Mary; nevertheless I do truly believe that he became man, because the

Scripture teaches so. I know that it is a work that was done by the

Lord, and is a miracle before our eyes. Nap, it is such a work that

intellect cannot fathom, nor accuteness comprehend. Truly it is said,

Who shall tell of his birth I

Inasmuch as I clearly find that it is an exalted and incomprehensible

miracle of the Almighty and great God which the Almighty, eternal

Father, through the omnipotence of the power of the Holy Ghost, has

wrought in Mary; and inasmuch as I know how very perilous and

solicitous it is for one to search into the incomprehensible profundity

and divine mystery with one's foolish earthly understanding; and to

garble the plain testimonies of the Holy Ghost, by deceitfulness and

human smartness Therefore it is that I dare not believe, nor teach more

nor less of the holy incarnation than the holy prophets of the Lord,

Christ Jesus, and also John, Peter and Paul, teach me on every hand in

the Scriptures, with such incontrovertibly clear testimonies; all of

which are surer and wiser witnesses to me than all the learned who have

been, are, or shall ever be on earth; although, I repeat it, I cannot

comprehend the ineffable mystery, with my dull, earthly understanding.

Sirach says, Inquire not into the things which you cannot bear; and

that which is too great or too exalted for you do not search.

Again, as to the saying of Malachi, "For I am the Lord, I change not,"

Mal. 3:6, and to the question of John A' Lasco, "If He is eternal how

could He die?"

Answer. Malachi does, not here speak of God's substance or being, but

of his intention, counsel, resolution and will. From which I confess

that God's intention, counsel, will, purpose, promise and love are

eternal and unchangeable and must come to pass as he will and has

resolved upon in his wisdom.

Inasmuch as it is manifest that the Almighty, eternal and unchangeable

Father rules, and does all things according to his eternal,

unchangeable intention, counsel, will and purpose, and as he had,

through his eternal, unchangeable love, provided his eternal holy Word,

or Son, that he, according to his firm and unchangeable intention,

should become the Paschal lamb, as Peter says, Therefore this must

happen that the Word, in due time, became flesh, although we cannot

comprehend it; for it was the gracious intention, counsel, resolution,

providence and will of his Almighty and everlasting Word which will

forever stand firm, and which, according to the prophetic word, can

never be changed, as has been heard.

Behold, honorable reader, this is my reply to the three questions: If

he is a Spirit how could he become flesh? Is he God, how could he

change I and if he is Eternal how could he die? as I, before my God,

believe and confess. I trust, by the grace of God, to remain firmly

therein unto death.

I have not counseled with nature and my intellect in this respect, but

with the word of the Lord, which is the true light to my feet, which

shows me in plain words that the conqueror, the promised seed of woman

from the loins of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah and of David, born

according to the flesh, who is the Blessing, Messiah, Christ, King and

Savior of all the world, is not of unclean, sinful flesh, but of the

pure seed of his heavenly Father; the word of God conceived of the Holy

Ghost, in the virgin Mary, and in her became flesh, as John says.

Christ himself also says that he is from above, that he is the bread

from heaven, and that he went forth from the Father, John 16. And Paul

says that he is the Lord of heaven; descended from above; that he is

the Alpha and Omega; our Immanuel, 1 Cor. 16; Eph. 4:10; Rev. 1:8; Isa.

7:14. And, besides, as I plainly see that our opponents dare not

advance these and such plain Scriptures, but garble them by their

intellect with many exceptions and flatterings; therefore I repeat it,

that I turn away from intellect and nature, bind my faith and

conscience to the word of the Lord, and truly and firmly believe and

trust, that this great miracle of God was thus produced in Mary;

although I cannot comprehend it.

Behold, kind reader, whosoever testifies or writes any thing else of

me, in regard to the change of the eternal Word, but that which I

hereby confess, is a liar and does not testify to the truth. The

testimony to which I 'refer is firm and binding:. "The word is become

flesh." But how far it was changed he knows who in his eternal love has

so arranged it for the salvation and everlasting deliverance of us all,

through his Omnipotence. Praise be to God forever, Amen.

Here I will perhaps be asked, if then, the Father is not of divine

nature 8 and whence has Christ derived his humanity? To this I answer:

From whence came the abundance of water which flowed from the hard

rock? The rock was no water nor watery substance. Was it not produced

by the omnipotence of God, to whom nothing is impossible, above all

human understanding and comprehension

Again, how did a virgin conceive otherwise than through the power of

God, and the operation of the Holy Spirit, above the comprehension of

all philosophers I Nay, above the comprehension of Mary herself, for

she said, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man $ and the angel

answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and

the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that

holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

He does not say, that holy thing which shall come from thy flesh and

blood, as say our opponents.

If they should further say, that if the Word became flesh, and did not

take unto itself our flesh, then it did not remain God's Word; as when

Lot's wife became a pillar of salt, she did no longer remain man or

woman; and when the water became wine it did no longer remain water. I

would reply: The Scripture says that Lot's wife became a pillar of

salt, and that the water became wine. This the Scripture says, and

therefore it is also true. But the Scripture says not that Lot's

housewife took unto herself a pillar of salt, and that water took unto

itself wine. In the same manner the Scriptures also testify that the

Word became flesh; but does not testify, that the Word took unto

himself our flesh.

I would further say, that if some Scriptures could be produced to prove

that "becoming" is taking unto one's self; or that two persons and sons

of different natures and minds can be one person and son; or that there

was a true Son from the beginning who had not both father and mother;

or that a son can be his father's son, who is not of the father's seed,

then we might ponder upon their foundation a little further. But since

they never produce such Scriptures, neither are they able to produce

them; and since the Scriptures testify that Jesus Christ is the Son of

God, therefore the testimony of John remains firm and immutable: "The

Word is become flesh," however much philosophers may dispute this.

Lastly I would say, That if the Word did not become flesh, but only

took unto himself a man of Mary's flesh, as our opponents assert, and

if the same was used as an instrument to suffer for us, then it is

manifest that Jesus Christ, a Son of his Father in truth (as John calls

him), did not come in the flesh (corporatus as Castalion says), for

were he to suffer himself, and not another in his stead, then he must

come in the flesh, otherwise he could not have suffered. This is too

clear to be contradicted. All those who deny this, are deceivers and

anti?christs, 2 John 1:7.

He further writes, "If he is holy why was he condemned for the sake of

sin in the judgment of the Father?" At another place he also writes:

"Christ partook of no other flesh than that which was subject to sin

and death, that he might be tempted."

Answer. If we are to understand his words as they read, then Christ,

together with his holy flesh was subject to sin and death; this is

incontrovertible. For he says, If he is holy why was he then condemned

for sin under the judgment of the Father. Just as if he, was unholy,

and guilty of death under the judgment, and deserving of the wrath and

punishment of God. But this must be so too if we are to assert that the

flesh of Christ was of Mary's flesh. Therefore it is manifest from his

words that the sin by which he was tempted dwelt in his flesh; and that

thus he did not die, out of grace for us, but as one guilty, for

himself. For the wages of sin is death.

O, dear Lord, If the poor Menno was to speak of the Son of God thus

blasphemously, and were to include him in sin, O, what an unpleasant,

bitter song would be sung about him! But whatever the learned dream and

philosophize, must be accepted as right and good.

This, then, is my short reply to his words ,just cited, namely: Isaiah

and Peter testify of him that he did not know sin, and that guile was

not found in his mouth. Yea, dear reader, he was holy before his

incarnation, holy in his incarnation, and will remain holy forever. For

it was needful, that we should have such a high priest, who is holy,

innocent and spotless, and who became higher than the heavens; for if

he were not innnocent and holy, he could not have requited for our sins

and guilt, but must have suffered for his own imperfections and guilt.

But now the Scriptures testify that he was braised for our iniquities

and was stricken for our transgression, Is. 63: G, 8.

In the sixth place he writes and says, "The comparison of the words of

Paul, The form of pod and the form of a servant, teaches us that by

which (plod is known to be God, and nothing else, than the immeasurable

power and the brightness of his light and glory to which none can

aspire; that we must also understand it as that by which a servant is

known to be a servant, and that it is nothing else but our human flesh,

and that through the disobedience of our first parents it was forfeited

under the servitude of sin; nevertheless he writes that .we must so

understand it that he took upon himself our flesh, but not the

servitude .thereof," Hac ille.

Answer. Here I will leave the reader to choose whether to explain this

form of a servant as having reference to a servile form, or, as John

A'Lasco thinks, to a sinful form. If it has reference to a servile, and

not to a sinful form, then it does not support the assertion that the

Word has taken unto himself our flesh. But if it is explained, as John

A'Lasco explains it, as having reference to a sinful, and not to a

servile condition, then it must necessarily follow that that is also in

Christ, on account of which we are called servants, namely, on account

of sin, or else the adduced antithetical form is not in place and can

not stand, as you will hereafter, by the grace of God, clearly hear and

see.

I deny that I misinterpreted the Latin phrase Bxinanivit semetipsum, as

John A'Lasco accuses me of doing; although at one place 1 ?wrote, ,He

has humbled himself, I trust I have not written it wrongly. At another

place I wrote, The Son, the Word, was humbled, went beneath himself;

was made lower than the angels. But nowhere have I written that he went

out from himself, as John A'Lasco wrongfully accuses me. I will leave

it to the judgment of all grammarians whether or not I have written

correctly.

I think Christ has greatly humbled himself, since he is the Almighty,

eternal Word, Wisdom and Power of God, and became such a poor, weak,

despised man. He also went much beneath himself, since he was in divine

form and became such a despised servant. Yea, reader, that Paul here

speaks (Phil. 2:7, 8), of the servile and not of the sinful condition,

we may well deduce from the following Scriptures. "Behold," says

Isaiah, "my servant, whom I uphold; mine Elect, in whom my soul

delighteth," Is. 42:1. Matthew is my witness that the prophet speaks

this of Christ; and therefore is he called the servant of his Father,

because he has performed the work and service of his Father here on

earth, for us poor sinners, as he says, "Even as the Son of man came

not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a

ransom for many," Matt. 20:28.

Therefore, I repeat it. Paul here speaks of the servile and not of the

sinful condition which Christ took upon himself for our salvation. For

if he here spoke of the sinful and not of the servile condition, then

Christ must also have assumed the form of a servant, that is sin; else

the phrase The form of a servant, and The form of God could not exist

together. For as the phrase form of God testifies to his true divinity,

so also, the form of a servant must testify to his true servile form;

or it must follow from the argument of John A'Lasco, that, although

Christ wag in divine form, yet he lacked the divinity, the same as he

had the form of a servant but the servility, i. e. sin he had not.

O, no, it is not so. He was in God?form, and was therein truly God;

thus he also took upon himself the form of a true servant, and was

therein a true servant; as may be deduced from Isaiah, Matthew and the

words of Christ. And in this sense the antithesis, the form of Clod and

the form of a servant, exists, and does not require the exception which

John A'Lasco here made. And this is the proper cause and reason why

Paul wrote to the Philippians about this, that they should not be

contentious one with another, nor seek their own vain, carnal honor, or

any thing selfish, but that they should, after the example of Christ,

humble themselves one towards another, and walk in love; for although

Christ was in the form of God, yea "equal with God, but made himself of

no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant," and not the

exalted form of a mighty emperor or king. He came to minister unto us

and not to be ministered unto, Matt. 20:28. Yea, " He was in all points

tempted like as we are yet without sin," Heb. 4:15. He sought not his

own but that which was ours; and for our sakes "became obedient unto

death, even the death of the cross," Phil. 2:8. Thus the assertion of

John A'Lasco, that the Word took unto himself our flesh or a man of our

flesh, remains unproven.

But his point that while Christ was here upon earth he still was also

in heaven, that his face shone as the sun, that his raiment was white

as the light, that he healed the sick, raised the dead, and by his word

remitted sin, which power alone belongs to God, does not prove that he

received his holy flesh from our sinful flesh; but it rather proves

that he still remained God and his word, notwithstanding he, for a

time, so humbled himself and went beneath his divine splendor,

attributes, right and glory, for our sakes. Whosoever sincerely fears

God, let him consider and judge, Matt. 17:2; Luke 7:21.

In the seventh place he asserts it as his foundation that the Word did

not become flesh, but that he took unto himself our flesh of Mary, and

confirms this with the Scripture Reb. 2:14; which reads thus,

"Forasmuch then as the children 'are partakers of flesh and blood, he

also himself likewise took part of the same," and says, "� The word was

made flesh;" not that he has in any manner changed his first estate, or

form, but he has taken unto himself our flesh and has therewith covered

his divinity while here upon earth.

Answer. All those who desire a scriptural and correct understanding of

the Scriptures quoted, and also of Christ, the Son of God, should well

observe that God, the Almighty, eternal Father, the true Creator, who

wills and works, is the only source of all good; and that he ineffably

before all creatures, begat of himself his Almighty, eternal and

ineffable Word, and has, through the same created all things, . and

thereby governs, maintains and preserves them; and that he in his

eternal justice, love, and in all his attributes, together with his

ineffable Word and Holy Spirit, is an eternal and perfect God, and

beside him there is none other; and that he is eternal and unchangeable

in his counsel, purpose, will and conclusion, as was said before, Mal.

3:6

And, that this Almighty, eternal Father, through his Almighty, eternal

Word, in the power of his Almighty, eternal Spirit, has, according to

his divine purpose, counsel, will and conclusion, created Adam and Eve,

the parents of us all, as righteous, good and pure creatures, unto

eternal life, nay, after his own image and likeness, as the Scriptures

testify; that he gave unto them the command of life and death, that

they might fear, love, praise, thank and serve him, and live according

to his will, Gen. 1.

Behold, this is the Creator that created Adam and Eve; it also shows

through what he created them, how and for what purpose he created them;

what he permitted and what he forbid them to do; what he promised them

if they obeyed him, and what he threatened if they should disobey him;

and thus the glory of God began to shine, Ps. 33:5; John 1:10.

In this piety, holiness and righteousness, Adam and Eve remained so

long as they did not deviate from the counsel, word, will and command

of God, in which all things have, and must have their being. But man

was left in the hands of his counsel, Sirach 15:14. But through the old

serpent, the cunning reptile and envier of the honor of God, and all

good, caused the glorious, noble creature of life to be led from the

favor and grace of his Creator into condemnation and death, and

obscured the glory of God. He began with Eve, the weaker vessel, to

tempt her with the desires of her appetite; for the woman saw, says

Moses, that the tree was good for food and pleasant to the eyes. He

falsified the word of the Lord, and said, " Ye shall not surely die,"

and made glorious promises, saying, "In the day ye eat thereof then

your eyes shall be opened; and ye shall be as Gods, knowing good and

evil."

Adam and Eve disobeyed the command of their God and Creator, by which

alone they must live; believed the promise of the serpent; ate, and

through the justice of God, fell into the threatened curse,

condemnation end death, and thus the deceiving serpent established the

kingdom of hell and of death. There, now lay the miserable, accursed

Adam and his wife, Eve, in the power of the devil, poisoned "from the

sole of the foot even unto the head," both within and without, with his

impure, deadly venom, and became subject unto sin and death. According

to the justice of God, there was now no way of escape, for Adam and all

his descendants; for the word of life was rejected; the holy command of

God was transgressed, the venom of the serpent was taken. Alas, all was

lost to them I Their eyes were opened, the shame was acknowledged, the

gnawing worm was in the disobedient, self?accusing ?conscience; there

was nothing but shaking and trembling, sighing and remorse. They fled

before the face of the Lord and knew not where to hide from his wrath;

for the justice of God pointed to the word, " For in the day that thou

eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

Here the counsel, purpose, will and conclusion of the Almighty, eternal

God were unchanged. He would make manifest his glory and have a man

after his own image and likeness.

Inasmuch as this was resolved upon and provided for with God, as has

been said; and as with poor Adam, all was lost, as also with all his

descendants, for at heart he was full of venom and abashed before his .

God, therefore should the unchangeable, will, counsel and resolution of

the unchangeable God be executed, there must be another who was like

the corrupted Adam before his fall; for upon such a man, God's will had

resolved; and with Adam all was lost.

Therefore the ineffable, eternal Word, by which Adam and Eve were

created, by which all things are and must forever remain; the Almighty

power and wisdom of God, must become man, that he might bruise the head

of the deceiving serpent, for the salvation of the condemned Adam and

all his descendants; that temptation might be overcome; that the holy

and unchangeable will of the Father might be fulfilled; that the

dominion and power of the devil might be destroyed; and that he might,

by his willing obedience and spotless offering, discharge and put away

the guilt and deserved death of Adam, by his innocent death.

Behold, this joyous gospel, and these glad tidings of the divine grace,

which God declared to the poor, afflicted and fugitive, Adam. He

accepted them through faith; consoled himself therewith, and sincerely

rejoiced in his grace, Gen. 3:15; 22:18; Jer. 23:6; Luke 1:28.

And this is the Messiah who, I say, was promised Adam, of a woman, the

salvation of all the world; promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; the

glorious Branch, Rod, Plant and Fruit of David, symbolized in Solomon,

the natural fruit of his loins; who shall sit on his throne and reign

in Israel forever. All who believe on him shall receive the mercy,

grace and peace of God; but whosoever does not believe on him, on him

remaineth the wrath of God, John 3:36.

From all this it follows that as Adam was created, in the beginning and

we in him, through the Word, he and also we are again quickened of God

through this same Word, and accepted in grace. John says, "In the

beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God; and the Word was

God; the same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by

him, and without him was not any thing made that was made," &c. "And

the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory,

the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and

truth." Behold, in such plain words testifies the Spirit of God, that

both the creation and the restoration of Adam and his seed, was brought

about by no other means than through the Word, as has been heard, Matt.

3:11; John 1; Col. 1:10.

And to the? better explanation of this, and also to learn to understand

rightly how entirely sinful, impure, poisoned, powerless, and as

nothing we all have become in Adam, I would point you, with Paul, to

the law and the Scriptures; ?they will depict to you the impure,

powerless nature and sinfulness of our flesh so plainly, that you are

forced to acknowledge that the holy, glorious and spotless Messiah,

through whom we all are pacified and reconciled with God, could not be

of such impure, sinful and accursed seed and flesh as the learned teach

us, and pretend with their philosophic reasoning, without the

Scriptures.

Thus speaks Moses, Thou shalt not covet, or thou shalt not desire.

Reader, observe: In these few words is properly represented the first

righteousness in which Adam was created in the beginning; and which is

yet claimed of God according to his righteousness, by his descendants.

Ponder diligently on these words of Moses and examine yourself closely,

before your God, who tries the hearts and reins, whether or not you

sometimes do not, against the law, find such forbidden lusts in your

flesh.

If you imagine yourself free from these, you convert God into a liar, 1

John 1:10; and thereby you also shame all the Hghteous of God, who were

from the beginning; for they have all unanimously complained of their

evil?disposed, wicked flesh, and have, alas, too unanimously shown it

in their fruits. The Scriptures testify that I speak the truth,

Yea, reader, if any man, born of the sinful flesh of Adam, had

completely fulfilled the law, then for such the commanded yearly

sin?offering, which was offered by the high priest in the Holy of

Holies, was useless and fruitless. Neither would it have been necessary

for the Son of the Most high, the eternal word of God to become man;

for such 'a person could have done all this and fulfilled the required

righteousness. But as it was, there was neither prophet nor any man of

God, born of Adam, so holy, or so pious, but who had to console himself

with the promise of God in regard to Christ, also symbolized in the

offering, and with the divine grace, through faith.

But if you find that you do not as the law requires, but that you. are

not alone ever fought by the lusts which dwelt in your flesh, but that

you are also often involuntarily conquered thereby, then you must

acknowledge that you are already condemned to death by the law of

righteousness. For the law says, "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all

the words of this law to do them; and all the people shall say, Amen,"

Dent. 27:26.

Behold, kind reader, if you would rightly know and acknowledge how

miserable, naked, powerless, impotent, unclean, sinful and poisoned all

of Adam's seed is become in him, through his transgression, and how his

seed is fallen, through the just righteousness of God, into his wrath,

judgment, curse, condemnation and death, then, I say, search the law

diligently; for it points out to you, First, the obedience to God and

righteousness required of you; and also the weakness of your sinful

flesh, your impure and evil disposed nature; and that you are already

condemned to death, according to the rigor of the above mentioned

righteousness, since you, through your inherent, weak nature and evil

disposed flesh, do not walk in the required righteousness as God has

commanded and required of you in his law, as you will clearly notice by

your own unction if you but rightly observe.

Inasmuch as Adam and his seed are se entirely corrupted; as by nature

he was created pure and clean, and became wholly impure and evil

disposed, and thus fell in the righteous judgment of God; and since

every thing is involved in sin; therefore, if this venom was to be

weakened in its power: if the corrupted nature of Adam was to be

delivered from the curse and judgment o1 sin; if the righteousness of

God was to be appeased; if the power of the devil was to be disturbed;

if curse, wrath, condemnation and death were to be taken away; if the

hand writing of the law, which required such righteousness of Adam's

children, was to be broken to pieces; if the eternal providence,

counsel, will and determination of God were to be fulfilled; if his

kingdom and glory were to be acknowledged; and if there was to be such

a man as the counsel, will, and determination of God required, as has

been heard; then the everlasting love of God would require that there

should be another man, who, conquering the devil, should disturb his

power, fulfill the righteousness of God, promulgate his glory, make a

clean sacrifice, and who should thus, out of love and compassion, be

innocently accursed and condemned to death; not of Adam, but for the

everlasting salvation of Adam and his seed; that thus the corrupted and

condemned Adam, together with his corrupt and condemned seed, should be

again accepted in grace, through his name, and be again delivered from

their great fall, Gal. 3; Gen. 3:17; Luke 11:21; John 14:30; Col. 1:14.

It could not, I repeat it, be a man of Adam's flesh; for the corrupted

flesh of Adam could not beget fruit which could fulfill this, while it

was so thoroughly corrupted and condemned before God; but it must be a

man who was free from the deserved curse, condemnation and death of

Adam, and also from all his venom, sin and unrighteousness, as has been

sufficiently heard.

Observe, my faithful reader, and here learn to know your God in his

grace and love. For although the whole Scriptures conclude Adam and

Eve, together with all their descendants, entirely under the sin,

curse, condemnation and death, according to justice, yet it does not

leave in hell the solicitous, afflicted conscience, which has been so

far taught and directed by the law, that it feels its wounds and

stripes, and acknowledges that it is deserving of eternal death and

condemnation; but the Scriptures show in consoling words and symbols,

where and of whom to get the healing medicine, namely: of Christ Jesus.

For it is he, who with all his righteousness, merit, cross, blood and

death, was graciously given of God our heavenly Father to the fallen

and condemned Adam and his posterity, for their eternal salvation and

reconciliation.

I think this may well be called a joyous gospel, and glad tidings to

all afflicted and lamenting souls, who having become subject to sin and

death under the law, so fearfully tremble at the righteous judgment and

wrath of God, that the Almighty, eternal God and Father has so loved us

miserable, trifling and condemned sinners who are so far estranged from

him and,, according to his righteous judgment, are deserving of eternal

death, that he sent into this miserable world, his Almighty, eternal

and ineffable Word, his only, eternal and beloved Son, the brightness

of his glory; and who was like unto Adam before the fall, as a proof

and means of his divine grace; and that this One has, through his

perfect righteousness, willing obedience and innocent death, led us

from the kingdom and dominion of the devil into the kingdom of his

divine grace and eternal peace.

Inasmuch as the 'Scriptures pronounce the first Adam and all his seed

to be such an impure, sinful, accursed and condemned Adam, and

pronounce Christ, the second Adam, free from all impurity, sin, curse

and condemnation, therefore the impartial reader may well deduce

therefrom that such a precious, glorious fruit could not be plucked

from an elder or thorn bush; but should be begotten from some other

source, namely: from him who is the only cause and eternal source of

all good things, as has been said.

That the holy and saving flesh of Christ was not of the sinful and

condemned flesh of Adam may be plainly observed from the following

passages and figures of the Holy Scripture.

Isaiah says, "All we like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every

one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us

all." " He hath done violence to no one; neither was any deceit in his

mouth. , Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him," Isa. 53:6, 9, 10.

I must pay, says the Psalmist, in the person of Christ that which I had

not taken. He "bare our sins in his own body on the tree," and by his

stripes we were healed, 1 Pet. 2:24.

" For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might

be made the righteousness of God in him," 2 Cor. 5:21. Again, we are

all sinners and come short of the glory of God; but are made righteous,

without merit, by his grace, through the deliverance which is in

Christ.

Again, " The Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise

by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe," Gal.

3:22.

Ye know, says John, that the Son of God "was manifested to take away

our sins;" and in him is no sin, 1 John 3: S. Read also all these

Scriptures, Isa. 7:9 and 40; Jer:23; Mica 5; John 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10,

11, 14, 16, 17; 1 Cor. 15; Acts, 20; Eph. 4; 1 Tim. 3; 1 John 1, 2, 3,

4, G; Heb. 1, 2, 3, "l; Rev. 1:19.

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SCRIPTURAL REFERENCES UPON THE FOREGOING SUBJECT.

He is the spiritual tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God,

which is not planted by the hands of man, but of God himself Rev. 2:7;

all those that shall eat the fruits of this tree, with pure hearts,

shall live for ever; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of

the nations, Rev. 22:3.

He is the spiritual, brazen serpent, sym bolized in the Mosaic serpent,

Num. 21:9; which was erected for us miserable sinners, by the Father,

in the wilderness of this world, as a healing sign, which had the

venomous form of the venomous serpent, yet had not its venomous nature.

All those who believe on him are delivered from the curse, condemnation

and death caused by the serpent; but whosoever does not believe on him,

on him the wrath of God remains, and he must eternally bear and suffer,

according to God's eternal justice, the threatened curse, death and

condemnation, John 3:38.

He is the spiritual mercy seat, which is not, like the ark made of

Shittim wood, but of fine, pure gold, from which God graciously hears

us and speaks unto us through his Spirit and word, Ex. 25:10; Rom.

3:24; Heb. 4:13. He is the spiritual Paschal Lamb, which is without

spot, and in the sprinkling and sanctification of whose blood the

chosen Israel of God was ever graciously saved from the destroying

angel, and from the .wrath of God, in the midst of the cruel, dark

Egypt of this world, Ex. 12:23; Num. 9:16.

He is the true bread from heaven, which is not made of natural corn or

wheat, I mean, of our sinful flesh, but is begotten of the dew of the

eternal Word, which is the only and true food for our souls, by which

we shall live forever, if we only eat of him through true faith, Ex.

16:5; Num. 11:18.

He is the Rock which was torn from the mountain, without hands, that

is, without human, assistance, which Nebuchadnezzar saw in a dream; and

to which Daniel was referred as being the one who should waste and

destroy the iron, clay, silver and gold; yea, all the kingdoms of this

world; for he has all power in heaven and upon earth; he is a powerful

King over all; and to his kingdom there shall be no end, nor pass to

other people, Dan. 2:44.

Behold, kind reader, judge from the above mentioned Scriptures and

figures, if you fear God, if such doctrine is based upon the

Scriptures, which claims that this righteous, holy, spotless, obedient

and saving Messiah was born of the unrighteous, sinful, impure,

disobedient and accursed flesh or seed of Adam, and that it took its

humanity therefrom. O, no. This pure, clear water, with which all our

blemishes were to be washed away, could never be drawn from such an

impure, stagnated pool. Let every body reflect what the word of the

Lord teaches him.

Now we will, by the grace of the Lord, enlarge upon the Scriptures of

Heb. 2, that we may rightly comprehend the foundation and truth

thereof; and that, too, that our opponents may not boast that we do not

satisfy them; I would first refer you to the first chapter of Hebrews,

and have you observe what is said there of Christ.

In the first place it reads, that "God hath in these last days spoken

unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom

also he made the worlds."

In the second place it reads, that this same Son is "the brightness of

his glory, and the express image of his person."

Thirdly, that he has purged our sins by himself.

Fourthly, that he is the first begotten Son of God, and that all the

angels shall worship him.

Fifthly, that he is God, and that his kingdom and throne shall endure

forever.

Sixthly, that he laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are

the work of his hands.

I think that if you earnestly ponder on these Scriptures and rightly

observe them, you will soon perceive from whence Christ came, who and

what he is. For these plain evidences clearly teach that the world was

made by him; that he is the brightness of the glory of God; that he

hath purged our sins by himself; that he is the first begotten Son of

God, that he is God, and that he has laid the foundations of the earth.

This could not be of Mary's flesh, Gen. 1:1; Ps. 33:6; Eph. 3:9; 1:9;

Col. 1:1.6; Heb.1:2; Ps. 102:26; 1 John 1:7; Col. 1:15.

If they should say that these Scriptures are not spoken in regard to

the Son of Mary, but in regard to the Son of God, then they confess

thereby a divided Son, two persons, two sons; besides, we are convinced

by these very Scriptures that they are spoken of the whole Christ; for

he has spoken with us as a man, and we are also cleansed of our sins

through his human suffering and death, as the Scripture teaches, 1 John

1:7; 1 Pet. 1:19.

But if they should call to their support the sinecdoche, or commonness

of the names, then I would answer in brief, plain, words, that the

plain, faithful souls, Peter and John the fishermen, Martha the

servant, and the plain Nathaniel, knew nothing at all of such satanic

testimony and human cunning; but they have given praise to the visible

and tangible Christ, and confessed that he was the Son of God, Matt.

16:15; Jn. 6:69; 11:27.

This is still further declared in the second chapter in these words:

"What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that

thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou

crownedst him with glory and honor," Heb. 2:6, 7.

Here I would faithfully admonish the faithful reader, to observe that

both Erasmus and Hieronymus, in their Latin translations, have

translated this thus: " Thou madest him a little lower than the

angels;" and the Hebrew Psalm also has it: " Thou madest him inferior

to God; with praise and honor thou crownedst him," Heb. 2:7; Ps. 8:5.

This agrees with the word of Paul, where he says, "Who being in the

form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made

himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant;"

Phil. 2:7. At another place he says, "Though he was rich, yet for your

sakes he became poor," 2 Cor. 8:9. This also agrees with the words of

Christ, "Now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the

glory which I had with thee, before the world was," Jn. 17:6. I think

these plain Scriptures and clear testimonies prove fully that the

teachings of our opponents are unscriptural and erroneous, when they

say that the Son of God remained in his first form and estate, and was

not bruised for our iniquities.

This same man, who, for our sake, was thus humbled and made less than

God and the angels, we see is Christ, who for suffering death was

crowned with praise and honor; for as he, for the purpose of obedience,

humbled himself to the lowest, for our service, therefore he was again

exalted to the highest, by the Father. And thus he was innocently put

to death for the sake of Adam and all his posterity, by the grace of

God; for Adam and his posterity could not be otherwise delivered from

the power of death. For it became him, for whom and by whom are all

things, who has brought many children unto glory, to make the Prince

and Captain of their salvation perfect through suffering, as both the

Sanctifier, Christ, and those who are sanctified through him, the

regenerated, are all of one, that is, of God, Phil. 2:9; Heb. 2:10.

Thus the sanctified together have one Father with their Sanctifier, as

John says, "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become

the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born

not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but

of God;" and therefore our Savior "is not ashamed to call them (the

sanctified), brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my

brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee,"

John 1:12; Heb. 2:11, 12. Yea, dear reader, if the flesh of Christ was

of Adam's flesh, and if we were called his brethren on that account, as

is the doctrine of the learned, then one brother must beget the other,

besides, then all the ungodly, yea, whores and knaves, must also be

Christ's brethren and sisters. This is too plain to be controverted.

O, no. Who his brethren are, he has himself plainly declared, Matt.

12:59; Mark 3:35; Luke 8:21. And he not only calls them his brethren,

but also, his children, and says, "Behold, I and the children which God

hath given me." They are called his children for the reason that he has

begotten them unto God his Father, by the word of his grace, through

the power of his Holy Spirit, in the besprinkling of his precious

blood. At another place he also calls them his mother, bride, flesh and

bones; which, according to the flesh, they could not be.

Yea, dear reader, if he had received his flesh from the flesh of his

children, as John A'Lasco and his followers claim that he has, then the

children must have begotten the father. Christ, the new Adam, would say

to his new Eve: I am flesh of thy flesh?and not: "Thou art flesh of my

flesh." If you fear God, then reflect and judge, Heb.2:13; Gen. 2: 23.

As the children partake of flesh and blood, so he, in the same manner

partook of the same, that he might, through death, take the power from

him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver those

who, of necessity, were in servitude all their lives; for he does not

accept the seed of angels, but of Abraham; therefore he must become

like unto his brethren in all things.

Behold, this is the strongest and most important saying wherewith John

A'Lasco (in regard to this subject), disputes the whole Scriptures,

divides Christ and makes him into two persons and sons, and, as he

thinks, joins together his whole work, arguments, sayings and

flatterings. And this is his proper foundation and meaning: "As the

children are partakers of flesh and blood, so, also, has the Word, or

Son of God received or partaken of this flesh and blood from the flesh

and blood of the children; and has thus vanquished hell, sin, death and

devil in our flesh, Heb. 2; Phil. 2: 7; Hosea 13: 14; 1 Cor.16: 54;

Col. 2:15; 2 Tim. 1: 10.

Inasmuch as he so strenuously insists on the above,; saying, therefore

have I by adducing so many Scriptures, so enlarged upon the inherent,

unclean, sinful flesh and nature of the children, and their deserved

death and condemnation on the one hand, i and the pure, holy flesh and

nature of Christ, his undeserved death and judgment

on the other, that the reader might thereby rightly understand and

comprehend that the Lord Jesus Christ could not be of such unclean

flesh and seed of the children, nor partake of such a man; for the

flesh of the children is unclean and sinful, but the flesh of Christ is

pure and holy.

Since his pure flesh could not be of the unclean flesh of the children,

as has been said, and since our opponents so strenuously insist upon

it, on account of this Scripture, therefore I will diligently examine

it word for word, and, by the grace of God, I will attach to each word

its wholesome and right meaning.

First, observe that the word children has reference to none other than

those who, above, are called Christ's brethren, namely, those who

believe in him, and who are born of God by the living power of his

Spirit and word, as said.

Secondly, observe what the Scriptural meaning of leaving communion with

,flesh and blood is; that it is not simply having flesh and blood, as

some have interpreted it; but that it also means, to intermix with

flesh and blood, and to do the things which are forbidden of God,

through the lusts of our flesh, Rom. 7: 7; 3: 20.

Thirdly, observe that since the children of God are partakers of sinful

flesh and blood and are subject to such human weakness by which they

involuntarily ever struggle and fail?therefore they must have such a

High Priest who could have compassion with their human failures; as he

was tempted in the same manner, although without sin, as said.

Fourthly, observe that the adverb simiZiter (that is, in the same

manner), here expresses a true human nature in Christ, it is true, but

not a natural conception as John A'Lasco claims and argues; for it is

manifest all through the Scriptures that the conception of Mary was

supernatural; that it was brought about by the Holy Ghost, through

faith, as has been shown above.

Fifthly, observe that the expression "partaking of flesh and blood"

means nothing else than having flesh and blood; since his children and

brethren, also have flesh and blood, as Sebastian Castalion, also, has

rendered it, but with such difference that his flesh was holy and knew

no sin, and therefore experienced no decay; but the flesh of his

brethren and children is sinful, and therefore also subject to decay, 1

Cor. 15:53; 5:4.

Sixthly, observe that Paul does not at all times use the words

partaking of flesh cured blood, in the same sense. In one place, 1 Cor.

9:12, he writes, "If others be partakers of this power over you," that

is, If others have this power over you; again," He that thresheth in

hope should be partaker of his hope," that is should receive that which

he hopes to get. Again in the 10th, 17th and 21st of the same epistle,

it is used for enjoying.

Inasmuch as the word partaking has not, every where in Scripture, one

meaning therefore, wherever it is found, it should not be explained

otherwise than according to the true nature and meaning of the

Scriptures, or else the whole Scriptures must be broken ?and garbled

for the sake of such a word.

Seventhly, observe that the word eorundem (that is, of the same), has

reference to the words flesh and blood, but not to the flesh and blood

of the children, for that is unclean, sinful, guilty and condemned; if

it had reference to the flesh and blood of the children, as John

A'Lasco and M. M. claim, and that the Son of God took unto himself a

perfect man, body and soul, of the flesh of the children, then it is

incontrovertible that all the following and indissoluble

inconsistencies must exist:

In the first place an impure, sinful, accursed, and death?guilty

Christ, as is the flesh of the children of whom he should have partaken

his flesh; for wherever the flesh of the children is, there, also, is

the sin and curse of the children; this cannot be controverted, or else

justice must have been changed and the curse taken away and ended by

our own flesh. To which M., in the first conversation I had with him,

thus replied: " Christ was pure and without sin, and that because Mary

did not conceive him of the seed of man." I answered: I must

understand, then, that sin is because of the mixture, which is the

ordinance of God, and not because of the transgression of Adam. He

answered: No, it was because of the justice of God that he became of a

corrupted nature. I asked, how? He answered: "Because God had said,

That in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." I then

replied: then God was the cause of the sin of Adam; and the threatened

death must not only be punishment of sin, but sin itself. I said,

Martin, do observe what reasoning you bring forward.

In the second place it follows that .there must be a divided Christ, of

whom one half must be of heaven and the other half of earth.

In the third place that there must be two persons in Christ; one divine

and one human. To which Martin in our second conversation, thus

replied: "There were not two persons in Christ, but one person; for,

although the word was one person from eternity, yet it was no person

which was conceived in Mary." He further said, "Although each human

being is one person, and although the man, Christ, was one man as any

other man, yet the man, Christ alone was no person." I am ashamed to

touch upon such inconsistent things. Paul justly said, abi disputator

seculi AKjus? "Where is the disputer of this world"

In the fourth place that there are two Sons in Christ?the Son of God

without mother, and he impassive; and the son of man without father,

and he passive; something which M. M., both in our first and also in

our second conversation, several times openly admitted before us all,

in plain language. O God, what strange things we hear!

In the fifth place, that not the first begotten and only Son of God,

but the fatherless Son of Mary, of the accursed, sinful flesh of Adam,

died for us?something which is directly contrary to Christ, John, Paul

and the whole Scriptures.

In the sixth place, that the eternal offering of reconciliation, once

offered for the sins of the whole world, was not the spotless Lamb, but

an unclean, blemished offering which was subject to sin and death, as

may also be unmistakably deduced from the writings of A'Lasco, John

3:16; Rom. 8:31.

In the seventh place, the angel Gabriel, Peter, and the Lord himself,

acknowledge that the man, Christ Jesus, is the Son of God. Thomas

acknowledges him as his Lord and God; besides the whole Scriptures

teach that he is our Advocate, Reconciler, Mediator, High Priest,

Deliverer and Messiah?and if he is yet to be of the unclean sinful

flesh and seed of Adam, then it is manifest that a created creature and

man of the sinful flesh of Adam, is our Messiah, Deliverer,

Reconciliator, Advocate, High Priest, Yea, Lord and God; something

which is not alone an abomination and idolatry, but also open blasphemy

against God.

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In the tenth place, if the eternal Word, by which every thing was

created, had partaken of such a, carnal son of the flesh of the

children, or of Mary, and had thus united himself into one person and

son, then the Creator and the creature, the Son of God without mother,

and the sun of Mary without father, must have become one, undivided

person and son. This is incontrovertible.

In the eleventh place, if the Word has partaken of such flesh as that

of Mary, and if it did not become man, then God is not the true Father

of Christ, Mary no true mother, and Christ no true son of both his

father and mother; besides, the whole Scriptures are denied which

testify that Christ is the Son of God.

I think that all these indissoluble inconsistencies, sufficiently show

you that John A'Lasco has not given the Scriptural meaning to the word

eorundem.

Eighthly, observe why Christ, the Prince of our salvation, became man,

namely, that he might destroy the prince of death, the devil, by his

innocent death, and that he might thus deliver and free his poor,

enslaved, timorous brethren and children from the accusing law, from

the judgment of sin and the terror of death.

Ninthly, observe that the passage, "He takes' not on him the nature of

angels, but he takes' on him the seed of Abraham," should not be

understood as having any reference to the taking on of human flesh, as

the learned explain it, but to the partaking of grace, by which we are

accepted; for he uses the word take in the present tense and angels in

the plural number, and says, "He takes not on him the nature of angels,

but he takes on him the seed of Abraham," the children of the promise,

'Rom. 9:8; the believers, Gal. 3:29; his i brethren and children. He

accepts them, in grace, to the praise of his Father, Rom. 15:7; prays

for their failings and weaknesses, Rom. 8:7; Heb. 5:10. For they can

never be freed from the inherent, impure, wicked nature of their

sinful?fiesh, in this life.

Tenthly, observe that a thing which is like unto another, is not

necessarily the same thing which it resembles; and, therefore it cannot

be maintained by this passage, "Wherefore in all things it behooved him

to be made like unto his brethren," that the holy, pure flesh of Christ

is of the unclean, sinful flesh of Adam.

Behold, dear reader, if you consider well the explanation of the

Scripture, ?Heb. 2, and weigh it in the balance of the Scriptures, you

will very plainly find that this is the meaning of the above mentioned

Scripture; that although Christ, the Prince of our salvation, has led

us to his glory, and has thus accepted us as brethren and children in

faith, yet we are, 'in our first Adamic birth, so poisoned by the

serpent, and so corrupted by nature, that we can nevermore become free

of our unclean sinful flesh, so long as we dwell in this tabernacle;

but oftentimes (although involuntarily) mix and soil ourselves

therewith; and become, therefore, convinced by the hand writing, that

we are guilty of death, according to the eternal justice, Rom. 7:7;

3:20; Col. 2:13.

Since we are ensnared by such wicked, sinful, disobedient and death

guilty flesh, as all the pious children of God have, from the

beginning, dolefully complained of, and could not be entirely freed

from the inserted sting of the serpent; therefore it is that our

Prince, Savior, Brother and Father, Christ, in his extremely great

love, has given himself according to the counsel, purpose, will and

determination of his everlasting Father, and in accordance partook of

flesh and blood; not of the flesh of the children, for they are sinful

and unclean, but as John says, "The Word was made flesh," John 1:14;

Dent. 32:15; Isa. 64:4; Job 15:14; Ps. 143:2; Gal. 2:17; 3:11; 1 John

1:3; Heb. 2:14; Phil. 2:7. Yea, a despised, afflicted, tempted and

mortal man; and is thus voluntarily come forward to battle for his

associates, sanctified brethren and children; has placed himself

heroically in their defense, and has abashed the tempter in his

temptation; vanquished him in his power; taken his stronghold; bruised

his head; fulfilled and blotted out the hand writing; blotted it out

with his precious blood; requited. our guilty and deserved death by his

innocent and unmerited death, to the fulfilling of the prophetic word,

" death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction!"

and he has thus delivered and freed his chosen, his saints, his

brethren and children from ?servitude and the penalty of the law; from

the judgment of sin, and from the fearful terrors of the threatened

death in such a manner that their human weaknesses and involuntary

mistakes, for his sake, will no more be counted against them as sin, if

they will but walk before him with penitent believing hearts, and will

steadily cling to his word with positive, assured consciences, Gen.

49:10; Isa. 2: G; Luke 11:21; Col.. 2:14; Hosea 13:14; Rom. 8:2, 3.

Behold, thus Christ, the Son of God, has accepted the seed of Abraham

and liberated it, to the praise of his Father; and .has therefore

appeared in person, and become, in all things, like unto his poor,

weak, afflicted brethren in all manner of poverty, misery, affliction,

need, fear of death and mortality; that he might thus be a

compassionate, merciful and faithful High Priest to reconcile the sins,

defects and errors of his saints before God his Father; for, as he has

walked with them in the same temptation, battle, misery, anxiety and

fear of death, therefore he can also come to the rescue of all those

who are tempted of the world, hell, sin, devil and death. This is my

reply to the construction which John A'Lasco and his class put upon the

Scripture, Heb. 2. If you fear God then read and judge.

In the eighth place he explains the testimony of John and says, "The

Word, the Son of God, commenced being of the seed of David, Rom. 1, of

the virgin Mary, Matt. 1, flesh, man, Christ, Immanuel," Sic. Again,

"The Word has accepted our flesh." Again, "The Word, which from the

beginning alone was God, is become (that is, it commenced being

together) flesh (that is, man), and has dwelt (that is, it has taken

its abode) in us (that is, in our flesh) through its participation," as

Paul says. These are his words in regard to the Scripture John 1.

O dear reader, what is so clear that it cannot be obscured by human

intellect, and what so straight that it can not be bent? If he does it

through a misconception he may yet be corrected; but if he does it for

other reasons, then it will not be well with his poor soul.

I am surprised that he dares publish such inconsistent explanations, in

print, when he well knows that there are to be found so many learned

theological men. O, dear Lord! How frightful it is to mix God's clear

wine, and the high testimony of the Holy Spirit with such impure water,

and thus to corrupt it by earthly wisdom. He has so treated with this

plain Scripture, that it would have removed all doubt and given me new

courage, if I had had any doubt of my faith and foundation, which,

thank God, I have none.

Inasmuch as he so fearfully belittles the wonderful, glorious work of

divine grace and love, which the Almighty, eternal Father has so

graciously shown us poor, miserable sinners, through his eternal Word

and Son; and as he would rather break the holy word and testimony of

the Lord, than doubt his own intelligence, therefore I pray every body,

for God's sake, not to think hard of me, that I, unlearned man, oppose

this and confute his unscriptural explanations with the clear, plain

Scriptures and reasoning, and thus lay the foundation of truth.

I trust that no reasonable and impartial person can, in any way, think

hard of me, for publicly replying to him, and defending the praise of

the Lord, since he has publicly written against me and fearfully

violated the word of God, as I understand it.

I would undoubtedly have excused him and not have mentioned his name,

if only he and his followers would leave the Scriptures unbroken, and

would not so indiscreetly war against the clear, pure truth, both

verbally and in writing. But my conscience and the word of God

constrain me to protect the praise of my Lord and my faith.

I say First, that he, by his explanation, has broken the testimony of

the Holy Ghost, and adulterated the Scriptures; for he writes, " The

Word, the Son of God has, of the seed of David, Rom. 1:3, of a woman,

Gal. 4:4, of the virgin Mary, commenced being flesh, man. In Rom. 1:3,

it reads, "Made of the seed of David according to the flesh;" Gal. 4,

born of a woman; and "That which is conceived in her, is of the Holy

Ghost," Matt. 1:20. Inasmuch as he has not left the Scriptures in their

natural sense, but has garbled and turned them to his own advantage;

and, instead of born of and conceived of he writes commenced being,

therefore he shows thereby clearly that he cannot prove his explanation

by the Scriptures, but merely decorates it, in semblance, by adducing

mutilated Scriptures and palms them off as true.

Secondly, I say that there is not a letter to be found in all the

Scriptures that the Word accepted our flesh, which he so oftentimes

writes; or that the divine nature miraculously united itself with our

human nature; or that the Son of God should have remained unchanged and

took on him the son of Mary; or that the Son of God should have

bestowed all his Attributes on the son of man, and that one person was

made of two, as John Brent says; or that the son of man should be the

chosen Son of God, as Pomeranus says; or that the Word, the Son, should

have taken on him a perfect man of the flesh of Mary; or that the blood

of Mary was concreted in her womb, as the servants of the barbarous

churches of London say; or that he put on our flesh; or that he should

have dwelt therein; or that he was flesh of our flesh; or that our

flesh should sit at the right hand of the Fathertherefore I say that

they are wrong in all particulars, yea more, that they are

anathematized. For they are a strange gospel and new doctrine which is

not derived from the Spirit and word of God, but is invented of flesh

and blood, Gal. 1:8.

Thirdly, I say that his explanation is inconsistent in every

particular. For he says, The word commenced being man, and also, that

it dwelt in our flesh. If it became man, as it truly did, as the

testimony of John, when not adulterated, clearly shows?how could it

then, yet dwell. in the flesh of man? For to commence being a house and

to dwell in a house, are widely different. This all reasonable people

must admit.

Fourthly, I say that this explanation of his is inconsistent in itself.

For if the word commenced being man, then it did not remain unchanged

in its first state. But if it remained unchanged, then it did not

commence being man, but it commenced taking on a man of our flesh and

thus it commenced to dwell in one of our flesh, let him turn the matter

as he pleases. Therefore I will not let John A' Lasco be the expounder,

but will let the faithful and plain John himself explain his own words.

He writes, " That which was from the beginning, which we have heard,

which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our

hands have handled, of the Word of Life, for the life was manifested,

and we have seen it," 1 John 1:1, 2.

Inasmuch as his explanation is inconsistent in itself, and is both

contrary to nature and the Scriptures; and inasmuch as John shows me

such a plain foundation therefore I will not establish my foundation

and faith on such uncertain, dark and colored flatterings, but I will

establish them on the certain, clear and undeceivable testimony of

John; for I know that his testimony is true, yea, that it is the

unbroken truth and pure word of God.

Fifthly, I say that his explanation of the verb habitavit, that is, has

dwelt, is false, for he says and claims that the Word and our flesh, or

the son of Mary, taken on by the Word, are one person and one Christ;

and here he claims that the Word, which is the Son of God, has taken

its abode in our flesh, and refers to Xenophon. From which one or the

other must follow, either that Xenophon and his domicil are one being

and thing, the same as the Son of God and the son of Mary. (understand,

according to his explanation) are one person and Christ-- or, if

Xenophon and his domicil are two separate things, as they really are,

that then, also, the Son of God and the son of Mary, in whom God's Son

should have dwelt, according to his explanation, are two separate

persons and Christs; for, the one who dwells in a house and the house

are two different things, is too self?evident to be denied.

Further I say, that his explanation of the verb habitavit is not at all

founded in fact. For the evangelist uses the verb to dwell in the

perfect tense, and says, Has dwelt; from which it is evident that John

does not here speak of dwelling in our flesh, but of his dwelling among

men, as all intelligent translators have rendered it. For if he should

have spoken it with such a meaning as John A'Lasco explains it, then he

would have said dwell, in the present tense, or we must acknowledge

that the word did not dwell in the man Christ longer than while he

walked here on earth, which to my understanding, would be a gross

abomination and a great error.

Sixthly, I say that the explanation can not be maintained in any

manner; for the whole Scriptures in regard to Christ would contradict

themselves. There would be two persons and sons in Christ?a sinful and

death?guilty Messiah?the father no true father, the mother no true

mother, and the son no true son. The prophets, Gabriel, the angel of

the Lord, Christ Jesus, John 'and Paul, would all be false witnesses,

as has been previously heard.

Lastly, I say as before, that John wrote his gospel and testimony of

Christ, the Son of God, in a very contentious time. If he had not meant

just as he wrote, but if he had written it in such a confused and

strange sense as John A'Lasco explains it?then he would not have abated

the dispute there by, but would rather have given new energy thereto.

O no. John has simply, clearly and plainly given his testimony,

foundation and faith concerning Christ Jesus, the Son of God, and our

only and eternal Messiah, and has testified, without duplicity, that

the Word of God, which was from the beginning, became flesh, and that

this same incarnated Word has dwelt amongst us. But he did not write a

syllable that he accepted our flesh, or that he dwelt in a man of the

flesh of Mary, as, alas, John A'Lasco, by his human wisdom obscures his

simple, plain word and clear testimony, mutilates and controverts it.

Inasmuch as he, in his defense and explanation, has so frightfully

broken the Scripture, and has so indiscreetly varied from the truth, as

you may plainly see from the cited extracts?therefore I felt

constrained by the pure love to God and your souls, to discover unto

you his great misunderstanding and gross errors; that the glory of the

Lord may be maintained and that you may be led to the right, true

confession of your God and of his beloved Son Jesus Christ.

But I am grieved to mention his name in such a connection, and that I

must publish his errors, although he has given me an ill reputation and

hateful name with many by his writing. I commend him to the Lord.

Perhaps he thinks that he has thereby done rightly. Whatever I do, I do

for conscience' sake, to the glory of my Lord and Savior, Christ; for

his glory I love far more than the honor of all creatures?and him I

must seek with all my strength, even at the cost of my life.

I am sure that if John A'Lasco seeks the praise of God more than his

own; if he loves his neighbor as the Scriptures require, and sincerely

seeks after truth, he will not be angry with me, but will love and

thank me, for not excusing him in this regard, but faithfully showing

him his errors, for maintaining my faith and doctrine according to the

truth, for warning my fellow?men against corruption, and most of all

for protecting and defending by the word of my Lord, my Lord's glory

and great name, as much as is in my power, according to the testimony

of the Scripture and my conscience. But if it be considered offensive

in me, as I fear it will be, then I must commend it to the Lord who, in

his great love, has, to this hour, stood by me in all my needs, with

his paternal faithfulness, and who has so graciously succored me in all

my temptations. Behold, dear reader, here you may see how far we differ

with our opponents in the confession, doctrine and faith of Christ, the

Son of God. Now judge, if you fear God, which of the two parties has

the strongest Scriptures and foundation.

If you would have the Scriptures, which they call contradicting in this

respect, rightly explained, then you must let go of the foundation of

our opponents and cling to ours. For it can never, never be explained

by divine truth in the meaning which they attach to them. For every

intelligent person who will not wilfully combat the plain truth and

reject the Holy Spirit, must acknowledge that from their doctrine it

follows that the Lord, Christ, must be an unclean, sinful, accursed,

condemned and death guilty Christ: that there are two persons in

Christ, the one divine, the other human; two sons?the one the Son of

God without mother, the' other the son of Mary, or the son of man

without father; not God's first begotten and only, own Son, but the son

of the unclean flesh of Adam, died for us. Besides, all the prophets,

Christ, and the apostles must be false witnesses; this is too plain to

injure by any writing, or dissipate by flattery.

But whosoever rightly understands our foundation, and confines his

reasoning within the limits of the word of God?who believes the

testimony of John, to which he testifies in his first chapter,

concerning the incarnation, as just and true, and does not injure it;

who attributes nothing more to Mary, the mother of our Lord, than what

is attributed to a true mother in Gen. 1, and who leaves God, the

Father, a true father of his Son, Christ; Mary a true mother, and

Christ a true Son, both of his Father and mother; to him all the

Scriptures in this respect are plain. He does not require the flattery

of any one; for there is not a sentence in all the Scriptures which

contradict him; he has an undivided, clean and innocent Christ; the Son

of God, and the son of Mary; an only person, of all of which I trust,

you have been fully convinced in the foregoing synopsis founded on the

power of the Scriptures; and which, by the grace of God, you will see

by the following brief collection of references.

The eternal Word of God, by which all things were created, John 1;

which is the First and the Last, Rev. 1:8; which, in due time, in the

city of Nazareth, according to the providence of God, 1 Pet. 1:20,

according to the will of God, Eph. 1:4, according to the promise of

God, Gen. 3:15, through' the Holy Ghost, was conceived in the virgin

Mary, who knew no man, Luke 1:2'7, 28; Matt. 1; Jn. 1:14. According to

which flesh conceived in Mary, through the Holy Ghost, of the eternal

Word of the eternal Father, he, in due time, was born of the seed or

generation of David, Acts 2:13; Rom. 1:4, of a woman, Gen. 3:15; Gal.

4:4, of the virgin Mary, Matt. 1:21; Luke 2:21, in Bethlehem, an only

begotten Son of God, Jn. 3:16; 4:9; 5:13; Rom. 8:32; according to the

promise and the generation of the mother, also, of Abraham, of David

and of the seed of the woman, fruit, and son, Gen. 3:15; Matt. 1:21;

Luke 1:31; a Savior of the world, Luke 2:11; the Lord himself from

heaven, 1 Cor. 15:47; the bread which came down from heaven, Jn. 6:58;

Immanuel, Isa. 7A:14; Matt. 1:23; the mighty Prince, Isa. 9:6; our God,

Isa. 40:9. The Lord Our Righteousness, Jer. 23:6;.33:15.

Behold, faithful reader, here you have our proper foundation, doctrine

and confession of Christ, the Son of God; how he is become flesh in

Mary, and how he came into the world, as we, before our God, believe

and teach our., brethren. And we would hereby pray and faithfully

admonish every one, gratefully to accept this noble and precious ~ Son

of God, with a sincere desire to hear, love, and serve him in gladness

of heart, and faithfully follow in his footsteps; walk unblamably in

his word and ways; freely promulgate his honor and praise, glorify his

holy name, and humbly and obediently bend their hearts before his

majesty, since the merciful Father has shown us such great love as to

give us, poor, miserable sinners, his only, eternal and beloved Son;

for he it is who has victoriously led us poor children, through the

merits of his precious blood and bitter death, according to the

gracious resolution, counsel, will and purpose of God, his heavenly

Father, from the kingdom of hell and from eternal death into the

glorious kingdom of his divine honor and eternal peace. Eternal praise

be to his illustrious, wonderful, high and glorious name, Amen.

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CONCLUSION.

CHRIST Says, "This is eternal life, that they might know thee, the only

true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent," John 17:3. At another

place he says, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your

sins," John 8:24. John also says, "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus

is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God," 1 John 4:16.

Again, " Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ V

He is anti?christ, that denieth the the Father and the Son. Whosoever

denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father," 1 John 2:22, 23.

O, that our opponents would rightly take to heart these and the like

Scriptures, and would learn to know who and what the Son of God is, and

from whence he came, then they might yet be delivered from the chains

of the deceiver and be led into the light of the true doctrine. But so

long as they do not confess Christ it will always be wrangling and

disputation, changing falsehood into truth and truth into falsehood.

Yea they will be so estranged and blinded that all those who, with the

angel Gabriel, with the eternal Father, with John the baptist, with

Peter, Paul, Martha, Christ, and with the whole Scriptures, confess

Christ Jesus as the true Son of the true and living God, must, alas, be

called by them, deceivers and heretics. , dear Lord, how long will this

great abomination continue!

, that they might yet awaken in time while it is yet to?day, and that

they could give just praise unto Christ! Could they see their accursed

hypocrisy, idolatry; the lamentable deceit of the poor and miserable

people, and the ignorant, reckless life of the wicked world, that they

could renounce and quit it, what a blessing it would be to their poor

souls! But I fear that so long as the spiritual Antioch complacently

stretches the idle life, and Jezebel sets the delicious tables, the

accursed Moaz will retain his sway; and that the world will not be in

want of false teachers and deceivers.

Kind reader, ponder well what I write. I warn you in faithful love,

watch, look and observe well what you believe and what you uphold; for

your preachers deceive you. Watch and pray; the day is at hand, yea, at

hand, that we must all stand before the impartial judgment seat of our

God, who judges without respect of person, and will reward every one

according to his works, be he emperor or king, doctor or licentiate,

rich or poor, man or woman.

In short, this is my reply to the defence of John A'Lasco. With this I

will not only appear on earth, before man, but also, in the day of my

Lord Christ. According to the word of his promise, will I, by his

grace, appear before the eyes of his majesty.

If you are of reasonable disposition and not blinded by the spirit of

the envious partisans, or led away by bitter zeal, then judge between

us and our opponents; who of us most glorifies Christ Jesus, the Son of

the true and living God; who has most wholesomely adduced the

Scriptures; and who has broken and turned them to suit his own

professions. But beware of judging according to the flesh; but judge in

purity of heart, even as if before your God, according to truth.

From my innermost soul I wish you a true and unfeigned faith, a true

confession of God and Christ, the unction and love of God, a pious,

penitent, cheerful heart, an unblamable, christian life, and a true

understanding and a good judgment, Amen.

OBSERVE: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten

Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have

everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn

the world; but that the world through him might be saved; he that

believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is

condemned already; because he hath not believed in the name of the only

begotten Son of God," Jn. 3: ig, 17.

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A

CONFESSION

OF THE

Triune, Eternal and True

GOD, FATHER, SON, AND HOLY GHOST.

BY

MENNO SIMON

Originally published in the Dutch Language, A.D. 1597. Republished in 1600,

and 1681.

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus

Christ," 1 Cor. 8:11.

ELKHART, INDIANA

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PREFACE.

Menno Simon wishes all his beloved brethren and sisters in the Lord, ,grace

and peace,

an unbroken, pure and firm faith, unfeigned brotherly love, a sure and living

hope, and

a God pleasing, 2unblamable walk, confession and life, from God our heavenly

Father,

through his beloved Son, Christ Jesus, in the power of his Holy Ghost, Amen.

WE know, dear brethren and sisters in Christ Jesus, that we are

condemned, by the whole world, to water, fire and sword, for the

testimony of Christ and our consciences; and that we are the spectacle

of, and regarded as the offscouring of all mankind. Besides, we know

also that the true Prince of Peace, the blessed Christ Jesus, has

summoned and taken us into the mansion of peace through the word of

peace; and that he has given and left his followers such a glorious

sign by which we shall know them to be his disciples, namely, Love.

Therefore it is reasonable and christian?like that we, poor, outcast

bearers of the cross, should be united in the perfect bonds of true

love, and that we should cling together as the members of one body,

"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body and made to drink

into one Spirit," 1 Cor. 12:13. But now we see plainly how the prince

of darkness, who from the beginning was a murderer, seeks, with all

diligence, to disturb this same peace in the house of God, to rend this

bond in twain, and thus to make odious to many the dear gospel of our

Lord Jesus Christ, our cross and confession, and all the christian

societies; and thus thoroughly to destroy it, John 8:44. Since his

acute attacks are so well known to us, therefore it is necessary ever

to be aware, to repent, to seek each other in true christian love, to

resuscitate that which has been corrupted, to cure and make healthy

that which is diseased, with the oil of the divine word; for during the

last four years, alas, christian love and peace have materially

decreased with some, on account of much pernicious upbraiding and

!disputing about the ineffable depths of the divinity of Christ and of

the Holy Ghost; also, about angels and devils, and about the ban; and

this has always been the case where such disputes were in sway. May the

Lord not count it as sin against those who have used the ban. I see

this plainly, and as I have been troubled not a little by some about

this matter?and since I naturally hate such upbraiding and disputing,

for I have these fifteen years never found any use in it, because I

love peace and unity, which are in conformity with the word of God,

more than my own life. I trust that I speak no lie, for, because of

that, my heart is very much troubled, mournful and afflicted, yea, more

so than I can write.

Would to God that I could, at the cost of my life?blood, help all

afflicted consciences and could lead them to God; for I love nothing

more on earth, nor do I seek any thing, before God, than the glory of

my Lord Jesus Christ, and the everlasting salvation of my beloved

brethren. And therefore I have, at the risk of my poor, diseased body,

placed at your disposal and service my firm faith and confession of the

eternal, Triune Clod, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, as taken from the

sure word of Clod; wherewith I will, unwaveringly, live and die before

my God, and will appear therewith in his grace, at the day of judgment,

trusting hereby to make pleasant and worthy to many, the noble and

desirable peace and unity in Christ, and to restore love.

Brethren, there has been enough of disputing, upbraiding, and complaint

of one another. I think it is time to discountenance the disturbers of

the peace, and to cordially seek scriptural peace and unity. But I

desire no peace outside of Christ. I ardently desire and pray all my

beloved brethren and sisters in the Lord, to read, hear and understand

this my admonishing confession, without any partisan bitterness or

spitefulness towards? God?fearing, pure hearts, as I have written it in

purity of heart, as before God, in Christ Jesus, without hatred or

malice. I doubt not but that, if you do this, brethren, I mean the

unpeaceable and troubled ones, disquiet, dispute and disunion will far

recede from the peace?mountain of the Lord; and peace, love and unity

will again install themselves.

I sincerely desire that it may be so read and taken to heart, that the

Almighty, eternal Father, with his blessed Son, Christ Jesus, and with

the Holy Spirit may remain unchanged in their true, divine being; and

that the afflicted, mournful, wavering consciences may find succor,

consolation and strength. The beloved Father grant his grace, Amen.

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A CONFESSION

OF THE

TRIUNE, ETERNAL, AND TRUE GOD, FATHER, SON, AND HOLY GHOST.

WE believe and confess with the Holy Scriptures, that there is an only,

eternal and true God, who is a Spirit. One God, who created heaven and

earth, the sea, and all that is therein. Such a God, whom heaven and

the heaven of heavens cannot comprehend. Whose throne is heaven and

earth his footstool; who measures " the waters in the hollow of his

hand;" who spanneth the heavens; who comprehendeth the dust of the

earth in a measure, and weigheth the mountains in scales and the hills

in a balance; who is as high as heaven, deeper than hell, lower than

earth and broader than the sea; "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in

the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor

can see;" who is an Almighty, powerful and an over?ruling King, in the

heavens above and in the earth beneath; whose strength, hand and power

none can withstand. A " God of Gods, and a Lord of Lords;" there is

none like unto him, but he is a mighty, holy, terrible, praiseworthy,

wonderful, and consuming fire; whose kingdom, power, dominion, majesty

and glory is eternal, and shall endure forever, and besides this only,

eternal, living, Almighty over?ruling God and Lord we know no other;

and since he is a Spirit so great, terrible, and invisible, he is also

inexpressible, incomprehensible and indescribable, as may be deduced

and understood from the following Scriptures, Deut; 4:35; 6:4; 7:6;

10:17; 32:39; Jn. 4:24; 1:18; Gen. 1:1; Ps. 33:6; Col. 1:18; Isa.

43:11; 44:6; 48:13; 40:12; Job 11:8; 1 Tim. d:16; Eccl. 1:7; Matt.

11:27; Rev. 17:14; 19:16; Heb. 12:29; 1:8, 10.

This only, eternal, Omnipotent, ineffable, invisible, inexpressible and

indescribable God, we believe and confess with the Scriptures, to be

the eternal, incomprehensible Father, with his eternal,

incomprehensible Son, and with his eternal, incomprehensible Holy

Spirit. The Father, we believe and confess to be a true Father, the

Son, a true Son, and the Holy Spirit, a true Holy Spirit; not carnal

and comprehensible, but spiritual and incomprehensible, for Christ

says, "God is a Spirit." Inasmuch as God is such a Spirit, as it is

written, therefore we also believe and confess of the divine generation

of the heavenly Father, and of his begotten Son, Christ Jesus

(brethren, understand my writing well), that they are spiritual and

incomprehensible, as is also the Father who begat them; for like begets

like: This is incontrovertible, Matt. 3:17; 28:18, 19; Mark 1:7, 11;

Luke 3:16; Jn. 14:9; 15:26; 1 Cor. 12:11. And this same

incomprehensible, inexpressible, spiritual, eternal, divine Being,

which is begotten of the Father, before every creature, divine and

incomprehensible, we believe and confess to be Christ Jesus, the first

and only begotten Son of God. "the first?born of?every creature," the

eternal Wisdom, the power of God, the everlasting Light, the eternal

Truth, the everlasting Life, Jn. 14:6, the eternal Word, Jn. 1:1. Do

not understand this as a literal word; for it is divine and spiritual,

and not carnal and literal; for a literal word is but a passing breeze,

comprehended in the letter, beginning and ceasing; and then, Christ

Jesus, before his incarnation, must have been a literal word. O, no I

But he is the eternal, wise, Almighty, holy, true, living and

incomprehensible Word, which in the beginning was with God, and was God

(mark), by whom all things were made, and without whom not any thing

was made that was made, and which will endure forever. And therefore he

says, "Before Abraham was I am" Again John the baptist says, "After me

cometh one who was before me," John 1:1, 15; 3:36; 8:12; Luke 7:29, 35;

1 Cor. 1:9; Heb. 1:2. Yea he had this glory of the divine being with

the Father, before the foundation of the world was laid. He thought it

not robbery to be equal with God, his Father; therefore, we confess

with John the Baptist, Nathaniel, Martha, and Peter that he is the Son

of the living God, Jn. 1; 17; Phil. 2; Matt. 16:16 , Jn. 11:27; 9:37;

6:69.

Dearly beloved brethren understand me rightly. He is the eternal

Wisdom, the sterna: Power. For, as we believe and confess that the

Father was from eternity and will eternally remain; yea, that he is the

First and the Last, so we may also freely believe and confess that his

wisdom, his power, his light, his truth, his life, his Word, Christ

Jesus, has been eternally with him, in him and by him; yea, that he is

the Alpha and Omega; or else, we must admit that this begotten,

incomprehensible, true, divine being, Christ Jesus (whom the fathers

have called a person), through whom the eternal Father has made all

things, has had a beginning like a creature; which all true christians

admit and look upon as a terrible blasphemy, curse and abomination. The

gracious, beloved Father will ever protect and uphold all his beloved

children in the right and true confession of his beloved Son Jesus

Christ.

Beloved brethren in the Lord, we believe and confess that this same

eternal, wise, Almighty, holy, true, living and incomprehensible Word,

Christ Jesus, which in the beginning was with God, and which was God,

incomprehensible?born of the incomprehensible Father, before every

creature, is in the fullness of time, become, according to the

unchangeable purpose and true promise of the Father, a true, visible,

passive, hungry, thirsty and mortal man, in Mary, the pure virgin,

through the operation and overshadowing of the Holy Spirit, and is thus

born of her. Yea, that he was like unto us in all things except sin;

that he grew up as other men; and at the appointed time was baptized

and entered upon his ministerial office, the office of grace and love,

which was enjoined upon him from the Father, and which he obediently

fulfilled; that he effaced the hand writing, that is, the law, against

us; and has at last, through the eternal Spirit of his heavenly Father,

offered himself in this his human flesh, nature tend weakness, in

which, also, hehas sighed, wept, and prayed unto the Father, has

sweated water and blood, and thus purified our hearts of the deadly

works, that we should serve the true and living God; and all who

believe on him, have received, through him grace, mercy, remission of

sins, and eternal life; and that, by means of his precious blood which

he has, in his great love, offered and shed for us poor sinners on the

cross, according to the good pleasure of the Father, he is thus become

our only and eternal High Priest, Reconciler, Mercy?seat, Mediator, and

Advocate, with God his Father. For, as God, the Almighty Father,

through his Almighty Word, Christ Jesus, had created Adam and Eve, so

he, also, would again thereby restgre them and make them pious, when

seducted by the serpent, together with all their descendants?that we

should give no one the praise of our salvation, neither in heaven nor

on earth, but to the .only and eternal Father, through Christ Jesus,

and that through the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. This is

sufficient of the incarnation, Matt. 1:16, 25; G:4; Mark 15:37; Luke

2:7, 40; 22:67; 23:46; Jn. 15:9, 10; 12:13; 11:26; Phil. 2: C, 7; Col.

2:14, 12; 1:13, 16; Heb. 3:2; Eph. 2:12; 1:7; Rom. 8:32; 3:24,25;

5:11,12; Isa. 53:12; 1 Pet. 1:19; Rev. 1:8; 2 Cor. S:14.

Further, beloved brethren, we believe and confess Christ Jesus to be

the true God with the Father; and this because of the divine glory,

operation and attributes, which are found in such abundance with him,

as may be clearly deduced and understood from the following Scriptures.

Say, beloved I Is it not the only and true God who has made heaven and

earth, and whose kingdom shall endure forever? Doubtlessly, yes. Paul

says, "Unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O ?God, is forever and ever;

a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom. Thou hast

loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God

hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness, above thy fellows. And,

thou, Lord, in the beginning hash laid the foundation of the earth; and

the heavens are the works of thine hands," Heb. 1:8, 9, 10.

Is it not the only God, who alone is "King of kings, and Lord of

lords?" and who reigns in heaven and on earth? Most assuredly. And the

Spirit speaks in Rev., that Christ is "King of kings and Lord of

lords." Christ himself says, "All power is given unto me in heaven and

in earth." Paul says, "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,

of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth,

and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord," Phil.

2:10.

Is it not the only God who saith, "I the Lord, the first and with the

last; I am he?" Isa. 41:4. And Christ says, "I am Alpha and Omega; the

beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and

which is to come; the Almighty." And "Fear not; I am the first and the

last; I am he that liveth and was dead; and behold, I am alive for

evermore," Rev. 1:8, 17, 18.

Is not this the only God who "trieth the hearts and reins?" Without

doubt it is. Christ saith, "All the churches shall know that I am he

which searcheth the reins and hearts; and I will give unto every one of

you according to your works," Rev. 2:23.

Is it not the only God, whom alone we should serve and worship? Yes.

Christ says, "That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the

Father." Of divine service Paul says, "He that in these things serveth

Christ, is acceptable to God," and "Let a man so account of us as of

the ministers of Christ," Rom. 14:18; 1 Cor.4:1.

Paul was a servant of Christ, as may be generally seen at the

commencement of all his epistles. Of his worship Luke says, that when

Christ had ascended to heaven they worshipped him, and returned to

Jerusalem. Also Stephen, in his last prayer, says, "Lord Jesus, receive

my spirit." Paul also saith, "Let all the angels of God worship him,"

also the murderer on the cross, " Lord, remember me when thou comest

into thy kingdom," Acts 7:68; Heb. 1:6; Luke 23:42; 24:52. Is it not

the only God which is true; and every man a liar? Oh, yes. The prophet

says" There was not any deceit in his mouth." Christ himself says, "I

am the truth," "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into

the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth," Ps.116:11; Rom.

3:4; Isa. 63:9; Jn. 14:6; 18:37.

Can any one forgive sins and bestow everlasting life except the only

and eternal God? O, no I Christ says, "Know that the son of man hath

power on earth to forgive sins;" and, to the sinful woman, " Thy sins

are forgiven." "I give unto them eternal life," Ps. 103:3; Matt. 9:6;

Luke 7:48; Jn. 10:28.

Should we believe in any one but alone on the only God? Not at all. For

Christ says, "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." "Ye

believe in God, believe also in me," Jn. 6:47; 14:1.

Is it not the only God who is the judge of all the world? who will

raise the dead and at the last day sit in judgment? Assuredly, yes. And

Christ says, " For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth

them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." " He was ordained of

God to be the Judge of quick and dead;" and at his coming he will judge

and sentence, Jn. 5:21; Acts 10:42; Matt. 26:31?46.

Behold, .beloved brethren, as the throne of Christ is an eternal

throne, and as the Scriptures are not ashamed to confess him to be God,

and also testify that he founded heaven and earth, that he has all

power in heaven and on earth; that he is the first and last; that he

searcheth the hearts and reins; whom we should serve and worship; who

is truth; who forgives sin, and bestows eternal life; in whom we must

believe, and who at the last day will raise us from the dead and judge

us, as has been said; so it is incontrovertible that Christ Jesus also

with his Father, must be the true God; for God gives his glory to none

other; and these are all glories, powers and attributes which belong to

no one in heaven nor upon, earth, except alone, the only, eternal, and

true God; this all taught of God, must fully admit and confess.

Besides, beloved brethren, we believe and confess Christ Jesus, with

his heavenly Father, to be truly God; and that because of the plain

testimony of the holy prophets; evangelists and apostles, as we may

learn from the following Scriptures, and also from some other texts.

Isaiah says, " Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the

government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called

Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the

Prince of peace," Isa. 9:6. Again, " Say unto the cities of Judah,

Behold your God! Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and

his arm shall rule for him I . Behold, his reward is with him and his

work before him; he shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall

gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall

gently lead those that are with young," Isa. 40:9?11. Read also Ezek.

34:11.

Jeremiah says, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will

raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a king shall reign and

prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his

days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is

his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGIHTEOUSNESS ,"

Jer. 23:5, 6; 33:15.

Micah says, " But thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among

the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me

that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of

old, from everlasting," Micah 5:2. Read also Heb. 7:3, 4; Isa. 44:6;

Rev. 1:8; 22:13. John says, " In the beginning was the Word, and the

Word was with God, and the Word was God," Jn. 1:1. The Lord said unto

Thomas, " Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach

hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but

believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord, and my God!

Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast

believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed,"

Jn. 20:27 ?29.

Paul says, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock,

over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church

of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood;" "Whose are the

fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came; who is over

all, God blessed for ever." Again, "God was in Christ, reconciling the

world unto himself," Acts 20:28; Rom. 9:5; 2 Cor. 5:19. Read also John

14; Col. 22; 1 Tim. 3. Again, "Who being in the form of God, thought it

not robbery to be equal with God. But made himself of no reputation,

and took upon him the form of a servant," Phil. 2:6.

John says, "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an

understanding, that we may know him that is true; and we are in him

that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and

eternal life," 1 Jn. 5:20. Besides, read the whole gospel of John and 1

Cor. 10:15; Eph. 4; Heb. 1:3; ?'; 11; 12; 13; and you will, by the

grace of God, find a sure and firm foundation.

Behold, faithful brethren, here you have the incomprehensible birth of

Christ, his divine glory, operation and power; and a number of precious

and plain testimonies of the holy prophets, evangelists and apostles,

all of whom with an invincible power, testify and point out, with such

clearness, the true, ineffable divinity of our Lord, Jesus Christ. I am

convinced and doubt not the least, that a pious, humble, God?fearing

conscience will herewith be satisfied, and not search into this

incomprehensible depth any further; and if any one desires to search

and dispute further, to him I prophesy that he will surely search and

dispute all his lifetime, and yet never have a settled mind nor a firm

foundation. Therefore, beloved brethren, be warned. Watch and beware.

As we have now pointed out and made known our faith and confession of

the true divinity of Jesus Christ; so we will also, now, by the grace

of God, set forth in few words, our faith and confession of the Holy

Ghost. Let the God fearing judge. We believe and confess the Holy Ghost

to be a true, real, or personal Holy Ghost; and that in a divine

way?even as the Father is a true Father, and the Son a true Son; which

Holy Ghost is a mystery to all mankind, incomprehensible, inexpressible

and indescribable (as we have shown above of the Father and the Son);

divine with his divine attributes, going forth from the Father through

the Son, although he ever remains with God and in God, and is never

separated from the being of the Father and the Son. And the reason that

we confess him to be such a true and real Holy Spirit, is because we

are impelled to this by the Scriptures, for he descended upon Christ

,at his baptism in the bodily shape of a dove, and appeared unto the

apostles as cloven tongues like as of fire; because we are baptized in

his name as well as in the name of the Father and of the Son; because

the prophets through him, prophesied, performed miracles and works, had

dreams and saw visions; for he is a distributer of the gifts of God,

ljhd that according to his will. Mark well. He moved Zachariah, the Son

of Barachiah, he moved John the Baptist while yet in his mother's womb,

and he said to Simeon, "That he should not see death before he had seen

the Lord's Christ." "The Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and

Saul." And to Peter, "Behold, three men seek thee." He guides us into

all truth; he justifies us; he cleanses, sanctifies, pacifies,

consoles, reproves, cheers and assures us; he testifies to our spirit

that we are the children of God. This Spirit all receive who believe on

Christ: Paul admonishes us, not to grieve him. Whosoever sins against

this Spirit (says Christ), unto him it shall not be forgiven. David

desired that God might not take from him this Spirit, for all that have

not this spirit are not of Christ, Acts 2:26; Luke 3:22; John 1:33;

Acts 2:3; Zach. 7:12; Jude 14; Joel 2:29; 2 Cor. 12:4; Luke 2:25; Acts

13:2; 10:19; Jn. 14:26; 15:26; Eph. 4:30; Rom. 8:16; Matt. 8:13; Ps.

51:11; Rom. 8:9. Yea, my brethren, from these plain Scriptures,

testimonies and references, and a great many other texts which are too

lengthy to mention, and which may be found in abundance in the

Scriptures and read, we believe [the [Holy Spirit to be the true,

essential Holy Spirit of God, who adorns us with his heavenly and

divine gifts, and through his inspirations, according to the good

pleasure of the Father, frees us from sin, makes us cheerful, peaceful,

pious, satisfies our s and minds, and makes them holy in Christ Jesus.

And thus we believe and confess before God, before his angels, before

all our brethren, and before all the world, that these three names,

operations and powers, namely, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost (which

the fathers called three persons, by which they meant the three, true,

divine beings) are one incomprehensible, indescribable, Almighty, holy,

only, eternal and sovereign God, as John says, "There are three that

bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and

these three are one." Read also Matt. 28:18; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:8; John

14:16; 15:26; 1 Cor. 12:11. And although they are three, yet in

Godliness, will, power and operation they are one, and can no more be

separated from each other than the sun, brightness and warmth; for the

one cannot exist without the other; yet incomprehensible from the

incomprehensible Father, even as the brightness and heat of the sun.

The one must exist with the other, or else the whole divinity is

denied; for all the Father does and has wrought from the beginning, he

works through his Son, in the power of his holy and eternal Spirit.

This Son does not work without the Father and the Holy Spirit. Neither

doeth the Holy Spirit any thing without the Father, and the Son.

Therefore the one must remain with the other, or else there must be an

imperfect God; for if we deny the divinity of Christ, or the true

existence of the Holy Ghost, then we counterfeit and depict unto

ourselves a God who is without wisdom, power, light, life, truth, word,

and without the Holy Spirit.

Brethren, understand all this in a divine and spiritual sense, and not

in a human or carnal manner I Then you will be satisfied with the

plain, clear and simple testimony of the prophets, evangelists and

apostles, concerning this deep mystery. Let every one see to it with

fear and trembling, lest he put his hand in the consuming fire.

Cordially beloved brethren and sisters in Christ Jesus I mark well the

following: Since the eternal God is such a great and terrible God, as

you have read; since Christ was thus born of the Father as said, and as

the attributes of God so richly abound in Christ; and, also, as the

prophets, evangelists and apostles so strongly declare, preach and

teach him as God; and as the Scriptures so abundantly teach and testify

of the Holy Spirit and confess that the eternal Father, with his

eternal Son and Holy Spirit, in their divine state, power, glory and

sovereignty are ineffable, inexpressible and incomprehensible, as may

be plainly understood from the cited Scriptures (for it is' all Spirit

and God, and therefore beyond human understanding); therefore it is

that I pray, admonish and desire all my beloved brethren and fellows in

Christ Jesus, with all that men can pray, not to allow and consent to

flatterings, innovations nor human explanations, be it by whom it may,

concerning this incomprehensible majesty; ever fearing, ye who seek

God, with all your powers, that ye do not, by such high soaring

thoughts and human conjecture, mistake the ineffable God who makes all

human wisdom, which is contrary to him, foolishness; lest ye, through

your vain searching and musing of such unfathomable matters, fall into

his hands, and be consumed by the fire of his wrath.

Brethren, I, for myself confess that I would rather die than to

believe, and teach unto my brethren, a single word or letter concerning

the Father, Son and Holy Ghost (behold, before God I lie not),

differing from the express, testifying word of God which so clearly

points out and teaches through the prophets, evangelists and apostles.

, my pious, God fearing, faithful brethren I let us all, one with

another, be thus minded; then the desolated cities may be again

rebuilt; the strong may remain firm; the wavering be again

strengthened; and thus peace, love, and unity be again restored. I know

certainly and truly that if any one wants to go further than we here

testify and admonish from ,the word of God, he will fall into error; or

mount too high, or deviate from side to side; he will miss the right

course and will act no more intelligently than he who would try to pour

or confine the river Rhine or Meuse in a quart bottle. But those who

abide simply and humbly by the word of .God, the testified,

prophetical, evangelical and apostolical word, and firmly believe it,

although they, neither do nor can? fully comprehend it, and take heed

to all human investigation, disputations, flatterings, explanations,

turning and conjecture in these incomprehensible abysses, will, in all

temptations, stand firmly, by the grace of God, and walk all their

lives before their God with penitent and cheerful minds. I sincerely

wish that all the brethren were of like mind with me in this respect;

for I have been at enmity with human sophistry and flattery for fifteen

years, and I am still; I expect to remain so, and, by the help of God,

to take heed not to offer the blood of the Lord with leaven; but I

desire, solely, to enter into the sanctuary of God, that is, into his

holy church, with the unleavened bread of the unalloyed word of God,

overspread with the oil of the Holy Spirit.

, brethren I were they all, who are called brethren, thus minded with

me, how soon then would the sad, afflicted hearts find consolation and

cheerfulness, and the divided, restless minds unity and peace. , Lord

Jesus I Have mercy upon thy poor, afflicted sheep, and let every hungry

and thirsty soul find thy verdant pastures and limpid waters, Amen.

Beloved brethren and sisters in Christ Jesus I Receive this with the

same mind with which I have written it to you; read it plainly to all

the brethren, and understand it in a christian manner; and beware,

beware, yea, BEWARE of all disputation, discord and division. This I

desire from my inmost soul, for the Lord's sake. The sincere,

evangelical peace be with all my beloved brethren and sisters in Christ

Jesus, Amen.

MENNO SIMON.

Sept. 9th, A. D. 1550.

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AN

EXPLANATION

OF

Christian Baptism

!!! IN THE WATER,

FROM THE WORD OF GOD.

IN WHAT MANNER IT WAS COMMANDED BY CHRIST JESUS, AND HOW

IT WAS TAUGHT AND PRACTICED BY HIS HOLY APOSTLES.

BY

MENNO SIMON.

"Fur other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Chnst"

1 Cor. 3:11.

ELKHART,, INDIANA:

PUBLISHED BY JOHN F. FUNK AND BROTHER.

1871

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MENNO SIMON'S SALUTATION.

READ and consider carefully the words which I speak, ye learned, who

appear to be distinguished in mind and doctrine above others. I have

added this my little German work for the celebration of the rite of

Baptism. For I am not well able to promote this cause in Latin, and if

able, am unwilling that this, my labor, should perish in the hands of

the few, but desire that it may become known to every christian and

yield the greater advantage. That there are, in this work, no

interpolations of Scripture, nor satires, nor falsehoods, judge for

yourselves. Moreover I know it is not the spirit of a christian to lead

in any way deceitfully, especially in an affair so serious. Indeed the

christian does not know deceit. It becomes the evangelical teacher to

set before himself nothing except these most illustrious precepts of

the evangelist?such as faith, charity, patience, life, gentleness,

peace, mildness, truth, moderation, and finally to so live that no one

is able with justice to thrust against him any taint of baseness, that

he may teach not only by word, but also by example, following the

teachings of Paul who says, "I keep under my body, and bring it into

subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I

myself should be a castaway," 1 Cor. 9:27. And elsewhere, "Having your

conversation honest among the Gentiles; that, whereas they speak

against you as evil doers," "they may be ashamed that falsely accuse

your good conversation in Christ," 1 Pet. 2:12; 3:16. For in the midst

of these things it behooves one to repress such ignorance and

stupidities, lest that saying of the Savior be turned against us which

says, "Cast out first the beam out of thine own eye," Luke 6:42. For

how can I induce others to become christians when I myself am not a

christian.

Read therefore, and if anything be found in this work that has not the

flavor of evangelical purity and spirit, I am confounded, not you. For

I have written from a sense of pion s affection, not that I may injure

any one, but for the benefit of all men. Nevertheless, such are my

thanks from you for this my kindness toward you, that I know it is not

enough except I, with my sanctified Leader, having indeed received

Christ as my reward, endure all evil, ignominy and tortures. No wonder.

They indeed do not spare me while I seek the truth and declare openly

the offered sacrifice, when almost all teachers of righteousness, who

were from the beginning, have yielded to death in the same way. This is

indeed gratitude, when the world displays its subjection to God. Would

that in very truth they were christians who persuade themselves that

they are christians. May grace abound with all the diligent through our

Lord Jesus Christ, with sincerity.

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PREFACE.

BELOVED readers, in our first publication of the writings concerning

Baptism, we have, with christian truth, satisfied the desire of every

pious christian. Yet, there are some light minded, rebellious,

contentious and carnal persons who, without cause and Scripture, and in

every respect without the fear of God, teach, write, admonish and cry

out against us, with partial hearts, saying, " It is heresy and deceit;

for it is written and taught adverse to the learned, and against the

doctrine of the holy, christian church." Although I had not intended to

reply to such perverse, rebellious, disobedient and contentious

persons, according to the word of the Lord, Matt. 7, but solely to

write to the humble, meek, God?fearing and penitent. For the wise will

hear wisdom; will love it and become wiser; but the fool will hear

folly, praise it, persist and die in it?yet to such contenders and

gainsayers, who speak so hard against the word of God, I would ask two

questions; and request them to examine and ponder them well,? and

return a discreet and becoming reply to me. In the first place: What

are properly heretics and deceivers? Secondly, Who are they that

admonish and teach against the doctrine of the holv church? If they

answer these questions fairly they must themselves pronounce the

sentence, that with us the Upright truth of Jesus Christ is found and

not with them; on the contrary, that all manner of heresy, deceit and

false doctrine are abundantly taught and practiced by them, and not by

us. Which of the two parties, then, are heretics and imposters, I will

leave to the judgment of the reader. For hereticus means: one who sorts

out, one who chooses, one who gleans. Quia heresis Grece ab electione

aocatur, inquit Beda super acts Apostolor~, one who selects such as

will suit his own opinion. If these, then, are truly heretics, who,

according to their own meaning, without Scripture, form themselves a

faith, then I truly do not know where to find more miserable and more

deplorable heretics than those who ever combat, upbraid, betray and

persecute us, poor, scattered and rejected christians, as damnable

heretics. For there is no worse, br more abominable heresy under heaven

than is found among our gainsayers and contenders; while they so

shamefully change and garble the word and the perfect ordinance and

institution of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ, as to baptize such things

which God has neither commanded nor ordained to be baptized, namely:

The little, unconscious children and bells; and do not baptize those

whom God has commanded to be baptized, namely: Those who believe, while

they worship and honor a mouthful of bread and a drink of wine as the

Son of God; while they ascribe to themselves, without the word of God,

the power over the living and the dead; and while they place ?in

Christ's stead a sinful man, a child of perdition, whose natural pride,

pomp, greed, cruelty, uncleanliness and idolatry are beyond

description, 2 Thess. 2:4.

Truly, I do not know how a worse. heresy could be invented.

Notwithstanding these miserable men cruelly cry against us, Heretics,

heretics, drown them, slay and burn them. And this for no other reason

than that we teach, according to the holy gospel of Jesus Christ, the

new life, Baptism on the confession of faith, the Supper as

representing both a holy and unblamable church; because we rebuke all

false doctrine, idolatry and the accursed carnal life; and point alone

to the blessed Christ Jesus, and to no other means of salvation,

neither in heaven nor on earth.

If this is heresy, beloved reader, then, in deed, the true Being is not

in Christ; then he is not the true way, the truth, and the life, John

14:6. Be not frightened by their upbraiding and slandering; for from

the beginning it has been the case that the unbelieving, hate, slander

and persecute the believing; the wicked, the good; the unrighteous, the

righteous; the carnal, the spiritual; the heretics, the christians. It

was the case with Cain and Abel, Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob and

with the false prophets and the true prophets; as Christ Jesus has told

us before namely: "Ye will be hated of all nations, for my name's

sake," Matt. 24:9. If they were the true disciples of Christ Jesus as

they boast themselves to be, they would persecute, betray or murder no

body for the sake of their faith; but with Christ Jesus; they would

diligently seek to reclaim that which was lost, Matt. 18:11, if we were

lost, as they claim. If they were the bride of Christ, they would not

be spiteful, cruel and blood thirsty, but meek, mild and merciful, yea

be thus minded as is the good and faithful bridegroom, Christ Jesus.

But they plainly manifest themselves, by their works, not to be the

bride of Jesus Christ, but rather to be the bride of him, who, from the

beginning was a murderer, that is, the devil, Jn. 8:44.

If they were the body of Christ, they would not crucify and persecute

any one for the sake of the truth of the Lord, but would themselves,

with Christ Jesus, and his church, be crucified and persecuted for the

sake thereof, Matt. 5:11; Jn. 16:1, 2; 2 Tim. 3:12. For the innocent

?lamb does not kill, but from the beginning it was killed. Behold, kind

readers, what miserable, bloody, tyrannical and murderous heretics our

gainsayers, opponents and persecutors are found to be before God, in

all their teachings, admonitions, instructions, life and tyranny. But

this they do not acknowledge. For it would not do to acknowledge this.

If they did, how could they then crucify and persecute the chosen

children of God, the children of the kingdom and promise, the brethren

and sisters of Jesus Christ, the angels of peace, and the children of

the eternal, imperishable life.

But now their minds are so obscured, their eyes are so bedimmed, their

ears are so closed up that they cannot understand; for their evil?doing

and wickedness have obscured and blinded them. The table of the divine

word is to them " a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling block, and a

recompense," Rom. 11:9. . The righteous judgment and awful wrath is

come upon them, because they so industriously seek falsehood, and so

obstinately combat and reject the lovely truth of Jesus Christ.

Christ Jesus says, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after

righteousness; for they shall be filled," Matt. 5:6. But these hunger

and thirst after unrighteousness, with which they, according to Paul,

are abundantly filled, 2 Thess. 2:12.

Christ Jesus says, "Every one that asketh receiveth; and he that

seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened," Luke

11:9. But these seek diligently, night and day, not after the right

way, but after the wrong; hoping yet to find something, either in the

word or in our lives, which may be so twisted, bent or applied as to

trample upon and nullify, the right, evangelical truth, even as if the

eternal Truth, the blessed Jesus had spoken and taught with two

tongues; and if they can find any errors in our walk, as there often

are (for we are all of the sinful, failing flesh of Adam); then the

evangelical truth is all deceit, as if we had no help from God but only

human aid. Inasmuch as they so assiduously seek after unrighteousness

and delight in falsehood, therefore God smites them with such great

blindness that they can neither comprehend nor judge of the teachings

of God; yet they desire to clothe their cause, however shameful it is,

in the garment of the Scriptures, that they may, under this scriptural,

holy appearance, the better deceive the foolish, ignorant populace that

desire to be deceived and seduced. And thus they remain, both teacher

and disciple, in the service of their perishable flesh which they have

chosen as their God, Phil. 3:18; Rom. 16:17.

Again, kind reader, they cry and foam with rage against us, saying that

we write against all the doctors, and also against the teachings of the

holy christian church.

I affectionately and freely admit and ac knowledge that we write

against the greater part of the doctors or the learned men, For

whenever or wherever they write, admonish and teach contrary to the

word, ordinances, statutes and institutions of Jesus Christ, we do not

consider their famous names and have nothing to do with their human

philosophy. But if they teach rightly we do not contradict nor write

against them.

I trust, by the most merciful grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that the

oldest, most pious, most upright, truest and most able doctors of the

church of Jesus Christ, who were long before all other doctors, are

received and believed by me and my beloved brethren, in every word and

doctrine. These are, Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, David, Christ Jesus,

Matthew, Mark, Luke, 'John, Paul, Peter, James and Jude. If any body

can show me a word in all my writing that I have taught or written

contrary . to the doctrine of these doctors, then I am willing to be

abashed, instructed and taught better; but I trust that it can never be

truthfully done. If I should write and teach against these pious,

unblamable doctors, then my writing and teaching would be against the

teachings and admonitions of the christian body, community or holy

church.

I acknowledge and know well that I admonish, teach, instruct and write

contrary to the instructions and teachings of some communities and

churches, in regard to some articles, such as the Papists, Dztherans;

and the corrupted sects; but not contrary to the teachings of the holy,

christian church. May the merciful Father, whose divine will I

industriously seek to obey, save me from teaching, instructing and

writing contrary to the doctrine of the holy church; for else woe would

be unto my soul forever.

Lest you be ensnared by the word holy church, you shall learn and know

from the word of God that the holy, christian church is no collection

of unbelievers, carnal or willful sinners; notwithstanding they falsely

claim to be of Christ Jesus, and think themselves to be the true,

christian church. No, kind readers, no. They are not all Abraham's seed

who are born of Abraham, " But the children of the promise are counted

for the seed," Rom. 9:8. Thus, also, the holy, christian church must be

a spiritual seed, an assembly of the righteous, and a community of the

saints; which church is begotten of God, of the living seed of the

divine word, and not of the teachings, institutions, and fictions of

man. Yea, they are those who are regenerated, renewed and converted;

who hear, believe, and fulfill all the commandments and will of God;

who "have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts;" who "are

all one in Christ Jesus." "Joint heirs with Christ," and heavenly and

spiritually minded with him, Gal. 5:24; 3:28; Rom. 8:17.

These are the holy, christian church, the community of God, the body

and the bride of Christ, whom he hath trusted, cleansed and sanctified;

but "they that are in the flesh cannot please God." This holy,

christian church has a spiritual Prince over her who rules her with the

unbroken rod of his divine word; a Master, or Teacher who teaches the

commandments of eternal life; and a Bridegroom whose voice she is ever

ready to hear, that is, Christ Jesus, 1 Cor. 6:11; Rom. 8:8; Ps. 2:9;

Jn. 6:68; 3:29.

If, now, I contend against his scepter, trample upon his commandments

and teach or write aught against his heavenly doctrine, then I teach

and write against the doctrine of the holy, christian church. For this

holy, christian church has but one doctrine which is fruitful and

godly, which is the limpid, pure and unmixed word of God, the lovely

gospel of the grace of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ, Matt. 28:19; Mark

16:15; 1 Pet. 1:26. All teachings and decrees which do not accord with

the doctrine of Christ, are but teachings and commandments of men, be

they teachings and opinions of doctors, decrees of popes, councils or

anything else; they are doctrines of the devil, and are accursed, Matt.

15:9; 1 Tim. 4:1; Gal. 1:8, 9. Since we write and teach nothing but the

pure, heavenly word, and the perfect ordinances of the holy gospel of

Jesus Christ and of his apostles; therefore we do not teach and write

against the teachings of the holy church, but we sustain them.

Beloved readers, let the light minded ran their course to the end,

which is certain death. They will nevermore concede the truth, however

powerfully they are vanquished, but they will ever delight in hatred,

upbraiding, discord and disputation and never be satisfied, because

they will not go into the strait way of the Spirit; taught of Jesus

Christ and his holy apostles; notwithstanding they want to be

considered the children and the church of God, without obedience. Not

so kind readers. Ever remember that there is no holy church of Christ

other than the assembly of the righteous, and the church of the saints,

which ever acts in harmony with the word and ordinances of the Lord,

and to no other doctrine. She neither will nor can accept any other

doctrine or ordinances in divine matters, forever.

Because, beloved brethren, the divine ordinance of baptism in the water

has thus been destroyed for many centuries, and as a strange baptism

has been practiced, contrary to the true doctrine of the holy,

christian church, namely, contrary to the word of God, from which evil

custom so much false doctrine, disbelief and fruitless, carnal life

have resulted?therefore I have again clearly pointed out from the holy

gospel, how we should practice the true, scriptural, christian baptism;

that the hearts and faith of the wise may be affirmed and assured, and

the mouths of the fools may be stopped, and that God may have the glory

in his holy word. Read and see if we have not rightly taught and

written according to the meaning of Jesus Christ. And because the

whole, wide world so shamefully blaspheme and oppose the word of God,

and despise his commandments and ceremonies as useless, saying, What

good can water do us? never considering that the kingdom of God and the

will of God do not consist in external ceremonies, but in the willing

obedience to the word of God?therefore we have, in the following

writings, so extensively shown from the holy Scriptures, who should be

baptized, according to the word of God, namely, the believing, or the

regenerated, Mark 16:18; Jn. 3: G; Tit. 3: C.

Besides we have also shown how very weak, useless and groundless all

the arguments of the world are, by which they defend infant baptism,

that the beforementioned despisers of God may know and understand that

they are not baptized according to the evangelical commandment of our

beloved Lord Jesus Christ. From which it follows that they are not in

obedience to the divine word, and if they are not in the obedience

which has the promise (I speak of those of understanding minds), then

they cannot inherit nor obtain the promise, so long as they do not

believe the word of God, and obediently fulfill it in all respects. Let

every one beware, and save his own soul; for our God is a consuming

fire.

May the merciful Father, through his blessed Son, Jesus Christ, our

Lord, grant you all a true knowledge, and his affection ate grace for

your edification, Amen.

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CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

Hex ye, O, illustrious, noble, wise lords and princes! Hear ye all

judges of the land, where the sword of God is given to the destruction

of the evil doers, to the protection of the good, and to the punishment

of the wicked I Hear, ye wise and intelligent, you, who think that you

bear the vessels of the Lord! Hear ye, all people, of whatever state,

condition, trade or class, who call yourselves christians, and who

boast of his bitter death and precious blood I Rom. 13:1; Tit. 3:4; 1

Peter 2:13, 14.

Since we, for the sake of baptism, are so miserably profaned, slandered

and persecuted by all mankind, and as we are ever suspicioned by the

ungodly sects (who are to you very shameful, perilous and abominable,

as may be plainly seen); therefore we say and testify in Christ Jesus,

before God, before his holy angels, before you, and before the whole

world, that we are solely urged by a God fearing faith which we have in

the word of God, to baptize and to be baptized, as the only means; nor

will it be found otherwise neither in this life, nor in death, nor in

the last judgment of God.

Beloved, we verily seek nothing in this baptism other than to obey our

beloved Lord Jesus Christ, who has taught and commanded us this with

his own blessed mouth, Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:16. Consider, once, we pray

you, that we cannot possibly seek carnal profit in this our actions;

neither gold, nor silver, nor honor, nor ease, nor long life on earth.

For you may plainly see that we are made a prey to the world on account

of it. But we are urged solely by the love of God, by an upright,

fruitful faith, which faith industriously examines all the words of

Christ, giving ourselves in willing obedience to God; knowing to a

certainty that if we oppose, and do not obey that which our Lord has

commanded, we can never receive nor inherit the heavenly blessing and

divine promise. For through obedience every thing is received, as has

been mentioned in the preface, Matt. 3:6; Acts 19:18; 2:38; 9:6; 10:48;

16:30.

How could Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, together with all the beloved

fathers and patriarchs, have obtained the consoling promise of God, if

they had not done, be it ever so little, that which God had commanded

them through his holy word? But they heard the word of God; firmly

believed and obeyed it; and therefore they became joint heirs of

righteousness, Heb. 11:8.

On the contrary, however, all those who did not obey God, undoubtedly,

must have borne the punishment of the Lord, as did Adam and Eve; Nadab

and Abihu; Korah, Dathan and Abiram; as Saul; as the man of God who

reproved Jeroboam the king, for his idolatry, and was deceived by the

old prophet in Bethel, and other instances, which may be read of in

Moses and other scriptural writings, Gen. 3:17; Lev. 10:2; Num. 16:32;

1 Sam. 15:23.

Since we are so pitiably opposed by all mankind in our doctrine and

practice of the christian baptism, and since they do not realize that

their opposition tends to eternal death, for they oppose Christ and his

word; therefore I will again briefly show them and all persons, from

the word of God who shall read, see or hear these my writings, how

wonderfully, powerfully, nay, how incontrovertibly this our doctrine

and practice are contained and founded on the holy gospel of Jesus

Christ, although we have fully shown and proven this before, in our

writings on baptism.

Most beloved, there are necessarily three reasons why our faith accepts

this baptism under such a heavy cross and anxiety.

First, because of the divine .commandment of our beloved Lord Jesus

Christ, which can never be broken. Secondly, because of the teaching of

the holy apostles. Thirdly, because of the practice of these same

apostles. And first of the commandment: After Christ Jesus had risen

from the power of death and was going to ascend to his heavenly Father,

he thus commanded his disciples, saying, "Go ye therefore, and teach

all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son,

and of the Holy Ghost," Matt. 28:19. Again, at another place, " Go ye

into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, he that

believeth and is baptized, shall be saved," Mark 16:15, 16. While, now,

Jesus Christ, the eternal wisdom who cannot err, the eternal truth who

cannot lie, has commanded this, namely, that we shall first preach the

gospel, from the hearing of which comes faith, Rom. 10, and that we

shall baptize those who believe, who will or who can, now, explain this

divine commandment otherwise, or make it of more value than the

eternal, wise, perfect, blessed Christ Jesus, has made and commanded

it?

Brethren, it was not allowed to apply one single word of the Mosaic

ceremonies different from what they were contained in the law. For the

Almighty God will not that we should follow our own inclinations with

regard to the ceremonies which he has commanded us, but alone desires

us to observe his good will and pleasure; for that purpose he has

commanded them. In the outward ceremonies alone God finds no pleasure;

but he has commanded them because he requires of us faithful obedience.

His wrath has often come on those who practiced his ceremonies

differently from the commandment, as in the case of Nadab and Abihu and

many others. For he will, yea, he will that we should not follow our

own opinion, but that we should hear, believe and obey his holy voice,

Jer. 7:5?7.

If God would have his ceremonies under the law (which were numerous,

and in one respect attended with trouble and expense, and which he

commanded not through Christ, his Son, but through his servant Moses),

kept thus strictly and unchanged until the time of Christ; how much

more so will he have the few ceremonies of the New Testament kept

strictly and unchanged, which are but two in number, being baptism and

the Supper, which he has commanded, not through his servant but through

his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ; and which are neither attended

with trouble nor expense.

Consider how troublesome and expensive it was to the Israelites to

travel a long distance over hill and dale, to appear two or three times

a year before the Lord, at Jerusalem, with their offerings of bullocks,

rams, goats and tenths, which they were bound to offer of all their

goods, to the Lord. But the christian .ceremonies of the New Testament,

baptism and Supper, which are commanded us of God, are not at all

attended with trouble or expense; although the meaning or

representation of these ceremonies to true believers, is attended with

great vexation to the flesh. This however is not caused by the

ceremonies themselves, but alone through the faith which leads us to

these ceremonies, out of love and obedience to the divine word. Most

beloved, since the ordinance of Jesus Christ is unchangeable and the

only one that is acceptable to the Father; and since he has commanded

that we shall first preach the gospel and then baptize those who

believe; it follows that all those who baptize and are baptized,

without the teaching of the gospel and without faith, baptize and are

baptized, on their own opinion, without the doctrine and the ordinance

of Jesus Christ, and therefore it is idolatry, useless and vain. For

had Israel circumcised their females because it was not expressly

forbidden, they would yet have circumcised without the ordinance of

God, for he had commanded that the males were to be circumcised, Gen.

1'7:10. The same it is in this instance. If we baptize the unconscious

children, although Scripture has not expressly forbidden it, just as it

was not forbidden to circumcise the females, we yet baptize without the

ordinance of Jesus Christ; for he commanded to baptize those who should

hear and believe his holy gospel, Gen. 1'7:10; Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:16;

Acts 2:38; 9:18; 10:48; 16:33.

It avails nothing that some say that these words of Matthew and Mark

extend the holy church to the Gentiles, and that thereby the baptism of

infants is not excluded. Beloved reader, it is true by this commandment

the holy church is also extended to the Gentiles, to the fulfillment of

the prophetic Scriptures which long before had seen this through the

Spirit, as Paul proves, Rom. 15. Yet the word stands firmly with regard

to both Jews and Gentiles, namely, whosoever believeth and is baptized,

shall be saved. Faith is before baptism. For faith is the beginning of

all righteousness which avails before God, from which faith, baptism is

the result as a sign and token of obedience. If the children, then,

have faith, their baptism is not forbidden by the alleged words of

Matthew and Mark.

Again, neither does it avail any thing that some allege and say, that

the resurrection of the dead was not expressly written in the books of

Moses, yet it was implied as Christ Jesus proved to the Sadducees from

Exod. 3:6, namely: I am the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob. As

in these words of Moses the resurrection is not expressed, yet it is

implied, as God is no God of the dead but of the living, as Christ

teaches, Matt. 22:32; thus they say, infant baptism is not expressed in

the gospel, yet it is implied. To this we reply: That the resurrection

of the dead is no outward ceremony which God has commanded us to do;

but it is something which God himself will accomplish in us by his

Almighty power, therefore it is an invisible consolation in the hearts

of all believers, which is comprehended by faith alone. But the baptism

of unconscious children is an outward ceremony. If, then, it is an

ordinance and word of God which has the promise, it must be plainly

expressed in the Scriptures. If not, it cannot be called a ceremony of

Christ.

Thirdly, neither does it avail that some allege and say, "Although the

believing women have no express word of invitation to the Lord's

Supper, neither were they at the celebration of the last Supper of the

Lord, yet they are, for good reasons, admitted to the Supper, and it is

the same with unconscious children. Although there is no express

command for their baptism, neither were they baptized of the Lord nor

of his disciples so far as we can learn from the Scriptures; yet they

are, for good reasons, admitted to baptism, the same as the believing

women are admitted to the Supper."

Kind reader, this is a very crafty argument to deceive the simple and

ignorant, for it savors highly of subtlety, but is not at all according

to the example of Jesus Christ. Because the Holy Supper represents the

death of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of our neighbors; both of

which are known and practiced by the believing women as well as the

believing men. If, then, the unconscious children have that which is

represented by baptism, namely, death unto sin, the new life, Rom. 6:4;

the new birth, Jn. 3, the putting on of Christ, Gal. 3:27, the moving,

quickening Spirit by which we are baptized into the body of Christ, 1

Cor. 12:13, and a good conscience, 1 Pet. 3:16, as have the believing

women of what is represented in the Holy Supper, then they should be

baptized for the same reason that believing women are admitted to the

Supper; but it neither will nor can ever be found in unconscious

children.

Fourthly, it avails nothing that some allege from Ecclesiasticus 1:14,

that " To fear the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and it was created

with the faithful in the womb," and will be with the chosen women. If

then, they say, "The fear of the Lord is created with the believing in

the mother's womb, which fear is a fruit of faith, and as the fruit can

not be before the tree, therefore the children from their mother's womb

have a fruitful faith; if they have faith, then their baptism cannot be

hindered according to the Scriptures." Not so, beloved reader, but

judge every thing according to the word of God and his Spirit. For I do

not doubt but that you will confess that the faith which avails with

God, is a gift of God, from whence all righteousness proceeds, comes by

the hearing of the divine word. If, now, it comes by hearing the divine

word, as Paul teaches, how will it be found in unconscious children;

for it is plain that they can not be taught, admonished or instructed,

nay, they are more senseless and helpless at their birth than the

irrational creatures; so unconscious that they cannot be taught any

thing about carnal things, until their hearing, comprehension and

understanding have commenced to develop themselves. If they cannot be

made to understand any thing visible, how can they, then, prematurely,

that is, before they can comprehend things, be taught and instructed in

invisible, celestial matters of the Spirit?

Secondly, you know and acknowledge that where there is a true faith

there is the true knowledge of the difference between good and evil;

the fear of God, the love of God and also of our neighbor, and the

obedience to God and the desire after righteousness. It can not be

otherwise than that a good tree bringeth forth good fruit. Faith works

all manner of righteousness, as it is written, " The just shall live by

faith," and " Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence

of things not seen," Matt. 7:18; Rom. 1:17; Heb. 11:1.

Say, dear reader, If faith ever begets good fruits, all manner of

righteousness is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of

things not seen?what fruits and righteousness do our little children

beget, which are evidence of faith, and what do they hope for, and seek

after but eating, drinking, laughter, crying, warmth, play, &c., as has

been the nature of children from the beginning. Besides, they often

show the growth of the evil, Adamic seed; and as they advance in youth

they manifest it still more; but the fruits of faith, or of the new

birth they do not show, as may be plainly observed, and if you do not

observe it by daily experience, then believe the word of God, which

will never deceive you. Thus Moses says, " Your children, which in that

?day had no knowledge between good and evil," &c., Deut.1:39. They had

no knowledge between good and evil, as it appears where, then, is their

faith which has the knowledge between good and evil?

Thirdly, you will acknowledge that all righteousness comes by faith as

our controverters themselves allege and adduce in their opposition,

Rom. 4: G. Without faith there is no godly righteousness; therefore

Paul says to the Hebrews (speaking of those ,of understanding years),

that " Without faith it is impossible to please God," Heb. 11: g.

Inasmuch as the children, then, have no faith by which they can realize

what God is and that he is a rewarder of both good and evil, as they

plainly show by their fruits?therefore they have not the fear of God,

and consequently they have nothing upon which they should be baptized,

yet they have the promise of everlasting life, out of pure grace. This

is all that the Scriptures accord to them, and all that the word of God

says of them, as will be shown below.

Inasmuch, then, as faith must be first and afterwards the righteous

fruits which come by faith?such as the fear of God, the love of God,

&c., which fruits do not appear in unconscious children, as has been

often said; therefore we must presume that Ecclesiasticus does not

teach that the fear of God is not in little children immediately after

conception; but we are taught here that the fear of God is to the

believing in the womb, that it will be given them in due time; because

his eyes of fire, those eyes which from the beginning to the end

foresaw all things; foresaw when they were yet in their mother's womb,

that they in time would hear his holy voice, truly believe, and through

faith fear God; and become righteous before him; for true faith cannot

be without its fruits, as has been often proven.

If then, faith were in the little, unconscious children from

conception, as our opponents say, it would be a fruitless faith, for

they do not bring forth fruits; and therefore their preaching in this

regard is in vain. For, if that were the case, faith would come by the

creation, or conception, of the believing, and not by the preaching of

the divine word. Not so, beloved reader. This is a sure, eternal,

imperishable and an enduring rule of the divine truth, to fulfill all

righteousness, namely: First, the true preaching of the holy gospel of

Jesus Christ. Secondly, a desire to hear and understand. Thirdly, to

cordially believe this gospel and i to fulfill it in fruit. This being

the case, it follows that the little, unconscious children have no

faith, for they can not understand and learn. If they have no faith,

they cannot have the fear of God. Therefore our opponents cannot prove

the justice of baptizing little, unconscious children, from this

passage of Ecclesiasticus; but they must wait according to God's word

until they can understand the holy gospel of grace, and sincerely

confess it; then it is time, no matter how young or old they are, to

receive christian baptism, as the infallible word of our beloved Lord

Jesus Christ has taught and commanded all true believers, in his holy

gospel, Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:16. If they die before maturity, that is

in childhood, before they have come to years of understanding and

before they have faith, then they die under the promise of God, and

that by no other means than the precious promise of grace, given

through Christ Jesus, Luke 18:16; and if they become of understanding

minds and have faith, they should then be baptized. But if they do not

accept or believe the word when they shall have arrived at the years of

understanding, .no matter whether they are baptized or not, they will

be damned, as Christ himself teaches, Mark 16:16.

I know that there are a great many, who will ask, " Why I, unlearned

man, am not satisfied in regard to this matter with the doctrine of

Martin Luther and other renowned doctors, who are versed in the

Scriptures and many tongues and sciences ?.who teach, and particularly

Luther, that faith lies dormant in little children the same as in a

sleeping believer?"

To this I answer: In the first place, if there were such a dormant

faith in little children (which, however, is nothing but invention),

then it would not be proper to baptize such children so long as they

would not verbally confess it and show it by their fruits. For the holy

apostles did not baptize any believers while they were asleep, as we

have shown in our former writings.

Secondly, I acknowledge and confess from my inmost heart, before you,

and the whole world, that they and many others are well gifted with

learning, eloquence, subtlety, languages and science, and that I, poor,

ignorant man, am in comparison to them, as a fly is to an elephant;

therefore I am heartily ashamed to write and speak against them, with

my dull pen and awkward speech. Yet every reader should know that

however learned the beforementioned philosophers are, and however

ignorant I am, yet our opinions avail the same with God and before him,

for, without the command of the holy Scripture, nothing righteous can

be done and nothing pleasing to God can be practiced, let him be

whosoever he may. The?holy Scriptures do not refer us to them nor to

any other learned person, but to Christ Jesus, alone. Whenever such

highly renowned men, by their subtle acuteness and artful philosophy

try to take from us and garble the plain ordinances of Jesus Christ and

of his apostles, we must, surely, consider their doctrine, in that re=

spect, as doctrine of men and false; for Christ Jesus is not under

them, but above them. Neither has he received his holy doctrine from

them, but from his wise Father, Jn. 7:24; 8:26; 12:46; 16:13.

Since they, by their philosophy, assert that there is a dormant,

unfruitful faith in unconscious children, evidently against all

Scripture and truth, and that the children should be baptized upon such

human phantaey; now, judge for yourselves, you who oppose me, which of

the two I would better do?hear the holy word and ordinance of Christ

Jesus, to whom the Father, together with all the prophets, have pointed

me, or hear the learned, who, against his holy word and ordinance,

would have me follow their opinion, which they have formed by garbling

the Scriptures. Eradicate from your carnal hearts all partisanship and

contention so that you can fairly judge of spiritual matters. God grant

that all the learned and those that are taught of them, may acknowledge

and teach truth, and fulfill it in their works, Amen.

Inasmuch as Christ Jesus has commanded his holy apostles that they

should first teach the holy gospel of grace and then baptize those who

should believe; we are, for the same reasons, urged by the love of God,

to teach this christian baptism according to the word of God, and

afterwards obediently receive it, and, by the grace of the Lord, to

save it, to the honor of God, both in life and death; notwithstanding

all the world opposes us.

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TEACHINGS OF THE HOLY APOSTLES CONCERNING BAPTISM IN THE WATER.

Again, we are urged by the pure, chaste teaching of the holy apostles

thus diligently to teach and receive this christian baptism: First,

because it is written, "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in

their heart, and said unto Peter," "Men and brethren what shall we do?

Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in

the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall

receive the gift of the Holy Ghost,'' Acts 2:37, 38.

Most beloved, bear in mind, now and all the days of your lives, not

only concerning baptism, but concerning all doctrine you may hear, lest

you be deceived by false teaching, namely, as all the true prophets of

God, who were between Moses and Christ, conformed their teaching to the

doctrine of Moses, so the holy apostles, also, conformed their teaching

to the doctrine of Christ Jesus, as he had commanded them, saying,

"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you,"

Matt. 28:20.

Therefore consider and ponder well that which shall be taught you, by

the grace of the Lord, from the word of God, and you will clearly

perceive from these words, of Peter, how the words of Jesus to

Nicodemus, concerning the new birth, should be understood thus, "

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of

the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God," Jn. 3: G.

Beloved brethren, the new birth came to pass through the word of God.

When this word was taught on the day of Pentecost, by Peter at

Jerusalem, the multitudes heard it from his mouth and from the mouth of

the other apostles; their hearts were pierced, for, by faith, they

accepted these words, and therefore they said, " Men and brethren, what

shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every

one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and

ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." The same as Christ said

to Nicodemus, when he first taught of the birth from above, saying,

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of

the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

Behold, my chosen brethren I how harmonious are both master and

disciples in their teachings, namely: First, the birth from above by

which we become children of God. Secondly, the water by which the

obedience of the children of God is shown. Thirdly, the communion of

the Holy Ghost by which we are assured in our hearts of the grace of

God, of the remission of sins, and of everlasting life through Christ

Jesus our Lord, Jn. 1:14; 3:2.

Inasmuch as the holy Peter, who is the apostle of God, a true witness,

sent by Jesus Christ with the word of everlasting life, enlightened and

taught by the Holy Ghost, has thus taught and commanded us, namely,

that we shall suffer ourselves to be baptized upon the confession of

faith according to the command of the Lord, Mark 16:16; in the name of

Christ for the remission of sin, therefore we must receive this baptism

the same as is commanded us in the Holy Scriptures, or else we cannot

obtain remission of sins nor the Holy Ghost. For who has ever received

remission of sins, contrary to the word of God? Surely, it is

impossible that we can rob God of the remission of sins and of his Holy

Ghost. If we, then, desire the remission of our sins and the Holy

Ghost, we must do and fulfill all that which God, the Almighty Father

has taught and commanded us through Christ Jesus his beloved Son, and

through his holy apostles, in all spiritual matters.

Here it avails nothing that some teach and say, contrary to the holy

Scripture, "That the little children are born of Adam, with a sinful or

wicked nature, and that therefore they should be washed of their

inherent guilt and sin, by baptism." To teach and believe thus, my

brethren, is first, a fearful idolatry, and abominable blasphemy

against the blood of Christ. There is no remedy, in heaven nor on

earth, for our sins, whether they are inherent or worldly, but the

blood of Christ alone, as we have often shown in our first writings, 1

Pet. 1:19; 1 Jn. 1:7; Eph. 1:7. If we ascribe the remission of sins to

baptism and not to the blood of Christ, then we mould a golden calf and

place it in the stead of Christ. For if we could be washed or cleansed

by baptism, then Christ Jesus and his merits would be of none effect;

otherwise we must admit that there are two means for the remission of

sin which is not, nor ever can be; first, baptism; second, the blood of

Christ. For the most holy and most precious blood of our beloved Lord

Jesus Christ must and shall have the praise, as has been so clearly

prophesied and testified of all the true prophets and apostles,

throughout the Scriptures.

The believing receive remission of sins not through baptism, but in

baptism, in this manner: as they now, sincerely believe the lovely

gospel of Jesus Christ which has been preached and taught to them,

which is the glad tidings of grace, namely, of the remission of sin, of

grace, of peace, of favor, of mercy and of eternal life through Jesus

Christ our Lord,. so they become of a new mind, deny themselves,

bitterly lament their old, corrupted life, and look diligently to the

word of the Lord, who has shown them such great love; to fulfill all

that which he has taught and commanded them in his holy gospel,

trusting firmly in the word of grace, in the remission of their sins

through the precious blood and through the merits of our beloved Lord

Jesus Christ.

They therefore receive the holy baptism as a token of obedience which

proceeds from faith, as proof, before God and his church, that they

firmly believe in the remission of 'their sins through Christ Jesus, as

was preached and taught them from the word of God; therefore they

receive remission of their sins in baptism, as the lovely promise of

grace proclaims and represents; the same as the literal Israelites

received remission of their sins by their offerings. For in case that

we only sought outward baptism and trusted in the literal practice, and

would yet continue in our old, corrupted walk, then indeed, all would

be in vain, the same as it was in such case, a vain offering, amongst

the ungodly and carnal Israelites. For the Lord of lords so often

complained through his holy prophets, that their offering was not

pleasing to him, that it was nothing but a corrupt abomination and

stench, before his holy eyes; inasmuch that they despised the law, love

and the commandments of God, and lived according to the lasts of their

flesh, Isa. 66:4, 5; and other passages.

Secondly, we are not cleansed, in baptism, of our inherited sinful

nature which is in our flesh, so that it is entirely destroyed in us,

for it remains with us after baptism; but since the merciful Father,

from whom are all good and perfect gifts, has graciously given us the

most holy faith, so we manifest in the baptism we receive, that we

desire to die unto the inherent, sinful nature, and destroy it, so that

it will not any longer be master of our mortal bodies, Rom. 6:12.

Although such true believers are often overcome by sin, as John

observes, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed

remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God," 1 Jn.

3:9.

Brethren, I repeat it, as the Israelites received remission of their

sins, through the promise, with which were associated their offerings,

when they offered with contrite hearts, not through the offering

itself, for then it would be merit, but alone through the word of

promise; for it is grace and not merit?so we receive remission of our

sins, when we are true believers and are washed and cleansed in

baptism, through the promise; not, I say, through the washing of water,

for it is not merit, but through the promise, for it is grace, with

which promise the Holy Spirit of God has associated the baptism of the

believing, in the gospel, as Paul teaches, saying, " Christ also loved

the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse

it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to

himself a glorious church," Eph. G:2G?27.

Behold, most beloved, from this it is plain that we are not cleansed by

the washing of water, but by the word of the Lord, as the holy Paul

clearly teaches us in the beforementioned words. Inasmuch as the

little, unconscious children, by reason of their incapability of

comprehending and understanding the preaching of the holy gospel, by

which, alone, comes faith, Rom. 10:17; by which faith, alone, God

?purifies our hearts, Acts 15:9, and not by the outward baptism, as has

been said before, and, inasmuch as the express command and word of God,

which associates the promise with baptism, solely refers to those who

are begotten of this same word and are thus cleansed in their hearts by

faith, it therefore follows incontrovertibly therefrom; that these

little children, notwithstanding that they are baptized under a false

pretension and false explanation of the divine word, are not cleansed

thereby, if they ever were unclean, which however is not the case. Why?

Because the promise is not associated with their baptism. Therefore

their baptism is not done according to the word; but in every respect

contrary to the word. For the word requires faith, and they have no

faith. Therefore their baptism is without doubt a baptism of their own

choice, without God, without promise, yea, idolatrous, useless and in

vain.

Whosoever now wants to oppose this, and does not want to believe the

ordinance and word of God, let him take heed to what he does. For by

infant baptism he nullifies the command of the Lord; tramples upon his

precious blood (for he seeks righteousness in this baptism), and he

establishes, contrary to the immutable ordinance of God, and of his own

carnal choice, a false baptism which God never commanded. Therefore it

neither is his holy will, as has been said above and as will be shown

more extensively below.

Again the apostle Peter writes, As Noah, in his day, was saved in the

ark from the waters of the deluge, so "even baptism doth also now save

us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a

good conscience toward God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ," 1

Pet. 3:21.

By this passage of Peter, the baptism of the believing is again clearly

affirmed and the baptism of infants nullified. For it is impossible

that any one can have a good conscience but those, alone, who believe,

and whose hearts are regenerated and converted; who acknowledge the

divine word which teaches that God the Almighty Father, whose enemies

we were before, Rom. 5:10, is now again reconciled through Christ

Jesus, his beloved Son; that henceforth, through the merits of our

beloved Lord, neither hell, devil, past sins, eternal death, nor the

wrath of God will hurt or hinder us. All those who truly believe this,

shall receive and obtain a joyous mind and good conscience by the

resurrection of Jesus Christ as Peter says; because he has so

gloriously triumphed over all his enemies, visible and invisible, to

our profit; and has again seated himself in heaven, at the right hand

of his Father. Such, are first inwardly baptized with the Spirit and

fire, according to the word of God, and are thus taught in their hearts

by this Spirit, and are led in all divine truth, righteousness,

obedience, and evangelical fruits and works. They are inwardly so

enkindled with this fire of love, having become conscious, by the word

of God, that such great grace, I repeat it, grace, has been bestowed on

them through Christ Jesus, that they regard neither lords, princes,

philosophers, learned men, councils, long usages, women, children,

flesh, blood, decrees, nor any other threats; neither life nor death,

but remain glad in Spirit, maintain, at the risk of home, not only the

outward baptism, but also all the works of love and the fruits of

righteousness, which the true mouth of the Lord Jesus Christ has taught

and commanded us in his holy gospel, either himself or through his holy

apostles.

Behold, beloved brethren, in this manner baptism saves us, as Peter

teaches; not the outward literal baptism, but the inward, spiritual

baptism, which as obedient children of God, has led us through the

power of faith, to the outward literal baptism; for the outward,

literal baptism is nothing more than obedience to the divine word, and

thus it is a seal or proof of the righteousness from whence the true,

fruitful faith comes; the same as was the literal circumcision to the

believing and obedient Abraham, Rom. 4:10, 11.

Since Christ Jesus has commanded that we should baptize the believing,

Mark 16:18?therefore holy Peter followed the commandment in his

teachings; and has taught baptism to be a work of faith, namely, the

answer of a good conscience toward God, which answer none can

experience but those alone who have faith. Inasmuch as there is but one

literal baptism taught in Scripture, which baptism shows and is proof

of the answer of a good conscience toward God, as Peter teaches, and

thus by this Scripture of Peter, infant baptism is prohibited; for they

cannot have this consciousness like the believing. Therefore take heed,

kind reader, whosoever you are, lest you offend God. For all those who

thus lamentably oppose this evangelical baptism of the believing, which

baptism is so pointedly commanded of Jesus Christ, and is thus taught

and practiced by .his holy apostles, either by doctrine, word or sword,

must confess and acknowledge that they were hitherto neither right

believing, regenerated, obedient, nor inwardly baptized with the Spirit

and fire. Again, let every one of you beware and take heed for it does

not concern anything temporal, but it concerns your poor, naked souls

which have been so dearly bought and delivered by such a precious

treasure.

Beloved children in the Lord, however incontrovertibly our cause is

confirmed and founded in the word of God, yet some are not ashamed,

persistently and continually to write, talk, and slander against us;

advising and exciting persecution, slaughter and blood?shed against us;

in part I presume from ignorance, partly out of partiality, and because

they are enemies of the cross of Christ and because they do not desire

the lovely, spiritual life which is of God; and say, "Although infants

have not ?the answer of a good conscience, as the believing have, yet

this should be no cause of not administering baptism to them; but they

ought to be baptized, that they may the better receive instruction in

the word and commandments of God."

Most beloved brethren, when an idolatrous, refractory and disobedient

person has not the word of God wherewith to defend his cause, he yet

acutely invents something wherewith he can so beautify and adorn his

invention and carnal righteousness with a semblance of divinity and

holiness, that it seems quite right, just, spiritual, holy, divine and

unblamable in the sight of those who are not versed in spiritual

matters of faith; and the more so because their unchristian hearts and

carnal minds are prone to trust in outward works, yea, through their

own choice and opinion, as I understand it. If I write wrongly, then

rebuke me according to the word of God; for the greater part of them

have always sought righteousness in wrought ceremonies, and not in

Christ, as is evident from the fact that, as now, the unintelligent

teachers and bishops in the days of the apostles, or soon after,

commenced the practice of infant baptism, contrary to the command of

God and the doctrine of the holy apostles, as may be readily perceived

in the book of Tertullian, called "Corona Milites." He writes that

among the ancients almost invariably the adults were baptized with the

washing of regeneration. Understand me rightly brethren. Tertullian

lived one hundred and eight years after Christ, some say one hundred

and forty years. As early as in the days of these ancient writers, the

true, evangelical baptism, which was commanded by Christ and taught and

practiced by his holy apostles, had become degenerated with many, which

baptism he clearly testifies that the ancients almost invariably

practiced upon adults. If now, brethren, it were so that the ancients,

who were before him, already baptized infants, as it appears, and to

which we consent, because he says almost invariably; and in another

place in the same book, as the Strasburgian philosophers write of him,

he says, "That in the same fount or water?bath, both children and

adults were baptized." Nevertheless, infant baptism was no apostolic

institution nor practice, nor a divine command; for if Christ had

commanded it, and the holy apostles had taught and practiced it, then

the ancestors of Tertullian would not have baptized some infants, but

all the infants of upright, believing parents, indiscriminately.

That it is no divine command nor apostolic institution, was well known

and shown by the beloved, aged father, Alexander, bishop of Alexandria,

who was a particular opponent of Arrius; for he, so long after the days

of the apostles, did not baptize the infants of his church, as may be

plainly seen and understood from the Church History of Eusebius, Vol.

10, Chap. 14, translated by Ruffinis, on "The play of Children," by

Anthanasius. Therefore the intelligent and learned Erasmus, of

Rotterdam, as Sebastian Franck writes of him, who had perused and

understood all the noteworthv writers of the world say, That the

ancient fathers disputed about infant baptism, but never settled it.

Behold, kind reader, inasmuch as the ancients, from the beginning, were

not unanimous in this matter; and inasmuch as they did not all practice

infant baptism, as appears from Tertullian and Alexander; and as those

who practiced infant baptism have ever sought righteousness therein, as

may be seen by their writings?therefore we will not place our

foundation upon that which is uncertain, but upon that which is

certain, which is Christ's word. Neither will we seek our righteousness

in the outward baptism nor in any other works, as does the world, but

in Christ Jesus, as all the Scriptures teach us. Herewith we desire to

present our cause to the consideration and judgment of all the world

and let them tell whether they have ever read in the word of God, I sap

in the word of Clod or in his gospel, that Christ Jesus and his holy

apostles taught two different baptisms in the water, namely, that one

baptism should be administered to the believing, which baptism

represents death unto sin, a new life, the answer of a good conscience

toward God, and the washing of regeneration, Rom. 6:12; Col. 2:12; 1

Pet. 3:21; Tit. 3: C; and that the other baptism should be administered

to infants, which signifies nothing only that they should be outwardly

washed with water.

Brethren, judge rightly and do not deceive your souls. We know that

they first say "That infants are cleansed of their inherent sins and

that therefore their baptism is not in vain." To this we reply with the

word of God: That such belief is abominable idolatry; for in this case

the blood of Christ avails, and not the outward baptism, as has been

shown above.

In the second place they say, "That thereby they are accepted into the

covenant of God." To this we reply again: That this is not because of

baptism, but alone through the mild election of grace, Eph. 1:6; for it

is grace and not merit, Rom. 11:6.

In the third place they say, "That children should be baptized that

they may the better be trained in the word of God and his commandments"

To this we reply again: That we desire to know where such is expressed

and written in the holy Scriptures. Give a discreet answer, we pray

you, who assert infant baptism to be right, ,just and necessary, and

who so lamentably slander and profane us on account of baptism, that we

may no longer be deceived in our hearts; but that we may assuredly know

by the word of God where to find this infant baptism. For however

industriously we may search day and night, we yet find but one baptism

in the water, pleasing to God, which is expressed and contained in his

word, namely: Baptism on the confession of faith, commanded by Christ

Jesus, taught and administered by his holy apostles, which is

administered and received for the forgiveness and remission of sins in

such a manner, as we have fully proven above by the words of Peter,

Acts. 2:38. But of this other baptism, that is, infant baptism, we find

nothing.

Because this infant baptism is nowhere commanded nor implied in the

divine word, therefore we take issue with you and all the world, that

we regard it not only as vain, but we believe and proclaim it as

idolatrous, useless, and unavailable, not only by words merely, but at

the cost of our lives, as has been proven by events in many countries

of Germany. The reason is this, because it is administered without the

word and commandment of God; because righteousness is sought therein;

and because the true baptism of the believing must be so lamentably

rejected and trampled upon, by the whole world, as an heretical

baptism, as far as the name of Christ is mentioned. Therefore,

brethren, it is nothing but opinion and human righteousness, to teach,

without the word of God, that infants should be baptized, that they may

be the better trained in the word of God and his commandments; as we

find to the contrary that, although these parents have their infants

baptized, they yet, from youth on, are trained by these same parents in

this Adamic nature, in all manner of pride, pomp, avarice, vanity,

lying, cursing, swearing, dancing, singing, foolishness, artfulness,

hatred, enmity, revengefulness and to the accursed life of this world,

the same, as from the beginning the heathen have done who never

confessed God.

What profits such baptism as they have received? Is it not merely

folly, deceit, mockery and shame in the sight of God? Certainly.

Beware. There can be no greater hypocrisy, mockery or blasphemy in his

sight. Inasmuch as, perhaps, the secret awfulness which is hidden in

infant baptism, is not yet rightly understood by you ?therefore I will

briefly present the matter, that you may the better distinguish between

truth and falsehood. I will present to you that which for many

centuries, as all men may have seen, has been of daily occurrence and

which, alas, yet occurs daily.

In the first place, we will imagine an extremely corrupted, ungodly,

carnal knave who is yet called a priest, pastor, vicar or prebendary by

the world. This same unchaste man, full of all manner of roguery and

deceit, covers his condemnable knavery with such a pleasant semblance

that none suspicion him, as does the ravening wolf in sheeps clothing,

Matt. 7:5. His head is frequently shaven, perhaps, as proof that he

wants thus violently to shave off and destroy all lusts and desires of

his wicked, sinful flesh; he desires to walk in long robes, as Christ

says, Luke 20:40, as if he were pious, holy and venerable; he daily

reads his prayers with folded hands and uncovered head, as if he were

very ardently inspired; he kneels and burns incense before stone and

wooden blocks, which he calls Peter, Paul, Mary and the worthy crucifix

of the Lord. I tell this verily without facetiousness, of which God is

my witness. Judge now whether this is not the case.

Besides he buys a hundred wafers for a stiver, takes one at a time,

consecrates it as he savs, and that mentally, without saying a word,

nods to it, worships, implores and eats it; and this same thing he

believes and teaches to be the true flesh and blood of our beloved

Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of the Almighty and living God. Besides he

must be so pure and chaste in his walk that he is not allowed to have a

legitimate or wedded consort, although the Holy Scriptures allow it,

but the Pope has forbidden it. All these and other abominations he

calls and teaches to be the holy worship, and the most holy, christian

faith. Such fruits are begotten and produced by this evil tree, by the

faith that is within him; and after he has orderly, sumptuously and

well performed his carnal holiness, he proves his inward holiness, by

seeking the best female company, wine and beer; drinks, sings, dances,

laughs, shouts, scolds, fights, curses, swears, boasts, plays, courts

and defiles himself with his female servant, his neighbors daughter, or

wife whose husband perhaps is at sea, or some other place, trying to

earn a livelihood by the labor of his hands. Thus he lives in shameful

adultery until, by the fruits thereof, it can no longer be concealed,

when the blame is cast upon some one else, and the fruit . (understand

what I write), is disposed of, and by falsehood and deception their

shame and adultery are concealed.

Behold, brethren, they of whom such illegitimate children are born,

have been baptized in their infancy, claiming thereby to be christians;

they boast of Jesus Christ and of his precious blood. But we may see by

their fruits what kind of christians they are, and what kind of faith

they have.

Therefore I tell you these things, O kind reader, that you may know in

the first place, what kind of christian parents these are, what kind of

faith they have, of whom some children are born who are,

notwithstanding all this, carried to the baptism and are baptized on

the faith of their hypocritical parents, and are therefore called

christians. O, abominable mockery!

In the second place, I find at many places, throughout the world,

numbers of vain and abandoned characters, some of them sanctified,

others not, some claiming nobility, in a worldly sense, some of large

means, some of mediocrity, some poor, in short, of all classes, who, in

the same manner, live in all manner of debauchery, vanity, inebriety

and uncleanliness, according to their shameful, inordinate lusts and

devilish desires, and in all? manner of fornication and adultery. Th ey

seduce all they can, notwithstanding they are baptized. And when they,

by their recklessness, have succeeded in accomplishing the ruin of such

simple and uncircumspect souls who are also born of Adam, and who are,

perhaps, deceived by, false promises and gifts, and led thereto by

their accursed actions, then yet, it must be considered by those of

their class as a great honor and respectability, as the prophet says.

Yet, notwithstanding all this, these same persons alike carry the

children who are thus illegitimately born of such profaners, rogues and

abandoned women, to the baptism, that they may be called christians and

be trained up in the same works and fruits as their adulterous parents,

in whom and by whom they are conceived, and begotten in accursed and

damnable adultery. , unbelief!

In the third place, I find almost universally, both among men and women

of whatever class or condition they are, noble, rich, poor, citizen or

yeoman, who were baptized in infancy, and on that account are called

christians, yet they lead such sinful lives that we can form no idea

thereof. Their pride, unchastity, avarice, fraud in buying and selling,

quarreling, hatred, unrighteousness, unmercifulness towards the tenant

and the , poor, their cursing, swearing, lying, cheating, pomp,

debauchery, drinking, vanity, foolery, blood?thirstiness, cruelty,

hypocrisy, tyranny, transgressions, idolatry and all manner of

wickedness know no bounds.

If there are some who are not guilty of all the beforementioned vices,

on account of their natural indisposition thereto, it must be admitted

that there is not one in a thousand who industriously seeks and desires

to walk according to the commandments of God, or to live according to

his blessed will. Nor do they ask for the right way to eternal life

that they may be saved; yet they must be called the right, christian

church. Thus has God, the righteous judge, obscured the understanding

and natural intellect of those who reject his holy word, and who make

and honor things of their own choice, as an idol.

Notwithstanding the heathenish life of both father and mother, yet

their infants which are born of them must, without the word of God and

merely out of their own choice, be conjured, blessed, rubbed with

spittle, anointed, crucifixed and baptized, and after this has been

done at the instance of their parents, although contrary to the

commandment of God, they are called believing,, christian people, no

matter how ungodly, inhuman and devilish a life they lead; and are

admitted and received into the church as full and proper members.

, Lord, Father, how very broad, easy and pleasing to the flesh is the

entrance into this miserable, carnal church; for it is all as said, no

matter who, or what, or how he is, it is all right, if he has but been

sworn before a fountain, and washed and baptized in it by an idolater.

But how wonderfully narrow, Lord, is thy way, and how very strait is

the gate which leadeth into thy poor and holy church. Yea, so narrow

that on its posts are stripped off gold and possessions, flesh and

blood and all the lusts and inclinations of those who desire and

sincerely seek to enter in at this narrow gate; and thus, by thy grace,

to rest and remain forever in thy holy church, Matt. 7? 13.

Behold, kind readers, I have referred to this in this manner, ?first,

that you may the better conceive and understand what kind of

christians, those are, what kind of faith they have, and what kind of

life they lead, to whom infant baptism has been administered and who

now have it administered to their children, that the true, divine

knowledge may multiply in you, that you may rightly comprehend, by the

word of God, what abominable mockery and hypocrisy infant baptism is

before the Almighty God; and that there is no other fruitful, pleasing

and available baptism before God, than alone the baptism which is

administered and received according to the command of Christ, Mark

16:16; namely, the baptism upon the confession of faith, as has been

frequently remarked. Secondly, I must refer you, in the same manner, to

how wonderfully far the custom of the godfathers, who lift the child

upon the basin and answer their confession of faith, is different from

the Spirit, commandment and word of Christ, that by all these facts,

falsehood, unbelief, abuse, and satanic imposture may appear to you and

be demolished; and that, on the other hand, truth, faith, the right

practice and the divine will may be made known and acted upon.

Inasmuch as Christ commanded that the baptized should first believe,

Mark 16:16, before baptism should be administered, Acts 8:38, and as

the world well knew that infants had no faith; and as they,

notwithstanding this, would have unconscious infants baptized, as human

righteousness ever has looked upon, profaned, persecuted, despised and

rejected the righteousness of God as useless, imperfect and foolish;

therefore the ninth or tenth pope, named Higinius, without any

commandment of God, hit upon a happy idea, with which the world has

hitherto been well satisfied, and by means of which they baptized their

infants, and those who feared God more, and therefore understood the

word of God better, were for the greater part thereby excommunicated as

heretics. This means was this: That some should be chosen from the

church, whom they called godfathers, who should lift the children up to

the fountain, to be baptized, and who should care for and answer to the

faith of the child. Most beloved reader, it is true this matter has a

fine appearance and show, but is not in accordance with Christ's Spirit

and meaning because the practice of godfathers is a human institution,

as history plainly shows; therefore I am at a loss to know why it is

that all the learned of the upper and eastern countries yet have this

practice of godfathers, since they have so bravely and incessantly

written, taught and battled with the word of God, against all human

institutions and teachings; for nowhere in the divine word are we

taught the practice of such godfathers, in any manner whatever; but

every where in the Scriptures where baptism is spoken of, it is shown

in very plain characters that the baptized must believe for themselves,

must confess it verbally and by their works, and thus desire and

receive baptism as a commandment of God, Mark 16:16, Acts 2:38; 8:36;

10:48; 16.:33; and other passages.

Again, if it were even so that the practice of godfathers was in

accordance to the word of God or the commandment of Christ, which

however is not so, O, how extensively and closely, and with what great

care we would have to search, in city and country, for a suitable

person to discharge the duties of such an office. For, How can one

blind man lead another I How can one fool make another wise $ How can

one poor person be surety for another? Understand what I write. In the

same manner one unbelieving person can be no surety for the faith of

another; "For every man shall bear his own burden," Gal. 6:6. Neither

can he teach nor advocate the faith of another so long as he himself

has no true, christian faith; for whatever I am to teach another I must

understand myself; and prayer must be the prayer of faith, Jas. G:16,

in Spirit and in truth, Jn. 4:24.

As the unbelieving cannot be surety, before God, for the faith of

another, nor teach him faith, nor advocate it, even if the practice of

godfathers were founded on the ordinance of God, which however it is

not, so it must be acknowledged and admitted, that the practice of

godfathers in infant baptism is entirely vain, useless and unavailable.

I will leave every intelligent christian to judge what faith there is

in the godfathers.

I know that I will be asked if there are no right, believing

godfathers, who with good consciences, hold the infants to the basin 8

To this I briefly answer: No. For, in the first place, it is human

righteousness, contrary to the word of God, and without the ordinance

of Christ; and therefore it can not be practiced with a good

conscience. In the second place I admit that there are godfathers who

are honorable and virtuous; but, truly, I do not know that they are

truly believing; for if they were true believers it would be impossible

that they could ever be led to practice such abominable shame with

infants, without the word of Christ. For there is no word to be found

in all the apostolic Scriptures which in any manner teaches and

commands us such a thing; not to say any thing about the impurity,

avarice, pomp, ignorance concerning divine matters, idolatry,

foolishness, vanity, refractoriness against God and his blessed word,

and of the accursed, carnal life of most of those who are called to

this office by the church, that the faith of the parent and of the

godfathers alike, upon which they baptize these infants and through

which they are thought to acquire faith themselves, may go over on

them; as we have too often seen that the one adulterous knave calls

upon the other; one drunkard on the other; or one proud person upon the

other. By their works they show plainly that it is not of God; but that

it is deceit, devilish hypocrisy, human righteousness, blasphemy,

mockery, destruction of the ordinances of Christ, and, in every respect

contrary to the blessed word of God.

Behold, worthy brethren, in the course of time they have thus subtlely

converted and changed the heavenly doctrine, and lovely ordinance of

our beloved Lord Jesus Christ into such unclean mocking, abuse and

shameful practice. O, Lord, Father of grace, that this fearful and

abominable snare and imposture to our miserable souls, might once be

destroyed, Amen.

In the third place, as we have first shown you the faith and life of

the parents; second, the command, faith and life of the godfathers, we

will now show you who those are whose office it is to baptize these

infants and thus to make christian people out of them, and will point

you, faithful reader, to your ? own pastor, vicar, prebendary or

chaplain, as you call their. Yea to all the priests round about you;

that you may closely scrutinize them according to the word of God, and

see if there is one amongst all of them, I say one, however many there

may be, who is called of an unblamable, christian church, who is moved

by the Spirit, and who is unblamable in both doctrine and life: O,

brother, not one, no, not one, however far you may travel, and however

industriously you may search. Their calling is of the dragon and of the

beast. They have nothing which forces them to this office, but, solely,

their lazy, greedy, avaricious, proud and gluttonous flesh. Their

teaching for the? greater part, is merely deceit; their worship is all

idolatry, spiritual enchantment of the bottomless pit and a cause for

shedding innocent blood. Besides, their daily walk is so shameful,

unclean, sodomic, adulterous, lustful, greedy, avaricious, backbiting,

envious, unmerciful, treacherous, ambitious, blind, ungodly, fearful

and so abominable that all reasonable men, the angels of God and the

heavens must be astounded and ashamed thereat.

Say, kind reader, is it not so? Have you, ever found greater pride,

avarice, gluttony, adultery, fornication, spitefulness, hypocrisy,

mockery and shame than is found amongst them? I am aware that they are

not all alike unchaste and shameful in their daily walk; yet there is

not one amongst them, however finely he appears before the world, but

his worship and life is of the flesh?of the devil; contrary to God and

his blessed word.

Worthy, beloved brethren, he who knoweth all things, knows that I do

not write this with hatred or with bad intentions. Therefore, judge for

yourselves all things according to the word of God, and according to

your rational, natural understanding; as you may daily perceive these

things amongst them. You will without doubt acknowledge that I have

discovered and presented to you nothing but the truth, out of love for

your salvation. Say, have I done wrong to discover and present unto you

the wiles of a thief or murderer? Pluck from your eyes this accursed

and abominable blindness, and look to the truth of your Lord; root all

unbelief from your obscured hearts, and believe the word of God.

Behold, the holy apostle Paul says, " Not to keep company, if any man

that is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater,

or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a one no not

to eat." A proof that, although they call themselves brethren or

christians, they are not in the church of Christ on account of their

dis\* reputable life. For the church of Christ is holy, pure and

unblamable. In another place he teaches that such shall not inherit the

kingdom of God, Rom. 1:32; 1 Cor 5:11; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 5:6.

Now if they are not in the church of Christ, and if they cannot inherit

the king dom of God, tell me what things divine, or christian can then

be served or practiced by them in the house of the Lord, that is, in

the church of Christ? Notwithstanding that we should not keep the

company of such, nor eat with them, and notwithstanding they have not

the promise of salvation according to Paul, on account of their

unbelief and their terrible, wicked, beastly life, yet the world is so

blinded by them and so estranged from God that they look upon, honor

and accept them as true shepherds, teachers and pastors who have power

from God to do anything they please while they only make their

pretensions under the false cover of christianity and of the holy,

christian church, as they call it. O, blindness!

These are they, O ye men, who yet this day are allowed to mislead the

whole world by their false doctrine, and to uselessly bless, conjure

and baptize infants, without the word or command of God,

notwithstanding that the most holy gospel of Jesus Christ opposes and

rebukes such things.

As these spiritual fathers or teachers are, so also are their children

who are begotten of them, that is, those whom they teach and baptize as

they plainly prove and verify by their fruits.

Behold, brethren, by no? other means than by these beforementioned

teachers; and infant baptists, the church of Christ is converted into

such a work of hypocrisy, shame, mockery, deceit, degeneration, knavery

and prostitution. O, misery of misery!

Now you have presented to you, first, the parents of whom the children

are born, with their unbelief and carnal life; secondly, the papal

godfathers, together with their abuse, unbelief and evil fruits, who

lift the children to the basin for baptism, and answer their

confession. Thirdly, the teachers, or baptizers together with their

sending, calling, doctrine, idolatry, unbelief, and ungodly works, who

baptize the infants, and, as they call it; cleanse and wash them of

their inherent sins; all of which parties, namely, parents, godfathers

and baptizers, themselves feel in their hearts neither knowledge,

faith, truth, love, fear of God, gospel, christian fruits, obedience,

remission of sins, peace of mind, prayer, promise, God, Christ, Spirit,

nor eternal life; but are only nominal christians. These deliberately

claim to make a christian out of a child just taken from the mother's

womb, which can neither stand, walk, hear, speak, nor comprehend; which

for lack of understanding, is as the irrational animals; which cannot

distinguish between good and evil; without the word and without faith

by no other means than by crucifixes; breathing, salt, oil, crisma,

candles, clothing, useless questions and answers; blessings, conjuring,

baptizing, offering, and such like abominations, and when this noisy,

idolatrous hypocrisy has been practiced upon the infants, then they are

christian people, as the nurses tell the mother after these things .

have been performed, saying, we have received from you a heathen but a

christian we return and deliver to you again.

The next thing in order, is setting the table. Victuals and drink are

prepared, the neighbors and friends partake thereof, and the parents

are well satisfied with their baptized infant. And from that hour it is

trained in all manner of foolishness, unbelief, vanity, sin, shame,

wickedness, idolatry and all manner of carnal and devilish works; in a

manner, that no knowledge, faith, fear, and love of God, evangelical

truth and life can ever take root in it. And should anything occur that

something christian?like would spring up in it, then it will have to

suffer much and bear the cross of Christ. I repeat it, because of this

baptism it is henceforth considered a christian person, no matter how

it acts. Behold, beloved brethren, they call this the holy church of

to?day, and in this manner one of these christians begets the other,

until the world is full of them.

Honored reader, understand rightly what I have written unto you, for I

have treated so extensively of this matter that you may be convinced of

what a secret, hidden snare and what a terrible, fearful idol, infant

baptism is against God; and how very useless and idolatrous it is to

teach that infants should be baptized that they may be the better

trained in the word and commandments of God. Thus human doctrine ever

puts on a fine and holy air, but in fact it is, verily nothing but

hypocrisy, falsehood and a deadly venom.

Those who do not depend on this autichristian, infant baptism, but

practice the true, christian baptism which was commanded of Christ

Jesus and taught and practiced by his holy apostles, take care of the

salvation of their children. Therefore they train them in the fear of

God by teaching, admonishing and chastising them, and with an example

of an unblamable life, that when they become of mature years, they may

hear, believe and accept the most holy gospel of Jesus Christ, and

receive the holy, christian baptism, as Jesus and his holy apostles

have taught all the believing of God, in divers places of the New

Testament.

In the third place, Paul, also, teaches us so, saying, " Know ye not,

that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized

into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death;

that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the

Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life," Rom. 6:3, 4.

Here the baptism of the believing is again undeniably confirmed, and

infant baptism is made void. For as Christ Jesus commanded that we

should baptize the believing, Mark 16:16, so, also, it is evident from

these words of Paul that baptism represents and signifies something

which none can realize but those, alone, who are believing, namely, it

represents death unto sin or a burying of the old life, and a

resurrection into newness of life.

Since Paul says, This christian baptism is such a death unto sin, and a

raising up into a new life, therefore they must confess and admit that

none can die unto, and bury his shameful lusts and desires, his

inordinate, carnal, ungodly life; and that none can raise up into a

pious, unblamable, godly life but those, alone who, as obedient

children of God, are taught and regenerated by the word of the Lord;

which spiritual death, burial and resurrection are represented in holy

baptism. At another place Paul calls it the spiritual circumcision,

saying, "Ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands;

in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of

Christ; buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him

through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the

dead," Col. 2:11, 12.

Inasmuch as it clearly appears that the believing alone die unto their

sins, and burp them, and, with Christ, enter into, and are raised up

into the new, godly life; and as little children cannot do this because

they have no faith by which God operates in his children, therefore it

must be acknowledged and admitted, whether they are willing or not,

that infant baptism is not commanded by the Lord Jesus Christ, nor

taught or implied in the apostolic doctrine.

Kind reader, it is sometimes alleged that other apostles also left

Scripture behind them; which Scriptures Pope Gelasius has selected, and

that perhaps infant baptism was expressed and implied in them.

Beloved reader, if our opponents build their cause upon the selected

Scriptures of the apostles and have no certainty therefrom, but only

presuming that infant baptism may have been expressed therein, we would

discreetly answer, and ask, first, since they refer to the apostolic

Scriptures which we do not have, we would like to know of them what

thgse apostles have taught ?and commanded concerning infant baptism

Secondly, as they seek to establish their doctrine by uncertain

Scriptures which they do not have, and that only on presumption, they

show thereby that they are unable to verify their doctrine at all by

the apostolic Scriptures which we now have.

Thirdly, we say that we should not. teach and practice the ceremonies

of the Lord, namely: The holy baptism, upon presumption and adventure,

but on certainties.

Fourthly, we say that the apostles have all written, taught and

preached in one spirit. Inasmuch as Christ Jesus has commanded baptism

on the confession of faith, Mark 16:16, and as Peter, Paul and Philip

taught and practiced, according to the commandment of Christ, the

baptism of the believing, and not of infants, therefore you may surely

deduce therefrom that it was not taught and practiced differently by

the other apostles whose Scriptures we do not have; even if they had

written and published six hundred volumes. For if infant baptism was an

apostolic institution it would appear so in their Scriptures. Nor would

Tertullian, who lived not long after the days of the apostles, have

written, that among his ancestors, almost invariably adults were

baptized, as has been said above. Also would Alexander, bishop of

Alexandria, have baptized the infants of his church; and the ancients

would not have disputed about it; as all those who feared God would act

according to the Scriptures and not deviate therefrom; for what

Godfearing person would dare to despise, oppose, or in any manner

contradict an apostolic institution or practice?

Those who did not rightly confess Christ, but sought their

righteousness and placed their trust in outward ceremonies, got the

upper hand of the world; and therefore it was not necessary that this

infant baptism should be confirmed by any papal decree or council, as

it gradually and of its own accord stole its way into all classes,

nations and tongues and took its full sway; for the whole church, after

the demise of the apostles, through the ignorant teachings of the

bishops, gradually degenerated from the trust in Jesus Christ to the

trust in outward ceremonies, as may be plainly seen.

Again, brethren, however plain this passage of Paul, Rom. 6, applies to

the believing, yet the learned of this barren world have inverted and

explained it as confirming and asserting infant baptism, saying, That

infants should be baptized that they may become partakers of the death

and holy blood of Christ Jesus; and that when they become. of mature

age, they may die unto sin and walk righteously before God.

My beloved children in Christ Jesus, if it would do thus to bend, twist

and garble, of our own choice, and carnal fancy, the plain truth and

will of God and the most holy and glorious gospel of our beloved Lord

Jesus Christ, then verily, I do not see why we could not so adorn and

beautify almost any abomination or idolatry as.to give it a good

appearance in the sight of the, ignorant. No, most beloved, no. The

eternal, omnipotent, and saving word of God, must be taught, explained

and understood according to the true meaning of the Holy Spirit. For

they baptize before that which is represented by it (namely, faith,) is

found in us. This is no more sensible than to place the cart before the

horse, to sow before we have plowed, to build before ?we have the

lumber at hand, or to seal the letter before it is written. Would this

not be ridiculed by all the world as foolishness? Yes, certainly.

Therefore the Holy. Spirit of God did not imply infant baptism in this

beforementioned Scripture of Paul. Yet they are partakers of the death

and blood of Christ by the precious promise which was graciously given

of God through Christ Jesus our Lord, and not through baptism, Luke

18:16. But this passage of Paul speaks and teaches of those who, in

their baptism, through their new birth from above and through their

fruitful, operating faith, have died unto and buried their old, sinful

life, as Christ Jesus once died in his flesh and was buried. For

whosoever thus died with Christ, is already ,justified of his sins, and

is thus victoriously raised up, with Christ, from the power of sin, to

the praise of the Lord, in. a new, just, godly, and unblamable life,

which is by no other means than through God's word alone, which is

accepted and believed by them through faith, as has been alleged above,

and is written " Ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without

hands, in putting off the body of the sins. of the flesh by the

circumcision of Christ; buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are

risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath

raised him from the dead," Col. 2:11, 12.

O, beloved brethren, open the eyes of your hearts and understanding and

take heed; for he who will not willfully battle against his God, or his

holy word, certainly, can not mistake these plain words of Paul. Yet

Henry Bullenger and many others, on the strength of this epistle to the

Colossians, have taught \_ baptism to have taken the literal place of

the Israelitic circumcision, although without a good reason and without

the Scriptures, yet not without a good deal of blasphemy and

vituperation. For what reason they have done so, I . do not know;

perhaps because Paul has so closely placed together and so intimately

connected both the spiritual circumcision and the baptism of the

believing or upright christians.

O, Lord, thy divine, blessed word is ever garbled into a shelter for

'all manner of false doctrine, heresy and wrong doing, so that the

Bible is called by some the book of heresy I Notwithstanding their

opposition and subtle lying and philosophizing, the eternal truth of

God shall obtain and triumph in the chosen children of God who

sincerely desire and seek the same.

I repeat it that I am heartily ashamed to write or speak one single

word against such highly renowned and learned men. But what will we do?

It will never do to be robbed, by these learned men, of God's eternal

truth which leads to eternal life, and which was so plainly? taught us

by Jesus Christ our Lord, and by his holy apostles. For, verily. I find

nowhere that we should follow and obey such learned men rather than

Christ and. his holy apostles. If it should be said that they are wise

and pious, I say that Christ is the most wise and pious; and if it be

said that they are versed?in many tongues and sciences, I rejoin,

briefly, that the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ is not bound by

tongues and science. Therefore the most holy and invincible truth of

God must be defended and maintained by us, not only against them, but

against all the gates of hell, by the most holy word of God, in so far

as God has bestowed on us grace, mercy and knowledge..

For this reason I will refer all my readers to Col. 2:12, and would

humbly beseech them to judge impartially whether we find in this or any

other divine Scriptures that the eircumcisioia of the Israelites was

the prototype of infant baptism. It is incontrovertible that Paul, in

this passage and also in Rom. 2:29, taught that the literal

circumcision was a figure of the spiritual circumcision and not of

infant baptism, which circumcision cannot be applied to any but the

believing as may be plainly inferred from the figurative, literal

practice; for the literal circumcision was to be performed with [6]

stone knives on the foreskin, Josh. 5:2, 3; Gen. 17':23. This spiritual

Rock is Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. 10:4, the knife with which the believing

are circumcised is his holy word. Brethren, understand it well. If we

wish to remain with believing, circumcised Abraham in the covenant with

God?into which covenant we are all graciously accepted, young and old,

male and female, through Christ Jesus and not through any sign?then our

earthly, carnal birth which is of the earthly, carnal Adam, must be

circumcised with this same, stone knife, which is Christ Jesus and his

holy word. Therefore examine the beforementioned words of Paul to the

Colossians, and judge whether they are spoken in regard to the

believing or to unconscious infants: Say, who is it that is circumcised

by the circumcision of Christ? Is it not the believing? Who is it that

has put off the body of sin by the circumcision of Christ? Is it not

the believing? Who is it that is buried in baptism with Christ? Is it

not the believing? Who is it that is raised up into a new life by the

faith of the operation of God? Is it not the believing? Yea, they are

those who hear the word of God and believe it; and not the little

infants. Never.

Kind reader, since the infant baptizers seek to prove their cause by

the circumcision of Abraham and by his promise, therefore observe and

ponder how unreasonably they make this assertion; and observe and

ponder also on that which will be briefly taught and presented by us,

from Scriptural truth.

In the first place, as we said before, we are all accepted into the

covenant with God, not by any signs but by grace, and have obtained the

promise by it, if we accept them by faith and walk according to the

will of the giver; as Abraham was accepted of God by grace, from

amongst the nations, and was made glad with the promise of grace; for

he accepted it by faith, and walked according to the will of him who

had accepted him as the Scriptures say, He believed in the Lord, and it

was counted to him for righteousness, Gen. 16:6; Rom. 4:3; Gal. 3:6;

Jas. 2:23.

To all those who are thus, by faith, graciously accepted of God into

the covenant of peace with Abraham, God has given his ceremonies and

figurative signs. Not that they should thereby be justified (for if it

were by the signs it would not be grace, Rom. 11:6), but that they

should be justified by faith; be children of God, children of the

promise, &c., that they should show their obedience to the commandments

of God who has graciously called, accepted and consoled them by his

promise. For those that are obedient unto God, are his friends, Jn. 15.

Behold, brethren, this is one reason why God commanded his ceremonies,

as is plainly shown in the case of Abraham; for Abraham was already in

the covenant with God, before he was circumcised; as Paul shows, that

his faith was already counted for right eousness when he was yet

uncircumcised; and because he was in the covenant with God, justified

by faith therefore God commanded him the circumcision, in itself a

useless and dishonorable ceremony. First, it was in itself quite

useless, because it did not benefit any neighbor. Secondly,

dishonorable, for it is performed upon the most dishonorable member of

the body. And it was commanded him that the believing father, Abraham,

should deny himself and not live according to his own desires, but

according to the will of him, alone, who, by grace, had accepted him

and chosen him from among the nations; and thus he sealed, by this

performance, which was dishonorable in itself, that his faith was true

and fruitful before God. Why these ceremonies were again commanded,

will be shown hereafter, if God please.

Behold, kind reader, in this manner Abraham was circumcised, and thus

we are baptized; because it is thus commanded by God. Whosoever

'disobeys and opposes the voice of the Lord commanding these

ceremonies, and despises the performance of them because of their

uselessness and trifiingness, not observing that it was commanded by

God, excludes himself from the precious covenant of grace, by his

disobedience; neither does he prove his faith to be fruitful and

living, but on the contrary he proves that it is unfruitful and dead

before God. For he hears not the voice of his Lord nor lives in

accordance therewith, but despises it as powerless, vain and useless.

Therefore observe and know that we are not accepted into the covenant

by an outward sign, but alone by grace through Christ Jesus. And

because we are in the covenant by grace, therefore he has given and

commanded us his signs, that we shall perform them upon those on whom

he has commanded them to be performed, namely, upon the faithful; for

if it were possible that we could come into the covenant with God by

any signs or ceremonies, then the merits of Christ were vain, and grace

was ended. No, brethren, no. Abraham was already chosen, accepted and

justified by God, through faith, before he was circumcised; and because

he was faithful, and justified through faith, therefore the

circumcision was commanded him of God that he should thereby seal his

faith. Again, as Abraham and all his seed born of Isaac, together with

others, were already included in the covenant with God, women as well

as men, and as the promise was given to both sexes, yet it was not

commanded that the females should be circumcised, but the males.

Observe well, beloved reader, had they obtained the covenant with God

by the sign and not by grace, then the females must have been excluded

and without the promise. Not so, it .was by grace, it is by grace, and

it ever will be by grace. If they had been disobedient to the word of

God, and not circumcised their males on the appointed day; or if they

had done differently from the commandment of God, and circumcised their

females, then they would have had to bear the punishment of their

disobedience in their children, Gen. 17:14, excluded them from the

covenant with the Lord, and not have obtained the gift of his, grace.

For God, the Almighty Father, whose voice, will and commandment all

creatures, both in heaven and earth, should obey, will have the

commanded ceremonies performed as it pleases him and as he has

commanded them to be performed, for therefore he has commanded them. If

we do not perform them or perform them differently, we have, by our

disobedience, neither covenant nor j promise. This is the right,

scriptural meaning of Abraham's covenant, circumcision and promise.

Whosoever teaches you differently deceives your soul; for he points you

to merits and works, and not to Christ Jesus through whom alone are

received the eternal covenant of peace and promise of grace, given of

God.

O brethren, brethren, how long will you oppose the Holy Gnost I Give

the word of God its due praise, and observe that little infants are not

buried with Christ in baptism; nor are raised into newness of life: for

if they did die, and were buried in baptism, then sin, would be so

destroyed in them that it would never more vanquish their spirit.

Inasmuch as sin, after their baptism, so powerfully, and so abundantly

flourishes in them as they begin to come to understanding, as may be

plainly seen, therefore the infant baptizers must acknowledge anal

confess that they bury the children alive, which should not be; or else

that they baptize them all without faith, and contrary to the ordinance

of Christ, therefore useless and vain.

For this reason, learn once, beloved reader, that infant baptism is not

of God nor through him. But whosoever rightly acknowledges the love of

God for himself through Christ Jesus and is baptized upon his own faith

through true love of God, according to the doctrine of Christ, Peter,

Paul and Philip, is rightly circumcised in his heart with the

circumcision of Christ, as Paul teaches; he is buried with Christ

Jesus; he has died unto sin, and is again raised up by a fruitful faith

with Jesus Christ in a new life, Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12,

In opposition to this, the infant baptizers have still another point,

saying, Because Paul, in this passage, has not forbidden infant

baptism, therefore it is right. To this we reply by asking: Whether

infant baptism is commanded in this or any other Scripture`s They must

own the truth and answer, no. If it is not commanded of God, then it is

not his ordinance, and therefore it has no promise. Again, if it is not

commanded of God, then it is not his ordinance; if it is not his

ordinance, then it has no promise; and if it has no promise, it is

doubtlessly useless and vain.

Again, we ask them, Where in the word of God it is expressly forbidden

to baptize bells? They must own the truth, and answer, nowhere. If it

is, then, not expressly forbidden to baptize bells, is therefore

bellbaptism just and right? Not at all.

Thirdly, Israel was not forbidden to circumcise the females. Now, would

it have been right if they had circumcised their females? Far from it.

For the Scriptures commanded that the males should be circumcised

therefore they considered that it was forbidden to circumcise their

females.

In the same manner Christ Jesus commands us to baptize the believing,

and that which is represented by baptism is only found in the

believing, as may be plainly seen from Peter and Paul, therefore we

infer that infant baptism is sufficiently forbidden; for they have no

faith and do not understand the representation of baptism which comes

by faith.

I repeat it, If the infant baptists assert that by this Scripture of

Paul, infant baptism is not forbidden, and that therefore it is right,

that it is not expressly forbidden in the holy Scriptures to bless (as

they call it), holy water, candles, palms, goblets and robes; to hold

mass, and other ceremonies; yet we pointedly say that it is wrong.

First, because trusf is put in it. Secondly, because it is done without

the ordinance of God, for he has not commanded us a word thereof; and

there is no ordinance in which his holy, blessed word is not expressed

and implied either in spirit or letter.

Since Christ Jesus has commanded baptism upon the confession of faith,

Mark 16:16; since the apostles have thus taught and practiced it, and

as the meaning of baptism Rom. 6:3; Col. 2:12; Tit. 3:6; Gal. 3:27; 1

Cor. 12:13;.1 Pet. 3:21, cannot be applicable but to .the believing,

therefore it is sufficiently forbidden by this divine ordinance, to

baptize infants; for there is no faith in them nor do they understand

the meaning thereof; notwithstanding that infant baptism commenced soon

after the time of the apostles, or perhaps yet in their time, and thus

it has been practiced many centuries; for length of time can not

prevail against the word of God, as we have sufficiently shown the

pious, god?fearing reader, above.

Fourthly, Thus says the holy apostle Paul, " The? kindness and love of

God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which

we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of

regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost," Tit. 3:4, G.

Most beloved brethren, if we rightly and thoroughly examine this

passage of Paul, with spiritual eyes, and weigh it with the Scriptures,

then the infant baptizers, by force of the Scriptures, must acknowledge

that the christian baptism which is commanded by God, pertains alone to

the believing, according to the commandment of Christ, Mark 16:16, and

not to those who are naturally unable to hear, speak and understand,

namely, infants; for it is a washing, of regeneration as holy Paul has

taught and testified to by the above words.

My worthy, kind brethren, because the holy, christian baptism is a

washing of regeneration, according to the doctrine of Paul, therefore

none can be washed therewith, to the pleasure and will of God, but

those alone who are regenerated through the word of God; for we are not

regenerated because of baptism, as may be perceived in the infants who

have been baptized; but we are baptized because we are regenerated by

faith in God's word, as regeneration is not the result of baptism, but

baptism the result of regeneration. This cannot well be controverted by

any ,man, by force of the Scriptures. Therefore all should be shamed by

this passage of Paul, let them be ever so learned; the learned, who so

shamefully teach and make the unsuspecting populace believe that

infants are regenerated by baptism. .Beloved reader, such teaching and

belief is, verily, nothing but fraud and deceit. For if the infants

were regenerated, as the learned say, then their whole course would be

humility, longsuffering, mercy, pure and chaste love, true faith;

certain knowledge, sure hope, obedience to God, spiritual joy, inward

peace, and an unblamable life; for these are the true and natural

fruits of the new, heavenly birth; but what fruits are found in infants

every intelligent reader may judge from every day experience.

Do you think, most beloved, that the new birth consists in nothing but

io. that which the miserable world hitherto has thought that it

consists in, namely, baptism ff or in the expression, I baptize thee in

the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost 8 No,

worthy brother, no. The new birth consists, verily, not in water nor in

words; but it is the heavenly, living and quickening power of God in

our hearts, which comes from God, and which, by the preaching of the

divine word, if we accept it by faith, quickens, renews, pierces and

converts our hearts, so that we are changed and converted from unbelief

into faith, from unrighteousness into righteousness, from evil into

good, from carnality into spirituality, from the earthly into the

heavenly, from the wicked nature of Adam into the good nature of Jesus

Christ; and of such Paul spoke in the alleged Scripture.

Behold, those who are of such a nature are the truly regenerated

children of God; those are the beloved brethren and sisters of Jesus

Christ, who are born with him from above of one Father, namely, of God,

Jn. 1:13; Heb. 2:13. And these regenerated are those to whom, alone, he

has taught and commanded the holy, christian baptism, as a seal of

faith, Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:1C, by which they receive remission of sin;

Acts 2:38, and not the unconscious infants, as has been frequently

shown above, from the word of God. Therefore the holy apostle Paul

teaches us by this Scripture that God sanctifies the regenerated by the

baptism of regeneration; because they are regenerated by the word of

God, they deny themselves by the power of their regeneration and have

obediently taken upon themselves all that. which God, the Almighty

Father, in his holy word, has taught and commanded his chosen children,

through his beloved Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, and through all his

true servants and messengers. Therefore I repeat that the baptism by

which God sanctifies us, belongs to the believing or regenerated, as

Paul teaches. And in this manner: First, there must be the preaching of

the gospel of Christ, Matt. 28:19; Secondly, The hearing of the divine

word, Rom. 10:17; thirdly, faith, by hearing the word, Rom. 10:17;

fourthly, there must be the new birth, by faith; fifthly, baptism, by

the new birth, Tit. 3:6, in obedience to God's word, and, lastly, the

promise follows.

If we do not desire willfully to oppose the Holy Ghost and reject the

grace of God, it is impossible to believe that a true faith can be

without regeneration and obedience, and that this obedience can be

without the promise. For the eternal truth, the blessed Jesus Christ,

will never fail nor deceive us in his holy word; and it is he who

taught this: First, to preach the holy gospel, saying, Go ye into all

the; world, and preach the gospel to every creature; therefrom follows

faith, saying, And whoever shall believe; from faith follows baptism,

saying, And be baptized; and from these follows the promise, saying,

,Shall be saved, Mark 16.

Inasmuch as the ordinance of Jesus Christ thus reads, and as the one

follows from the other, therefore Paul here teaches us that God

sanctifies us by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the

Holy Ghost; for in case true faith and obedience be separated from each

other, as is sometimes the case, such as grieving the Holy Ghost and

sinning against him, then such faith does not profit us; for it has no

promise, on account of disobedience and is, besides, useless and dead

before God, Jas. 2.

To all those, who, of their own choice., and contrary to the

Scriptures, assert the regeneration of infants, because they were

baptized, notwithstanding there are no fruits in them, as may be

plainly seen, I reply: First, that he does not know what the new birth

is. Secondly, with the same propriety and reasonability, bells are

baptized. God in his word has no more commanded the one than the other,

for according to their nature, there is as little faith and fruits in

the one as there are in the other. O, Lord! when will this awful

abomination once cease to be practiced. When will those who now call

themselves christians be christians ? Yea, when will the blessed Lord

Jesus Christ be acknowledged as wise, true and perfect in his holy word

~ I fear, never. The false teaching, unbelief and opinion is esteemed

and loved by these miserable, carnal men, far above the same doctrine

of Jesus Christ and his holy apostles. Notwithstanding we say in Christ

Jesus, let them baptize their infants as much as they will, let them

teach it as long and as strong as they will, and let them assert it on

the strength of the garbled Scriptures, of learned men, and of long

usage?yet it is all vain and useless before God; for the regeneration

of infants cannot be maintained by virtue of the word of God.

Chosen brethren, let them freely cry out against us, let them adduce

all doctors, learned and famous men who have lived centuries ago, let

them console themselves with long usage, even from the apostles' time;

yet where there is no new birth there can be no baptism administered in

accordance with the commandment of Jesus, for baptism is the washing of

regeneration, Tit. 3; which regeneration none have but the believing,

alone, as we have shown our readers before.

Therefore I would admonish all my belovedreaders in the Lord, not to

heed the philosophy of the learned, nor to look at the long usage, but

to the plain and unmixed word of God, and you will surely find by this

Scripture of Paul, and others, that, according to the commandment of

Christ, the christian baptism should be, administered to none but those

who, by grace have become believing and regenerated through the word of

God. As long as baptism .is, administered to infants, it is no washing

of regeneration. For the new birth is of the word of God, as has been

often said, which word infants cannot hear and understand; therefore

they cannot be born again as long as they are minded as a child. All

that which the Father has not planted should be plucked from the heart

by the word of God, Matt. 15. God's word shall stand forever, and

according to the divine word, every pious christian shall and must

build the structure of his faith, if his work shall be pleasing before

God; and should not build it according to his own pleasure. For God,

the Almighty Father, who rules all things by his word, will not be

honored by human doctrine and commandments, Matt. 15:9; Mark 7:7; Col.

2:22; Jer. 29:8.

In the fifth place holy Paul teaches us saying, For ye are all children

of God by faith in Christ Jesus. " For as many of you as have been

baptized into Christ, have put on Christ," Gal. 3:27; Rom. 8:3.

My beloved children in Christ Jesus, you are aware that all the world,

by their blind and foolish unbelief, have hitherto whored with outward

works and ceremonies. Yet you should not do likewise. But you should

know that the righteousness which avails before God, consists nut in

any ceremonies and outward works, but solely in a true, pious and

fruitful faith and in nothing else, in this manner. For the faith which

comes by the word of God cannot be without fruit only in those who sin

against the Holy Ghost, as said above, but it leads into all manner of

righteousness, it willingly submits itself in all obedience and it

cheerfully complies not only with baptism, but with all the words and

ceremonies which God, the gracious Father, through his blessed Son, has

so clearly taught and commanded in his holy gospel.

Therefore true faith is the fullness of righteousness, Rom. 3 and 6;

yea, it is the true begetter of all christian virtues; and by reason of

this, the word of God ascribes to it righteousness, Rom. 3:23, the

blessing, salvation, and life everlasting, Jn. 3:36; 17:4, and does not

ascribe these to ceremonies. If ceremonies are commanded by him, it is

not because of these ceremonies, but it is because of the faith which

compels us to observe these ceremonies for they are commanded of God.

Therefore you should know, kind reader, that when the ceremonies in

God's word are coupled with the promise, as the Israelitic offerings in

the law, and baptism under the gospel, then it is not because of

ceremonies, but it is by virtue of faith, which obediently and in love

fulfills not alone the commanded ceremonies, but also all that which

God has commanded, as has been said above.

For this reason holy Paul taught the Galatians that they were become

the children of God through faith and not by baptism, saying, "Ye are

all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." And again, because

they were the children of God by faith, they showed obedience to his

word, and therefore Paul said unto them, "As many of you as have been

baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." Therefore the principal

thing is in faith, and not in ceremonies. Bat this godly, fruitful

faith, in which all consists, together with its chrisn tian fruits, is

not known to many, and for that reason they ever seek their

righteousness in outward ceremonies, yea, also in the most useless

ceremonies of human invention which are neither taught nor commanded of

God, as they have shown, these many centuries, in baptizing infants.

Read what we told you above? about the parents, godfathers and

baptizers and you will see that all the world is led into a false trust

by infant baptism; has become estranged from God, and is blinded in

regard to all christian matters. And to give their false pretensions a

beautiful, holy and divine appearance, they mutilate and twist the

precious word of God to suit them, as they fully show in this case;

for, by this Scripture of Paul, and other garbled Scriptures, they have

fooled and deceived the poor, ignorant people these many years;

teaching them that infants put on Christ in baptism, plainly showing by

such doctrine that they do not know what regeneration is, nor what it

is to put on Christ Jesus.

Most beloved brethren, verily it is the nature of all heretics to tear

a fragment from the holy Scriptures and thereby to prove their chosen

worship; never observiug what is written before or after, by which we

may ascertain the right meaning, as in this instance they have so

plainly shown. For this sentence: " as many of you as are baptized have

put on Christ," they pick out to give their infant baptism an

appearance; but the foregoing sentence: "Ye are all the children of God

because you believed on Christ Jesus," from which, as we have shown

above, all the rest must follow, that they seem not to have noticed;

and thus they, seek merit in ceremonies and not through faith in Jesus

Christ.

Besides, inasmuch as they are not clothed with Christ nor have put him

on, either actively or passively, and have not tested his heavenly,

spiritual nature and Spirit, because they are carnally minded?therefore

they do not understand, however much they write and teach, what it

means to put on Christ Jesus, I repeat, either actively or passively.

That we may convince all gainsayers of the word of the Lord, and that

we may neither stumble nor err in these words, therefore I would refer

all my readers to holy Paul. He shows who they are that put on Christ,

and what fruits they manifest, by which we may know that they have put

on Christ, thus saying; "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because

of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness," Rom. 8:10;

6:5.

Kind reader, however dexterously the scribes and infant baptizers may

controvert under a false semblance of the divine word, yet none can

deny that Christ dwells in those who have put on Christ. Since the

truly baptized put on Christ Jesus, he is in them; and if he is in them

then the body is dead unto sin and the spirit is life because of

righteousness; this being the case, I again call on all reasonable

persons to judge impartially for themselves, whether it is found in

truly believing persons, or in infants? If they say, in the believing,

their judgment is right; for Christ Jesus dwells in the hearts of the

believing, Eph. 3:17. But if they say in infants, then I would again

ask by what means we may find this out, inasmuch as in these infants

the death unto sin and the spiritual life are not shown nor found

For all of them, from infancy, so long as they do not believe the word

of God, notwithstanding their baptism, are not alone prone to evil, but

also to disobedience, as daily experience openly shows in all those

baptized of this world.

Therefore I conclude from this Scripture of Paul, and say, If the

infant baptists remain constant in their opinion and belief, that by

their baptism, infants put on Christ, that they must come to the

conclusion by virtue of the word of God, that Christ Jesus is

unbelieving, proud, ambitious, envious, vain, drunk, adulterous,

refractory and disobedient to the word of God; for whosoever has put on

Christ Jesus does not live himself, but Christ lives in him. If they,

then, have put on Christ by their baptism, as they claim, and as,

according to Paul, Christ lives in them and rules their actions, so it

must follow that Christ is vain and useless in them, or that their

accursed works are begotten of Christ, for they yet live in all manner

of carnality and ungodliness, and it therefore follows that they have

not put on Christ.

No, verily, no. For Christ Jesus cannot be without fruits; but

whosoever has put on the humble, long?suffering, merciful, amiable,

peaceable, sober, chaste and obedient Christ, in such an one the

beforementioned accursed works are not found; for whosoever has put on

Christ, is dead unto sin and lives in righteousness, Rom. 8; is led by

the Holy Spirit, born with Jesus, from above, of the Father; and

therefore he lives according to the will of the Father, and cannot sin

because he is born of God, 1 Jn. 3:9; 5:18.

Inasmuch as all those who are baptized without faith, prove the

contrary by their life and do not manifest the nature and virtues of

Christ whom they have put on, as they falsely claim; but they manifest

in their whole walk the nature and vices of the flesh and of Satan;

therefore it proves clearly that they have not put on Christ who is

from heaven; but that they have put on the devil, who is from hell; for

it is he who actuates and leads them at will, as may be plainly seen:

as all their thoughts and works of the flesh and of Satan are natural,

inherent fruits which are found all over the world, in all men; no

matter of what state, trade, condition, class or sect they are.

Beloved reader, you will acknowledge that every tree brings forth

fruits after its own kind, and that by the fruit we may know the tree,

Matt. 7:20; 12:33. Therefore it can not fail but that where Christ

Jesus is, there are the good fruits of life everlasting; but where the

devil is, there are the wicked fruits of eternal death. Yea, whosoever

has put on Christ, in him the works of the devil are not found. On the

contrary, where the devil is, there Christ is not; the one must give

place to the other; for they are two princes so very different that it

is impossible for them to dwell in one heart, or for the two to be

conceived and included in one human heart, Matt.. 6:24; Eph. 2:2.

For this reason I would admonish all God fearing christians in the Lord

to ponder well upon these words of Paul, and tounderstand them

according to the divine truth, and you will plainly see that Paul

taught by this Scripture just what Christ had commanded, Mark 16:16.

The believ ing, alone, put on Christ Jesus in their baptism, and they

alone bring forth true fruits, and not the infants, as we have here,

and also in our first writings sufficiently proven to all the pious and

true believers.

Most beloved brethren, let the infant baptizers, to their own

condemnation, thus scornfully ridicule such plain Scriptures, and let

them subtlely garble and twist them as much as they please, yet this

Scripture will ever remain unbroken by them; it will remain so firm and

binding that they will stumble thereon, be shamed thereby and will have

to stand back, notwithstanding all their flattering. If they would but

rightly look into the matter and then judge according to the word of

God, what it means according to Paul, what it implies, to put on

Christ, whether spoken in the active or in the passive (for all those

who are not content with the active may apply the passive to Rom. 13,

although it is in the active by Paul, according to the translation of

Erasmus), they would soon perceive that it makes no difference in this

matter whether it is used in the active or in the passive. But what

will it benefit? If the learned have nothing wherewith to obscure the

truth they garble things before the ignorant, simple populace, by

strange tongues, false explanations, lies, and ?high?sounding

philosophical reasons. O how justly Christ Jesus said unto the

Pharisees, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites I for ye

shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for ye neither go in

yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in," Matt.

23:13.

In the sixth place,. Paul teaches, saying, "For by one Spirit are we

all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we

be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit," 1

Cor. 12:13.

By these words of Paul the baptism of the believing is again plainly

taught and confirmed, and, on the other hand, the anti?christian,

infant baptism is rejected and made of none effect, because God, the

merciful Father, in his holy gospel, points us to faith, alone, through

Jesus Christ, and to the new birth. Because the believing or

regenerated act rightly before God, and diligently seek and fulfill his

holy will according to the grace they have received?therefore we must

forcibly acknowledge that we cannot be led to this godly gift of faith

and of regeneration, otherwise than by the word of God, through his

Holy Spirit. All writing, reading, and teaching is in vain, when the

Holy Spirit of God, the true Teacher of all righteousness, does not

quicken, pierce and turn the hearts of the disciples or hearers, by the

only means for this purpose given of God, which is his word.

Since we are baptized by one Spirit into one body, according to the

teaching of Paul, and since this same Spirit must quicken and turn the

hearts by the word of God therefore it incontrovertibly follows that

none should be baptized but those alone whose hearts are quickened and

turned by this Spirit through the word of God.

All those, then, who hear the holy gospel of Jesus Christ and sincerely

believe it and are thus inwardly quickened and pierced ', by the Holy

Spirit (let them be of whatever nation or sex), are baptized by this

quickening Spirit into one holy, spiritual body, of which Christ is the

head,?that is into the church. And thus Paul has taught by this

Scripture in conformity to the command of Christ, Mark 16: le.

Beloved reader, as those should be baptized who are urged by faith and

forced by the Spirit, as Paul teaches, so I will again leave it to your

judgment who they are that are led and impelled by this Spirit. Whether

they are the believing or whether they are the infants? If you say the

believing, your answer is right. For the believing die unto their

flesh, lusts and desires, Gal. S:24; they put off the old man and all

his works, Eph. 4:23; seek Christ Jesus in purity of heart; bring forth

the precious fruits of the Spirit which is in them, and show outwardly

and inwardly in all their actions that they are taught, led and

impelled by this Holy Spirit, Gal. 5:18; Rom. 8:14. But if you answer,

the infants, then I would ask you, Where are their spiritual fruits

As nothing appears in a child but their childish actions, as we said

above. Yet they are baptized and called christians, without doctrine,

faith and commandment, from which follows that in all the baptized of

the world nothing is found but abominable blindness, idolatry,

hypocrisy, evil thoughts, vain words, madness against the truth,

disobedience, blasphemy, trickery and a very wicked life contrary to

God and his blessed word.

I am aware, brethren, that children have spiiritum ritalem, that is,

the spirit by which they live, which God breathed into Adam and into

all flesh that they might live, Gen. 2:7; Acts 17:25. But they have not

the Spiritwm Justifccantum, aut innovantem, that is, the spirit which

sanctifies or regenerates. For if the latter spirit was in them it

would surely be manifested in the fruits, as it is impossible that the

Holy ? Spirit of God, which of itself is awake, living and fruitful,

and by which all true christians are justified, taught, led and urged,

should be idle, dormant, and fruitless in those in whom it dwells. Let

the infant baptists controvert this as mach as they please, no matter

whether they are old, learned, or of high renown, yet it will never be

proven by the word of God, that the Holy Spirit of God is ever idle,

useless and without fruits. I am aware that one may stumble,

notwithstanding he has the Spirit of God, as is shown in the case of

the pride, adultery, and manslaughter of David; the hypocrisy of Peter,

and the quarrel of Paul and Barnabus; they will not long continue

therein, but will be immediately admonished to repentance, either by

the kind admonition of the brethren or by the Spirit. For it is

impossible that those, in whom is the spirit of love and the fear of

God, can long continue in a shameful sin and transgression. If the

baptized infants, now, have the Holy Spirit, as the infant baptists

affirm, then they must admit that it is a dead, unfruitful and

powerless spirit which can beget neither faith, love, fear of God,

obedience; nor any evangelical, divine righteousness, in these

children.

Because they have, of their own choice, contrary to all scriptural

truth, and by their own righteousness, taught infant baptismtherefore

they subtlely seek to clothe and adorn it with a garbled form of the

divine word, that the adulterous, enchanting wine which is in the

goblet of the Babylonian whore, may be swallowed as a good and pure

wine, Saying: "That infants should be baptized that they may be the

better trained in the word and commandments of God; cleansed of their

inherent sins; buried in the death of Christ; regenerated and put on

Christ Jesus, yea, baptized into the body of Jesus Christ and thus

become partakers of the Holy Spirit." Which teaching is, verily,

nothing but open deceit, lies, garbling of the Scriptures and a

deception of satan. For in all the baptized of the world we find the

very contrary in their fruits, all through their lives, as every

intelligent christian may plainly observe.

Most beloved brethren in the Lord, never let such shameful and

abominable lies find place in your hearts, but examine all things

rightly and according to the word of God, that you may rightly

understand all evangelical truth. For thus to ornament infant baptism

with the virtues which only belong to the baptism of the believing, is

just as reasonable as it is to clothe an ape in purple and silk, as the

common saying of the learned implies, which reads, Simia semper manet

simia, etiamsi induatur purpwra; which means: an ape is an ape though

he be clothed in purple. In the same manner infant baptism will remain

a stench and abomination before God, however finely it be ornamented

with garbled Scriptures, by the learned; for an infant, so long as it

is in its infancy, will remain ignorant, simple and of childish mind,

notwithstanding it be baptized a hundred times and its baptism be still

more subtlely asserted by six times a hundred garbled Scriptures; as it

is plain to all intelligent persons that with infants are found neither

doctrine, faith, spirit, fruits nor idea of God's commandment; and that

therefore they should not be baptized; that is, if we believe that the

word of God is true and will ever remain true, as we have abundantly

proven in our first writings concerning baptism, as also in this.

O, kind reader! Verily, if it were not that this bitter, cancerous,

lime spittle of false doctrine and long usage had so deeply eaten into

the eyes of your hearts, you would acknowledge at once that this large

church, in its young days, was not embodied into the pure, chaste,

god?serving, and unblamable body of Jesus Christ, by the office of a

clean and christian spirit, but rather into the adulterous, idolatrous

and blamable body of anti?christ, by an unclean and anti?christian

spirit.

For if it were the case that they were incorporated into the most holy

body of Jesus Christ, as they persistently boast, they should prove by

their works that they are serviceable, and fruitful members of that

body into which they are incorporated.., For we plainly see that there

is no member of the human body created but for some use and purpose, be

it ever so small and trifling; but it is in its way profitable and

useful to the body to which it belongs. But how useful the

beforementioned infants are to the body of Christ Jesus will be

perceived by all those taught of the spirit.

From this it incontrovertibly follows, that if they are the body of

Christ, as they claim, and that Christ is the head of his church, that

Christ is the head of the unbelieving, the avaricious, perjurious,

gamblers, drunkards, adulterers, fornicators, Sodomites, thieves,

murderers, liars, idolaters, disobedient, blood?thirsty, traitors,

tyrants, proud, and of all rogues and knaves. For where is there one in

the whole church of those who were baptized in infancy; that walks

unblamably in all the commandments of our beloved Lord Jesus, Christ,

and who, either inwardly or openly, is not guilty before God, in some

or many of the beforementioned crimes. O no, kind reader, no. The most

holy and glorious body of Jesus Christ is wonderfully far different

from such a cruel, ungodly, refractory, disobedient, carnal, bloody and

idolatrous body.

Most beloved brethren, since they plainly are such transgressors,

blasphemers, and willful sinners, judge for yourselves from these and

other scriptural reasons, what kind of a body they are; by whose

doctrine, commandment and practice; by what Spirit they were and are

yet daily incorporated into this very horrible body; yea, such a body

that has neither gospel, faith, christian baptism, supper, nor

christian life; and therefore neither God, prayer, promise mor eternal

life; but only false doctrine, false faith, false sacraments, false

promise, ungodly life and eternal death. O, Lord, save all thy beloved

children from such an abominable, bloody body.

But in the most holy body of Jesus Christ is a true and orderly state

of things according to the word of God, as the true doctrine, faith,

baptism, supper, love, life, worship and true excommunication; and

therefore also grace, favor, mercy, remission of sins, prayer, God's

promise and eternal life. Behold, brethren, where these are, there

also, is the true body of Jesus Christ, of which Christ Jesus is the

head. They are the true brethren of Jesus Christ who with him are born

of God the Father; the spiritual Mount Zion which will never be moved;

the spiritual house of Israel which is wisely ruled by Christ Jesus our

only King, according to the Spirit, with the unbroken scepter of his

divine word; the spiritual Jerusalem in which the great King, the

blessed Christ Jesus has placed the glorious, kingly throne of his

honor; the spiritual temple of the LOr(I. in which his holy name is

sincerely glorified; the spiritual ark of the covenant with his

heavenly bread; blooming, red and stone tables upon which the throne of

mercy, the blessed Christ Jesus is found under the two cherubims of his

testaments according to his promise. Yea, the lovely bride of Jesus

Christ; flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone, Eph. 5:30; which he

placed in his chamber, Cant. 1:4, and kissed with the mouth of his

eternal peace, Col. 1; Eph. 1. Therefore no one can be a profitable

member in this most holy, glorious and pure body of Christ, who is not

believing, regenerated, converted, changed and renewed; who is not

amiable, mild, meek, obedient, merciful, chaste, sober, humble,

forbearing, peaceable, ,just, constant, and who are heavenly and

spiritually minded with Christ; for it is impossible, according to

Scripture, that Christ Jesus will or can be a Prince or head of those

who do not conform themselves to him, that is, of those who do not

sincerely seek, hear, believg and serve him; but rather trample upon,

blaspheme and resist him.

But those who hear and believe the word of God, are, by the Holy Spirit

which has taught, begotten and enlightened them, baptized into the body

of Christ, on their own faith, according to the commandment of Christ;

for these are regenerated of the word of God; bury their sins and are

raised up with Christ into new life; have a good conscience; receive

remission of sins; put on Christ Jesus; become true members of the most

holy body of Jesus Christ, which are fruitful, useful and serviceable

according to their strength, 1 Cor. 12:13; Rom. 6:5; 1 Pet. 3:21; Acts

2:38; Gal. 3:27. On all such are the affectionate eyes of the Lord, the

heavenly blessing, and the merciful mind, protection and solicitude of

the eternal Father; because they have sincerely and fully denied

themselves, and have obediently followed the will of God to live

according to the will of him who has graciously called them, Christ

Jesus. Beloved reader, since infants have not this mind, and as the

Holy Spirit does not operate, nor show itself to be in them, and since

they cannot serve in the body of Christ as is required by the word of

God, since it is plain to all intelligent persons, they should not be

baptized; for without the quickening Spirit of God, none should be

baptized, as we have abundantly proven to all the pious children of

God, from his word.

Therefore I conclude in regard to this matter of baptism, with these

plain words

Inasmuch as Christ Jesus, the true Teacher, sent of the Father, has

commanded us to baptize the believing, Mark 16:16, and as the holy

apostles have, in the above adduced Scriptures, so explained that which

is represented by baptism as pertaining to none but the believing, and

as infant baptism is no such baptism because it is evident that they

have no faith nor its fruits, which faith and fruits are the true

representation of baptism?therefore we are again necessarily forced by

the word of the Lord, by faith and by the love of God, diligently to

teach and receive the baptism of the believing, and to assert it to the

praise of the Lord before lords, princes, and the whole world, at the

risk of life and goods as true witnesses of Jesus Christ.

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[6] German translation of the Bible.

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HOW THE HOLY APOSTLES PRACTICED BAPTISM IN THE WATER.

IN the third and last place we are forced to assert the christian

baptism of the believing, even at the risk of life and blood for the

reason, that the holy apostles of God baptized none but those alone who

desired to be baptized, as Christ expressly and plainly commanded them,

saying, " Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every

creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," Mark

16:15. This commandment the apostles received from the mouth of the

Lord and have proclaimed the holy gospel, the glad tidings of grace,

throughout the world, Rom. 10, and preached it to every creature which

was under the heavens, Col. 1. They baptized all who accepted this

gospel by faith, and no others as is shown and perceived in many

Scriptures treating of the acts of the apostles; some of which

Scriptures I shall place before the reader, by which all the rest of

the Scriptures will be easily explained.When Philip was led by the

angel of the Lord, to the chariot of the eunuch, who was come from the

land of Ethiopia, and read the gospel of Jesus Christ from Esaias the

prophet, "Philip preached unto him Jesus and as they went on their way,

they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch said, See here is water;

what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest

with all thine heart thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe

that Jesus Christ is the Son of God," Acts 8:35 ?37.

My chosen, beloved brethren, If all the earth were full of learned

orators or highly renowned doctors, and these were, by sharp subtlety

and human philosophy, exalted as high as the stars; yet, by the grace

of God, the word will never be wrung from us, namely this: That where

there is no faith, no baptism should be administered, according to the

word of God; or else we must admit, first, that the command of Christ

Jesus is wrong: Secondly, that the holy apostles have taught

wrongfully; thirdly, that the holy Philip here asked wrongfully;

fourthly, that the eunuch was concerned about this matter more than all

the rest of humanity.

No, kind reader, no. But as Peter and Paul, together with all the pious

witnesses of Christ always had their eyes fixed upon the commandment of

the Lord Jesus Christ and did not act in opposition thereto, so also,

the holy Philip, the true servant of God who preached and taught with

the same spirit, would not baptize until the illustrious and famous man

had sincerely confessed his faith; for it was thus commanded him of

Christ Jesus, his true Master, our Redeemer and Savior, Matt. 28:19;

Mark 16:15.

As the holy apostles required of those that were to be baptized, first,

to make a confession of their faith before baptism, so I ask you,

beloved reader, How can we require a confession of faith of infants

before they are baptized, and who shall confess for them? If you should

say the godfathers, then I would reply, that the godfathers were first

gotten up by pope Higinius, as we have shown above. Inasmuch as

Higinius is the getter up of them, and as infant baptism has been

practiced ever since the time of the apostles as Origen and Augustine

write, and as I believe, because those who do not rightly confess

Christ, ever seek their righteousness in wrought ceremonies,

notwithstanding it is no divine command nor apostolic usage, as may be

particularly proven by the holy Scriptures, and also by Tertullian and

Ruffinus and others?therefore I verily do not see who, by the faith of

infants, has answered for them in their baptism which were baptized

during the period between the apostles and pope Higinius, inasmuch as

the godfather were first gotten up by Higinius who was either the ninth

or tenth pope, and as the infants which were before him had as little

doctrine, hearing, voice or understanding as the children of the

present day, as they plainly prove by their fruits.

Observe, kind reader, that all their doing with children, such as

catechism, godfathers, baptism, crisma, and such like things, is

nothing but open hypocrisy, human righteousness, idolatry, useless

fantasy and opinion.

Inasmuch as Christ Jesus has commanded but one baptism on the

confession of faith, and as the apostles have taught and practiced

it?therefore the infant baptists must consent and admit, by virtue of

the word of God, that infant baptism is not by the commandment of

Christ, not by the teaching and practice of the holy apostles, but by

the doctrine of anti?christ and by the practice of his preachers.

I repeat that the holy apostles baptized none but those that desired

it, or those who confessed the most holy faith either verbally or

proved it by their walk, as did holy Peter; for although he was

previously informed by a heavenly vision that he might go amongst the

Gentiles to teach them the gospel, yet he refused to baptize the pious,

noble and godly centurion and his consorts, so long as he did not see

that the Holy Spirit was descended upon them, that they spoke with

tongues, and glorified God. But when Peter plainly saw that they were

truly believing and that the Spirit was descended on them, he said,

"Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized which have

received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be

baptized in the name of the Lord," Acts 10:47, 48.

Behold, kind reader, here you are plainly taught that Peter commanded

that those only should be baptized who had received the Holy Ghost; who

spoke with tongues and glorified God, which only pertains to the

believing and not the unconscious infants. Thus the practice of Peter

was in accordance with the commandment of Christ, Mark 16:16. Therefore

Peter did not command infant baptism; for the Holy Ghost does not

operate in them, as may be plainly seen. This may also be understood

from a passage of Paul; for he says, "When they believed Philip

preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of

Jesus Christ, they were baptized both men and women," Acts 8:12.

Observe, nothing is said of infants.

Paul, a preacher and apostle, also baptized upon the confession of

faith and truth.

He required faith before baptism to such perfection that he regarded

the baptism of the holy John the baptist, as useless and vain among the

disciples at Ephesus, because they knew not the Holy Ghost, saying, "

Unto what then were ye baptized? And they, said Unto John's baptism.

Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance,

saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should

come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they

were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his

hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with

tongues and prophesied; and all the men were about twelve," Acts

19:3?7.

Hear, most beloved readers; for I would here present to you and to all

the world three points, which you should impartially consider and judge

according to the word of God. First, Was the baptism of John not of God

8 I know you will give an affirmative reply. If now the baptism of John

is of God, as it is indeed, and if Paul yet considered this baptism

which was from above, as insufficient and imperfect in these disciples

because they did not acknowledge the Holy Ghost, and as he, after

preaching to them Christ, again baptized them with the baptism of Jesus

Christ, as is mentioned in Luke, for what purpose must we consider the

baptism of children that are naturally unable to understand the divine

word, and therefore they acknowledge neither Father, Son, nor Holy

Ghost; neither can they distinguish between truth and lies,

righteousness and sinfulness, good and evil, right and wrong 9 Does not

this prove infant baptism to be useless, vain and unfruitful? and as

administered and received without the ordinance of God? and if we

acknowledge this by the word of God through faith, is it therefore not

necessary to be baptized with the baptism of Jesus Christ as Christ has

commanded and as Paul has administered to these disciples I I say,

verily, if we do not, there is, according to the word of God, neither

faith, regeneration, obedience, nor Spirit in us, and therefore no

eternal life, as we have frequently shown above.

Let all the learned garble this invincible Scripture and practice of

Paul as subtlely as they please, yet it will never be asserted by

virtue of the word of God but that these disciples, notwithstanding

that they were baptized with the baptism of John, were again baptized,

after they were taught by Paul, with the baptism of Jesus Christ;

because they knew not that there was a Holy Ghost; that is, if baptism

is to be baptism according to the word of God. But, brethren, the

preaching of the cross is ever opposed because it is to them that

perish, foolishness, 1 Cor. 1:18.

Again, judge for yourselves kind readers, since Christ Jesus himself

and also the holy apostles, Peter, Paul and Philip, have commanded and

taught no other baptism in all the Scriptures of the New Testament, but

upon the confession or proof of faith, and as the whole world in

opposition thereto, teaches and practices a different baptism, which is

founded neither in the command of Jesus nor in the teaching and

practice of the holy apostles, namely, infant baptism, and asserts it

not by the word of God, but solely by the opinion and long usage of the

learned; and forces it upon the world by the cruel, bloody sword;

therefore judge, I say, which of the two we should follow. The divine

truth of Christ Jesus, or the lies of the ungodly world? If you answer,

Christ, your judgment is right; but the consequence according to the

flesh, is anxiety, being robbed, apprehension, banishment, poverty,

water, fire, sword, the wheel, shame, cross, suffering and temporal

death; yet in the end eternal life. . But if you answer, the world,

then you verily judge wrongfully; notwithstanding, on the contrary

according to the flesh, the consequence is honor, peace, ease, liberty,

temporal life and such perishable advantages; yet the end is eternal

death.

Thirdly and lastly, judge rightly whether the ordinance of Jesus Christ

which he commanded into his church, and which the holy apostles learned

and administered from his blessed mouth, can ever be changed and broken

hp human wisdom or excellency. If you answer in the affirmative, you

must prove it by the divine and evangelical Scriptures or else we

should not believe it. But if you answer in the negative, as it should

be, you must acknowledge that those, no matter who they are, whether

they lived at the time of the apostles, and were even their disciples,

who say that the apostles baptized infants, shamefully misrepresent the

apostles and load falsehood upon them, yea, that they speak their own

opinion and not the word of God, for the most holy apostles, the true

witnesses of christian truth, never taught two different baptisms in

the water; neither did they act contrary to the command and ordinance

of Christ, nor administer it contrary to their own doctrine.

O, had the educated and learned men, Origen, Augustine, Jeronimus,

Lactantius and others, not soared so high in their smartness and

philosophy; and had they been satisfied with the clear, chaste, and

plain doctrine of Jesus Christ and his apostles, and had they conformed

their intelligence and subtle reasoning to the word of God, then the

heavenly doctrine and unchangeable ordinance of our beloved Lord Jesus

Christ would not have been subjected to such shame and change I And in

particular has the great Origen, by his philosophy and self?conceit, so

shamefully treated with the Holy Scripture that Martin Luther in his

book called Sermum Arbitrium, calls him Spercissimus scripturarwm

interpres, that is: The falsest explainer of the Scriptures. And

besides, it is annotated in the Lutheran New Testament, that this

Origen is the great star which fell from heaven, burning like a lamp,

and that his name is Wormwood, Rev. S:11. Therefore we will leave it to

God who and what he is. Notwithstanding he has treated the word of God

so shamefully and has erred so terribly, yet, because he pleases the

world in regard to infant baptism?the holy doctrine of Christ Jesus and

the apostles must stand back; and Origen is heeded, accepted and

followed as a sure testimony to this idolatrous ceremony. , abominable

blindness I , shameful foolishness! That we do not believe the sure

word of our Lord Jesus Christ, the word of truth, and the true

witnesses who were sent by him I but that we would rather follow, to

the loss of our souls, those who teach to please us, notwithstanding it

is plain from their writings that they have so often stumbled and

erred, and been mistaken in regard to the truth of Almighty God!

Therefore I beseech you all, beloved brethren in the Lord, by the grace

of God to open your understanding, that you may be no longer deceived,

and that you may perceive, you who are made uneasy by the writings of

the learned, that all the writers, both ancient and modern, have ever

sought righteousness in wrought ceremonies, which we should only seek

in Christ Jesus. And again, that, because they have not the word of God

on their side they do not follow the same path in regard to this

matter, do not speak of one accord nor write unanimously. For as their

writings show, some seek the washing away of inherent sin. Others teach

that they should be baptized on account of their faith. Again, to train

them in the word and commandments of Clod. Still others, to have them

included into the covenant with Clod; and, again, to baptize them into

the church of Christ. Behold, kind readers, thus each of the

beforementioned writers follows his own course, and does not follow the

same way. If they were supported by the word of God, in regard to this

matter, they would all be unanimous. But because they have not the word

of God?each one follows his own inclination, thinking that he can,

under a scriptural appearance, palm off pernicious falsehood as being

the truth. Yea, lie tickles his vision so long with garbled Scriptures,

that his mind becomes so obscured that he can no more conceive that he

teaches, follows and administers accursed falsehood for the blessed

truth of God.

Thus, most beloved children, because the learned have ever sought and

yet seek righteousness in infant baptism, you can easily surmise that

these infant. baptista have, by that means, made this innovation. For

with the ancients it was not the common practice, I say common, as may

be deduced from Tertullian, Ruffin and others; but as appears, just

after the demise of the apostles or perhaps yet in their times, they

commenced to abuse the true, christian baptism, which solely belongs to

the believing. As some of the Corinthians already in the time of Paul

suffered themselves to be baptized for the dead, 1 Cor. 15:29, so,

also, through the false doctrine and opinions of foolish bishops, the

abominable serpent of infant baptism crept in, and was so confirmed by

long usage that, at last, it was thought and accepted by all the world

as an apostolic institution for the sake of righteousness which they

all seek therein. Therefore you must acknowledge, beloved brethren, not

withstanding infant baptism is of old date, that it is still not by the

command of Jesus Christ, and by the teaching and practice of the holy

apostles; and is therefore idolatrous, useless and vain.

And because the true, christian baptism has such a great promise,

namely, the remission of sins, and other promises, Acts 2:38; Mark

16:16; 1 Cor. 12:13; 1 Pet. 3:21; Eph. 4:5, the pedo?baptists apply the

same baptism to infants; never once observing that the beforementioned

promises are solely to those who show obedience to the word of God; for

Christ Jesus has so commanded it. Inasmuch as pedo?baptism is not

commanded, therefore it is not required of children as obedience. For

where there are no commandments there are no transgressions. Again,

baptism is not commanded to infants, by God; and therefore they have no

promise in their baptism, from which it follows that infant baptism is

idolatrous, vain, useless and void, before God, as was said above; for

God, the Lord, has no pleasure in the ceremonies, unless they are

administered according to his divine and blessed word.

But the little children, and particularly those of christian seed, have

a peculiar promise which was given them of God without any ceremony,

but out of pure grace, through Christ Jesus our Lord, who says," Suffer

little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is

the kingdom of heaven," Matt. 19:14; Mark 10:14; Luke 18:16. This

promise makes glad and assures all the chosen saints of God, in regard

to their children or infants; being assured that the true word of our

beloved Lord Jesus Christ can never fail. Inasmuch as he has shown such

great mercy towards the children that were brought to him, that he took

them up in his arms, blessed them, laid his hands upon them, promised

them the kingdom of heaven and has neither done nor commanded them any

thing more; therefore they have in their hearts a sure and firm faith

in the grace of God, concerning their beloved children, that they are

children of the kingdom, of grace, of the promise and of eternal life

through Christ Jesus our Lord, to whom alone be the glory; and not by

any ceremony. Yea, by this same promise they are assured that their

beloved children, so long as they are not of understanding years, are

clean, holy, saved and pleasing unto God, be they alive or dead.

Therefore they give thanks to the eternal Father through Jesus Christ

our Lord, for his inexpressibly great love to their children, and train

them in the love of God and in wisdom, by correcting, chastising,

teaching and admonishing them, and by walking before them with an

unblamable life until they may hear the word of God, believe it and

fulfill it in their works. Then is the time, of whatever age they may

be, that they should receive the christian baptism which Christ Jesus

has commanded, in obedience to his word, to all christians; and which

his apostles have thus practiced and taught.

Behold, brethren, if it should be said that we thus rob the children of

the promise and of the grace of God, you will observe that they

contradict us out of hatred and envy, and do not tell the truth. Say,

who has the strongest ground and hope of the salvation of their

children? Is it he who places his hopes upon an outward sign? or is it

he who bases his hopes upon the promise of grace, given and promised of

Christ Jesus? Still the evangelical truth must, in all respects, be

blasphemed and belied by the ignorant and light minded. But,

notwithstanding this, the just and impartial Judge, Christ Jesus, will

some time pass the true sentence between them and us, although they do

not fear it now. I am forced to think that then it will be acknowledged

by many, too late, that they did not believe and follow the truth of

Christ Jesus but the falsehood of anti?christ. Take .heed and watch.

Again, it is sometimes, and very foolishly too, asserted by the

pedo?baptists, " That the apostles baptized whole households, as the

household of Cornelius, Acts 10:48; the household of Stephanus, 1

Cor.1:13; the household of Lydia, and of the jailer, Acts 16:15, 33;

from which, they say, it may be presumed that there were also small

children among them." From this allegation, beloved brethren, they

show, although not intentionally, that they can not produce Scriptures

to prove infant baptism. For whenever we must follow (build on)

presumption, there is evidently no proof of the assertion.

To such opponents I would reply, in plain language, thus: Three

households, namely, of Cornelius, Stephanus and of the jailer, were all

believing. Of the first household it is written, " There was a certain

man in Cesarea, called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the

italian band; a devout man and one that, feared God with all his house,

which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always," Acts

10:1, 2. If they all served and feared God, as Luke writes, then they

were not baptized without faith, as is plainly shown in the same

chapter; for Peter commanded that those should be baptized who had

received the Holy Ghost, as they had who spoke with tongues and

glorified God; which are all fruits of faith, as every intelligent

person will admit.

Again, of the household of Stephanus it is written, " I beseech you,

brethren (ye know the house of Stephanus, that it is the first fruits

of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of

the saints); that ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that

helpeth with us, and laboreth," 1 Cor. 16:15, 16. I repeat it to serve

the saints is a work of faith. Since the house of Stephanus served the

saints, as Paul writes, therefore they showed by their fruits that they

had faith.

Again, of the house of the jailer it is written that Paul and Silas

spake unto him and said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou

shalt be saved and thy house; and they spake unto him the word of the

Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he (the jailer) took them

the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized,

he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them into his

house, he set meat before them and rejoiced believing in God with all

his house,"Acts 16:31?34; or as Erasmus says, "He has rejoiced because

he believed in God with all his house." Beloved reader, observe first,

that they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in

his house. Secondly, he rejoiced with all his house. To hear the word

is something which pertains to those of understanding minds, and

spiritual rejoicing is a fruit of the believing or of the spiritual,

Gal. 5:18. Inasmuch as they all heard the word and rejoiced in God,

therefore it incontrovertibly follows that the holy apostles did not

baptize them without faith.

In the fourth place, in regard to the house of Lydia, I reply: Because

the world tries to establish their cause on presumption, therefore we

would say first, that presumption ought not to establish faith; and if

it were so that it could avail before God, then still the presumption

in the case of the house of Lydia would not be in favor of the world

but against it; because it is the custom in the Holy Scriptures and

also with the world, that a house is named after the man and not after

the woman, so long as the husband lives, because the husband is the

lord of his wife and household. As in this case the house is named

after the woman, and as there is no mention made of the man, therefore

it follows that she, at the time, was not married. If she was a young

woman or widow, as appears, then the presumption of the world is

contradictory; and it is probable that she had no children and still

more probable, that she had no infants, since she at that time had no

husband.

Again, we would further say in reference to this Scripture, that if it

were that Lydia had infants, they would not be counted among the

baptized of the house. For Christ commanded that the believing should

be baptized and the holy apostles taught and practiced such baptism;

from which it may be safely deduced that when the holy Scriptures speak

of houses being baptized, or houses being subverted that it has

reference to those of understanding years, who may be taught or

subverted, as Paul shows in another Scripture, that some "subvert whole

houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake,"

Tit. 1:11.

If you take the term whole houses as applying also to infants; and as

whole houses were subverted, as Paul says, then it would follow that

infants were subverted by false doctrine. No, beloved reader, no. An

infant without understanding can be neither taught nor subverted;

therefore they are not counted in the number of baptized, or those who

were subverted, of which the Scriptures speak. But the Holy Scripture

teaches and admonishes, both by words and sacraments, as they are

called, those alone who have ears to hear and minds to understand, as

we have frequently shown above.

If any one would like to have more information about the ceremony of

baptism and about the objections made to it, let him read our first

treatise on baptism which we published; and by the grace of the Lord,

he will be enlightened upon the subject from the word of God.

Brethren, I conclude this treatise on baptism in the water in these

words: Inasmuch as God, the merciful Father, has graciously sent into

this miserable, blind and erring world his chosen, beloved Son, Christ

Jesus, who has taught us the holy will of his Father, in great

clearness; and as he has, in his great love, offered up his precious

and most holy flesh and blood for us, and as to him the eternal Father

has not only pointed us through his holy prophets, but also from high

heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear

ye him," Matt. 1'7: G; therefore we say and testify that we should hear

this Christ Jesus; that we should believe in him and follow him in all

things which he has taught and commanded us; and that we should also

hear and follow his holy apostles who by his own divine command were

sent out with. the most precious word of grace, namely, with the holy

gospel?or else we have neither God, promise, nor eternal life, as is

plain and intelligible to all mankind, from the New Testament.

As this Christ Jesus has given us this express and incontrovertible

command in this wise: First to teach the gospel and then to baptize

those who believe, and those that are thus baptized shall be saved,

Mark 16:16; Matt. 28:19; Acts 19:5; 2:38; 10:48; 16:33. And as the holy

apostles have taught and used no other baptism than baptism on faith,

according to the command of Christ, as shown and proven by many reasons

from Acts 2; 8; 10; 16; 19; Rom. 6:4; Col. 2; 1 Cor. 12:13; Tit. 3:6; 1

Pet. 3:21; therefore we again declare before you, before all the world

and before God, that we are prompted by nothing bat by the fear of God,

being so taught by his word, thus to teach this christian baptism, and

thus to receive it upon the confession of faith, for the remission of

sins, Acts 2:38, as said before, and are thus baptized with the washing

of water, by the word, Eph. fi:26; and by a Holy Spirit which quickens

our hearts, into one body, 1 Cor. 12:13; of which body Christ Jesus is

the head, Col. 1:18; Eph 1:22. Nor do we know of any other baptism, of

which God is a witness, than this alone; of which, by the grace of God,

we have so much taught and written.

I herewith beseech you, kind reader, not to do like the angry, blind

and bloody world, who condemn everything from an envious, rebellious,

refractory and raving heart before they have thoroughly perused and

understood it; who reject all good, christian doctrine and usage;

sometimes because of fashion, again, because of the cross, and

sometimes because of the plainness of the person. Do not thus; but

judge this and all our writings according to the Spirit and holy word

of the Lord, and you will plainly see whether we have written and

taught you truth or falsehood; whether we teach two baptisms or one;

whether we seek to save your souls or destroy them; whether we seek the

praise and honor of the Lord, or his dishonor. For I trust, by the

grace of God, if you are desirous of your own salvation, and if you

peruse what we have written and judge it with a spiritual judgment,

that you will find nothing in it but the teaching which is of God; the

eternal, heavenly, true and saving will of God, and the very strait way

of truth which the ever blessed Jesus Christ and his apostles have, in

the most holy gospel taught and shown all mankind.

Take heed, ye illustrious, noble and pious lords I Take heed ye judges

and keepers of the law, against whom your cruel, .

bloody sword is sometimes sharpened and drawn. I tell you in Christ

Jesus that we seek nothing but what we have here told you, as you may

clearly see by many, namely, that there is not a false syllable nor

deceitful word heard from their mouths or found in them, and these are

forced and led by you to the sword, fire and water, as poor, innocent

sheep to the slaughter. And if you should point me to the abominable

actions of the corrupted sects, and say that you must therefore oppose

baptism, by the sword, that such ungodly doings may be averted and

hindered; then I would again reply, first: Christian baptism belongs

not to corrupted sects; but it is the word of God. Secondly, the holy,

christian baptism does not cause mutiny nor shameful actions; but it is

caused by the false teachers and fallse prophets who boast themselves

to be baptized christians, and yet, before God, are not such. Thirdly,

there is nothing under heaven at which I am more alarmed than I am at

the ungodly actions of the false, corrupted sects. They frighten me

more than death; for I know that all men must once die, Heb. 9:27. More

than the tyrannical sword; for if they take my body, it is all they can

do, Matt. 10:28. More than Satan; for I have vanquished him through

Christ. But in case the terrible doctrine of the corrupted sects

adhered to me, then I would verily, be lost; eternal woe would be to my

poor soul. Therefore I would rather die the temporal death (that he

knows who knows all things) than to eat, drink, commune, greet or

converse with such, if I knew that they would not be helped by my

conversation or admonition; for it is forbidden in the word of Christ

to keep the company of such, Matt. 7:16; 1 Cor. 5:11; 2 Thess. 3:14;

Phil. 3. And, by the grace of God, I know to a certainty, that they are

not in the house of the Lord, in the church of the living God and in

the body of Jesus Christ. Therefore I say, if you find in me or in my

teachings, which is the word of God, or among those who are taught by

me or by my brethren, any thieving, murdering, perjury, mutiny,

rebellion or any other criminal acts, as were formerly, and are yet

found among the corrupted sects?then punish all of us; as we would be

culpable if this were the case. I repeat, if we are disobedient to God

in religious matters, we are willing to be instructed and corrected by

the word of God; for we mean diligently to do and fulfill his most holy

will. Or if we are not obedient unto the emperor in matters belonging

to him as he is called and ordained of God, I say in matters belonging

to him, then we will willingly submit to such punishment as you may

inflict upon us. But if we sincerely fear and seek our Lord and God, as

I trust we do, and if we are obedient unto the emperor in temporal

matters, as we should be according to the word of God, Matt. 22:21;

Rom. 13:7; 1 Pet. 2:13; Tit. 3:1, and are yet to suffer and be

persecuted and crucified for the sake of the truth of the Lord?then we

should consider that "the disciple is not above his master nor the

servant above his lord. \* \* If they have called the master of the house

Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household l" Matt.

10:24, 26. Yet you should know and acknowledge, O ye beloved, noble,

illustrious, pious lords, ye judges and keepers of the law, that as

often as you take, condemn and put to the sword such people, that you

put your tyrannical sword into the blessed flesh of the Lord Jesus

Christ, and that you break the bones of his holy body; for they are

flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone, Eph. 6:30; they are his

chosen, beloved brethren and sisters, who are with him, born from

above, of one Father, Jn. 1:13; they are his sincerely beloved children

who are born of the seed of his holy word; they are his holy, spotless

and pure bride whom he, in his great love has wedded as his consort.

Why? Because they have, by the operation of their faith, and led by the

Holy Spirit, cordially committed themselves to the service of our

beloved Lord Jesus Christ, and do not live any more according to their

lusts, but agreeably to the will of God, alone, according to the

direction of his holy, blessed word. Yea, they would rather surrender

every thing which they possess, and suffer envy, slander, scourging,

persecution, anxiety, famine, thirst, nakedness, cold, heat, poverty,

imprisonment, banishment, water, fire, sword or any other punishment

than to forsake the gospel of grace and the confession of God and be

separated from the love of Christ Jesus, Rom. 8:35. But they will never

accept the vain doctrine and commandments of men.

Therefore we pray you, as our beloved and gracious rulers according to

the flesh, by the grace of God, to consider and realize, if there is

any reasonableness about you, in what great anxiety and suspense we

poor, miserable people are placed. For if we abandon Christ Jesus and

his holy word, we fall into the wrath of God; and if we remain firm in

his holy word, we are put to your cruel sword. O, Lord! if it were true

that this large church were thy holy church, bride and body, as they

boast it to be, then we might truthfully assert that thou art the

prince, bridegroom and head of an abominable, detestable band of

murderers, who thirst after the innocent blood of those who sincerely

seek, fear, love and serve God. For the ignorant, blind people go about

like a backsliding heifer, as the prophet says, seeking nothing but the

persecution, imprisonment and destruction of God's saints and children.

All the priests and monks, who seek and fear nothing but their

gluttonous, greedy belly, and their avaricious, pompous flesh, do

nothing but upbraid, slander, lie and persecute; the judges and

magistrates, who seek to live of the bloody labor of the miserable;

take them and deliver them into the hands of the tyrants, that they may

become favorites of the rulers, as the prophet says, Mic. 7; "The

prince asketh and the judge asketh for a reward." The lords and keepers

of the law, as a body, are after nothing but the favor and friendship

of their prince to whom they are sworn; after authority, good wages and

aggrandizement. They are those who torture, banish, confiscate and

murder, as the prophet says, "Her princes within her are roaring lions;

her judges are evening wolves; they gnaw not the bones till the

morrow," Zeph. 3:3. At another place, "Her princes in the midst thereof

are like wolves, ravening the prey to shed blood, and to destroy souls,

to get dishonest gain," Ezek. 22:27. O, how just was the revelation of

holy John, when he saw that the Babylonian woman was drunk with the

blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus, Rev.

17:6

O, beloved lords and judges of the land, observe once, how all the

righteous, the prophets, Christ Jesus himself, together with his holy

apostles and servants, have been treated from the beginning; and to?day

yoga still treat those thus, who in purity of heart seek the truth and

life eternal. Therefore we must run the risk; for in case you do not

fear God, and do not sheathe your murderous sword against Christ Jesus

and against his holy church, then we esteem it of less consequence to

fall in the hands of worldly princes and judges, than to fall into the

hands of God. I repeat it, take heed, awake, and be converted, that the

innocent blood of the pious children of God, which calls for vengeance

in heaven, may never more be found on your hands.

Take heed, also, ye wise and learned and ye common people! For such a

people are they and such is their doctrine and faith whom you daily

ridicule and mock as fools; whom you slander as heretics and deceivers;

and whom you take and deliver, and murder in your hearts, as thieves,

murderers and criminals. Yet, God's word shall never be broken, 1 Pet.

1:24; Jas. 1:10; Ps. 90: e. O ye miserable people, what will !, become

of you! that you are not ashamed daily to mock and ridicule the blessed

Christ Jesus; to trample upon him and thus ravingly tear to pieces his

most holy and glorious body, notwithstanding you boast of his divinity,

word, death, grace, mercy and blood.

Say, beloved, if you are the church of Christ, why are you not obedient

unto him? If you are the body of Christ why destroy its holy members?

If you are the children of God why trample upon your brethren? If you

are the servants of Christ, why not do the things he has commanded? If

you are the bride of Christ why not hear his holy voice? If you are the

truly regenerated where are, then, the fruits? If you are the true

disciples of Christ, where is your love? If you are the true christians

where are your christian ordinances of baptism, Supper, deacons, ban

and life as commanded in his word? If you are the truly baptized ones

of Christ where is your faith, your new birth, your death unto sin,

your unblamable life, your good conscience, your christian body into

which you were baptized, and your Christ whom you have put on?

O beloved brethren, error has been rampant long enough I Christ Jesus

will be no longer mocked as a fool. I tell you as truly as the Lord

lives, that so long as you .are thus earthly, carnally and

devilishlyminded; so long as you oppose God and his holy word; so long

as you live without the fear of God, according to the lusts of your

flesh, so long you are not the true church of Christ, even if it were

that you were using the true sacraments, which, however is far from

being so. Beloved brethren, First our hearts must be cleansed and

afterward our outward actions will show; or? else it is hypocrisy

before the eyes of God. I repeat it, so long as you live thus ungodly,

as you have done hitherto, Christ Jesus was, verily, born in vain, died

in vain, arose and ascended in vain. He is no Lord, Deliverer or Savior

of the willful; obdurate, unrepenting and disobedient sinners, but he

is a Lord, Deliverer and Savior of those who willingly hear his divine

word; who sincerely renounce evil, .and walk diligently according to

his holy commandments, all the days of their lives.

May God, the gracious Father, who lives in mercy forever, grant you all

true knowledge to comprehend all divine truth; and a heart, mind and

will to fulfill that which you now confess by faith from the word of

God, through Christ Jesus our beloved Lord. To him be the honor,

praise, kingdom, power and glory forever and ever, Amen.

Let the bride of Christ rejoice.

HEREIN, reader, you have most devoutly what the mode of God's baptism,

which perished through the long degeneracy of the ages, in the church

ought to be, being restored whole by the unspeakable gift of. God.

Therefore let the writers oppose as they please; let the learned oppose

by their shrewdness as they know how; let all the world under the

heavens oppose in every way in which they are able, this is the only

mode of baptism which Christ Jesus himself instituted and the apostles

taught and practiced.

The invincible truth will ever abide, although powerfully opposed by

many. He who reads the teachings of christianity and considers well,

will welcome this divine truth, of Christ, though for many ages lost,

and now thus made to appear, because it is not without merit by its

favor toward us.

May the reader give thanks to the infinitely great and good God.

Mayest thou be well, be humble, read, obtain, believe and live, and may

the Lord be with thee.

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A LETTER OF CAUTION ON DISCORD.

To the brethren in Groeningen, and the country thereabout, copied and sent by

the faithful brother John Aertsen. Receive it in love.

Grace and Peace: Since, beloved brethren, it is known to all churches,

that in the southern countries, great trouble exists in regard to the

divinity of Christ, and the Holy Spirit, whereby much unbelief, discord

and division have been caused in some bodies, to the great affliction

of all the saints; and, since it sometimes happens that this one or

that one, who comes from those countries, is affected thereby and

causes trouble with some?therefore lovehas constrained me to write the

following to the churches, and for these reasons

First, that the unaffected and sound hearts may beware of such

frightful disputations and incomprehensible murmurings, lest their

hearts, to their eternal loss, drown in such bottomless profoundness,

and become forever ashamed before their God.

Secondly, that all those who ignorantly and unwittingly err and are

bound in their consciences, and pet fear God, and walk under the cross,

may be saved and freed, through this our service and christian warning,

to the eternal praise and glory of God and to the joy of all the

saints. I have written it to all my beloved brethren and fellows out of

sincere love and compassion If but one afflicted, wavering, doubting

soul could be helped thereby, I would esteem ii the dearest thing under

heaven. My children, beware of all discord and division, that ye may

thrive and multiply in Christ Jesus. Avoid all those who disturb you

and excite you to disunion; all those who would institute something

novel and peculiar whereby they might weaken and destroy the christian,

evangelical love, peace and unity. O, my sincerely beloved brethren and

sisters in the Lord! Consider diligently that which I write to you,

that God the heavenly Father with his blessed Son Christ Jesus, and

with his Holy Spirit, may retain their divine honor. Peace be with you.

Note. To write with my own hand such long writings and send them to

each particular church, I can not do.

MENNO SIMON.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

ANOTHER LETTER..

My very faithful brother in Christ, grace and peace with thee.

Chosen brethren in the Lord, I have nothing particular to write to you,

but that I wish you would write to me how far the choosing of the

brethren in Waterhorne and of Lebe Pieters has progressed. Not that I

desire to impede the choosing of Lebe; but I would have been glad to

have had a conversation with him, before his entering upon the office

of bishop; for my soul is troubled about that which passed between us

last year.

O, brother Rein, that I could speak with you half a day, and make known

to you a little of my affliction, sorrow and sadness, and also of my

great solicitude which I yet bear for the future of the church; what an

ameliorating, pleasing application that would be to my sorrowful soul!

As it is I must bear it all myself. If the omnipotent God had not

preserved me last year, as well as now, I would already have been

deprived of my mind; for there is nothing upon earth which my heart

loves more than it does the church; and yet I must live to see this sad

affliction upon her. I think much, yet I write and say but little. Help

me pray that I may find refreshment, and may yet see a gracious result,

with all afflicted souls.

Brethren, beware of discord; foster love and unity with sincerity;

accompany the peaceful; make use of few words, and in, every respect

show yourselves to be children of God. , chosen brethren I Come and

unite your ardent prayers for me in my great affliction. I pray you for

Jesus' sake, let my affliction be buried with you; but if you should

speak about it to any one, then know with whom you speak. If all hearts

were pure, all tongues seasoned with salt, and all the mistakes of last

year were honestly and truly acknowledged, how soon would I be found a

cheerful man. Now, now the Lord will be my Comforter. May the poor

church be saved! brethren, let us pray! I trust that you will not be

offended at the writing in my last, to a private brother, concerning

the sixty dollars annually. I took the liberty of so writing, for I do

need it annually. The merciful Lord will send them to me. He knows

where. Greet the pious with the peace of the Lord. My daughters greet

you. The God of all grace be with you most beloved brother, and with

all the pious, forever, Amen.

If something should be sent to my assistance, send it the first

opportunity; for slaughtering time will soon be at hand and I have

little wherewith to buy. , brethren, do not think hard of it; it is

necessity which compels me to do so.

Your unworthy and affectionate brother,

MENNO SIMON.

September lst.

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THE REASON

MENNO SIMON

DOES NOT CEASE

TEACHING AND WRITING.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

" Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke,

exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine," 2 Tim 4:2.

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus

Christ," 1 Cor. 9:11.

ELKHART, INDIANA:

PUBLISHED BY JOHN F. FUNK AND BROTHER.

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THE REASON WHY MENNO SIMON

DOES NOT CEASE TEACHING AND WRITING.

FOR Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I

will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness,

and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth; and the Gentiles

shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory," Isa. 62:1,? 2.

I am well aware, most beloved readers, that we are, on account of our

teaching and writing, cursed, envied, hated, slandered, persecuted and

condemned to death, by innumerable persons of both high and low

stations in life. As roaring lions they gnash their teeth at us. Lords,

princes, learned and ignorant people, no matter of what station in

life, exercise their tyranny over us, as may at all times be seen; not

solely upon us, but also upon all those who accept and fulfill, by

their works, this our doctrine, with believing, faithful, obedient and

resigned hearts. Not that we claim it to be our doctrine, understand,

but it is the eternal, heavenly and unchangeable doctrine of our

beloved Lord Jesus Christ, which he himself has carried from high

heaven, from the bosom of his Father, to earth with his own blessed

mouth which cannot lie; which he has taught, and proclaimed to the

world by his faithful witnesses, the holy apostles, which he had chosen

for that purpose. Whosoever does not believe that our doctrine is the

pure, undefiled and saving doctrine of Jesus Christ, may piously

examine the rest of the plain Scriptures of the New Testament and he

will come to the conclusion and acknowledge that it is the pure

doctrine, testimony and Spirit of Christ Jesus, however much his

reluctant, lazy, rebellious, refractory, selfish and disobedient flesh

may oppose, frighten, tremble and be awe?stricken thereat. Yet, however

incontrovertible our cause appears, so much so that it can not be

controverted or refuted by the Scriptures, still it must be persecuted

by this ignorant, blind world as an abominable crime and treated as

heresy. The prophet says, "I have written to him the great things of my

law, but they were counted as a strange thing." Hosea 8:12.

O, worthy, beloved reader, if you would consider and realize how

earnestly the righteous God ever enforces his holy word, and how

terribly his wrath has ever been enkindled against those who did nut

abide firm in his divine word, you would, without doubt, in case you

are not within the word of God, tremble, and be frightened in your

inmost soul before God, on account of your disobedience! Did you never

read that the parents of all mankind, Adam and Eve, who were, by the

power of the divine Word created by God himself and punished by him on

account of their disobedience; banished from paradise; subjected to

manual labor; that the earth was accursed in them, and that all their

daughters must suffer and give birth to their children in perilous

travail and excrutiating pain; not to mention that they would be

subject to eternal death, if the new Man of grace, the blessed Christ

Jesus, had not, by grace, prevented this? Why was it? For no other

reason than that. they did not abide in the true word of the living

God, but lived according to their lusts, contrary to the word of God,

trusting in the deceit of the lying serpent rather than in the warning

of the true God, who, by grace, had created them, wise, righteous and

incorrupt, and placed them as lords of all creatures, Gen. 2:26.

Again, do you not know that all the creatures under the heaven, both

rational and irrational, were destroyed by water, through the righteous

judgment of God, except those that were in the ark with Noah, because

they became corrupt and lived according to their lusts, and in my

opinion, because they did not acknowledge the Spirit of the Lord, as

their judge 9 Gen. 6; 7; 8. O do consider these things, and

doubtlessly, you will hereafter sincerely fear your God, and ever abide

in his holy word I

Besides, you must have often heard, and perchance read for yourselves

about Sodom and Gomorrah, Gen. 18; 20; 19:4; Er and Onan, Gen. 38:7?9;

the idolaters, Ex. 32:5; the man who gathered sticks upon the Sabbath

day, Num. 15:32?36; Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, Num. 16; about the

murmurers, Num. 21:5; Zimri and the other adulterers, Num. 25:14, 15;

Nadab and Abihu, Lev. 10:2; those who hid the forbidden things, Joshua

7; King Saul, 1 Sam. 15:17?22; Jeroboam, Manasseh and the other kings,

priests and prophets who did not abide in the true worship and in

obedience to the divine word, which was given through Moses, but taught

and practiced either more or less or something quite different from the

law of the Lord; how terribly and in how many different ways they and

their followers were punished and smitten by God, who desires to have

his will obeyed. Some suddenly died; some were pierced with the sword,

Ex. 32:27; Num. 25:5; some were stoned to death, Num. 15:36; Josh.

7:25; some were swallowed up by the earth, Num. 16:32; some were bitten

by serpents; Num. 21:6; some were hanged, Num. 25:4; some were consumed

by the fire, Lev. 10:2; Saul's kingdom was taken from him, 1 Kings

15:28; and put to death with the sword; the house of Jeroboam and Achab

were taken from the earth; the eyes of Zedechias were put out; Manasseh

was captured; and all Israel was in exile in foreign countries, as in

Assyria, Babylonia, and Egypt as recorded in Chronicles, Kings, and the

prophets. I repeat, why was it V Solely because they did not abide in

the law of their God, but either by their own choice or else out of

disrespect for the law, transgressed it, establishing without the

command of God, images, temples and altars, in many countries and

cities, Jer. 2; Hosea 10; in many mountains and under large trees,

Hosea 4:13; notwithstanding, as may be seen by the writings of many

prophets, that Moses so strenuously commanded them as also was

commanded their fathers, thus, "What thing soever I command you,

observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto nor diminish from it,"

Dent. 12:32. At another place, that on all those who do not abide by

the works of the covenant, ', which are written in the Book, all the

plagues will come, and on the contrary, all the blessings will be to

all those who abide thereby, Deut. 28:58, 59. The children of Israel

did not always abide by the express, commanding word of him who had, by

his powerful hand, brought them out of the land of Egypt; but suffered

themselves to be misled by ungodly princes and false prophets, and

chose for themselves, without the divine commandment, places for divine

worship; carved for themselves images and built themselves temples. All

this by their own choice, and not by divine command; besides, they

committed all manner of idolatry. This the Holy Spirit, in divers

Scriptures, has called shameful whoredom, perjury, accursed idolatry

and despising the Lord. The prophet says, "Woe unto them, for they have

fled from me; destruction unto them I because they have transgressed

against me; though I have redeemed them, yet they have spoken lies

against me," Hosea 7:13.

As Israel deviated from the law of their God, and committed themselves

to the service of Baal, not being content with the law, doctrine and

service which God had commanded them through Moses, which Baal with his

altars they however erected to the service of the living God, as it

appears; so God in his grace and paternal love which he bore to Israel

for the sake of their fathers, again sent his faithful servants, the

prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Elias, Ezekiel, and others, who sharply

reproved, in behalf of God, the degenerated princes, false prophets and

the miserable, confused people; and again returned them to the true

worship and ceremonies of the law which God had commanded, and which

they had forsaken.

Besides, they prophesied famine, pestilence, failures, drought, war,

conflagration, robbery, imprisonment and destruction, as plagues on

account of their sins? and disobedience. And also concerning the divine

grace, salvation, deliverance, peace, mercy, and the eternal glory,

which in the latter days will so gloriously appear unto all the world

through Christ Jesus our Lord, who is the only promised prophet, Dent.

18:15. The truly anointed of the Lord; the spiritual King David, Ezek.

3'7:24; who establishes his kingdom by right and righteousness, Isa.

9:7; the true Shepherd who leads us into the pastures of eternal life,

Ezek. 34:14; whose name is Emmanuel, that is, God with us, Isa. 7:14;

Matt. 1:23; and the Lord who makes us righteous, who shall reign over

the house of Jacob forever, Luke 1:33; and this was the peculiar work

of the holy prophets who were graciously sent of God the Lord, to the

carnal Israel. But what did it avail, dear reader? They preached both

mildly and harshly, punishment and grace, judgment and mercy; yet it

was all in vain, as God plainly proclaimed by these same prophets,

saying, "I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious

people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own

thoughts," Isa. 65:2.

Again, "Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah and in the

streets of Jerusalem, saying," "Obey my voice. Yet they obeyed not, nor

inclined their ear, but walked every one in the imagination of their

evil hearts; therefore I will bring upon them all the words of this

covenant which I commanded them to do; but they did them not," Jer.

11:6, 7, 8. Again, "O Ephraim, thou committest w boredom and Israel is

defiled; they will not frame their doings to turn unto their God; for

the spirit of whoredoms is in the midst of them, and they have not

known the Lord," Hosea 5. Again, at another place, "The Lord has

testified against Israel and against Judah, by all the prophets, and by

all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my

commandments, and my statutes, according to all the law, which I

commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants, the

prophets. Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their

necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the

Lord their God," 2 Kings 1'7:13, 14. Again, "Thus speaketh the Lord of

hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and show mercy and compassions

every man to his brother; and oppress not the widow, nor the

fatherless, the stranger, nor the pour, and let none of you imagine

evil against his brother, in your heart; but they refused to hearken,

and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should

not hear. Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they

should hear the law, and the words which the Lord of hosts bath sent in

his Spirit by the former prophets; therefore came a great wrath from

the Lord of hosts," Zech. 7:9?12.

Yea, most beloved reader, they have so stopped their ears and so

hardened their hearts that they would not only not hear, but all of

them, as a general rule, and particularly most of the kings, princes,

prophets and priests, wittingly thirsted after the innocent blood of

the true witnesses of God, who, by an inextinguishable fire of love

fraternally reproved them of their sins, called them to repent and turn

to God, and they proclaimed and taught the way of the Lord in

righteousness.

Thus the mad, blind world has thanked and rewarded the faithful

servants of God, the true prophets and true teachers of the divine

truth, who sincerely seek their salvation, by upbraiding, imprisoning,

beating, banishing and slaying them. For the obdurate, ignorant,

whoring, refractory people will not be reproved as may be read in the

fourth chapter of Hosea, and of the men of Anathoth to Jeremiah,

saying, "Prophesy not in the name of the Lord that thou die not by our

band," Jer. 11:21; and "As for the word which thou hast spoken unto us

in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee," Jer. 44:18.

The selfish and lustful teachers will not suffer themselves to lie

reproved or admonished; they boast of their wisdom, and say, " We are

supported by the Holy Scriptures: although all that the scribes say and

teach is falsehood."

Above all, the proud, carnal, worldy, idolatrous and tyrannical

princes, who do not acknowledge God, I speak of the evil princes, who

do not want to be right in all their mandates, projects and

undertakings, however much they may be at variance with God and his

blessed word; as if the Almighty Father, the Creator of all things, who

holds heaven and earth in his hands, who rules all things by the word

of his power, had given them the privilege not only to command, rule

and administer according to their will in temporal government, but also

in the celestial kingdom of Jesus Christ. O no, beloved, no. This is

not the intention of God; but it is an abomination in his blessed sight

when mortal man substitutes himself in his stead. And when he raised up

and sent his beloved servants, the prophets who, fraternally reproved

and admonished all the princes, prophets, priests and common people

from the mouth of God; the princes destroyed them as seditious persons,

and the learned and common people as deceivers and heretics; as was the

case with Zechariah, the son of Berechiah; with Isaiah, Jeremiah,

Uriah, Kiriathaim and others, as may be read in history.

However ravenously the princes and the learned tyranized and opposed

the law and its followers, yet the law and word of God remained

immutable until Christ Jesus; so that every one who desired to be saved

had to regulate and conform himself according to the law and his

conscience, if he would see the dawn of day. For God is an eternal God

and his will can never be changed and diverted by man. In this case

neither prince nor learned man can avail. God alone, has dominion over

man; he will keep them in all eternity.

Therefore all things which they instituted and practiced as holy

worship without the command of God, or against it (not withstanding it

was in honor of the living God who had so gloriously led their fathers

and them from the land of Egypt), was nothing less than open idolatry,

spiritual whoredom, perfidy, degeneracy, blasphemy and an awful

abomination, as we have above briefly shown the reader from the

prophetic Scriptures. God is a God who does not need our aid and

offerings, because he has made all things. Mine, he says, are the

cattle, upon a thousand hills. What then can I offer? He will take no

other sacrifices than those alone which are commanded in his holy word,

as Samuel spake unto Saul, "Behold to obey is better than sacrifice."

The Lord God of Israel spake through Jeremiah, saying, "Obey my voice,

and do them, according to all which I commanded you, so shall ye be

my.. people, and I will be your God," Jer. 11:4; 2 Cor. 8:17.

All those, beloved reader, who sought a different way of salvation than

the one which God had commanded, either did not esteem God as wise

enough to teach the right way; or else that he would. deceive them by

his word. They despised the commanding voice of their God; they honored

and exalted their own opinions and deceiving wisdom far above the

wisdom of God; and they transgressed the precious covenant which God,

by mere ,race and mercy, had entered into with them and their fathers;

for the most shameful obduracy, and the worst disesteem of God, is not

to abide by his divine word, as the Scriptures say, They transgress the

covenant, as did Adam, and thereby they despise and abhor me.

O, had Israel acknowledged the most glorious promise of grace which was

given them and their fathers in regard to the promise of the seed,

land, kingdom and glory? And had they considered the beneficences of

God, so abundantly shown to them and their fathers, in miraculously

leading them from the land of Egypt, and letting them pass through the

Red Sea, Ex. 14:22; that "He went before them by day in a pillar of a

cloud to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire," Ex.

13:21; that he gave them bread from heaven, E x. ! 16:4; that he gave

them to drink from the ! rock, Ex. 17: (&gt;; that their clothes nor

their shoes did not wax old, Dent. 29:5; that he ' scattered the giants

from before them; that he led them into the promised land over; flowing

with milk and honey; that he gave to them the strongly fortified cities

and well I built houses full of gold and silver, which they had not

built; that he gave them the vineyards they had not planted, Dent.

6:11; that he gave them these not for their righteousness' sake, but by

grace, and because he would fulfill his promise which he had sworn to

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Yea he gave it as a permanent possession, if

they should abide by his holy word and should walk in his divine

commands, statutes and righteousness, as Moses the faithful servant

had, in divers instances, taught and commanded. Besides, that he gave

them corn, oil, wine, peace, freedom, religion, and fame above all the

people round about; for there was no people under all the heavens which

was like unto them, Dent. 4. He led them by the hand, as a young child;

carried them in his blessed arms; and girded himself round about them

as a lancer, as Jeremiah says; raising up among them his righteous men

and prophets who spake unto them the words of the Lord, fraternally

reproving all disobedient transgressors, and mildly consoling the pious

hearts with the gracious promise of both temporal and eternal life.

O, had the children of Israel sincerely realized all these favors and

many others, they would never have deviated so shamefully from the

word, law, will and commandments of God their Savior and Deliverer, who

in every respect treated them with such a paternal spirit. But because

they did not acknowledge the gracious beneficences which the Lord

showed unto them, and because they did not fear the righteous judgments

against them, therefore the wicked, blind flesh and the adulterous

spirit of idolatry has so misled them, so estranged them from God, and

made them so drunk and mad that they acted worse than the Gentiles

which were before them, whom God had, on account of their sinfulness,

rejected and scattered, as the holy prophets in divers Scriptures show

and proclaim.

O, fearful wrath of God! We can never escape it. If we do not desire

grace, light, truth, righteousness, salvation, true religion, life, the

kingdom, blessing and God himself, we must, by his righteous judgment,

doubtlessly, inherit disgrace, darkness, falsehood, unrighteousness and

idolatry, and hereafter eternal damnation, death, hell, malediction,

and the devil himself.

Sincerely beloved readers, God know that I love you with pure love in

Christ Jesus. Inasmuch as I find in proof of many Scriptures how

severely God has, from the beginning of the creation, ever punished all

transgression of his divine word and disobedience thereto, as every

intelligent reader may clearly understand from the history of Israel;

and as I clearly see that the whole world, from east to west, from

south to north, in the course of time, has been misled by ignorant

teachers and preachers, who seek nothing but carnality, aided by

unfaithful lords and princes, and that they have lost their faith in

and knowledge of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ, the ever blessed

Savior, his holy gospel and sacraments, true religion and the pious,

unblamable life which is of God; and as they are falsely led, under the

name of Christ, to put faith in a man of proud, unclean, idolatrous and

ungodly flesh, in useless fables, doctrines and human commandments; in

an idolatrous baptism and supper; in images, wood, stone, gold, silver,

water, bread and wine; in a shameful idolatry; in mere vain, false and

useless promises, so that it has gone so far among those who boast of

the name of Christ, that there is nothing left them, neither in regard

to faith, love, sacraments, nor in their life of which it can be

truthfully said that it comports to the life and doctrine of Christ,

judge for yourselves whether or not I speak the truth; and although

some of them, to?day, boast of the holy gospel of Christ, yet there is

nothing preached but that is useless and vain, and this no stronger

than the temporal lords and princes allow them to do; and, as the

princes are, so are the preachers; and, as the preachers are, so are

the people; and as by this we are asked to abandon Christ and his holy

apostles and humble them in their doctrine and believe and adhere to

the princes and?the learned, if we do not want to be tortured or

burned, at their hands, or be murdered by some other tyrannical means;

as if the preachers were sent by the princes, and not of Christ

?therefore, for the sake of the chosen of Zion and of Jerusalem, I can

no longer hold i my tongue, but must tell the truth; that ' their

righteousness may go forth as alight, and their salvation burn as a

torch; and that thus all mankind may acknowledge the righteousness of

the Lord, and all tongues, generations and people confess his glory;

although I have sometimes, with Jeremiah, thought not to teach any more

in the name of the Lord, because so many thirst after my blood. Yet, I

can no longer hold my ton ?tie; for I am, with the prophet, very mach

troubled at heart; my heart trembles in my bosom; all my joints shake

and quake, with the idea that the whole world, lords, princes, learned

and ignorant people, males and females, bond and free, are so widely

estranged from Christ Jesus, from evangelical truth and from life

eternal.

When I think to find a magistrate who fears God, rightly performs his

office and uses his sword, I verily find, as a general thing, nothing

but a wine bibbing Lucifer, Antioch, or Nero; for they place themselves

in Christ's stead so that their decrees must be respected above the

word of God. Whosoever does not regulate himself according to their

contents: does not serve Baal; maintains the ceremonies of Christ and

fulfills the word of God in fruits, must be taken and suffer as a

rogue, his property be confiscated, and the poor, innocent orphans who

have now lost their faithful parents because of the testimony of the

Lord, must be cast out and find their way begging through the land. But

the idolaters, deceivers of souls, whoremongers, knaves, adulterers,

fornicators, blasphemers, perjurers, drunkards and like transgressors,

are not persecuted, but can live at liberty and peace, under their

protection, I. do not here speak of the good magistrates, who are few;

but of the evil ones, which are numerous. Besides, we have their

unseasonable pomp, pride, greed, uncleanness, lying, robbing, stealing,

burning, hatred, envy, avarice and idolatry. Yet they want to be called

christian princes and gracious lords. O, Lord! Of what little benefit

will these hypocritical, lying titles and false boasting be to them

before Christ, when he shall appear I

Again, when I think of finding true teachers, such as are sent of God,

quickened by the Holy Spirit; who sincerely seek the salvation of their

brethren; who are not earthly minded, but preach the saving, wholesome

word of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ, in purity of heart, and who are

quite unblamable in their doctrine and life, I find myself altogether

mistaken. But instead, I find all over the world and among most of the

sects, nothing but robbers of the glory of God, and murderers of souls;

deceivers, blind watchmen, mute dogs, masters of sects who are

carnally, earthly and devilishly minded; enemies of the cross; serving

their bellies instead of serving God; false prophets, idolaters, vain

talkers, liars, and wizards. If any person does not believe my words,

let him prove their walk by the word of the Lord; let him compare their

doctrine, sacraments, spirit, object, walk and life with the doctrine,

sacraments, spirit, object, walk and life of Christ, and common sense

will teach you, without, even the word of God, of whom they are sent;

how, what and why they teach and what fruits their teachings bear.

In the third place, when I think of finding an unblamable church

without spot and blemish, which serves the Lord with all its power and

which conforms itself to his word ?I verily find such an ungodly,

abominable, corrupted and confused people; so carnal, idolatrous,

whoring, cruel, ungodly, unbelieving, ignorant, blood?thirsty,

unmerciful, drunken, pompous, luxurious, proud, avaricious, greedy,

envious, adulterous, false, deceiving, sodomitic, refractory,

disobedient, rebellious, vain, and so devilish, that ' a godfearing

soul must stand dumbfounded and be ashamed thereat. Yet they claim to

be the true bride, the believing church of Christ. O no, dear reader,

no. Christ Jesus does not own such a bride or church. But his bride is

flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone, Eph. fi:30; she conforms to

him, Rom. 8:29; is created after his image, Col. 3:10; partakes of his

nature, 2 Pet. 1:4; is minded as he is, Phil. 2:6; seeks nothing but

heavenly things where Christ Jesus is, sitting at the right hand of his

Father, Col. 3:1; yea in God's church nothing is heard, seen or found

but the true doctrine of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ and his holy

apostles, according to the Holy Scripture. But in the beforementioned

churches it is mostly doctrines, flatterings, comments, councils and

commandments of men. Here is faith, truth, obedience, baptism of the

believing, according to the word of God, true fraternal love, sad the

service of our neighbors; yonder is unbelief, falsehood, disobedience,

infant baptism without God's word, hatred, envy, tyranny, cruelty,

shedding blood, quarreling, lawsuits, backbiting, cheating, stealing,

robbing and murdering; here is teaching, admonition, consolation,

reproof in righteousness?there, mere corruption, heresy, upbraiding and

slandering; here, blessing, praise and thanksgiving?there, cursing and

swearing by the suffering of the Lord, by his wounds, sacraments,

flesh, blood and judgment; here, longsuffering?there, inflammable

temper; here, humility?there, pride; here, mercy?there, mercilessness;

here, true religion?there, idolatry; here, spirit and spiritual

wisdom?there, flesh and foolishness; here is prayer in spirit and in

truth?there, mockery with many powerless words; here is prayer for the

Lord's truth?there the righteousness of the Lord is persecuted; here is

faith in Christ ?there, idolatrous ceremonies; in short, here is Christ

and God?there, anti?Christ and the devil. Yea, most beloved brethren,

the pure, chaste and spotless bride of our Lord Jesus Christ (judge for

yourselves) is quite different from this carnal, unclean, adulterous

and shameful cause.

Verily, they are not the true church of Christ who merely boast of his

name. But those are the true church of Christ, who were converted, who

are born from above of God, who are of a regenerated mind and by the

operation of the Holy Spirit from the hearing of the divine word have

become children of God; who obey him, and live, unblamably in his holy

commandments and according to his holy will, all their days, or after

their calling.

Inasmuch as the worldly church is no such amiable, obedient bride, but

has left her lawful husband, Christ, and follows after strange

adulteries, as may be plainly seen, and all this through blindness,

ignorance and the deceit of their teachings therefore I seek to

accomplish nothing by my writing and teaching, according to the talent

God was pleased to give me, but to reclaim this adulterous bride, the

erring church, from her adulterous actions and again to return her to

her first husband, Christ Jesus, to whom she was so unfaithful,

notwithstanding he did her such great service, showing and declaring to

all sects, nations and individuals who desire to read or hear our

doctrine, writings and admonitions, not by flatterings and my own

opinion, but by the express word of God, which alone avails, that there

is no salvation on earth or in heaven otherwise than in Christ Jesus,

that is, in his doctrine, faith, sacraments, obedience and walk. All

doctrine which is contrary to his word or without his command, is vain,

such as, in the papa church, purgatory, false promises, differences in

places, in victuals and in days, pilgrimages, false sacrifices, &c.

Again, in Me German churches, the availability of infant baptism.

Again, with the corrupted sects, the third David; the carnal kingdom;

that every thing is clean to the clean, such as to show to idols

outward honor and reverence, to baptize infants, polygamy, shameful

confession, to make indecent show of person, not to believe in angels

or the devil; that a more perfect doctrine will be proclaimed than was

taught by Christ Jesus, Paul and the other apostles, and more like

abominations.

Again, all the sacraments not comprised in the word of God, as the

idolatrous baptism of infants, the false supper in a church which

neither seeks, knows, fears nor loves its God; which believes that the

bread is actual flesh and the wine actual blood; also, the

confirmation, the holy oil, as they call it; again, all the services

which are neither taught nor commanded by Christ nor his apostles, such

as holy water, altars, images, masses, vigils, absolution, the

invocation of the departed, monkhood, pilgrimages and the like

abominations. Again, the private and public life which does?not comport

with the Spirit and life o Jesus Christ; such as unclean, vulgar

thoughts, evil desires, unbecoming, shameful words; uncleanness,

adultery, fornication, drinking to, excess, hatred, envy, the shedding

of blood contrary to the ordinance of God, avarice, pride, lying,

cheating, backbiting, jesting, theft, usury, murder, swearing and

fighting. All these matters and articles, such as doctrines,

sacraments, worship and life, which are here noted, and others which

are not, every reader can easily understand by the inward unction of

God, that they, not being comprised, expressed, nor commanded in his

word and in the wholesome doctrine of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ,

but most of them being diametrically contrary to the Word, therefore we

deem them, according to the sentence of the Holy Scriptures, as nothing

else than false doctrine, deceit and fantasy; as false and garbled,

idolatrous sacraments, as abominable idolatry, spiritual whoredom,

degeneracy, and as carnal, earthly and deadly life, of which the Holy

Spirit of God has so abundantly testified through Paul and John that

those who commit these things shall not inherit the kingdom of God,

Rom. 1:22; 1 Cor. 6:8; Gal. 5:21; Eph. 3:5; Rev. 22:5.

For if the literal Israel was so severely punished and crushed by God,

because they did not abide by the law, commandments, statutes and

righteousnesses of their God, and because they did not hear and receive

the reproving, admonition and teachings of their faithful prophets who

spoke to them through the inspiration of God, but stoned them, put them

to the sword, killed, upbraided and blasphemed them; following a

worship to suit their own taste, as has been shown above?O, what must

we, then, expect from God, if we do not abide by the wholesome doctrine

of grace, by the right holy sacraments, by the works of love which are

pleasing to God and by the pious, unblamable life which no Moses,

prophet, angel, nor creature has taught us, but which the eternal Son

of God, the eternal wisdom and truth, the eternal love and mercy, the

blessed Christ Jesus has taught us by his own blessed mouth, by the

command of his Almighty Father, which command is eternal and immutable,

whose love for us is ineffable, who has confirmed it by virtue of

miracles and at last sealed it with his precious blood; and has

proclaimed the same to all the world by his faithful testimony, his

holy apostles, in incomprehensible power of the Spirit; which doctrine

is nothing else, nor will it ever be any thing else, than the precious

gospel of peace, the glad tidings of grace, the remission of sin, the

victory over death, hell and the devil; besides, grace, peace, freedom

and admission to the Father; and all this out of love and grace?not by

works or merit of our own; but by means of Christ Jesus alone.

Again, these are the sacraments which Christ Jesus has instituted and

taught: First, the holy baptism of the believing, in which we bury our

sinful flesh and take unto ourselves a new life, seal and confess our

faith, testify to the new birth and good conscience; and thus we enter

into the obedience of Jesus Christ, who has taught and commanded us

thus himself and also in his Holy Spirit through his disciples.

Secondly, the Holy Supper, in which is represented the death of the

Lord, who died for us in his great love; and in which is represented

true, brotherly love; and also the righteous, unblamable, christian

life which must be lived inwardly and outwardly in full measure of

death unto sin and unfeigned love, conformable to the word of God.

Behold, worthy reader, since the whole world, yea, all tongues, tribes

and people have become degenerated, according to the righteous sentence

of God, in the doctrines, sacraments anti life which is pleasing to

God, for they prefer falsehood to truth, unrighteousness to,

righteousness; as, they have committed themselves to all manner of

false teachings, false ceremonies and carnal life, so that we may

consider them rather as brutes than human beings, rather as devils than

christians, as every reasonable being can easily, even without the word

of God, comprehend and understand; and as the learned and preachers,

who, we should reasonably expect to reprove such things, themselves are

committed to such false doctrine, unbelief and abominable idolatry and

lead, even, a more beastly and infernal life?yea, as these learned

people diligently lead and force all mankind to such idolatry,

unbelief, transgression and accursed life, both by their teaching and

example, as most of the learned have done from the beginning, as they

are ever earthly, carnally and devilishly minded, and as they ever

reject the spiritual and heavenly wisdom and will of Jesus Christ which

tempers the carnal lusts, as a displeasure and inconvenience, Col. 3:5;

1 Pet. 2:11; Rom. 13:14; therefore, since I clearly see this awful

disesteem of the holy word of God, and the condemnation of innumerable

thousands of souls whom Christ Jesus has so dearly bought and ransomed

by his precious blood, for outside of the obedience to the divine word

there is no salvation, therefore I cannot be silent; for the honor and

praise of my Lord and God are at stake, and it avails the salvation of

a poor, erring brother?although, perchance, it may be at the risk of my

life.

Who knows but that God, through me and through my beloved brethren who

are and who shall be, has chosen and provided in his grace, that some

of those who now unwittingly err, may yet acknowledge and confess the

right way, doctrine, truth and life, and walk unblamably in Christ,

before God and before all the world all the days of their lives. ,

Lord, that it might be so, Amen.

Behold, most beloved reader, inasmuch as the Babylonian king, namely,

the antichrist, has, through his servants, that is, through the false

prophets and teachers, demolished the disobedient Jerusalem, the temple

of the Lord, and has thus imprisoned Israel these many years?therefore

I and my brethren in the Lord desire nothing but that we may, to the

honor of God, so labor at his fallen city, temple and imprisoned

people, according to the talent received of him, that we may rebuild

that which is demolished, repair that which is damaged and free those

who are imprisoned, with the word of God, by the power of the Holy

Spirit, the same as it was before the fall, that is, in freedom of the

Spirit, on the doctrines, sacraments, ceremonies, love and life of

Jesus Christ and of his holy apostles.

For this reason I am not ashamed to write down, publish and loudly

proclaim my faith, doctrine, seeking and desire, before all mankind who

will hear, no matter who they are. Yea, I doubt not but if those could

see my inmost heart who now assiduously seek my life, they would change

their hatred against me and my brethren, into love for us.

In the first place we desire, according to the word of God, that no

bishop, pastor or teacher shall be admitted into the church of the

Lord, to teach and administer the sacraments of the Lord, other than

those who are comprised in the doctrine, ordinance and life of our Lord

Jesus Christ?unblamable in all things, 1 Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:6; Lev. 21:7;

Ezek. 44:21; for the word of the Lord is truth, Jn.17:17; it is Spirit

and life, Jn. 6:63; therefore they can not be administered by the

carnal minded; by no children of death, nor by liars; but by the

truthful, by the spiritual minded, and by those who rightly confess

Christ Jesus; who surely feel the life eternal in their hearts, and who

live unblamably before God and walk in Christ Jesus, so that they may

truthfully say with Paul, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of

Christ," 1 Cor.11:1.

In the second place we desire with ardent hearts, even at the cost of

life and blood, that the holy gospel of Jesus Christ and his apostles,

which alone is the true doctrine, and will remain so until Jesus Christ

will reappear in the clouds, may be taught and preached through all the

world, as the Lord Jesus Christ commanded his disciples at the last

moments while he was on earth, Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15.

In the third place we seek, teach and desire a true faith and christian

life conformable to the doctrine of Jesus Christ and his apostles; for

the doctrine of the preachers is all vain and useless if the word which

is preached is not accepted by faith, Heb. 4:2; and faith is vain, and

dead before God when it does not work by love, Jas. 2:20.

In the fourth place, we teach, seek and desire a right, christian

baptism; first, with Spirit and fire, Luke 3; 16; afterward in the

water, in obedience to faith; for thus has Christ Jesus commanded all

the believing; and thus the holy apostles have taught and administered

it, Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15; Acts 2:38; 9:5; 16:31; 10:47.

In the fifth place, we teach, seek and desire such a Supper as Christ

Jesus himself has instituted and administered, Matt. 26:19; Mark 14:22;

Luke 22:19; first, to a church which is outwardly without spot and

blemish, that is, without any considerable transgression and

wickedness; for the church can only judge as to the visible; but what

is inwardly wicked and not outwardly apparent to the church, as the

betraying of Judas, of that God is to judge, for he alone tries the

hearts and reins, and not the church. Secondly, in both forms, namely,

bread and wine; thirdly, to the remembrance of the Lord's death.

Fourthly, as a renewal and proof of brotherly love, as this supper was

also called amongst the ancients, a brotherly supper, as Tertullian

writes.

In the sixth place we seek and desire that all strange ceremonies and

manners of worship which are without the word of God, or instituted

contrary thereto and tend to abominable idolatry, such as holy

water,oral confession, infant baptism, masses, matins, vespers, images,

altars, false promises and the like ceremonies, may be abolished, not

by force of arms, but peaceably by the word of God, that the poor,

ignorant populace may no longer be deceived by such vain works which

are nothing short of idolatry; but that they may put their faith in the

living God and in the merits of our ever blessed Lord Jesus Christ and

that they may cordially walk in his divine commandments, not varying to

the right. or the left; for in him is life everlasting, Jn. 12:60, and

in none other.

In the seventh place we seek, desire, teach and preach, that all

magistrates, emperors, kings, dukes, counts, barons, mayors, knights

and other officers may be so taught and trained by the Spirit and word

of God, that they may sincerely seek, honor, fear and serve Christ

Jesus, the true head of all lords and potentates; that they may rightly

administer their office, and use the sword given them of God, in his

fear and in brotherly love, to the praise of God, to the protection of

the good and to the punishment of the evil, according to the intent of

the word of God, Rom. 13:3; 1 Pet. 2:13; as did the men of God, as

Moses, Joshua, David, Ezekiel, Josiah and others. Read also Dent. 17:2,

3, and you will clearly understand what God has commanded all

magistrates to do.

Besides, we teach the true love and fear of God, the true love of our

neighbor, to aid and assist all mankind and to injure none; to crucify

the flesh and its lusts; to circumcise the beart, mouth and the whole

body with the knife of the divine word, of all unclean thoughts,

unbecoming words and actions. Now consider whether these things are not

the will of God, the true doctrine of Jesus Christ, the true

ministering of the sacraments and the true life which is of God;

although all the gates of hell may willfully oppose them.

Behold, dear brethren, against these doctrines, sacraments and life no

imperial decrees, no papal bulls, no councils of the learned, no long

usage, no human philosophy, no Origen, Augustine, Luther, Bucer,

prison, banishment or murder can prevail; for it is the eternal,

imperishable word of God; it is, I repeat, the eternal mord of Good,

and will remain immutable forever. Etiamsi rumpantur ills codro.

Whosoever yet opposes and wars against these things, either at heart,

verbally or by the sword, does not war against flesh? and blood, that

is, against man, but he wars against the Lamb, against him who has all

power, and who by a word created heaven and earth and the fullness

thereof. Nay, against him who lifts up his hand and says, " 1 live

forever," Dent. 32:40.

As this is the true doctrine of Jesus Christ which alone leads to life

eternal, and as there is no other true doctrine beside; therefore I

might be asked by the reader why it is that so very few men sincerely

believe and fulfill it in works? In my opinion there are four reasons

for this. First, because all lords, preachers and common people are

carnal and earthly minded; therefore they cannot admit the lovely

doctrine of the Holy Ghost, the doctrine of eternal peace. Secondly,

because they are drunk and full of the enchanting wine of the

Babylonian whore, exceedingly rich and not in want of any thing, Rev.

1'7:2; 3:1'7. Thirdly, because they do not fear the awful judgment and

fearful wrath of God against all disobedience and transgression, yea,

so utterly disregard the word of God, as if the Holy Ghost was merely

jesting, when threatening temporal or eternal punishment. Fourthly,

because they do not acknowledge the great beneficence of God toward

them in Christ Jesus; for in case they did acknowledge the works of

divine love toward them, namely, that God has created heaven and earth

and the fullness thereof for their

I benefit; that he formed them after his own image from the dust of

earth; placed them at the head of all creation; gave them gold, silver,

land, house and home and all the necessaries of life; gave them his

divine word; first, the law of nature, then Moses and the prophets, and

afterward his only begotten Son, his wisdom, his power, Christ Jesus,

who has taught them the will of his Father in great clearness; opened

heaven and closed hell; vanquished death, sin and the devil for them;

fulfilled the cumbersome, threatening law on the cross, and acquired

for them grace, favor, mercy, peace, freedom, deliverance, remission of

sins and eternal life with the Father, if they in truth believe, seek

and desire it, besides calling them daily to repentance, regeneration

and the glory of the chosen children of God; desiring to draw them

forth from the darkness of the world and deliver them into the kingdom

of his beloved Son; not letting his righteous judgment come on them as

it did on Sodom and Gomorrah; giving them day and night, sun and moon,

rain and drought; again, blessing them with wisdom and understanding,

wife, children, cattle and fruits; if they did cordially acknowledge

these rich gifts of his abundant grace, then all the tyrants under

heaven would not separate them from the doctrine, love, sacraments,

life and confession of Jesus Christ even if it were possible that they

could testify to and assert it by a thousand deaths. Yea, they would

say with the apostle Paul, "Vno shall separate us from the love of

Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or

nakedness, or peril, or sword?" Rom. 8:35.

But because they do not acknowledge the God of all grace in his divine

word, judgments and beneficences; and do neither acknowledge the

Spirit, power, will and life which was in Christ Jesus whom we should

follow, according to the word of God; therefore they so wrongfully

oppose and persecute the heavenly doctrine of Jesus Christ, and

diligently follow, teach and protect all manner of falsehood, deceit,

fraud and idolatry. Again I repeat, If they rightly acknowledged and

believed the paternal heart, mind and love, protection, favor, will,

solicitude and affection of the .Al, mighty God in Christ Jesus, they

would doubtlessly accept and cordially fulfill his blessed word and

admonition; but as they do not rightly acknowledge Christ Jesus and his

Father?the Savior said, " God so loved the world, that he gave his only

begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but

have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to

condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He

that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not, is

condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only

begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come

into the world and men loved darkness rather than light because their

deeds were evil," Jn. 3:1(i?19.

Take heed, O ye miserable, erring mend! For here the eternal wisdom of

the blessed Christ Jesus has expressed, why you do not believe his

precious word, and do not fulfill his divine will, because you prefer

the damnable darkness to the saving light. Yea, I repeat, that if you

sincerely accepted and believed the divine goodness, mercy, and the

ineffable love of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ toward you, namely,

that by his ardent love he became an humble mortal man for you; came

down from high heaven into these lower parts of the earth, taught and

preached unto you the eternal kingdom of God, performed miracles,

prayed, suffered tribulation, anxiety, apprehension and prison; that he

was beaten, mocked, derided, spit upon, scourged, crowned with thorns,

drenched with gall and vinegar, blasphemed, crucified and that he died

and was buried for you; was again raised up, ascended to heaven, seated

at the right hand of the Father; and that by his precious blood he

became your faithful Servant, Reconciler, Deliverer, Mediator and

Advocate; that by love he sent to you and the whole world, his faithful

servants, the holy apostles, with the word of grace if you believe all

this, you would, doubtlessly, love him who has shown you such great

love and grace without any merit on your part; and if you would return

the love with which lie has loved you and yet loves you, you would,

verily, not tire of seeking and following him, so that you might live

unblamably according to his blessed will, and walk all your life in his

divine commandments, as he himself says, ".He that hath my

commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me," Jn.14:21.

Behold, most beloved reader, thus true faith or true knowledge begets

love, and love begets obedience to the commandments of God. Therefore

Christ Jesus says, "He that believeth on him is not condemned." Again

at another place, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my

word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and

shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death into life,"

Jn. S:24. For true evangelical faith is of such a nature that it cannot

lay dormant; but manifests itself in all righteousness and works of

love; it dies unto flesh and blood; destroys all forbidden lusts and

desires; cordially seeks, serves and fears God; clothes the naked;

feeds the hungry; consoles the afRicted; shelters the miserable; aids

and consoles all the oppressed; returns good for evil; serves those

that injure it; prays for those that persecute it; teaches, admonishes

and reproves with the Word of the Lord; seeks that which is lost; binds

up that which is wounded; heals that which is diseased and saves that

which is sound. The persecution, suffering and anxiety which befalls it

for the sake of the truth of the Lord, is to it a glorious joy and

consolation.

All those who have a faith as is here mentioned, namely, a faith that

makes desirous to walk in the commandments of the Lord, to do the will

of the Lord, and which shows itself in all righteousness, love and

obedience, also acknowledge that the word and will of our beloved Lord

Jesus Christ is true wisdom, truth and life, yea, unchangeable and

immutable until Christ Jesus shall reappear in the clouds of heaven at

the judgment day; they do not scoff at God's word as if it were a

vapor, as do the ignorant world, saying, "What can water avail me?" but

they will diligently try to obey the word of Jesus Christ in every

particular, even at the risk of death according to the flesh.

Behold, beloved brethren, I speak frankly with a certain and sure

conviction not by any revelation or heavenly inspiration, but by the

express, definite word of the Lord, and from my inmost heart I am

convinced that this doctrine is not our doctrine, but the doctrine of

him who sent us, that is Christ Jesus. All those who are desirous of

doing his will, will acknowledge that this doctrine is of God; and that

we do not preach our own opinion, dreamings, and visions. But those who

do not fear God; do not believe on Christ Jesus; who trample upon his

word, and do not do his will; who love darkness rather than light; by

those, all evangelical truth must be called damnable heresy and

considered and treated as deadly treason. Notwithstanding all this, the

word of God shall remain unbroken until the judgment day.

Woe unto such I For in them are lost the abundant gifts of grace, the

heavenly word of peace, the mild admonitions, the hard and bitter

labor, the precious treasure, which is the precious blood and bitter

death of our Lord Jesus Christ. Again, woe, woe unto them! For it can

never be that we can be saved without faith, love and obedience to our

Lord Jesus Christ. I speak of those of understanding age. Paul says,

"With. out faith it is impossible to please him (God)," Heb. il:6. "He

that believeth not is condemned," Jn. 3:18.

As the literal law of Moses could not, at any time, be changed by the

tyranny of princes, the accnteness of the learned, or by the madness of

the common people; and as there could be nothing added to, nor taken

from it, it had to remain unchanged until the coming of Christ. Yea, as

all who did not abide by this law were the children of the wrath and of

death; so, also, it is today. If all the deceased apostles should be

raised up and should teach us differently from what they did at the

time of their ministration; and besides these, Moses and the prophets,

all the angels of heaven and as many eloquent and miraculous prophets

as we have hairs on our heads; and if besides these, all the princes

should roar like devouring lions and ravening wolves, and if every

learned tongue should cut as a razor, it would yet be impossible that

those could be saved who do not abide by the wholesome doctrine,

sacraments, obedience and life of Jesus Christ. Yea they are the

children of wrath, the curse and of death eternal, as Christ himself

says, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into

the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is

in heaven," Matt. 7:21. At another place he says, "If ye continue in my

word then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and

the truth shall make you free," Jn. 8:31, 32. From this follows the

opposite, beloved brethren, namely, that if we do not abide in Christ's

word, we cannot be his disciples; that we do not acknowledge the truth;

and if we do not acknowledge the truth how can we then be made free

thereby? And if we are not freed by truth, woe unto us that we were

ever born; for then we are yet in sin, under the curse, wrath, children

of hell, of the devil and of eternal death. O, misery, misery I Fear

with all your heart, faithful reader 1 For this will never be found

otherwise.

If the bloodthirsty, tyrannical lords and princes had, from the

beginning, acknowledged this, and would now acknowledge it, namely,

that the word is eternal and will remain unchangeable and that it

cannot be changed by the most exalted of men, never would they thus

have opposed and murdered the professors of the divine word.

If the Roman bishop and his learned fellows had taken this matter to

heart, he would never have taken from Italy her emperor, and from

Christ Jesus the spiritual reign. But he would, doubtlessly, have

bidden adieu to his worldly glory, pomp, luxury, idolatry, false

doctrine, easy life, garbled sacraments, sodomitic uncleanness,

councils, statutes and decrees and would have contented himself with

the immutable, heavenly doctrine of the only, true Shepherd, Teacher

and Bishop of our souls, Christ Jesus.

As the whole burden of our salvation is included and comprised in

Christ Jesus and his holy word, and in no one else, nor in any other

doctrine?therefore I warn every godfearing soul, by the word of God;

through nothing but brotherly love, not to be shaken and misled, either

by the exalted position of man, or by old age, learning; eloquence,

finely gotten up ceremonies, dreams, prophesies, visions, signs and

jugglery. For there can never be a wiser, truer, more diligent, more

righteous, god pleasing, unblamable, powerful, perfect, higher or

holier Prophet than the ever blessed Christ Jesus. Every thing, too,

has testified this of him, both in heaven and upon earth. In the first

place God testified this to Adam; afterward to Moses, David, Isaiah,

Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Zechariah, and to most of the prophets; to

the angel Gabriel; to the angels at his birth; by the star of heaven;

by the wise from the east; the learned at Jerusalem; John the Baptist.

Again at his baptism by the Father and the Holy Ghost; afterward by the

multitudes, the devils; by the healing, the raising up of the dead; by

changing water into wine; commanding the storm to cease; by the loaves,

fishes, fig?tree, and the children on palms?day; at his death; by the

murderer; the firmament of heaven; the whole earth; the curtains of the

temple; the stones; the deceased dead, and the centurion under the

cross, Ps. 22:7; Isa. 53:5; Dan. 9:25. Say, what is there that has not

testified to Christ Jesus 8 Yea he is the one, as he himself says, who

after his resurrection again ascended to heaven, to whom all power is

given of the Father both in heaven and in earth, Matt. 28. Therefore it

is just and right, yea it is absolutely required, if they do not want

to be lost, that all magistrates bow themselves under his scepter; all

reason and sagaciousness place themselves under his heavenly wisdom;

all flesh lay at his blessed feet; and that every tongue confess that

he is the Lord, to the honor and praise of his Father. Therefore I pray

all godfearing readers in the Lord, by the merits of our blessed Lord

Jesus Christ, to whom be the kingdom, the praise and honor; not to

consider me any higher than a mere, humble servant of Jesus Christ and

as a dispenser of his mysteries, according to the faith given me of

him. I, miserable sinner that I am, on account of my unclean, greedy,

proud, vain, idolatrous and carnal life which I formerly led, and on

account of my yet often sinning and transgressing before my God, who am

not worthy to be the least servant in the house of my Lord! Yet, by his

grace I am that I am.

Brethren, I tell you the truth and lie not. I am no Enoch, no Elias, I

have no visions, am no prophet, who can teach and prophesy differently

from what it is written in the word of God and whosoever tries to teach

something else will soon miss the right way and be deceived in his

learning. I trust that the merciful Father will keep me in his word so

that I shall write or speak nothing but that which I can prove by

Moses, the prophets, the evangelists or by other apostolic Scriptures

and doctrines, explained in their true sense, Spirit and intent of

Christ. Judge ye that are spiritually minded. Again, I have no visions

nor angelic inspirations, neither do I desire such, lest I be thereby

deceived. The word of Christ, alone, is sufficient for me. If I do not

follow his testimony, then, verily, all that I do is useless. And even

if I had such visions and inspirations, which is not the case, even

then it would have to be conformable to the word and Spirit of Christ,

or else it would be mere fantasy, deceit and satanic temptation. For

Paul says, "Let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith," Rom.

12:6. Nor am I a third David, as some have falsely passed themselves

and yet pass themselves for. There are but two Davids comprised in the

word of God. The first, a literal and figurative, namely, the son of

Jesse; and the second, the spiritual, the only begotten Son of God,

Christ Jesus. Whosoever, now, passes himself for the third, is a

falsifier and blasphemer. Let every soul take heed, lest he err in his

faith.

According to my first birth I am nothing but unclean slime and dust of

earth, conceived and born in sin from my mother's womb, and educated

all my life in all manner of ignorance, sin and blindness, until the

clear light of grace and knowledge appeared unto me from high heaven

and which has given me such a heart, will and desire, that I willingly

seek after that which is good, and strive, with holy Paul to " follow

after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of

Christ Jesus," Phil. 3:12.

O, most beloved reader, I repeat that I have formerly acted shamefully

against God and my neighbors; and yet I do, sometimes think, speak and

act recklessly, of which however I sincerely repent. What am I that I

should boast of, seek and teach any thing else than the ever blessed

Christ Jesus alone, his word, sacraments, obedience and his

god?pleasing, virtuous and unblamable life. He is the only one of whom

it is written: That he was begotten of the Holy Ghost; that he knew no

sin; that guile was not found in his mouth, that his doctrine, word,

will, and commandments are life eternal, Matt. 1:25; Luke 1:31; 1 Pet.

2:22; Isa. 53:12.

Therefore take heed and save your soul. For thus every christian must

be minded in regard to Christ Jesus, his Savior and in regard to his

holy word; nor must he think himself more exalted, no matter what gifts

he has received, if he would not rob Christ Jesus of his glory; and

remain in a humble walk before God, in the right measure of his faith

as becomes him in Christ. I advise all not to deceive themselves. Let

spiritual pride, and vain boasting be far from you, "For God resisteth

the proud, and giveth grace to the humble," 1 Pet. 5:5.

Inasmuch as I daily see the perils which have surrounded us from the

beginning; and as so many souls are deceived by false prophesies,

smooth words, seeming holiness, lying, jugglery, boasting and false

promises of the anti?christians and the false prophets who are ever

intent upon their own honor, fame and gain, under a semblance of God's

word, as was the case with the popes of Rome, with John of Leyden, the

Mnnsterites, and others?therefore I deem it essential and well,

sincerely to warn and admonish all beloved readers in the Lord, not to

accept my doctrine as the gospel of Jesus Christ until they have

weighed it in the balance with the Spirit and word of God, that they

may not place their faith in me, nor in any teacher or writer, but,

solely in Christ Jesus. For if they should accept it for my sake, and

should not first compare it with the word of the Lord, and should, thus

depend upon me or any other man, and not upon Christ Jesus, they would

be like unto the culpable Corinthians, whom Paul severely reproved

because there were dissensions among them; some were of Paul, some of

Apollos, and not all of Christ Jesus, 1 Cor. 1. They would be like unto

those of whom it is written, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man,

and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord,"

Jer. 17: C.

If I should, by my teaching, gain disciples for myself and not for

Christ Jesus, seeking my own gain, praise and honor, then, indeed, woe

unto my soul I No brethren, no. The Lord be blessed I seek not that

which Judas, Gallio and Theudas sought. By the grace of God I am not

minded like those who, in their imagination soar above the clouds and

want to be like unto the Most High, Acts 6:37. But I repeat it. I am a

poor, miserable sinner, who must daily fight with my flesh, the world

and the devil, and daily seek the mercy of the Lord; and who, with holy

Paul boasts of nothing but of Christ Jesus alone; and that he was

crucified for us.

My writing and preaching is for nothing but for the sake of Christ

Jesus; for I seek and desire nothing (this the Lord knows) but that the

most glorious name, the divine will, and the glory of our beloved Lord

Jesus Christ may be acknowledged throughout the world. I desire and

seek sincere teachers, true doctrines, true faith, true sacraments,

true worship and an unblamable life; for which I must pay with much

tribulation, trouble, uneasiness, labor, watching, fear, anxiety,

sorrow, envy, shame, heat and cold, and perhaps, at last by torture,

yea by my blood and death. For my reward, according to the flesh, must

be that of him who, from the beginning, in his great love, has sought

the salvation of the world. I say with holy John the Baptist; Christ

Jesus must increase, but I must decrease, Jn. 3:30; he lives forever

and ever, but I shall again return to the dust from whence I came, as

all the children of men.

Therefore I beseech you again, by the grace of God, and for the

salvation of your souls, that you may weigh my doctrine and the

doctrine of all mankind, who have been from the times of the apostles,

are now, and shall yet be, with the gospel balance of Jesus Christ and

the doctrine of his holy apostles, lest you be deceived by me or by any

other man, no matter whether he be a prince, learned or unlearned, holy

in appearance, or miraculous. If it be the word of God which I teach,

accept it in the name of the Lord, if ye would not be lost. But if it

be human doctrine, then let it be accursed of God. "For other

foundation can no man lay than that is laid (by the apostles) which is

Jesus Christ," 1 Cor. 3:11.

No doctrine is profitable or serviceable to our salvation but the

doctrine of Christ Jesus and his holy apostles, as he himself says, "

Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you,"

Matt. 28:19.

All Scripture, both of the Old and New Testaments, rightly explained

according to the intent of Christ Jesus and his holy apostles, is

profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction

in righteousness, 2 Tim. 3:16; but whatever is taught contrary to the

Spirit and doctrine of Jesus is accursed of God, Gal. 1.

Inasmuch as there is but one corner stone laid of God, the Almighty

Father, in the foundation of Zion, which is Christ Jesus, Isa. 28:16;

Rom. 9:33; 1 Pet. 2: B; upon whom alone we should build conformable to

his word, and upon none other; and as the whole world, to the contrary,

have built upon strange corner stones, such as popes, councils,

doctors, doctrines and commandments of men; upon wrong practices of

long standing, and still continue to build upon pretending prophets;

and as they thus so shamefully reject the only, noble and finished

corner stone, the ever blessed Christ Jesus?therefore I can not be

restrained, but must warn all godfearing souls in the Lord, by my

writings, wherever they shall be taken, read and heard, that from this

moment they may awaken, if they desire to be saved (whether I live or

die by so doing), and that they may without delay, enter upon the

wholesome doctrine, sacraments, obedience and life of our beloved Lord

Jesus Christ; for in him alone is life eternal, as has been frequently

said above.

Beloved reader, verily, I can not but wonder at the obduracy, deafness

and blindness of the world, inasmuch as they are not ashamed to bear

the name of Christ, and to boast of his merits, blood and death, while

nothing is found among them at all by which they prove the good will

and nature of Christ Jesus. O ye vain boasters, if you are the true

christians in whom God is pleased, as you pretend, where then, is your

christian baptism in which you have buried your sins and put on the new

life? Where is your true Supper in which you proclaim the death of the

Lord and show your brotherly love I Where is your love and fear of God

H your love of your neighbors? Your humility of heart B Your

mercifulness towards the needful? Your obedience to the commandments of

God V Your new birth from above, from which results a new life which

should be unblamable before God, and before all the world? Jas. 1:27.

Where is the living, holy and pleasing sacrifice of your own body,

which you should ever be ready to present for the sake of the Lord's

truth q We find nothing amongst you but unbelief and its evil fruits;

an anti?Christian baptism, idolatrous supper; unclean love of flesh,

unmercifulness, pride, avarice, disobedience in all divine matters,

carnal birth, earthly mindedness, and the old blamable life, led

according to the will of him who, from the beginning, was a proud,

false, deceitful, cruel and bloody murderer.

We find amongst you no worship but only a self?begotten set of rites

which are pleasing to the flesh, such as, bells, organs, singing,

celebration, ornamented churches, beautiful images, differences in

victuals and in days, false purification and promises, reading many

psalms and pater nosters with the mouth and not spiritually,

adulteration of the sacraments, and a destruction and garbling of all

that which Christ Jesus has taught and commanded in his holy gospel.

All of which are, verily, no works of regenerated christians; but

rather the works of Satan or of the foolish, blind and ignorant flesh.

For by these works neither the word nor righteousness of God is taught:

no flesh is crucified; no neighbors are served; and above all they are

not pleasing to God. Therefore they can not be considered, according to

Scripture, services of God, but rather an abominable, fearful and

terrible service of idols. For by such means the ignorant, trusting

populace is led away from the true faith and trust in Christ Jesus and

is led into a false trust in ceremonies, yea, in such ceremonies as the

eternal wisdom, the blessed Christ Jesus, has never commanded. By which

ceremonies they plainly show that they believe at heart that Christ

Jesus is imperfect, foolish, and unclean. For in case they believed him

to be wise and perfect how could they thus shamefully adulterate,

break, despise and garble his perfect, evangelical word and ordinances?

And if they acknowledged him to be spotless why do they seek their

salvation in such impure and strange means, and not in the only pure

sacrifice, which is Christ Jesus?

But because true religion opposes your carnal mindedness, pride,

avarice, uncleanness, vanity, ease and the lusts of your flesh,

therefore you have chosen for yourselves a vain and strange religion by

which you think to be saved, although you do not live according to the

word and will of God. O, no, dear reader, no. I repeat it, if all

creatures under the heavens were devouring swords, fire and water; if

all men were cruel, horrible and bloody tyrants; and if the acuteness

of the learned, ruled all the people, yet all would be vanity. If you

would enter into life, you must be born again, Jn. 3: S, you must be

regenerated and in malice you should be children, 1 Cor. 14:20; yea,

you must keep the commandments which were taught and commanded of Jesus

Christ, Matt. 18. Nothing can be devised as a substitute; for there

will never be a way to salvation other than Christ Jesus.

It is too plain, and indiscreet blindness to think that we could be

saved and at the same time be avaricious, spiteful, envious, proud,

adulterous and idolatrous, as all the Scriptures too plainly show and

teach that such shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Did you ever find

falsehood with God? I think not. Holy Paul says that God is one "that

can not lie," Tit. 1:2. Christ Jesus says, " Thy word is truth," Jn.

17:17. If he be, then, a God that can not lie; and if his holy word be

truth; .O, ye miserable, then all is lost with you. For his doctrine

and truth is, that the unbelieving, refractory, disobedient,

avaricious, vain, lying, whoring, greedy, obdurate, idolatrous,

adulterous, ambitious, bloodthirsty and carnal man shall not enter into

the kingdom of heaven; but his portion shall be "everlasting

destruction," 1 Thess. 1:9, eternal darkness and eternal death.

As you are such ungodly, obdurate and willful sinners, therefore you

are, according to the word of Christ which can not lie, and according

to the doctrine of the apostles who spoke in like Spirit, deprived of

the glorious revelation of the children of God, and of the future life;

and must remain forever, by the wrath of God, in the lake which burns

with fire and brimstone, Rev. 21:8.

And if you, notwithstanding this, trust to be saved while you do not

sincerely repent of your old life, then, verily, your trust is vain.

For by such trust you make God a liar, because you trust to acquire

life contrary to his holy word.

What I Do ye think, O ye perverse, that we shall surprise, blind and

bribe the Almighty, wise and just God? Do you think that the eternal

truth shall become falsehood for your sake? No, beloved reader, no.

Beware. The irrepressible sentence of God was passed, irrepealably more

than fifteen hundred years ago, namely: "If ye live after the flesh, ye

shall die," Rom. 8:13. This word is sure and firm.

O world, world, that you thus despise as vain and useless, the calling

and inviting voice of your God who is as faithful to you as a faithful

Father to his beloved children ! And that you speak in your hearts,

with beautiful Tyrus, "I am of perfect beauty," Ezek. 2'7:3; and with

proud Babel, "I am, and none else besides me; I shall not sit as a

widow, neither shall I know the loss of children," Isa. 47:8. Yea,

although you now say, as do the ignorant, It is peace and freedom; yet

I tell you, as Ezekiel said unto Tyrus, Thou art nothing; nothing wilt

thou be forever; and as Isaiah said unto Babel, Thou shalt fall and not

rise again; and with Paul, " That the day of the Lord so cometh as a

thief in the night," and, " as travail upon a woman with child; and

they shall not escape," 1 Thess. 6:2, 3; and although you may now, with

Capernaum, be exalted unto heaven yet you will be brought down to hell,

unlooked for, Matt. 11:23. You eat, drink, dress, grab, hoard, and you

act in all your transactions as if you would ever remain in this

tabernacle of clay; and you never reflect that soon the word will be

heard by all of us, " Give an account of. thy stewardship; for thou

mayest be no longer steward."

The precious word of grace and of eternal peace, which is the most holy

gospel of Jesus Christ, you account for nothing more than a fable, nay,

as accursed heresy; for you drown, burn, persecute, and murder those

who teach, admonish and reprove you by this word, and who by a strong

power of the Spirit are sent to you of God, by grace; just as the mad

synagogue of the Jews did; so that they did not only persecute and

destroy the chosen children of God, the holy prophets, but also the

only begotten Son of God himself; who by the ineffable love of the

merciful Father was sent to them for their own, eternal salvation. What

did they say? "This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us

seize on his inheritance," Matt. 21:38.

How long will you continue in your damnable blindness, your refractory

obduracy and your pernicious madness? Reflect upon the abundant,

ineffable works of grace which Christ Jesus has shown you, and if his

great love cannot move you to withdraw from your idolatry, disobedience

and accursed life, then remember his rigid judgments which, from the

beginning of the creation; came upon all those who did not abide in his

blessed word and obedience, that you may by such fear, since you are

not moved by his love, be drawn away from all evil.

Behold the weeping eyes, O, miserable world, and hear the tender voice

of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ, how he wept for obdurate Jerusalem,

and said unto them, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this

thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid

from thine eyes," Luke 19:42. At another place, "Behold, I send unto

you prophets and wise men and scribes; and some of them ye shall kill

and crucify; and some of them ye shall scourge in your synagogues, and

persecute them from city to city: That upon you may come all the

righteous blood shed upon the earth; from the blood of righteous Abel

unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the

tem.

pie and the altar. Verily, i say unto you, All these things shall come

upon this generation: 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! Behold, your house is left

unto you desolate," Matt. 23:34?38. ,

O, sincerely beloved readers, in case you would rightly take to heart

these words of Christ, your bones would become dry by fear; they would

)shake and tremble; for it is with you, even, as it was with Jerusalem

and Judah. You willfully deny that Christ Jesus is your Lord. You do

not desire the true knowledge of his ways. But you desire to do as all

gentiles have done from the beginning, namely, worship wood, stone,

gold, silver, bread, wine and the works of your own hands. Besides your

earthly, carnal and corrupt life, which, so to speak, does not conform

in the least to the word and will of him who, by grace, created you, to

his honor.

Indeed, you have so entirely rejected Christ Jesus and cast him from

you in mockery, that there is no doctrine, sacraments or any thing left

you which conforms to his word; but you have instituted selfbegotten

doctrines, sacraments, ceremonies and commandments, as if Christ Jesus,

the only begotten Son and Wisdom of the Almighty Father, were not the

true Messenger. And all those who, about this damnable, deadly error,

fraternally admonish and mildly reprove you and seek to return you to

Christ Jesus and to his blessed word, must be taken and suffer as

rebellious heretics, in all cities and countries.

Behold, kind reader, as you have ever been and yet are so unthankful

for his paternal grace, God has shut out from you his mercy, and has

brought his just judgment upon you so that there is neither right,

godfearing truth, nor true teachers, nor deacons, nor gospel, nor

faith, nor christian baptism, nor christian Supper, nor christian life,

nor knowledge, nor truth, nor spiritual wisdom, nor judgment, nor ban,

nor love, nor piety left upon earth. Thus the house of which Christ

Jesus has spoken, is entirely destroyed and the well `prepared vineyard

of the Lord is without fruit, and is become useless, as the prophet

says, '? Now will I sing to my well beloved a song of my beloved

touching his vineyard. My well beloved hath a vineyard in a very

fruitful hill; and he fenced it and gathered out the stones thereof,

and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst

of it, and also made a wine?press therein; and he looked that it should

bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. And now, O

inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt

me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that

I have not done in it ~ wherefore, when I looked that it should bring

forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? And now, go to; I will tell

you what I will do to my vineyard. I will take away. the hedge thereof,

and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall

be trodden down; and I will lay it waste; it shall not be pruned nor

digged; but there shall come up briers and thorns: I will also command

the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. For the vineyard of the Lord

of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant

plant; and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for

righteousness, but behold a cry," Isa. C:1?7.

Behold, dear brethren, as this judgment came first upon Israel, so it

also has come upon us. For all flesh has corrupted his way, from the

lowest to the highest. The heavens are iron, and earth is metal. There

are found in the vineyard of the Lord no dew, no moisture nor ripe

fruits; there is no digger, no pruner nor tender. Every where it is

accursed; the walls and hedges are trampled down; it is laid waste to

be trampled upon by all men; strangers have dominion thereof. The

Gentiles have entered into the sanctuary, and have soiled the temple of

the Lord. Our princes are to us devouring lions; our fathers are our

betrayers; our pastors are our deceivers; our shepherds are our wolves;

our watchmen are the thieves and murderers of our so al s. We find

nothing but thistles and thorns; it is all plundered and robbed; it is

all torn up and broken down wherever we turn.

And all this on account of our sinfulness; this we must confess before

our God.

Yea, dearest reader, compare our transgressions with those of Sodom and

Gomorrah and the other cities which God has destroyed on account of

their sinfulness, and see how far they stand above us yet. For if we

will rightly look into the matter we can conceive of no sinfulness

greater than that of our, time; no matter how great a sin it is, as

pride, avarice, fornication, adultery, idolatry, backbiting, hatred,

envy, greediness, treason, murder, disobedience to God, refractoriness,

lying, stealing, hypocrisy or any other ungodliness, as may be plainly

seen.

Besides, flesh is accounted Spirit; falsehood, truth; sinfulness,

righteousness; and Satan is accounted as Christ, by this miserable,

blind, erring world. Anti?christ is seated in the temple of God.

Pharaoh arms himself against Israel. The powerful miracles and the

beseeching voice of the Lord are neither seen nor heeded. Thus has this

abominable darkness covered the whole land of Egypt. I repeat, thus the

fearful judgment of God is come upon us because of our sinfulness, as

the prophet says, "Your iniquities have separated between you and your

God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.

For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity;

your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness.

None calleth fur justice, nor any pleadeth for truth; they trust in

vanity and speak lies; they conceive mischief, and bring forth

iniquity. They hatch cockatrice' eggs, and weave the spider's web: he

that eateth of their eggs dieth, and that which is crushed breaketh out

into a viper. Their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they

cover themselves with their works; their works are works of iniquity,

and the act of violence is in their hands. Their feet run to evil, and

they make haste to shed innocent blood; their thoughts are thoughts of

iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths. The way of peace

they know not; and there is no judgment in their goings: they have made

them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know

peace.Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake

us. We wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we

walk in darkness. We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as

if we had no eyes: we stumble at noon?day as in the night; we are in

desolate places as dead men. We roar all like bears, and mourn sore

like doves; we look for judgment but there is none; for. salvation, but

it is far off from us. For our transgressions are multiplied before

thee, and our sins testify against us; for our transgressions are with

us; and as for our iniquities, we know them: In transgressing and lying

against the Lord, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression

and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood.

And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off:

for truth is fallen in the street, and equity can not enter. Yea, truth

faileth; and he that departeth from evil, maketh himself a prey: and

the Lord saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment. And

he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no

intercessor," Isa. 69:2?16.

Most beloved, thus has God, the just judge, sent his fearful judgment

into this wicked world, although you do not feel it. For inasmuch as

you trample upon the Son of God, deem the blood of the New Testament as

unclean, grieve the Holy Spirit of grace?therefore you are under the

terrible judgment and have fallen into the hands of the living God, so

that you prefer falsehood to truth, obscurity to light, death to life;

and therefore God has sent you error, and deprived you of his holy

word, faith, knowledge and truth, so that you have, in this world,

neither light nor way, nor spiritual wisdom, nor prayer, nor God, nor

Christ, nor promise, nor righteousness, nor peace, nor conscientious

freedom, nor inward joy nor hope; notwithstanding you so highly boast

of the name, mercy, merits, death and blood of the Lord. For since you

say that you acknowledge God, and yet do not honor and thank him as

God, therefore he has suffered you to be deceived by your sensual

thoughts, and your foolish heart is become obscured, 1 Jn?1:6; Jn.

1;10; Rev.

22:15; Jn. 9:31; Eph. 4:18; Rom. 1:18, 22. Besides, you deem it but

mockery to acknowledge God, therefore God has delivered you to a

perverse mind, to do the things you should not do; "Being filled with

all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness,

maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity;

whisperers; backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters,

inventers of evil things, disobedient to parents, without

understanding, covenant?breakers, without natural affection,

implacable, unmerciful," Rom. 1:29 ?31.

Behold, beloved reader, thus mysteriously God punishes by his righteous

judgment. For God, the Mighty Lord visits this world in many different

ways, on account of the sinfulness thereof. As with bondage, war,

bloodshed, drought, famine, pestilence and many other diseases; at

which plagues and chastisements the world is horror?stricken. But above

all, the most terrible wrath of God is his depriving us of his divine

word. For the first mentioned plagues, such as pestilence, famine,

sword, &c., only punish us according to the flesh, and are

chastisements for our correction, as the prophet says, which he

inflicts that his children may learn wisdom; but when he deprives us of

his word, then all is lost. For if we have not the word, we verily,

have nothing but unbelief, blindness, error, disobedience, conceit,

acrimony, an unclean, foolish and adulterous spirit, and eternal death.

But how few, yea, how very few are horrorstricken at these plagues,

however abundantly they have come upon them.

If we should desire to put out a man's eyes, cut off his ears, take his

life or take from him the inheritance of his natural father, would not

such an one use all his reason, wit and wisdom to prevent such pain,

shame, danger, and damage? And to?day the whole world have eyes and see

not, ears and hear not, life and yet are dead; and, above all, bereft

of the eternal inheritance of the merciful Father, but do not mind it.

O, if they acknowledged their own misfortune how diligently they would

seek him who gives sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and true

wisdom to the unlearned, which is Christ Jesus, Ps. 94:9.

But the finely attired woman has so enchanted you, and the whoring

spirit of the spiritual whoredom has so kept you under its wings, that

I fear, indeed, that, your abominable unbelief, obscurity, blindness,

falsehood and madness will never more be taken from your hearts, but

that the wrath of God will remain upon you to the end; so that in this

earthly life you will err, without any piety, from one unclean thing to

another until the time that we shall be placed before the just judge,

where every one shall receive his reward according to his works. Then,

when too late, your blind eyes will be opened amidst sighs and

unavailing remorse, acknowledging that you have not walked in the ways

of righteousness to life eternal, but in the dark ways to death

eternal. O misery, where will you then hide yourselves from the wrath

of God? Then you will cry in terror: Ye mountains fall upon us and ye

hills cover us, Rev. 6:16. For then there can not be found a place of

prayer, of mercy, nor of repentance for the sinner. But the awful

sentence of the just God against all the wicked, unbelieving, willful

and disobedient sinners will then be pronounced, "Depart from me, ye

cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels,"

Matt. 25:41. O, how well it would be for such if they had never been

born.

Therefore I will not cease, while I live, to teach and admonish both

verbally and by writing, so far as God, the merciful Father, by his

ineffable kindness, is giving me knowledge, spirit, grace and wisdom,

to all those that seek the truth; that they may awaken while it is yet

time and seek the Lord while he may yet be found, and call upon him

while he is near, that their righteousness may go forth as a light and

their salvation burn like a torch; which consists in nothing but

casting off the works of darkness and putting on the armor of light,

which is to renounce all false doctrine, sacraments, false religion and

the unbecoming, dishonest, carnal life, and again to enter into the

divine doctrine, the evangelical !, sacraments, the services and works

of love and the sincere, christian life, as it was taught, instituted

and practiced by Christ Jesus, our only Deliverer and Shepherd himself,

according to the will of his Father, Isa. SS:6; 62:2; Rom. 13:12.

Thus I labor and strive, according to the small talent given me of God,

of which God is my witness, after nothing else than that the Day?star,

the blessed Christ Jesus, the ever shining Light may arise in your

heart and enlighten you in all divine truth; knowledge, spiritual

understanding and. wisdom, unto life eternal. Amen, 2 Pet, 1:19.

Most beloved reader, herewith I beseech you all, whether you be lord,

prince, learned or unlearned, to peruse these and all my writings, with

the fear of God in your hearts, and I have no doubt but you will

clearly find that our doctrine, which is the doctrine of Jesus Christ

and his holy apostles, does not tend to mutiny, discord, treason and

rebellion; but rather, yea surely, to true, christian love, unity and

peace. For Christ Jesus whom we preach, is the true Prince of eternal

peace, and not of discord, Isa. 9. Say, whom have we curtailed? Whom

have we injured ? We sincerely seek nothing but that we may save all

mankind. Not only at the cost of our chattels, shelter, gold, silver,

and labor, but also (understand it in an spiritual sense) at the cost

of our life?blood.

Verily, verily, I say, If all lords and princes and their subjects who

boast of the name of Christ, would acknowledge the beforementioned

doctrine of Jesus Christ as right and true, and were minded as the

doctrine, life and Spirit of Christ require, then it would not be

necessary to fortify cities and towns; to keep cavalry and inafntry,

nor to manufacture deadly weapons such as guns, swords and spears. I do

not here speak of the sword of justice which is given as a punishment

to the wicked and protection of the good. But it would be as the

prophet says, "They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their

spears into pruning?hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against

nation, neither shall they learn war any more." " But they shall sit

every man under his vine and under his fig tree," Isa. 2:4; Micah 4:3,

4. For it is impossible that those who have committed themselves to the

doctrine, life, body and church of Jesus Christ and remain therein,

should seek or desire any thing but divine love, peace and unity; to

suppress all evil, and protect all good, as becomes us in Christ Jesus.

But we do not abet the false prophets of the corrupted sects which in

many actions transgress the doctrine, rule and measure of Christ.

Herewith we commend you to the Lord, ,, faithful readers. And now judge

for yourselves according to the word of the Lord, whether or not I

have, by his grace pointed out to you the truth of our beloved Lord

Jesus Christ. (Trace, peace, mercy, true knowledge and life eternal be

to all who, in truth, love Christ Jesus, Amen. Do not hide the praise

of God. But let it be read, and heard by all who diligently seek and

desire it.

Beloved brethren, do not deviate from the doctrine and life of Christ.

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A FUNDAMENTAL

CLEAR CONFESSION

OF THE

POOR AND DISTRESSED CHRISTIANS

CONCERNING

JUSTIFICATION, THE PREACHERS, BAPTISM, THE LORD'S SUPPER, AND

THE SWEARING OF OATHS; ON ACCOUNT OF WHICH WE ARE

SO MUCH HATED, SLANDERED, AND BELIED, FOUNDED

UPON THE WORD OF GOD.

BY

MENNO SIMON.

A. D., 1552.

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also

before my Father which is in heaven; but whosoever shall deny me before men,

him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven," Matt. 10:32, 33.

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus

Christ," 1 Cor. 8:11.

ELKHART, INDIANA:

PUBLISHED BY JOHN F. FUNK. AND BROTHER.

1871. A TRUE knowledge of the divine word, a fruitful faith in Christ Jesus,

unfeigned love, and a pious, penitent, unblamable life I sincerely wish to all

those who shall see, read or hear this our confession, of God our heavenly

Father through Christ Jesus our Lord, who has loved us and cleansed us of our

sins with his blood. To him be the honor, praise, kingdom, power and glory,

forever and ever, Amen.

Christ saps, " Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them,

I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock;

and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and

beat upon that house; and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock.

And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not,

shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the

sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew,

and beat upon that house; and it fell; and great was the fall of it,"

Matt. 7:24?27.

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PREFACE.

Horror reader, the reason why we write is this: Because we and our

ancestors, for many centuries, have sought the light in obscurity, the

truth in falsehood, life in death, and the way among the deceivers; and

have wandered about like a flock of sheep without a shepherd; and,

alas, there was none who pointed us to the way of life and led us into

the pasture of the Lord. The accursed doctrine of anti?christ had so

drawn the shameful smoke of deceit from the bottomless pit; had so

obscured the glorious dazzling of the divine word, nay, the just

judgment of God was come upon this reckless world, on account of its

sinfulness, so that, alas, there was neither true doctrine nor true

knowledge of God and Christ, nor faith, baptism, Supper, ban in

accordance with God's word, nor love, nor righteousness found among

men, and of which very little is found as yet; for all over the world

we find false teachers, hypocritical deceivers, and enemies of the

cross, who diligently serve their own bellies, who by their tickling,

erring doctrine proclaim peace to those who know of no peace, and thus

strengthen the hands of the wicked so that none converts himself from

his wickedness, as the prophet says.

Yea, they have carried on their wrangling, writing and preaching so far

that they adjudge the Lord's express ordinances of baptism, Supper and

ban, as commanded by him, and as taught, practiced and testified to by

his holy apostles, not only as heretical, but also fiend?like, they

upbraid and persecute those who keep them, as may be plainly seen; and

have instituted a new baptism, which the Scripture knows not, which is

more pleasing to the flesh than the baptism of Christ; a new Supper

which is a false consolation to the ungodly; also a ban which serves

for nothing but the destruction of the pious, and which is not founded

on anything reasonable; for if they are not banished from city and

country, they are sentenced to the stake or water; nor is it practiced

sparingly upon the pious in many places.

In short, they have so led the common world from God, and so estranged

them by their carnal doctrine and false sacraments, and led them into

such unbelief and heathenish life, that all heaven must be afflicted

and ashamed thereat. Say reasonable reader, who can enumerate the

accursed, ungodly pride, pomp, adultery, fornication, idolatry, Roman

and Spanish abominations, unfaithfulness, fraud, avarice, usury,

unrighteousness, debauchery, luxury, hatred, envy, murder, thefts,

robbery, incendiarism, treason, blood?shed, unmannerly, obscene words,

the terrible lying, shameful diseases, lameness, suffering and

wounds,which are found with this wicked, reckless world. Yet they claim

to be the church of Christ. Yea, every thing is in such a condition

that we may well say ?with the prophet Hosea, "There is no truth, nor

mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land; but swearing, and lying, and

killing, and stealing, and committing adultery; they break out, and

blood toucheth blood," Hosea 4:1, 2; with Jereemiah, that "A wonderful

and horrible thing is committed in the land," Jer. 5:30; with John,

that " The whole world lieth in wickedness," Jn. 5:19; and with John

the divine that their " sins have reached unto heaven," Rev. 18:5. O,

faithful reader, it is worse than I can express. Whosoever is

reasonably disposed may realize the truth.

Inasmuch as the brightness of the sun has not shone for so many years;

as heaven and earth have been as copper and iron; as the brooks and

springs have not run, nor the dew dropped from heaven; as the beautiful

trees and verdant fields have been dry and barren (I mean spiritually);

but, inasmuch as, in these latter days, the gracious, great Lord, by

the rich treasures of his love, has again opened the windows of heaven,

and let drop the dew of his divine word, so that the earth once more

produces its green branches and plants of righteousness, as before,

which bear fruit unto the Lord and glorify his adorable name; and

inasmuch as the holy word and sacraments of the Lord again lift up

their heads from the ashes, by means of which the blasphemous deceit

and abominations of the learned are made manifest?therefore all the

infernal gates are opened in opposition; foam and rave, and that with

such subtle deceit, blasphemous falsehood and tyranny that if the

strong God did not interpose with his gracious power, no man could be

saved. But they will never wrest from him his chosen ones.

Inasmuch as they so fearfully teach and strive against the truth, weigh

out dross for silver, and, besides, accuse us of all manner of shame,

blasphemy, roguery and profanity, as they did from the beginning to all

those who fear the Lord?therefore we are forced, and constrained by the

true love of the divine word and the salvation of your souls, to

explain briefly to you according to the word of the Lord, the sure,

divine foundation, and the pure, immutable truth of Justification, of

the Preachers, of Baptism, of the Supper, and of the swearing of oaths,

on account of which we are so much hated and slanderously belied by

every person, and especially of the learned, that you may thereby

acknowledge what the Holy Scriptures clearly teach us in regard to

these articles; and to show whether we are such useless, ungodly

people, as the learned incessantly cry against us and tell the people.

If you have ears to hear, then hear the word of the Lord; and if you

have understanding hearts, take heed, and follow the truth.

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A FUNDAMENTAL AND CLEAR

CONFESSION OF THE POOR, AFFLICTED CHRISTIANS.

HONOURED reader, it is plain and manifest that Adam and Eve, the father

and mother of us all, were, in the beginning, created after the image

of God by Christ, pure, good, without sin, righteous and incorrupt, as

the Scripture teaches, Gen. 1:27; C:1; 2:7; Acts 17:24; Eccl.17:9. And

that they remained pure and righteous until they sinned against their

Creator's word and commandment. For God had said unto them, " Of the

tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it; for in

the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die;" as also it

happened. For as soon as Adam and Eve, deceived by the serpent, ate of

the forbidden fruit they became impure, unrighteous, corrupt, of sinful

nature, children of death and of the devil; and thus, by their

disobedience they lost their being children of God, and the purity in

which they were created; and must have forever remained, with all their

descendants, in sin, under the curse and servitude of death and devil,

if God, the merciful Father whose love endures forever, had not again

comforted and raised them up by the promise of Christ whom he promised

to send in the future to bruise the Serpent's head; for whose sake he

would be gracious unto them, would forgive their transgression, would

show them' mercy and favor, so far as they should believe.

When Adam and Eve heard these glad tidings of grace, the gospel of

peace, from the mouth of the Lord, they joyfully accepted and believed

it as the immutable truth of God, anxiously cleaved to it, and consoled

themselves therewith as a sure foundation of salvation. And thus Adam

and Eve were again accepted of God through Christ Jesus, justified and

delivered from the eternal death and curse; for they, according to the

promise of God, believed and trusted in him and looked for him in

latter days as the Conquerer, Savior and means of grace to eternal

reconciliation.

But had they despised this means and not accepted it by faith, they

would have suffered eternal death; this is incontrovertible, as Christ

himself says, "He that believeth not, is condemned already;" again,

John the Baptist says, "He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting

life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the

wrath of God abideth on him," Jn. 3:18, 36.

As Adam and Eve, then, were bitten and poisoned by the infernal

serpent, and became of sinful nature, and would have been subject to

eternal death if God had not again accepted them in grace through

Christ Jesus, so we, their descendants, are also born of sinful nature

of them, poisoned by the serpent, inclined to evil, and by inherent

sin, children of hell, of the devil and everlasting death; and cannot

be delivered therefrom (we speak of those who have come to years of

understanding, and hence to sinful works) unless we accept Christ Jesus

the only and eternal means of grace, by true and unfeigned faith, and

thus conscientiously look upon the brazen serpent which is erected by

God, our heavenly Father, as a sign of salvation; for without him there

is no help for our souls, no reconciliation nor peace; but disgrace,

wrath and eternal death can only be expected, as was said before. But

those who accept this Christ by a true faith which, according to the

doctrine of Paul, was given us of the Father for the purpose of wisdom,

righteousness, sanctification .and deliverance, are in grace for

Christ's sake, and God is their Father; for by faith they are born of

him; he forgives them all their sins; has compassion on all their human

failings and weaknesses; turns them from the curse, wrath and eternal

death; accepts them as his beloved children, and gives them Christ

Jesus, together with all his merits, fastings, prayers, tears,

sufferings, tribulation, cross, blood and, death; besides, also, his

Spirit, inheritance, kingdom, glory, joy and life; not, we say, by our

own merits and works, but by grace through Christ Jesus, as Paul says,

" God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loves us,

even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ

(by grace ye are saved); and hath raised us up together, and made us

sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to

come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness

toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through

faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works,

lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in

Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that we

should walk in them," Eph. 2:4?10.

Behold, kind reader, thus we do not seek our salvation in works, words

or sacraments, as do the learned, although they blame us therefore, but

we seek them alone in Christ Jesus and in no other means in heaven or

earth. In this only means we rejoice and in no other. We trust, by the

grace of God, to abide therein unto death.

But that we abhor the carnal works and desire to suit ourselves to his

word and commandment, according to our weakness, we do because he has

so taught and commanded us. For, whosoever does not walk according to

his doctrine, proves in fact, that he does not believe on him nor knows

him, and that he is not in the communion of the saints, 1 Jn. 3:10;

5:10; 2 Jn. 1:6.

All those, now, who accept this means of divine grace, Jesus Christ,

with believing hearts, and enclose him in their consciences, believe

and confess that their sins are forgiven through his sacrifice, death,

and blood; that his wrath and damnation will not be upon them forever;

that he accepts them as his beloved sons and daughters, and gives them

life eternal. All such become of peaceable and joyous spirit, and give

thanks to God, with renewed hearts; for the power of faith quickens and

changes them into newness of life, and they walk thus, by the gift and

grace of the Holy Spirit in the power of their new birth, according to

the measure of their faith, in obedience to their God who has shown

them such great love; they diligently watch lest they fall from the

grace and favor of God by licentiousness and ungodliness. They

acknowledge by the Scriptures that Adam and Eve, the antediluvian

world, Sodom and Gomorrah, and the patriarchs in the wilderness were

severely punished of God on account of their sins; that the wages of

sin is death; and that, also, Christ Jesus, the innocent Lamb of God

who knew no sin, was so deeply humiliated and tortured on account of

our sinfulness, Gen. 3: ?; 19:9, 10; Lev. 10:1?4; Rom. 6:23; 1 Pet.

1:19.

Inasmuch as they believe the word of the Lord which says, that to be

carnally minded is death?if thou livest according to the flesh thou

shalt die?adulterers, fornicators, drunkards, the avaricious, proud,

liars, &c., shall not inherit the kingdom of God?and besides, believe

that God is truth; that none can be saved contrary to his word; that he

will judge in accordance with his word, because he is truth and cannot

lie, as the Scriptures testify, Rom. 8:6, 13; 1 Cor. 5:10; 6:10; Gal.

6:21; Eph. 6:5; Rev. 22:15; therefore it is that they sincerely fear

the Lord, and by fear die unto their flesh, crucify their lusts and

desires, and shun and abhor the unclean, ungodly works which are

contrary to the word of the Lord.

Besides this they acknowledge the abundant grace, favor and love of God

towards us, as shown in Christ Jesus, and therefore, in return they

love their God, for he first loved us, and stand prepared by this love

to obey, in their weakness, his holy word, will, commandments, advice,

doctrine and ordinances, according to the talent received; and thus

they show, in fact, that they believe, they are born of God, and are

spiritually minded; they lead a pious, unblamable life before all men;

suffer themselves to be baptized according to the commandment of the

Lord, as proof that they bury their sins in the death of Christ, and

are prepared to walk with him in newness of life; they break the bread

of peace with their beloved brethren as proof and testimony that they

are one in Christ and his holy church and that they have, or know no

other means of grace and remission of their sins, neither in heaven nor

in earth, than the innocent flesh and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ

alone, which he once, by his eternal Spirit in obedience to the Father,

sacrificed and shed upon the cross for us poor sinners; they walk in

all love and mercy, and serve their neighbors. In short, they suit

themselves, in their weakness, to all words, commandments, ordinances,

Spirit, rule, example and measure of Christ, as the Scripture teaches;

for they are in Christ and Christ is in them; and therefore they live

no longer in the old life of sin after the first earthly Adam (weakness

excepted), but in the new life of righteousness which comes by faith,

after the second and heavenly Adam, Christ; Paul says, I do not now

live, "But Chris, liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the

flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave

himself for me," Gal. 2:20. Christ says, "If ye love me, keep my

commandments," Jn. 14: ls.

Think not beloved reader, that we boast of being perfect and without

sins. Not at all. I for myself confess that often my prayer is mixed

with sin and my righteousness with unrighteousness; for by the grace of

God I feel, by the unction which is in me, when I compare my weak

nature to Christ and his commandments; what kind of a flesh I inherited

from Adam. Yea, if God should judge us according to our worthiness,

righteousness, works and merits, and not according to his great

goodness and mercy, then I confess with holy David that no man could

stand before his judgment, Ps. 143:2; 130:3. Therefore it should be far

from us that we should console ourselves with any thing but the grace

of God through Christ Jesus; for it is he, alone, and none other, who

has perfectly fulfilled the righteousness required by God. We are also

aware, by the grace of God, that all saints, from the beginning, have

lamented the corruption o: their flesh, as may be seen by the writings

of Moses, David, Job, Isaiah, Paul, James and John.

But for Christ's sake we are in grace; for his sake we are heard; and

for his sake our failings and transgressions, which are committed

involuntarily, are remitted: For it is he who stands between his Father

and his imperfect children, with his perfect righteousness, and with

his innocent blood and death; and intercedes for all those who believe

on him and who strive by faith in the divine word, to turn from evil,

follow that which is good and who sincerely desire, with Paul, that

they may attain the perfection which is in Christ, Phil. 3:12.

Mark, beloved reader, that we do not believe nor teach that we are to

be saved by our merits and works, as the envious accuse us of without

truth; but that we are to be saved solely by grace, through Christ

Jesus, as has been said before. By grace man was created, through

Christ Jesus, Gen. 1:27.

By grace he was again accepted through Christ when he was lost. By

grace Christ was sent to us of the Father, Jn. 3:34. By grace he has

sought the lost sheep, Luke 15:4, taught them repentance and remission

of sins. Died for us when we were yet ungodly, and enemies, Rom. 5: G;

by grace we receive faith. By grace the Holy Ghost was given us, in tb

a name of Jesus, Jn.14:16. In short, by grace we receive eternal life

through Christ Jesus, Rom. 6:8.

Behold, kind reader, this is, concerning this article of our faith and

confession, namely: That we can not obtain salvation, grace,

reconciliation nor peace of the Father, otherwise than through Christ

Jesus, as he himself says, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me,"

Jn. 14:6. Peter also says, "There is none other name under heaven given

among men, whereby we must be saved" than the name of Jesus; and that

all those who accept this grace in Christ, preached by the gospel and

accepted by a firm faith, and cordially adhered to by the power of the

Holy Ghost through faith, and become new men, born of God; changed in

their hearts, renewed and of a different mind; yea, transferred from

Adam unto Christ; and thus walk in newness of life, as obedient

children, in the grace which is manifested unto them; for they are

renewed; have become humble minded, meek, merciful, compassionate,

peaceable, patient, hungry and thirsty after righteousness; they strive

firmly by good works after eternal life, for they are believing, born

of God, are in Christ and Christ in them; they are partakers of his

Spirit and nature, and thus live according to the word of the Lord by

the power of Christ which is in them. And this is, according to

Scripture, to be believing; to be a christian; and to be in Christ and

Christ in us.

Again, that all those who disregard this preached grace and do not

accept Christ Jesus by faith; who reject his holy word, will,

commandments and ordinances, and hate and persecute them; who live

according to their lusts and licentiously, are lost, and that it will

avail them nothing before the Lord to boast of their faith, new

creature, Christ's grace, death and blood; for they do not believe;

they remain in their first birth, namely, unchanged in their earthly,

corrupted nature, impenitent, carnally minded, nay, utterly without

Spirit, Word and Christ; and therefore are children of death, as

Scripture teaches; for they know not Christ in whom is life, as John

says, "This is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and

that this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he

that hath not the Son of God hath not life," 1 Jn. 5:11, 12.

Behold, worthy reader, this now is our foundation and confession of

justification, as you have here read. Judge for yourself whether the

preachers act rightly in so slanderously belying us, saying that we

expect to be saved by our merits and works; and that we boast to be

without sin.

May the Lord forgive them that they so fiendishly belie us with such

shameful lies. O, that these miserable men would once take to heart

that the backbiters, slanderers and liars are of the devil and worthy

of death; that God abhors all liars; that they shall have no part in

his kingdom; and that a lying mouth killeth the soul, Jn. 8:44; Rom.

1:32; Ps. 6:7; Rev. 21:27; 22:16.

This, I say, is our foundation, and, by the grace of God, it will ever

remain our foundation, for we truly know and confess that it is the

invincible word and truth of the Lord; therefore we testify before you

and before all the world that we do not agree with those who teach and

institute a dead faith, which they gather from profane history: First,

that without change, there can be Spirit, power and fruits. Secondly,

that we can be saved by our own merits and works, for reasons above

stated.

May the merciful, gracious Father, through his beloved Son Jesus Christ

our Lord, grant us all the gift of his Holy Spirit, that we may

sincerely believe and confess this beforementioned grace in and through

Christ; and that we may walk and abide therein firmly and faithfully

unto the end, to the eternal praise and glory of God, Amen.

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HEARING THE PREACHERS.

IT is a well known fact, kind reader, that, on account of this article,

principally, we are so hated and persecuted by the learned, and that

all the world cries against us and complains, That we will not hear

God's word. Therefore we are necessarily impelled, inasmuch as it

concerns the prairie of God and the salvation of our souls, to assign

the reason according to the word of God (which we would gladly omit if

we were not required by Scripture), to assign the reason why we do not

hear them, and conscientiously dare not listen to them; on account of

which we have to suffer so much pain and tribulation. Jesus said to

Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born

again, he can Rot see the kingdom of God." Paul also says, "If any man

have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," and John says,

"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ,

hath not God," Jn. 3:3; Rom. 8:9; 1 Jn. 1:9.

Honored reader, consider the word of the Lord. That the preachers of

the world are not born again and have not the Spirit of Christ, and do

not abide in his word, their fruits abundantly prove; for it is

manifest that they pitiably adulterate the word of the Lord and walk

according to the flesh, as will be clearly shown in the following:

First, I am convinced that you never saw that the preachers, who are

one with their church, have ever converted an avaricious person from

his avarice; a drunkard from his inebriety or a proud person from his

pride and luxury, which are plainly, works of the flesh, and, according

to Scripture punishable with eternal death, if not repented of.

Inasmuch as they convert none as it appears, therefore it is plain that

their doctrine is nothing but vain prattle without power and fruit;

which, alas, is clearly shown and proven by all the world by their

unbecoming life.

Secondly, the reckless people are chained to and consoled in their

unbelief and licentious, carnal life by their light minded doctrine,

sacraments and easy life; for they preach and teach you, " There are

none that can truly believe; we are all sinners therefore none can

rightly keep the commandments of God. In your baptism (they say) you

became a regenerated christian and received the Holy Ghost. Although

you could not understand the word; although you have no faith in Christ

Jesus nor knowledge of good or evil, nor any change or renewing of

heart, because you were an unconscious child, and like false

consolations." You hear their absolutions, and receive their bread, as

if that were sufficient; and never mind that you are yet an impenitent,

avaricious, proud, drunken, unclean, envious and idolatrous man. We'

will leave you to judge whether these can be called preachers of peace

who make arm cushions and pillows for the people and preach such things

as are pleasing to them, Dent. 1:39; Ezra 13:18.

Inasmuch as none are made better by their doctrine and sacraments but

are more and more comforted in unrighteousnesstherefore it must be

acknowledged that they strengthen you in your evil doing, shut unto you

the kingdom of heaven, lead you into the ditch, and rob and murder your

souls, Jer. 23; 14; Matt. 16:14.

O, kind reader, they have so enchanted the ignorant people who so

gladly walk upon the broad road, with their light minded doctrine that

we may well exclaim with Jeremiah, that "No man repented him of his

wickedness, saying, What have I done?" Jer. 8:6; or who enquires after

a pious, penitent or godly life? What is worse, they have carried it so

far, that alas, those must be called work?saints and heaven stormers

who, with faithful hearts hear, believe, fear, love, and, according to

the measure of their faith, obey the word of the Lord. Behold, thus

entirely has the smoke of the pit darkened the sun and sky, Rev. 9:2.

As to their sacraments, it is manifest that they do not have the

sacraments of Christ; 'but self?begotten abominations and idols, only a

semblance of the Lord's sacraments. For they baptize infants; of which

Christ has not taught nor commanded a single word in the whole New

Testament, and are therefore called christians, notwithstanding that

such baptized persons generally, walk in perverse ways all their lives,

and not only not confess Christ Jesus together with his holy word, but

also hate him and oppose the word.

Again, their supper must be called the Lord's flesh and blood; while

the Scripture, at many places testifies that he ascended up to heaven,

Mark 16:19; Luke 24:61; Acts 1:9; Eph. 4:8; and is seated at the right

hand of his Father, while common sense, besides the Scripture, teaches

us that he cannot be chewed with teeth nor consumed by the stomach.

Besides, it is administered by some as for the remission of sins.

Behold they have so entirely forsaken the Lord who has purchased. them

with his blood, that they have changed his praise and honor into such a

weak creature. If this cannot be called serving Baal and moulding

calves you may judge according to Scripture.

Lastly, How they conform their lives according to the doctrine of Paul

you may best deduce from their fruits and life. That they do not walk

in humility of heart before the Lord, their looks and names prove. They

suffer themselves to be greeted as lords and masters; notwithstanding

it is forbidden by the mouth of the Lord. Say kind reader, did you ever

hear or read that the holy apostles and prophets were covetous of such

high, vain names as are the learned and the preachers of the world. It

is true the word Rabbi or Master was applied to the ambitious Scribes

and Pharisees, but not to the apostles and prophets. For we do not read

of Doctor Isaiah, of Master Ezekiel and of Lords Paul and Peter. No,

no. All those who have rightly taught the word of the Lord, were in

their time not honored with such high?sounding names. This I write that

you may know that such ambitious, proud spirits can never rightly teach

you the humble word of the cross.

Besides, also, consider their avarice, and solicitude for their

appetite; for they do not preach nor render services without pay, as if

the office of a preacher and shepherd were a profession or trade. Jude

says, They honor the persons for the sake of profits. Where there are

no liens and rents there we find no preachers; but where liens and

rents are abundant there is no want of preachers.

Again, they are in part usurers, in part fornicators or adulterers,

greedy, liars, irascible, proud, hateful, lustful, vain, and lazy,

envious, cruel, treacherous and rebellious toward all those who

sincerely seek and fear God. In short, if you rightly confess the Lord

and his word, then you must acknowledge that the best and most pious of

them are yet far outside of Christ and his word in regard to doctrine,

sacraments and also to their walk.

Inasmuch as all of them, in doctrine, sacraments and walk are so

diametrically Opposed to the Spirit, word. and walk of the Lord, as

appears, and inasmuch as Christ says, " Every tree is known by his own

fruit," Luke 6:44; therefore it is plainly proven that they see not the

kingdom and glory of God; are not of the Lord, and have not God, as was

said before.

If they see not the kingdom of God as Christ speaks, how, then, can

they rightly preach it and teach it to others?

If they have not the Spirit of the Lord and are not of him (as

appears), how then, can they be true ministers and servants of the

spiritual office

And if they have not God, how can they, then, rightly teach and point

out his precious word unto righteousness? Inasmuch as it is well known

to all theologians that they do not understand the kingdom of God and

his glory; are not of the Lord, and have no God, as was said, therefore

we conclude therefrom, and that truly, that their sending, calling,

office and service is not of God end his word; but they are of the

bottomless pit, and of the dragon and beast, Rev. 9:2. By this we do

not mean this one, or that one; but all preachers in general who do not

act according to the word of God; no matter of which denomination or

sect. We do not judge according to their boasting and appearance, but

truthfully, according to doctrine, sacraments, fruits and life; for we

are sure that the high and holy office, which should be filled in the

power of the Spirit, can never be filled by the avaricious; neither by

the proud and unrighteous, the carnal and earthly minded, nor by

drunkards and the lustful who serve their appetites before their God,

as Paul says; nor by slanderers nor by vain prattlers, nor liars, nor

soothsayers, nor hirelings, nor by those who adulterate, hate and

oppose the Spirit, will, word, ordinances and commandments of the Lord,

and who are ignorant and blind in all spiritual and evangelical

matters; for the Spirit and word of God do not know such shepherds and

teachers, but the Scripture portrays them with many terrible names and

calls them profane, blind watchmen and greedy dogs, blind leaders, con,

sumers of souls, false daubers, fools who seek not the Lord, preachers

of peace, of whom it is written, "The prophets prophesy lies in my

name; I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake

unto them; they prophesy unto you false vision and divination, and a

thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart," Jer. 23:11; Matt.

15:14; Ezek. 13:10; Jer. 10:8; 14:14. In short, they are the teachers

against whom the word of the Lord has faithfully warned us. Read here

and there in the prophets, particularly Jer. 23:13; Matt. 7':15; 15:14;

16:12; 24:11; Mark 12:38; Luke 12:1; 20:45.

Say, kind reader, did you ever read in the Scriptures of any proud,

avaricious, unclean, lying, ,inebriated and idolatrous prophets,

apostles and shepherds who were pleasing unto the Lord? Or of such who,

to please the world, have adulterated, changed and abused the word,

ordinances and commandments of the Lord? Or, of such who said to

cities, districts or towns, If you will care for our necessaries of

life; or, if you will give us so much money or income, we will teach

you the word of the Lord? O no, reader, no. It never was nor never will

be the way of the holy prophets, apostles or servants of Christ. Of

this we are sure.

The teachers and preachers who are sent of God are born of God, are of

godly nature, and are prompted by the Spirit of the Lord; they

acknowledge the kingdom of heaven; are forced into the vineyard of the

Lord by pure, unfeigned love of God and of their neighbors; seek not

the gifts of Balak, nor the tables of Jezebel; but they seek the praise

of God and the salvation of your souls and commend their carnal cares

to him, who, according to the word of his promise, furnishes the

necessaries of life to all creatures upon earth, Matt. 13:25; Num.

22:28; 2 Pet. 2:16.

They teach the word of the law in the power of the Spirit, to the

remission of sins and the denial of all flesh by the gospel of grace to

the consolation, peace and joy of all the godfearing, pious hearts, who

before disregarded the law and so greatly feared the wrath and judgment

of the Lord.

They reprove and shun all false doctrine, deceit, abuse, idolatry and

licentious reckless life, which is of the flesh and contrary to the

word of the Lord; they use baptism, Supper, ban and all the ordinances

of God as is commanded them by the word of the Lord, be it unto life or

death; they admonish lords and princes, learned, unlearned, male and

female, so far as they possibly can, if they are favored with a

hearing; for the word of God excuses neither emperor nor king, doctor

nor master, rich nor poor; all must follow the word of the Lord who

wish to be saved, Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:38; 9:6.

They lead their lives in the fear of the Lord; they daily die, with

holy Paul, for the sake of their brethren; they are pointed at by all

the world; are slandered, persecuted and deemed the sap and substance

of all knaves and rogues, notwithstanding they are ever ready to show

their love and faithfulness to all, as was formerly the case with

Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Zechariah the son of Berechiah, John the Baptist,

the apostles and Christ himself; and how the pious are thanked and

rewarded at the present time, for their love and services, the burning,

the sword, the stake and the wheel show, 1 Cor. 15:32. Carefully

observe and understand me, kind reader. Since the sending, calling,

doctrine, sacraments and life of the preachers do not conform to this

beforementioned rule, and are therefore not of God, as was said; for

they, generally, do not enter but to destroy, steal and murder, as the

Lord says; to adulterate and garble the precious word and the holy

sacraments, to gratify their appetites; to exclude the word of God and

institute their own; to kill the souls which would have eternal life;

and promise life to those that. will die the eternal death; and for the

sake of a handful of barley and a mouthful of bread, as the prophet

says; rule but do not serve; deceive but do not lead; corrupt but do

not teach; weaken but do not cure; scatter but do not gather; shut the

kingdom of heaven against man and freely lead all poor souls to hell.

Behold, therefore it is that we do not hear them, neither can we

conscientiously hear them; for the word of the Lord every where

admonishes and commands us that we should be aware of them, flee and

shun them, and not hear them, as was said before, Ezek. 13:14; 34:1;

Jer. 5:26; Phil. 3:17; 1 Tim. 6:4; Tit. 3:8; 2 Jn. 1:8.

Judge now, kind reader, whether these reasons are not sufficient to

shun the preachers. We have not here presented to you philosophical

words, garbled flatterings, nor falsehood; but we have pointed you to

such facts as you may daily observe and hear of among your preachers.

This is what our?much beloved brethren and sisters in Christ

Jesus?fellow?partakers of the tribulation, kingdom and obedience of

Christ, the faithful children of God, have for many long years, so

frankly confessed, and so heroically asserted before this idolatrous,

bloody world, in excessive measure of poverty, by preaching and

writing, at the peril of life, property, blood, prison, banishment,

water, fire, chains, gallows, wheels and the stake; but preachers

remain preachers and the world remains the world. They, as appears,

will never be converted. They, so firmly adhere to their idolatry, that

they do not suffer themselves to be converted, Jer. 8.

Honored reader, we pray you for Christ's sake that you will rightly

understand this our confession; do not think that we have written this

out of bitter feelings or hatred, inasmuch as it so openly reproves,

discovers and points out the shame of the preachers. O, no. We testify

before you and before the Lord who has created us, that there is no

hatred or bitterness in our hearts; for we know and confess that they

are works of the flesh and will be rewarded by death. But we have

written in purity of heart, as before him, who tries the hearts and

reins, to the service of you and all mankind, no matter whether they be

our opponents or not, learned or unlearned; to the service of all those

who seek the truth; that we may so discover the judgment of the

Babylonian whore, the covert wiles of the learned, by such expositions,

that you and all godfearing hearts, by such exposition, may tire of the

inhuman abominations, and so understand the word and truth of the Lord,

and with all your harts seek and obey the same, that you may be saved,

Rom. 1:32; Gal. 5:21; 1 Cor. 6:10; Eph. 6:5; Rev. 17:1.

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OF BAPTISM.

CONCERNING baptism we believe and confess that it is the institution,

word, ordinance and command of the Lord; and therefore a holy, divine

sacrament or sign by which faith and its powers, fruits and mysteries

are gloriously . represented and portrayed when rightly administered

according to the ordinance of God and not after our own choice, namely:

To the believing, and not to infants.

We teach and administer baptism upon the confession of faith, for these

reasons: First, because Christ himself has commanded so, for he says, "

Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature; he

that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved," Mark 16:15; Matt.

28:19.

Secondly, because the holy apostles have taught and administered it

upon the confession of faith, according to the commandment of God, and

not to infants, Acts 2:38; 8:37; 10:47; 16:15; 18:8; 19:5. Thirdly,

because the effect, or the signification, that is, that which is

represented by baptism, is found with the believing and not with

infants, Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:4; 1 Pet. 3:21;

(dal. 3:27.Inasmuch as the Wisdom and Truth himself has commanded that

we should baptize the believing; and as his faithful witnesses, the

holy apostles, ha: a not otherwise taught and administered it than

according to the commandment of their Lord; and as the signification is

only applicable to the believing and not to infants as remarked; and

as, by the grace of the Lord, we acknowledge from the Scriptures that

Moses and the prophets, yea, the Father himself, point us to Christ,

that we shall hear him; and as, according to the doctrine of Paul,

there can be laid no other foundation, nor other gospel preached but

that preached to us by the apostles?behold?therefore it is that we

teach, receive, assert and maintain baptism upon the confession of

faith, at the cost of so much misery, even at the peril of prop, erty

and life; for we truly confess, and that in accordance with the

Scripture, which is the true light of our feet, that it is the

institution, word, ordinance and command of the Lord, Jer. 23:33; ?

Matt. 17:5; Mark 9:6; Luke 9:30; 1 Cor. 3:11; Ps. 119:105.

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INFANT BAPTISM.

IN regard to infant baptism we hold and confess, first, that it i s a

self?begotten rite and human righteousness; for in all the New

Testament there is not a word said or commanded about baptizing

infants, by Christ nor by the apostles.

Secondly, that it is a breaking and tearing to pieces of the ordinance

of Christ; for he has commanded that the gospel should be preached and

that those should be baptized who believe, Matt. 28:19; Mark 18:16. But

here they baptize, without divine command, without the preaching of the

word, without knowledge, faith, repentance, new life, and without all

consciousness and knowledge, yet it is called by the learned a holy,

glorious work and a christian baptism and sacrament.

Thirdly, that it is a vain consolation and boasting of all the

unrighteous; for, although they do not understand the word of God, do

not know the truth and lead a licentious, carnal life, yet they boast

themselves to be baptized christians.

Since infant baptism is such a pernicious superstition that it entirely

destroys the Lord's baptism, and as the poor, blind world suffer

themselves to be misled and consoled therewith, and as, besides, there

is connected with it such fearful blasphemy, hypocrisy, adjuration;

witchcraft and abuse of the glorious name of God that a godfearing

heart may well be astounded thereat, therefore it is that we so

strenuously oppose infant baptism,. and openly confess that it is not

of God or of his word but of anti?christ and of the bottomless pit.

Luther writes in a book on "Human doctrine" that that which is not

commanded of God in religious matters of faith, is forbidden." Again,

concerning the 12th chapter of Genesis he says, "That we should not

accept any doctrines without certain reasons from the divine word."

Daniel writes, " Worship, without the word of God, is idolatry."

Philip Melancthon, in a book on the Jurisdiction and dutkority of the

church, says, " That all worship which is not instituted of God by his

express word, is false and wrong, let it be glozed over ever so much."

Here Luther and Melancthon have rightly expressed themselves according

to the Scripture, although alas, they did not practice upon it. For if

we read and well consider the Scriptures then we clearly find how

pointedly God has commanded us that we shall not institute a religion

of our own choice, but that we should do as he has commanded. On

account of self?righteousness and self?chosen religion, Israel was

severely visited and punished of the Lord.

Say not, beloved reader, as the ignorant do, that we thereby condemn

our children because we do not suffer them to be baptized. O, no. For

the Scripture does not connect the kingdom to words and water, but to

the election and grace of the Father, in the merits of the death and

blood of Christ.

Christ has promised the kingdom to small children, without baptism,

Matt. 19:14; Mark 10:14; Luke 18:18. On account of this promise we are

exceedingly rejoiced, and give thanks unto the Lord for the grace shown

our children. Therefore, take heed, and mistake not; for to connect the

election, grace, favor and kingdom of God to words, works, .signs and

the elements, is quite contrary to the merits, death, blood and word of

the Lord; yea, open deceit,, abomination and idolatry.

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THE LORD'S HOLY SUPPER.

IN the same manner we believe and confess concerning the Lord's Holy

Supper, that it is a holy sacramental sign, instituted of the Lord

himself, in the shape of bread and wine; and left to his own in

remembrance of him, Matt. 26; Mark 14; Luke 22; 1 Cor. 11; which was

also thus taught and administered by the apostles among the brethren,

according to the commandment of the Lord, by which, first, the Lord's

death is proclaimed, 1 Cor. 11; and also to remember how he offered his

holy flesh and shed his precious blood for the remission of our sins,

Matt. 26:27; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:19.

Secondly, it is an emblem of christian love, of unity and of peace in

the church of Christ. Paul says," For we, being many, are one bread,

and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread," 1 Cor.

10:17. For as a loaf being composed of many grains, is but one bread,

so we, also, being composed of many members, are but one body in

Christ; and as the members of a natural body are not disunited but are

in every respect united and peaceable among themselves, so it is. with

all those who in Spirit and faith are true members of the body of

Christ; and for this reason this same supper was called by Tertullian a

brotherly meal, or supper of love.

Thirdly it is a, communion of the flesh' and blood of Christ, as Paul

says, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of

the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion

of the body of Christ?" 1 Cor.10:16; which communion is, that Christ

has accepted us in his great love and we are become partakers of him,

as Paul says, "We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the

beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end," Heb. 3:14.

Inasmuch as it is a sign, which is left us of Christ, in such power

that it is to represent and admonish us of his death, the love, peace

and unity of the brethren and also the communion of his flesh and

blood, as was said, therefore none can rightly partake of this Supper,

according to Scripture, but he that is a disciple of Christ, flesh of

his flesh, and bone of his bone, who seeks the reconciliation and

remission of sins in no other means than, alone, in the merits,

sacrifice, death and blood of Christ, who walks in unity, love and

peace with his brethren, and who leads a pious unblamable life in

Christ Jesus, according to the Scriptures.

Here you have the true Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ together with

what it represents, briefly stated, which the mouth of the Lord has

left and taught you by his holy word. If you would be a becoming guest

at the Lord's table, and would rightly enjoy his bread and wine? then

you must also be his true disciple, that is, you must be an upright,

pious and godly christian. Therefore, prove yourself according to the

doctrine of Paul, 1 Cor. 11:27, before you eat of this bread and drink

of this cup; for before God no feigning avails. He .did not institute

this ceremony with the intention that God would be pleased in the mere

eating of the bread or drinking of the wine. O, no. But he instituted

it that thereby you should observe and faithfully conform yourself to

that which is represented and admonished by this sacrament. For not the

ceremony itself, but the meaning represented by it, rightly understood

and fulfilled in actions, constitutes a 'sincere christian.

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THE SUPPER OF THE PREACHERS.

IN regard to the supper of the preachers we hold and confess, first,

that it is a false and idolatrous consolation and sign of peace to all

those who delight in walking upon the broad way, such as,

greedy,?covetous, avaricious, usurious, adulterous, lying, deceiving,

proud, unrighteous persons. For, as it is represented to them, by their

preachers, as being a means of the remission of their sins, they

console themselves and think that if they partake of it they are the

people of the Lord. O no. The ceremony makes no christian; for, so long

as they do not convert themselves, and become new men, born of God, of

spiritual mind, it is a vain baptism and a vain supper, even, if it

were administered by either Peter or Paul. Paul says, "For in Jesus

Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but

faith which. worketh by love," Gal. 6:6, the new creature; and the

keeping of the commandments of God, 1 Cor. 7:19; Matt. 18:4; Jn. 3:3?5;

2 Pet. 1:3.

Secondly, we assert that it is openly a feigned? work, although it is

acknowledged by few. For Christ instituted it in remembrance of his

death, as a sign of christian peace, and as a communion of his flesh

and blood; while the common world partake of the supper in semblance,

as if they believed thus and were thus minded; and, yet, they seek .the

remission of their sins and their salvation in infant baptism,

absolutions, and in bread and wine, as is manifest.

Besides, their fruits openly show that they are not the body of peace;

for they make use of such tricks and perfidy amongst each other in

buying and selling; some, also, commit adultery, lie and cheat; the one

slanders, defames and robs the other, that it may be truly said of them

that they do not acknowledge christian peace which is of God, and that

they are not in the communion of Christ, but that they are in the

communion of him, of whom John says, "Little children let no man

deceive you," " He that committeth siu, is of the devil; for the devil

sinneth from the beginning," 1 Jn. 3:7, 8.

Thirdly, we say, that it is a horrible blasphemy, abomination and

adultery, nay a new calf and Moaz; for the blind, reckless world sees

plainly that it is a perishable fruit of earth which they have planted,

cut, pressed and baked with their own hands, and which again returns to

earth; that it must be taken care of by man lest the worms and age

consume it?and yet it is called by many the imperishable precious flesh

and blood of Christ, and worshipped and honored as the true Son of the

living God, which we also with our ancestors have done these five

hundred years, and which is yet done in many large kingdoms,

principalities, cities and districts, as was in bygone times the case

with Israel in the worship of the. brazen serpent, which was afterwards

broken in pieces by Hezekiah, king of Judah, 2 Kin. 18:4.

Behold, to such rude idolaters and deceivers has the apocalyptic

Apollyon rendered the scribes of this world, that they have, by their

own wisdom, doctrine and council, erected such a powerless, earthly

cereal and fruit as being, or filling the place of the true Son of the

Almighty and eternal God; behold, thus entirely has the noble Sun of

righteousness lost its brightness and the Egyptian darkness covered the

entire land, Rev. 9:2; Egod. 10:22.

Faithful reader, by this our exposition and confession of the preachers

and their baptism, supper and envious hearts toward all the pious,

learn the judgment of the finely attired woman, seated upon the scarlet

colored beast, Rev. 17:3. Mark: The beast upon which the woman was

seated, is full of names of blasphemy; understand the spiritual sense.

The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color?in celebrations,

churches, bells, choirs, organs, baptism and supper. The cup in her

hand was of gold. They boast of the word of God?but are filled with

abominations and filthiness of their fornication and have made all the

world drunk therewith; and the name was written upon her forehead and

may be read by all who have spiritual eyes, and is called, " MYSTERY,

BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE

EARTH.'

And although she is so finely arrayed that all kings commit fornication

therewith, yet she is called a whore by the angel, and of such an

inhuman and wolfish nature that she is "drunken with the blood of the

saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus."John, the holy man

of God, saw this in the Spirit, and was astounded thereat. Yea, kind

reader, whosoever rightly understands the abominable power, idolatrous

array, spiritual enchantment and fornication, inhuman abominableness

and fearful bloodthirstiness and tyranny of the woman may well be

astounded thereat. Therefore, fear God and learn wisdom. We have, by

the . grace of God, thoroughly shown her, exposed her shame and

diligently and in faithful love warned you against her.

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THE SWEARING OF OATHS.

David says, who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall

stand in his holy place? he that hath clean hands, and a pure heart;

who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He

shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the

God of his salvation," Ps. 24.

These words of David are full of spirit and wisdom, yet not regarded by

the world. For every where we find guilty hands, unclean hearts, false

doctrine, faithlessness and but little truth. Yea, it has come to this,

among the children of men that the precious yea and nay which was

commanded of the Lord himself can no longer be trusted. But nearly

everything which is transacted before the magistracy, must be affirmed

by an oath, although the Lord has so plainly forbidden the swearing of

oaths to all christians, Matt. G:34.

The Scripture teaches that we should hear Christ, for he is the king in

Jacob, Isa. 9:7, the king of righteousness, the Teacher and Prophet

promised of God, who hath taught us the word of the Father, and his

word !is truth, his commandment eternal life, Dent. 18:16; Matt. 17:.5;

Mark 9:7; Isa. 9:7; Jer. 23:6; 33:16; Dent. 18:15; Acts 3:26; Jn. 3:17;

5:46; 17:17; 12:50.

Inasmuch as we thus confess and cordially believe, and besides, confess

that no emperor or king may rule or command contrary to his word, since

he is the Head of all princes, Eph. 1:21; Col. 2:10; and is the King of

all kings, Rev. 1:5; 19:16; and that unto him every knee shall bow

which is in heaven, in earth or under the earth, Phil. 2; and as he has

plainly forbidden us to swear, and pointed us to yea and nay, alone,

therefore it is that we swear not, by the fear of God, nor dare swear,

though we must hear and suffer so much on that account from the world.

Since throughout the world they act so fearlessly contrary to the word

of God, in regard to this article; and as sometimes some of the

godfearing are thereby put into difficulty, therefore I will, by the

grace of God, show the kind hearted reader, from the word of God what

the Holy Scriptures at different times teach and imply concerning the

swearing of oaths.

First, the reader should observe that swearing was not always practiced

uniformly among the people of the Lord. Before the law the holy fathers

had a custom to lay their hands under the thighs, and thus swore to

others, as may be read in the case of Abraham and his servant, Gen.

24:3; and in the case of Jacob and his son Joseph, Gen. 47:29?31.

Joseph also swore by the life of Pharaoh, Gen. 42; and it seems that

such swearing was customary among the Egyptians.

Secondly, the reader should observe, that Israel was bound by the law

to swear by the name of the Lord and to keep their oath, as Moses says,

"And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane

the name of thy God. I am the Lord, Lev. 19:12; and this oath settled

all dispute among Israel, Ex. 22:11;" Heb. 6:16. Thirdly, It should be

observed, that Christ Jesus does not in the New Testament, point his

disciples, in regard to swearing, to the law, as in the imperfect,

which allowed swearing?but he points us now from the law to yea and

nay, as in the perfect, and speaks thus, "Ye have heard that it hath

been said by them of old time (that is, to the fathers under the law,

by Moses), Thou shalt not foreswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the

Lord thine oaths (that is, thou shalt swear truly and fulfill thine

oath): but I (Christ) say unto you (my disciples), Swear not at all

(that is, neither truly nor falsely); neither by heaven; for it is

God's throne; nor by the earth; for it is his footstool; neither by

Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou

swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.

But let your communication be, yea, yea; nay, nay: for whatsoever is

more than these, cometh of evil." Here you have Christ's own doctrine

and ordinance concerning swearing, Matt. C:35?37; Jas. S:12; Ex. 20:7.

Behold, beloved reader, before these words of Christ all human laws and

regulations concerning swearing must stand back and be abolished; such

as Juramentum Calwmniae. Jerumentum de veritate dicenda, or Fede; no

matter how they be performed; be it by words, or by raising your hand,

or holding your hands upon your breast, or upon a cross, or upon the

New Testament, &c. And the truthful yea and nay, ordained of the Lord

himself must be restituted, if the magistrates and subjects do not want

licentiously to transgress the word of the Lord and reject it as vain;

for, whatsoever is more than yea and nay (says Christ) cometh of evil.

This same the holy James also teaches, "Above all things, my brethren,

swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any

other oath: (understand, such as, By God's word?By the Lord's cross?By

the salvation of your soul); but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay

(and not go help me God, go help me Clod and all the saints, as is

alas, the custom in many places); lest ye fall into condemnation," Jas.

5:12.

We are aware that the magistracy claim and say, We are allowed to swear

when Justice is on our side. This we simply answer with the word of the

Lord. To swear truly was allowed to the Jews under the law; but the

gospel forbids this to christians. As Christ does not allow us to

swear, and as the magistracy, notwithstanding, proceed according to

their rule, although contrary to the Scriptures, and as the Scriptures,

may not be set aside by man, what shall now the conscientious christian

do? If he swear, he falls into the hands of the Lord; but if he does

not swear he will have to bear the disfavor and punishment of the

magistracy.

O, ye beloved lords I if we, now, had christian eyes and could see and

sincerely acknowledge what it is, according to the justice of God,

licentiously to despise and transgress the word of God, we would rather

die than weaken or break the precious gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,

the ordinance of the eternal God, by temporal statutes and policies.

Nor would we, even, think of asking more than yea and nay, particularly

of the pious, godfearing hearts, who, by the fear of their God, dare

not speak anything but the truth; who esteem every word which comes

from their mouths as an oath, and keep their yea and nay unto death;

while, now, alas, they dare force them to swear to a trifle, as

concerning some temporal goods or something of the kind, even with

their fingers raised to heaven or with their hands upon the New

Testament, by the God of heaven and by his living word.

O, ye beloved lords I how pitiably your teachers and leaders lead you

upon the way which tends to damnation, who ever console you by saying

that we should obey the magistracy (as is, also, becoming so far as is

not contrary to God's word); as if the magistracy may act and rule

against the Lord, at pleasure.

O, no, beloved lords, no! We warn you in faithful love. Repent, wake up

and take heed. Your preachers deceive you. With God there is no respect

of person. If you. do not repent, are not born of God, become like unto

children in malice, do not in love execute your office and service

agreeably to the will of God, do not act justly to the poor and

miserable, and do not walk obediently to the word of the Lord with

godly, humble hearts, you will find your judge at the judgment day.

Beloved lords, take to heart this saying, " Mighty men shall be

mightily tormented," Wis. g: e.

Again, ye learned, you who by your flatterings and errors assert and

maintain it, how dare you so flatly contradict the eternal wisdom and

truth of God and say, Thou sagest: thou shalt not swear; but we say;

Thou mayest swear when the love, profit and need of thy neighbor

require it. We will leave it to your judgment whether that is not

teaching contrary to Christ; as it is so plain that it was allowed to

the Jews under the law, to swear sincerely; but to us, christians, it

is forbidden and as it is very plain that, according to the New

Testament, no love of neighbors nor kinsmen nor peril of life is any

excuse to strain or break the word of the Lord, Matt. 10:37; Mark 8:38.

Therefore, worthy reader, if you fear the Lord and if it should happen

that you are asked to swear, then pray the Most High for wisdom,

courage and strength; do not listen to the flatterings of the learned,

for they deceive you; do not look to numbers lest you follow in their

evil ways, as Moses says, Respect no flesh in this matter, no

difference who, what or where they be, but admonish them in a becoming

manner and in love when they ask of you more than the Scriptures

command; abide in the Lord's word which so plainly has forbidden you to

swear; and let your yea and nay, be your oath, as was commanded,

whether life or death be your lot, that you, by your courage and firm

truthfulness, may admonish and reprove unto righteousness the useless,

fruitless, vain world (who, 'in? their faithlessness respect nothing

less than the word of the Lord) by your truthful yea and nay; that some

might yet be converted from their unrighteousness and thereby more

deeply study the truth, and be saved, Matt. G:37; Phil. 2:12.

It is better to incur the disfavor, scorn and slander of man and remain

in the truth, than to be the favorite of man and sin against God. The

good John Hussy confessed when he was asked to swear and said, I am

pressed on all sides. If I swear, I have eternal death; and if I do not

swear, I will fall into your hands. But I would rather fall into your

hands, without swearing than to sin in the face of Clod. Thus

considerately this worthy man weighed the oath.

Also read Hieronymus, Theophilact, Chrysostom, Erasmus of Rotterdam in

their annotations; Philip Melancthon's Treatise on the fifth Chapter of

Matthew. Heymon's Treatise on the Tenth Chapter of Revelations and also

Origen, and you will find that in this article they agree with our

foundation, faith, doctrine and confession. This is our foundation and

understanding in regard to this article. Inasmuch as the Lord has

forbidden us to swear at all (understand in temporal matters) neither

sincerely nor falsely, as was said; and has commanded that our yea

shall be yea and our nay, nay, Matt. G:37; as Paul and James, also,

testify to this, 2 Cor. 1:18; Jas. G:12; and as we know that no man,

nor commandment of man may supersede God and his commandment, therefore

it is that we, in temporal matters, dare not affirm to truth with more

than yea or nay, as the.case may be; for .thus the word of the Lord

teaches us.

Reader, mark. W a say, In temporal matters, and for this reason:

Because Christ sometimes in his teachings makes use of the word,

verily, Matt. 18:18; Jn. 3:3, 5; 8:34; 10:1; and because Paul called

upon the Lord as a witness of his soul. For this reason some think that

swearing is allowable; not observing that Christ and Paul did not do

this in speaking of temporal matters, as in a matter of flesh or blood,

or money or property; but as an affirmation of the eternal truth, to

the praise of God and to the salvation and edification of their

brethren.

We hereby pray all lords and magistrates, for Jesus' sake, to fear the

Lord sincerely, and to conform their policy, in this matter of

swearing, to the word of the Lord, and to consider why they require the

oath, namely: That that shall be fulfilled to which one swears.

Inasmuch as we deem our?yea and nay to be no less than an oath, why

require any further affirmation at our hands than the word of the Lord

teaches and allows; for, by the grace of God, we trust, inasmuch as we

are partakers of the Lord, and adhere to the word in which yea is

amen?that it will be found with us that it is yea where it should be

yea, and .nay where it should be nay; much more so than with the world

under strong oaths. But in case that a man's yea and nay is not kept,

let him be punished as a perjurer. That it is yea and amen with all

true Christians, is sufficiently proven by those who, in our

Netherlands, are so tyrannically visited with imprisonment,

confiscation and torture; besides, with fire, the stake and the sword;

while with ,one word they could escape all these if they would but

break their yea and nay; but as they are born of the truth, therefore

they walk in the truth and testify to the truth unto death, as may be

abundantly seen in Flanders, Braband, Holland, West Vriesland, and

other places.

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CONCLUSION.

IT is manifest, honored reader, that the world is so degenerated that

it esteems every thing wrong which God teaches, commands and desires,

and hates it with envious hearts persecutes and destroys it. On the

contrary, all that which God hates, accurses and esteems as an

abomination, it looks upon as good, and diligently asserts and

maintains; and yet they want to be the holy, Christian church and the

people of God, as if we could be such by the mere name; by baptizing

children &c.; without faith, the new birth, and the Spirit and

obedience of God. O, no, reader, no. Take heed. Your consolers deceive

you and corrupt the way you should go, Isa. 3:11.

Inasmuch as the world is so entirely degenerated, as was said, and as

our opponents so shamefully lie and war against us, that we cannot

answer for ourselves, as is manifest, therefore we have written this

our confession, that every one who may read, hear or see it, may know

why and whereby we seek to be saved?why we do not hear the preachers,

and why we so strictly administer baptism to the believing and oppose

infant baptism; what is represented by the Lord's Holy Supper and what

abominations are implied in the baptism of the learned; and that it is

not allowed to a true Christian to swear in temporal matters, but only

affirm by yea and nay. And by so doing we have compared truth with

falsehood, light with darkness and white with black, as you will

perceive. If you do not want to be willfully blind, you have here a

good eye?salve. Yea, we have presented it so plainly and clearly that

you must acknowledge it to be the truth; or else reject it in

perverseness, and say, No, I do not want to believe it thus. What kind

of a Christian you are you may consider for yourself.

Kind reader, do not associate with those who say unto God, "Depart from

us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways," Job 21:14. Nor with

those who are intent upon blood, for their reward will be death, Rom.

1:32; Rev. 21:27. Behold, this is our foundation, as you here have

read. If, now, you are of a pious mind and not led by the blind spirit

of the spiritual whoredom, then judge our cause according to the word

and truth of the Lord. If you do not understand it then fear God and

pray. All those who are born of God and inclined to the word of the

Lord, must acknowledge that our doctrine is of God and that truth is on

our side; whosoever accepts them and abides in them unto the end, has

eternal life; but whosoever rejects them does not reject us, but Christ

Jesus himself who has thus taught from the mouth of his Father and

sealed it with his blood, Rev. 1: S; 1 Pet. 1:19; Acts 20:28. The

gracious Father, through his beloved Son, Jesus Christ our Lord,

enlighten you and all hungry hearts by the gift of his Holy Spirit, and

lead you by his strength into his eternal, saving truth, Amen.To the

praise of God and the service of all mankind.

A. D. 1552.

MENNO SIMON.

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

QUESTION 1. Is separation a command or is it a counsel of (rod?

Answer. Let every one weigh the words of Christ and of Paul, referred

to above, and he will discover whether it is a divine commandment or

whether it is a counsel. Every thing which Paul says in regard to

separation he generally speaks in the imperative mode; that is, in a

commanding manner. Expurgo, that, is; Purge, 1 Cor. 5:7. Profligo, that

is, drive out. Sejun,gere, that is, withdraw from, 1 Tim. 6: S; .huge,

that is, flee, Tit. 3:9. Again, "We command you, brethren, in the name

of our Lord Jesus Christ," 2 Thess. 3:6. I think, brethren, these

Scriptures show that it is a command; and if it even were not a command

but an advice of God, Should we not diligently follow such advice? If

my spirit despise the counsel of the Holy Spirit, then I truly

acknowledge that my spirit is not of God. And to what end many have

come who did not follow God's Spirit, but their own, may be read in

many passages of sacred history and may be seen in many instances, at

the present time.

QUESTION 2. If any person should not maintain this ban and yet be pious

otherwise, should such an one be banned on that account?

Answer. Whoever is pious will show his piety in obedience, and not

knowingly or willfully despise and disregard the word, commandment,

will, counsel, admonition and doctrine of God.. For if any one

willfully keeps commercium (intercourse, company) with such whose

company is forbidden in Scripture, to be kept, then we must come to the

conclusion that he despises the word of God, yea, is in open rebellion

and refractoriness (I speak of those who well know and acknowledge, and

yet do so). "For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft and stubbornness

is as iniquity and idolatry," 1 Sam. 15:23.Since the Scriptures

admonishes and commands, That we shall not associate with such, nor eat

with them, nor greet them, nor receive them into our houses, &c.; and

yet if some body should say, I will associate with them, I will eat

with them, I will greet them in the Lord and receive them into my

house?he would plainly prove that he did not fear the commandment and

admonition of the Lord; but that he despised it, rejected the Holy

Spirit and that he trusted, honored and followed his own opinion rather

than the word of God. Now judge for yourself what kind of a sin it is

not to be willing to hear and obey God's word. Paul says, "Now we

command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye

withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not

after the tradition which ye received of us;" again, "And if any man

obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company

with him, that he maybe ashamed," 2 Thess. 3:6, 14. Inasmuch as the ban

was so strictly commanded by the Lord, and practiced by the apostles,

Matt. 18:17; therefore we must also use it and obey it, since we are

thus taught and enlightened by God, or else we should be shunned by the

church of God. This must be acknowledged.

QUESTION 3. Should husband and wife shun each other on account of the

ban?as also parents and children?

Answer. First, that the rule of the ban is a general rule, and excepts

none; neither husband nor wife, nor parent nor child. For God's

judgment judges all flesh with the same judgment and knows no respect

of persons. Inasmuch as the rule of the ban is general, excepts none,

and is no respecter of persons?therefore it is reasonable and necessary

to hear and obey the word of the Lord in this respect; no mat.

ter whether it be husband or wife, parents or children, Rom. 2:11; Gal.

6:1; Eph. 6:9; Col. 3:25; Jas. 2:4; 1 Pet. 1:17.

Secondly we say, That separation must be made by the church; and

therefore the husband must consent and vote with the church, in the

separation of his wife; and the wife in the separation of her husband.

If the pious consort must give his consent, then it is also becoming

that he also shun her, with the church; for what use is there in the

ban when the shunning and avoiding are not connected with it, 1 Cor.

5:3.

Thirdly we say, That the ban was instituted to make ashamed unto

reformation. Do not understand this shame as the world is ashamed; but

understand as in the conscience, and therefore let it be done in all

discretion, reasonableness and love. If, then the husband or wife,

parent or child is judged in the church, in the name of Christ and by

virtue of Christ, to be banned, it becomes us (inasmuch as the

evangelical ban is unto reformation) according to the counsel of the

Holy Spirit, to seek the reformation of our own body, namely, of our

consort, and also of our nearest. kinsfolk as parent or child; for

spiritual love must be preferred to any thing else; aside from this I

would care for them and provide the temporal necessaries of life, so

far as it would be in my power.

Fourthly we say, That the ban was given, that we should not be leavened

by the leaven of false doctrine or of unclean flesh, by the

degenerated. And? as it is plain that none can corrupt and leaven us

more than our own consorts, parent, &c., therefore the Holy Spirit

counsels us to shun them, lest they leaven our faith and thus make us

ashamed before God. If we love husband or wife, parent or child more

than Christ Jesus, we cannot possibly be the disciples of Christ, Matt.

10:37; Luke 14:26.

Some object to this, saying, that there is no divorce but by reason of

adultery. This is just what we say; and therefore we do not speak of

divorce; but of?shunning, and that for the beforementioned reasons. To

shunning Paul has decidedly consented, 1 Cor. 7:10; although this is

not always coupled with adultery; but not to divorce. For divorce is

not allowed by the Scripture only by reason of adultery, Matt. 5:32;

Luke 6:18; therefore we shall never consent to it for other reasons.

Therefore we understand it that the husband should shun his wife, the

wife her husband, parents their children and the children their parents

when they apostatize. For the rule of the ban is general. They must

consent, with the church, to their sentence, they must seek their

scriptural shame unto reformation and diligently watch, lest they be

leavened by them, as said above.

Beloved in the Lord, I would here sincerely pray you that you would

make a difference between commandment and commandment and not consider

all commandments as equally hard. For adultery, idolatry, shedding

blood, and the like shameful and abominable works of the flesh will be

punished more severely than a misunderstanding in regard to the ban,

and particularly when not committed willfully and perversely. Therefore

beware, that in this matter of matrimony, you press none farther than

he is taught of God, and that he in his conscience can bear, and thus

seethe the kid in his mother's milk, Ex. 23:19; 34:26; Dent. 14:21. On

every hand the Scriptures teach that we should bear with the weak.

Brethren, it is a delicate matter. I know too well what has been the

result of pressing this matter too far by some in my time, Rom. 15:1;

Gal. 6:4. Therefore I advise you to point all to the sure and certain

ground. And those consciences that are through the Scripture, and the

Holy Spirit, free and unencumbered, will freely, without the

interference of any one, by the unction of the Holy Spirit and not by

human encouragement, do that which he advises, teaches and commands in

the Holy Scripture, if it should be that either consort should be

banned. For verily I know that whoever obeys the Holy Spirit, with

faithful heart will never be made ashamed.

QUESTION 4. Should we greet one that is banned, with the common, every

day greeting, or return our respects at his greeting? Since John says,"

If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him

not into your house, neither bid him God speed; for he that biddeth him

God speed is partaker of his evil deeds," 2 Jn.10, 11.

Answer. Mildness, politeness, respectfulness and friendliness to all

mankind becomes all christians. If, then, an apostate should greet me

with the common greeting of Good Morning, or Good Day and I should be

silent; �if he should be respectful to me and I should turn my face

from him, and bear myself austerely and unfriendly toward him, I might

well be ashamed of myself, as Syrach says. .For how can such an one be

convinced, led to repentance, and be moved to do better, by such

austerity? The ban is not given to destroy but to buildup. If it should

be said, That John has forbidden such greeting, I for myself would say,

That, before my God, I can not understand that John said this in regard

to the every day greeting. But that he says, That if some deceiver

'should come to us who has left the doctrine of Christ that we should

not receive such an one into our houses, lest he deceive us; and that

we should not greet him as a brother lest we have .communion with him.

But not so with the worldly greeting For if the worldly greeting have

such power in itself that it causes the communion of the vain works of

those whom I greet, then it must follow that I would have communion

with the adultery, fornication, drunkenness, avarice, idolatry and

blood shed of the world, whenever I should greet a worldly man with the

common greeting or return his compliment. O no. But the greeting or

kiss of peace signifies the communion. Yet if one should have

conscientious scruples in this matter, with such an one I do not

dispute about it. For it is not worth contending about. But I would

much rather see all scruples in regard to this matter, removed, and

have christian discretion, love, politeness and respectfulness

practiced, to the building up, and not unbecoming stubbornness,

unfriendliness, malice and unmercifulness to the destruction of our

fellow man. Brethren, beware of discord. The Lord grant every

godfearing person a wholesome understanding of his holy word, Amen.

QUESTION 5. Are we allowed to show the banned any charity, love and

mercy?

Answer. Every one should consider, first, the exact meaning of the word

commerciwm (intercourse, communion).

Secondly, for what reason and purpose the ban was ordained by the Holy

Spirit, in the Scriptures.

Thirdly, how a true, regenerated christian is minded.

Fourthly, how the merciful Father him self acts with those who are

already worthy of his judgment and wrath.

All those who can rightly see into these will doubtlessly not deny

charity, love and mercy to the banned. For the word commerciwm does not

forbid these, but it forbids daily company, conversation, society and

business as was explained above. The ban is also a work of divine love

and not of perverse, unmerciful, heathenish cruelty. A true christian

will serve, aid and commiserate with every body; yea, even with his

most bitter enemies. Austerity, cruelty, and unmercifulness he

sincerely hates. He has a, nature like his Father of whom he is born,

"For he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth

rain on the just and on the unjust." If I, then, be of a different

nature, I show that I am not his child.

Therefore I say with our faithful brother Dietrick Philip that we

should not practice the ban to the destruction of mankind (as the

Pharisees did their Sabbath) but to their improvement; and thus we

desire to serve the bodies of the fallen, in love, reasonableness and

humility, with our temporal goods when necessary, and their souls with

the spiritual goods of the Holy Word; and should rather show mercy to

the wounded, with the Samaritan, than to pass by him with the priest

and Levite. James says, "For he shall have judgment without mercy, that

hath showed no mercy, and mercy rejoiceth against judgment." "Be ye

therefore merciful as your Father also is merciful." "Blessed are the

merciful; for they shall obtain mercy," Jas. 2:13; Luke 16:36; Matt.

G:7. In short, if we understand the true meaning of the word

cammercium; understand for what reason and purpose the ban was

instituted; how a true christian is and should be minded; and?conform

ourselves to the example of Christ and of God, then the matter is

clear. And if we have not this grace we will shamefully err in this ban

and be cruel, unmerciful christians; from which error and abomination

may the gracious Father eternally save all his beloved children.

Brethren, I tell the truth and lie not when I say that I sincerely hate

such unmerciful and cruel mindedness. Nor do I wish to be considered a

brother of such unmerciful, cruel brethren, if there should be such,

unless they desist from such abomination, and discreetly follow, in

love and mercy, the example of God and Christ. For my heart cannot

consent to such unmerciful action which exceeds the cruelty of the

heathen and Turks; and by the grace of God I will fight against it with

the sword of the Lord unto death. For it is against the doctrine of the

New Testament, and contrary to the Spirit, mind and nature of God and

Christ, according to which all the Scriptures of the New Testament

should be judged and understood. All those who do not understand it

thus are already in great error.

But in case my necessary service, charity, love and mercy should become

a commerciwrn, or that my soul should thereby be led into corruption,

then we confess (the Lord must be glorified), that our daily

intercourse is forbidden in the Scripture, and that it is better to

leave off our charity, love and mercy, than to ensnare our souls

thereby and lead them into error. The unction of the Holy Spirit will

teach us what we should best do in these premises.

Question 6. Are we allowed to sell to, and buy of the apostates,

inasmuch as Paul says that we should not have intercourse with them;

and yet the disciples bought victuals in sychar, and the Jews dealt

with the Gentiles? Jn. 4: b.

Answer. That the apostles bought victuals in Sychar proves nothing at

all; for many of the Samaritans were a remnant of the ten tribes, as we

have sufficiently shown above, from the Holy Scripture. But we do not

deny that the Jews dealt with the Gentiles, yet they shunned their

commercium, that is, their daily association, company and conversation,

and did not eat nor drink with them, as the writings of the evangelist

sufficiently and plainly show in many scriptural passages.

And inasmuch, as Christ points us to the Jewish ban or shunning,

namely, That as they shunned the gentiles and sinners, so we should

likewise shun an apostate christian; and as the Jews had dealings with

them, although they shunned their daily intercourse in company,

association and conversation; therefore we say that we can not

maintain, either by the Jewish example to which Christ points or by any

explicit Scripture, that we should not in any manner deal with the

apostate, if no such daily intercourse arises therefrom. For such

intercourse with the apostate is strictly prohibited by Scripture; and

since it is prohibited, it is manifest that a pious, godfearing

christian could have no apostate as a regular buyer or seller. For as I

have ~f daily to get my cloth, bread, corn, salt, &c., and exchange for

it my grain, butter, &c., it can not fail but that intercourse will

arise therefrom. But with a trading which is conducted without such

intercourse this is not the case.

And because such merchandizing, which is carried on without intercourse

can not be avoided by virtue of the Scripture, as was said, therefore

we would pray all godfearing brethren and sisters in the Lord, for the

sake?of God and of love, to act in this matter, as in all others, as

reasonable, good, discreet, wise and prudent christians, and not as

vain, reckless, self?conceited, proud, obdurate and offensive boasters;

for a true christian should always strive after that which is the best

and the surest, and follow the pure, unfeigned love, lest he abuse the

freedom which he seems to have, to the injury and hindrance of his own

soul, to the affliction and destruction of his beloved brethren, to the

scornful boasting of the perverse, and to the shameful blemishing of

the Holy word and the afflicted church of Christ. Besides, I pray and

desire in like manner, that none will thus in the least be offended at

his brother and mistake and judge him by an unscriptural judgment; as

he has in this case no reproving example among the Jews nor forbidding

word [in the Scriptures..]

O my sincerely beloved brethren! let us sincerely pray for

understanding and wisdom, that all misunderstanding, error, ,jealousy,

offense, division and undue reports may once be exterminated, root and

branch; that a wholesome understanding, doctrine, friendship, love,

edification and opinion may be restituted and prevail. Let every one

look with pure eyes and impartial hearts to the example to which Christ

points, and to the wholesome, natural meaning of the holy apostles, and

let true, christian love ever prevail, and he will know, by the grace

of God, how he should act in this matter.

Question 7. Are we allowed to be seated with an apostate in a ship or

wagon, or to eat with them at the table of a tavern?

Answer. The first part of this question, namely, to be seated with an

apostate in a ship or, vehicle, when the captain or driver is no

apostate, we deem childish and useless, since this so often happens

without intercourse, and must needs happen. As to the second part,

namely, to eat at the table with an apostate, while traveling, we can

point the questioner to no surer ground and answer than this, namely,

We advise, pray and admonish every pious christian, as he loves Christ

and his word, to fear God sincerely, and follow the most certain way,

that is, not to eat by or with him; for thereby none can be deceived;

and if perchance some godfearing brother might do so, then let every

one beware, lest he sin against his brother by an unscriptural

judgment; for none may judge. unless he have the judging word on his

side.

Whosoever fears God, whosoever desires to follow after his holy word,

with all his strength; loves his brother; seeks to avoid all offense

and desires to walk in the house of God in all peace and unity, will

act justly in all things and will not offend or afflict his brethren.

Question 8. Who, according to scripture, should be banned or

excommunicated?

Answer. Christ says, Matt. 18:16?17,If thy brother trespass against

thee, &c., and will not hear thee nor the witnesses, nor the church,

let him be unto thee as a heathen man?and a publican. And Paul, " If

any man that is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or an

idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an

one no not to eat," 1 Cor. G:11; Jer. 16:8. To this class also belong

perjurers, thieves, violent persons, haters, fighters and all those who

walk in open, well known, damnable works of the flesh, of which Paul

enumerates a great many, Rom. 1:29; Gal. 6:19; 1 Cor. 6:9; Eph. S: G.

Again, disorderly persons, working not at all, but which are busy

bodies; such as do not abide in the doctrine of Christ and his apostles

and do not walk therein, but are disobedient, 2 Thess. 3:11, 14. Again,

masters of sects. Again, those who give offense, cause dispute and

discord concerning the doctrine of Christ and of his apostles..

In short, all those who openly lead a shameful, carnal life, and those

who are corrupted by a heretical, unclean doctrine, Tit. 3:10, and who

will not be overcome by the wine and oil of the Holy Spirit, but

remain, after they have been admonished and sought to be regained in

all love and reasonableness, obdurate in their corrupted walk and

opinion. They should, at last, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, by

the power of the Holy Spirit, that is, by the binding word of God, be

reluctantly but unanimously separated from the church of Christ, and

afterward, according to the Scriptures, be shunned in all divine

obedience, until they repent, Rom. 16:16; Gal. 6:16; 1 Tim. 6:24; 6:3.

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CONCLUSION.

MOST beloved brethren and sisters in the Lord, as we have hinted in the

beginning of this admonition, and as you are all aware that for some

years there have been much division and discord concerning the ban by

which christian love has been and is yet much retarded; therefore I

have endeavored (while I see that this is carried on without the

foundation of the word, without reason and discretion, and without the

nature of Christ Jesus and his holy gospel, both as to stringency or

leniency, to the ensnarement of many consciences; as every one as:

serts and follows his own view as the best, to advise all my beloved

brethren and sisters in the Lord who seek the amiable peace and unity,

not to seek more nor less than the Scriptures teach, show and require),

to write this explanation of the ban or separation, compiled with the

greatest care from the Holy Scriptures and to the promotion of the

peace of all the pious children of God; and trust, before God, that

this will satisfy all humble, peaceable consciences; for, behold, I

seek nothing, before God through Christ Jesus, but that these

unscriptural proceedings and mournful disputations concerning the ban,

both as to stringency and leniency, may be thereby ended, and that the

noble, glorious peace and unity in Christ Jesus may remain unbroken and

undamaged.

Although I have written this out of pure love and upheld the peace

according to the true nature and direction of the Holy Word, as before

my God who shall judge me at the last day; yet I know that by some I

will not be thanked; for to some it will be too stringent, and too

lenient to others; but I must bear with this, as I have done these

fifteen years. Still, I would pray you, for the sake of the merits of

the precious blood of my. Lord Jesus Christ, that if any one should

find fault with this my treatise, be it on account of mildness or

stringency, not to do so otherwise than by authority of the Word,

Spirit and life of the Lord, and not recklessly and without thought,

lest he mistake. Whatsoever any person can advance and prove thereby I

will gladly hear and be obedient thereunto; but I dare not go higher

nor lower, more stringent nor lenient than the Scriptures and the Holy

Spirit teach me; and that out of great fear and anxiety of my

conscience, lest I again burden the godfearing hearts who now have

renounced the commandments of men, with those commandments.

Self?conceit and human opinions I hate, nor do I desire them; for I

know what tribulation and affliction they have caused me for many

years.

Sincerely beloved brethren and sisters in Christ Jesus I Understand my

writings rightly, and faithfully follow this my advice, explanation,

understanding and admonition, and you will doubtlessly find great peace

and joy (so far as regards separation) among all the brethren; but

whosoever rejects them, let him take beed, for he will one day meet his

Judge.

In short, it is my inward and outward faith, foundation and confession

of the separation which I never before wrote and published with such

clearness and minuteness. But now necessity urges me; and with this my

faith, foundation and confession, which I thus had from the beginning,

I desire to die in Christ Jesus and to appear before the throne of God;

for I am aware that it is the most important showing of the separation

which can be explained and taught to the godfearing consciences, from

the Holy Scriptures. Therefore I ask of all my brethren and sisters in

the Lord to leave me at peace about this matter and not to trouble me

further; for, by the grace of God, there will be nothing heard from my

lips but that which my writings teach and imply.

Let every brother seek the wholesome understanding of the word of

Christ and of his apostles, with a humble spirit, in brotherly love and

in christian peace, and he will, doubtlessly, drive back all

unscriptural dispute and discord and sincerely follow the true

god?pleasing unity.

May the Almighty, merciful Father, through his blessed Son Christ

Jesus, grant all brethren and sisters the heavenly gift of the Holy

Spirit? that there may become an end to this sad dispute and discord,

and thus become a sound body with the perfect bond of unfeigned,

christian love, bound together in becoming, steady peace in Christ

Jesus, Amen.

Beloved brethren and sisters in the Lord, I pray you by the bloody

wounds of my Lord Jesus Christ to beware of dispute and discord, and

that you may receive this my, labor with affectionate hearts, for in

true christian love I have written it to your service, as before God in

Christ Jesus.

'MENNO SIMON.'

A. D. 1550. blank page

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A THOROUGH ANSWER

TO THE

SLANDER, DEFAMATION, BACKBITING,

UNSEASONED AND BITTER WORDS OF

Zylis and Lemmekes,

CONCERNING

OUR FOUNDATION AND DOCTRINE, FULL OF INSTRUCTION AND ADMONI

TION, WHICH DOCTRINE IS (IN OUR OPINION) THE UNADULTERA

TED FOUNDATION AND DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY

APOSTLES, CONCERNING THE

BAN, SEPARATION OR SHUNNING.

BY

MENNO SIMON.

" The man that is accustomed to opprobrious words will never be reformed all

the

days of his life," Eccl. 23:16.

" The dispostion of a liar is dishonorable, and his shame is ever with him,"

Eccl. 20:26.

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus

Christ," 1 Cor. 8:11.

ELKHART, INDIANA:

PUBLISHED BY JOHN F. FUNK AND BROTHER.

1871. IF thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or

the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee

secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which thou hast not known,

thou, nor thy fathers; Namely, of the gods of the people which are round about

you, nigh unto thee, or far from thee, from the one end of the earth, even

unto the other end of the earth, thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken

unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare him,

neither shalt thou conceal him; but thou shalt surely kill him; thine hand

shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all

the people. \* \* Because he hath sought to thrust thee away from the Lord thy

God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

And all Israel shall hear, and fear, and shall do no more any such wickedness

as this is among you." " Then his father and his mother that begat him, shall

say unto him, Thou shalt not live; for thou speakest lies in the name of the

Lord: And his father and his mother that begat him, shall thrust him through

when he prophesieth," Deut. 13: g?11; Zech. 13:3.

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THOROUGH ANSWER,

REPLETE WITH

Instruction and Admonition.

A true, pure and pious mind, unfeigned love of God and neighbor, a true

and well seasoned tongue which speaks nothing else but the truth, and a

resigned, impartial and pious heart wherein the Holy Spirit dwells,

together with the sure knowledge of Tesus Christ and of his holy word,

I wish to Zylis and Lemnraekes, to all righteousness, now and forever,

from my inmost heart, Amen.

I HEAR and understand, dear friends, that you, alas, mistake yourselves

against God and against myself, both by writing and speaking; using

untrue, slanderous words and abominable, bitter backbiting, which are

not becoming a christian; which I had not in the least expected from

you; for I thought that you were so taught of the Lord that you would

not thus enviously smite your poor brother who cannot now answer for

himself; nor that you would, as is the case, defame your faithful

friend, who, according to his small talent, has ever sincerely served

you and all the pious in Christ, and thus thank him for his faithful

service and love. But my good opinion of you, alas, has been a mistake

in this case. For my case in regard to you is the same as that of the

good Jeremiah, when his enviers counseled about him, and said, " Come,

and let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any

of his words," Jer. 18:18. Yet the innocence of my hands, the true

intention of my labors, the unfeigned love of my unction, together with

the incontrovertible, sure foundation of the truth shall be my refuge,

yea, my invincible shield and surety against all unreasonable

upbraiders and defamers, now and at all times. By the grace of God I am

sure of this.

Inasmuch as you prove yourselves quite unreasonable and devoid of love

(as I am at such a great distance from you, yea, as if you never had

heard a syllable of the word of the Lord), by which you do not only

make me an abomination and stench (which I deem very little in you) in

the sight of many of those who are not versed in this matter, but also

make the holy word such, which, in my weakness, has been preached by me

for some time, not altogether without fruit, and thus deter those of

little understanding from the right way, and strengthen them in their

blindness, and rob them of the true light and understanding of the true

ban; therefore I am forced by a sense of duty to send you and your

brethren (whom you deprive of the light, by your cunning), my humble,

but true reply, as briefly and clearly as possible; in writing, as I

can not attend personally, hoping that you may thereby take the matter

to heart and henceforth sin no more, but truly repent of your great

mistake, and yet find grace in that day before the Lord and his

righteous judgment. Therefore I pray you earnestly to consider that to

which I shall point you.

Understand, then, first, that I am blamed by Zylis of being a trifler.

The reason is that (as he says) I should have published two small books

which contradict each other. To which I thus answer, in my humility: It

is well known to a great many that I have been combatted on all sides

by many sharp spirits, for more than twenty?three years; and that I

have had to withstand many s hard assault. Yet (glory to him who has

saved me) I did not go, unsteadily, from one church to the other as

both of you have done (do not think hard of my thus writing; for you

urge me to it); but I remained firm and peaceable in the faith and

doctrine with my beloved brethren until this day. And as I have borne

testimony in the name of the Lord in such dark days, I trust, by the

grace of God, to remain firm and peaceable, so long as I remain in this

tabernacle. To which of us this name of trifler (if so it must be

called is now applicable, I will leave to the judgment of every

intelligent reader. But as to the two publications of which you seem to

think hard, this is my plain reply: Eighteen or nineteen years ago,

when I wrote the first book, I was not well enough enlightened to

understand all things thoroughly; and I freely and frankly admit, that

until that time I included all sin in three admonitions. This I

acknowledge verbally and in writing and do not deny it. But, as all

well minded servants of God, who seek the crucified Christ and not

their own honor or flesh, are ever ready to investigate the sure

foundation of truth still further, thus I, the least of all servants

(on account of many abominations which were, from time to time

discovered in the church, and also on account of the miserable

disputation and discord which crept in without my fault) came to a

serious reflection concerning this matter and, at last, plainly saw

that we men may not retain those whom God himself, by his Spirit and

word excludes, or else the church of Christ must be divided. This is as

clear as day.

Therefore it would be advisable for you to season your words a little

better. For you do not thereby slander and despise me, but the Holy

Spirit, which, according to the word of promise, has led me, his poor,

weak servant and instrument into his truth and discovered unto me the

true foundation in this matter.

Yea,? dear men, if I, on that account, am to be called by you, a

trifler because I was not perfectly enlightened from the beginning, nor

claim to be perfectly enlightened at this hour, O Lord! what a trifler

you would call the beloved Peter and others, if they were alive to?day,

and if you loved him no more than you love me, as he, although taught

by the Lord's mouth and enlightened by the Holy Spirit, was yet so

unintelligent that he dared not preach the gospel to the heathen until

he was admonished and told to do so by a heavenly vision or revelation

from God, and thus first took the liberty to teach them.

Oh! oh! Terrible is the word, that slanderers, defamers and liars shall

have no part in the kingdom of God. Behold, chosen Zylis and Lemmekes,

let it be told you.

Secondly, I understand besides, that Zylis said I published a book from

which nothing but hatred, murder and blasphemy could emanate.

To which I reply with Christ's own words, thus. "Think not that I am

come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword,"

Matt. 10:34. At another place, " I am come to send fire on the earth;

and what will I, if it be already kindled?" Luke 12:49. From which

words and also from experience it is plain that the pure doctrine of

Christ and of his holy apostles, truly taught and practiced upon, is of

such a nature that it engenders, among the obdurate and unbelieving,

hatred, envy, falsehood, slander, upbraiding, persecution, rebellion,

murder, misery and tribulation. But should we not on this account teach

and practice upon the pure doctrine and truth'? If you .answer in the

affirmative, you judge that we should not sup. press the truth on

account of danger, if that should be the result, but that

notwithstanding it should be taught and practiced upon. And what kind

of a spirit it is that teaches you this pretense of hatred, murder,

blasphemy, &c., by which you frighten the poor people from the truth, I

will leave you to reflect upon in the fear of God. But if you answer in

the negative you make yourselves merely men of blood, as you still

continue in teaching, baptizing and the like, while you daily hear that

many a pious child is, on that account, robbed, and even murdered. O, I

pray you, learn to know the spirit of upbraiding. Say, beloved, is not

the word of Christ called the word of the cross i You must answer in

the affirmative. For here, in the kingdom and reign of Christ upon

earth, the command to the believing, is nothing but to deny yourselves

and take up the cross and follow him, Matt. 16:24. If we love father,

mother, husband, wife, children, property or ourselves better than

Christ, we are not worthy of him. Yea, he says, if we do not hate all

these we cannot be his disciples, Matt. 10:37. Inasmuch as this is the

case with the gospel of Christ, as has been heard; therefore your

trifling darts and powerless thunderbolts of hatred, murder and

blasphemy, cannot nor should not deter me in the least, so long as you

do not convince me by the binding truth and power of the divine, Holy

Scriptures, that I, in this matter of the ban or separation, have

mistaken the word of the Lord, or in any manner not fulfilled the

requirements thereof; but I am the more assured, by your slander,

inasmuch as it is done altogether without truth or the Scripture, that

the invincible foundation of truth and of the immutable word of the

Lord is on our side. But as for the word slander or blasphemy, I would

make this my brotherly reply: Learn to know with more fear of God what,

according to the Scripture, is blasphemy or sinning against the Holy

Spirit. For in my opinion it is this, that when the truth of God is

imprinted and conceived into the heart of man, with such a power of the

divine, Holy Scripture, by the Spirit and finger of his power, that we,

convinced in spirit, must confess that it is the true foundation of

truth, and can not be controverted by the Scriptures, yet, by reason of

self?conceit or choice we are so audacious and stubborn as to persist

in hating, upbraiding and slandering this inspired and truly known

truth, or ascribing it to the devil, by our ambitious, partial, proud

and obdurate flesh, as the obdurate? Pharisees and Scribes ascribed the

glorious miracles and power of Christ to Beelzebub. This the mouth of

the Lord (if we persevere, as I understand it) calls blasphemy and

sinning against the Holy Spirit. Of which they will not be forgiven in

this world nor in the world to come. , dear, take heed, Luke 12:10.

Inasmuch as such slander and sin, is the true blasphemy and sin in the

Holy Spirit, as was heard, and as God before whom we stand exposed with

all our teachings and doings, knows that I have written the book which

you slander, with a good, sealed and assured conscience and as all

theologians must acknowledge that it is the truth and word of the Lord;

and as you cannot disprove it by virtue of the Scriptures, and as you,

notwithstanding all this are so obdurate and lost as to call this

undisproven writing of mine, a book of fables, and heretical doctrine;

therefore I will leave the impartial reader to judge with which of us

this slander is to be found. O, that you would see I

Thirdly, I understand that you call our doctrine concerning the ban

between husband and wife as heretical. To which I would reply: First,

Paul says, "Knowing that he that is such (a heretic) is subverted, and

sinneth, being condemned of himself," Tit. 3:11. Inasmuch as such a one

is subverted and condemned of himself, as was shown, therefore I know

by the grace of God, that I am not worthy of such heretical name; for

he that knows and tries all hearts, also knows me. He knows that I

never knew, and much less fostered any obduracy, licentiousness,

partiality or perverseness in my heart contrary to his word and will. I

am sure that the merciful Father (who alone is the true Father of my

soul), will not thus condemn to hell his despised, weak servant; nor

look at him as such an heretic, although I must hear the despicable

slander, not from the world alone, but also from you. O, no, no. His

name is, Our faithful God, Merciful Father, Deliverer, Emmanuel, &c.

Therefore let all under heaven judge, upbraid and slander; his paternal

word, conceived in my open and willing heart, together with the Holy

Spirit of his love which leads all souls, hungering and thirsting

?after righteousness, to the bread of life and to the true fountain of

his living waters, will doubtlessly refresh me in the ardor of such,

and of all my tribulations, and extend unto me his hand of consolation.

For where is he who thus sought him that did not find grace? and where

is he who trusted in him that was not aided and protected 8 , that you

would once see the abomination of your perverse and unseasonable

judgment!

Secondly, I answer: That according to the Scripture, heretics are

self?conceited, disquiet, licentious and perverse sectarians, who

choose, collect and establish for themselves a peculiar foundation,

doctrine and church, contrary to the true foundation of truth in which

the true church which avails before God, should be founded; by means of

which they disturb the unity of the pious, extinguish love, destroy

peace, and cause much disturbance, trouble, sorrow and tribulation

among those who would gladly walk in the truth. , I pray you, learn to

know the heretic.

As such are really heretics, as has been heard, so necessity requires

to show the division between us, and to explain it; that the

intelligent reader and auditor may thereby understand and comprehend

with which of us such perverseness and heretical foundation is to be

found. Take heed. Judge?not by words and semblance, but by God's Word.

So this, our first foundation and doctrine, is that all obedient

children of God, with. out any respect of person, must withdraw from

all brethren and sisters who walk disorderly and who are disobedient to

the institution, ordinance and doctrine received from the apostles;

because it is so commanded of the Holy Spirit in the name of Christ.

Bat your foundation and doctrine is that this does not apply to husband

and wife in case one or the other deviates from the truth. You have

respect of person, of which the Holy Spirit of wisdom does not command

nor imply a single word in all the Holy Writ. Mark our first

difference, 2 Thess. 3:14; Jas. 2:9; Dent. 3:8; Zech. 13:3.

Our second foundation and doctrine is that the true apostolic ban and

shunning has not reference alone to the spiritual communion, as Supper,

hand and kiss and greeting of peace (as you think), but also to the

carnal communion, as eating, dealing, to receive into one's house, &c.,

and that it is plainly forbidden. But your foundation and doctrine is

(for your deeds show it, which in my opinion proves more than words and

confession would do) that the shunning applies alone to the spiritual

communion, and that it does not apply to natural association. For it is

a well known fact that you allow the natural association between

husband and wife; and that you eat with the separated, and deal with

them, if you have not changed. Mark our second difference.

Our third foundation and doctrine is, that the second table, namely,

the commandment concerning our neighbor, must give way to the first,

which is, the commandment concerning God. But your foundation and

doctrine is (for your action in regard to husband and wife testify it),

that not the second table must give way to the first, but the first to

the second. As if the Creator must do the will of the creature, and the

creature not the will of the Creator. 0! 0!! Mark our third difference.

Our fourth foundation and doctrine is; that the Holy Spirit ever cares

for his, and has therefore commanded us to shun the sectarian and

offensive sinners, lest they leaven with the leaven of their

unrighteousness, or by their intercourse or conversation (as is

generally the case), the pious and draw them into their wicked works;

and also, that the apostates may thereby be made ashamed before the

Lord and his church, repent, and be converted. But your foundation and

doctrine combats and disputes this so cruelly that you quite bitterly

call us divorcers and heretics; because we, in this regard, through the

zealous fear of God, fol. low the command of the holy apostles, and

point every one, whose lot it becomes, to the surest way, according to

Scripture. You pretend to the poor people that it is an abomination

that, on account of the ban, a husband should shun his wife, or a wife

her husband. The same as it is also an abomination to the world that we

should baptize the believing and not hear the false preachers; and thus

reprove the Holy Spirit of the love of Christ; accuse and abuse his

holy apostles of a false doctrine, as if the leaven of corruption

(against which they have faithfully warned us) could not leaven husband

or wife; also, as if we were at liberty, according to the rule of the

holy word, not to seek the reformation of our consorts, 2 Thess. 3:14;

Tit. 3:10; 1 Cor. G:6; Gal. S:9; 1 Cor. S:3; 2 Tim. 2:18, 21.

Our fifth foundation and doctrine is that the ban without the shunning

is quite useless and dead, yea, as a mill without a millstone, and as a

knife without a blade; for it is very clear that the apostolic ban,

properly, has its power and effect in the outward shunning. For else

the danger of corrupting others would not be in the least avoided,

which, properly, is the first and main reason of the ban, as has been

heard. Your actions openly show that you have and teach a ban without

the shunning, and that the same is therefore without effect, since you

first except husband and wife from the shunning, and second, eat, deal,

&c., with those who are banned, while the Holy Scriptures plainly and

pointedly forbid it, saying, With such ye shall not eat; with such do

not keep company; but shun them. Have no dealings with them; do not

greet them, nor take them into your houses. Mark our fifth division, 1

Cor. G:10; Rom. 16:10; 2 Tim. 3: G; Tit. 3:10.

But if you should say, That if the pious can abide in his faith, living

with the impious, that in such case there is no necessity of shunning,

I would then answer: First, that by such acceptation of the matter you,

in fact annul all the plain commandments of the Scriptures concerning

the outward, bodily shunning; as not to eat, deal or take them into

your houses. Yea, if some liberty, should be taken, it would be more

reasonable to give the whole church liberty to eat and deal with

apostates than to allow it between husband and wife. For there would be

less danger accompanied. with it to the church than to husband and wife

who are of necessity in continual intercourse; something which the

church could is easily avoid, ?This is too clear to be denied. O, men,

take heed.

My second reply is, that none under heaven can abide in his faith,

living. with his degenerate consort. For, first, he would transgress

all the explicit commandments of the Holy Spirit concerning the ban and

shunning. Secondly, he would not seek the repentance of his consort in

such a manner as the Scripture teached. And, thirdly, he keeps company

with one who should, according to the command of the word, be shunned

by all pious persons. I will leave it to the consideration of all of

you, if this can be called abiding in the faith. Therefore, I pray you

again, take heed.

Behold, beloved, if you compare this division with the doctrine of the

Scripture, and in the fear of God impartially weigh it in' the balance

of the holy word, you will clearly see that I and my beloved brethren

have the immutable, incontrovertible word to sustain us; and that you

only have a vain presumption and a self?conceived opinion; that we have

a restoring ban, while you have one that is fruitless, vain and dead;

that we have obedience, you, disobedience; that we cordially seek to

save all afflicted souls from the inherent disease of corruption,

according to the doctrine and command of the holy apostles, while you,

contrary to all admonition, doctrine and the explicit commandment of

the holy apostles leave them to corruption, without all aid, succor,

consolation, assistance and earnest trial; not looking at what is

pleasing to the spirit, but only at what is pleasing to the flesh.

Therefore it shows that you are, alas, those who are covered with the

abominable shame of heresy of which you undeservedly blame me. If you

are intelligent, mark what is the meaning.

Fourthly, I understand that you call us divorcers, telling your

followers that of such shunning of husband and wife there can not be

found a single example in all the Scriptures. To which I answer, first,

that Moses taught the Israelites that they should not excuse their own

wives, sons, daughters and friends who. were as precious to them as

their own hearts, if they should want to lead them to strange gods; but

that they should, without mercy, slay or stone them, Dent. 13:8??10.

Say, beloved mwho was the cause of this? Moses or God? Not Moses; but

God who had thus commanded him. Thus it is with us also. We teach that

the apostates and sectarians should be shunned, without respect of

person. Yet not we, but God, who has thus commanded us to do, in his

word, as has been sufficiently shown. O, mark this.

Again I reply by asking this question: If one of your number had a

dishonest, wicked, thievish, sodomitic, murderous, incendiary wife or

one that should try to take his life, and were aware of it, would he

yet continue to live with her? If you answer in the affirmative, you

must acknowledge and own that he is an abominable, fearful, murderous

rogue, to be one flesh with her; something which would not well become

a servant of Christ. But if you answer in the negative, you judge

yourself that you, in this matter, without previous adultery or

fornication, are no less divorcers than we are. I repeat, mark this

also.

Again, I ask, If one of your number had such a consort that he would

have to renounce his faith or could not abide therein, would he, or

should he continue to live with such consort? Jer. 17: G. If you answer

in the affirmative you thereby plainly testify that such perverse and

ungodly flesh avails you more than Christ Jesus himself, together with

his kingdom, truth, word, promise, blood, and death, besides your

faith, unction, love, and the salvation of your souls. If you answer in

the negative, I again say, that you, in this matter, without previous

adultery or fornication, are no less divorcers than we are. Mark this.

Thirdly, I answer, If this our doctrine must be called a divorce by

you, then it is evident that holy Paul was no less a divorcer than we

are, for he says "But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried

(observe he openly admits separation), or be reconciled to her

husband," 1 Cor. 7:11. Paul also allows such separation when it is for

their betterment if they remain unmarried, as is also our doctrine, and

so you yourselves (if the above is your answer), are no less divorcers

than we are, as shown in the above two articles; therefore I would have

you to consider in the fear of God what kind of a spirit it is that

prompts you to make use of such slanderous, cunning words as divorcers,

book of fables, heresy, &c. Venom is deadly, and gall is bitter, but

much more poisonous and bitter is the tongue which is charged and laden

with partiality and hatred. O, mind this, Jas. 3:5?10.

But as to the beforementioned example this is our answer, first: That

all those who make such pretensions manifest thereby that they do not

believe the Scriptures of the apostles concerning the ban and shunning,

nor understand the reasons, utility and effects of the ban, and alas,

have but little regard for the explicit commandments concerning the

outward, bodily shunning.

Again we say, concerning the opinion that a doctrine without example

cannot stand in the church of Christ, as seems to be your ground; that

in such case we are all badly mistaken, both you and we; because we

allow our women to approach the Lord's Supper, of which there is not a

syllable to be found in the Scriptures. But if you should say, .That

our women are believing; therefore they should be admitted to the

Supper, along with the believing men, I would answer in like manner: As

the pious consort is believing, he should shun his apostate wife,

according to the common rule of Scripture, together with all other

believing ones without exception. Whosoever is intelligent will judge

and consider the inference.

In the fifth place, I understand that Lemmekes has boasted that he is

going to rebut more than half of the books. To which I briefly reply:

To promise mountains of gold and not to have sandhills to give, is

called boasting by the world; therefore, it would be well not to boast

of more than we have Scripture and talent for. But whosoever will rebut

it must first establish the following ten articles, by virtue of the

Word.

First, that the first table of the commandments in Christ's Kingdom and

reign must give way to the second. Mark.

Secondly, that the Scripture teaches two bans or shunnings. Mark.

Thirdly, that there can be a scriptural ban without the shunning. Mark.

Fourthly, that the deadly disease of corruption cannot leaven or make

unclean the husband and wife when they do not shun each other. Mark.

Fifthly, that it is not required at the hands of the pious spouse

earnestly to seek the reformation and repentance of the impious.

spouse, according to the counsel, doctrine and commandments of the Holy

Scripture. Mark.

Sixthly, that the pious spouse is riot bound to agree to the separation

of his impious consort. Mark.

Seventhly, that the carnal ban and love must be preferred. to the

spiritual ban and love. Mark.

Eighthly, that the marriage with Christ, in the Spirit, must give way

to the marriage consummated in the human flesh. 'Mark.

Ninthly, that the Holy Spirit has taught exceptions or respect of

persons concerning the ban or shunning, in the Scripture. Mark.

Tenthly, that the spouse is not subject to the explicit commandments

concerning the outward or bodily shunning. Mark.

Behold, dear Lemmekes, whenever you or any of your followers dissolve

or untie this knot by virtue of the Scriptures, then we will further

consider the matter.

But as we know that no man, no matter who he be, can ever do so by

virtue of the truth, of which, before the Lord, we are certain;

therefore we let men slander and boast as much as they please: Firm and

immutable the doctrine remains, namely, that all pious husbands and

wives as also the church are bound to shun their impious spouses,

according to the common rule, doctrine and command of the Holy

Scriptures, as has been frequently shown, by virtue of the holy Word.

Whosoever seeks and loves the truth, may ponder upon that which we say

and consider the meaning of the Scriptures.

In the sixth place I understand that Lemmekes should have said, that if

we were of one mind in regard to the article concerning husband and

wife, that there would yet be three or four articles about which we

could not agree. To which I would say this, that I would like to have

him put in writing these articles and, points of difference, and send

them to me. ?f you have truth on your side, and we have not, then, by

the grace of God, I for myself will say, yea with you. But still I

would warn you not to call that which is right and pure, wrong and

impure; nor that which is wrong and impure, right and pure; not to

dissolve that which the Scripture binds, nor to bind that which it

makes free, as some, alas, are in the habit of doing; so that not our

selfchosen righteousness nor human propositions and holiness; but the

word of God alone, be our guide and way. In love, take heed.

In the seventh place, I understand that Lemmekes also said, that I

first came to the Franekers and their followers and agreed with them;

but was afterward instructed by the brethren, and remained with them.

To which I reply to you and all who believe your untrue story, with

truth, thus: I fraternally asked the Franekers when I was in

conversation with them, If they had any further doings with carnal

transgressors after the third admonition? To this they answered, no.

Then I said (after passing a few words concerning secret sins), If that

is your doctrine we will not remain divided. Then they thanked the

Lord, as if we were quite of one mind in regard to the matter.

Observing this, I said, Not so, brethren, bat I will also talk to the

others, and see what grace the Lord will give. That this is true I can

prove by our beloved brother, Nette Lippes, and is also known to the

omniscient Lord whose hand and judgment I cannot escape if I lie and do

not speak the truth.

Afterwards I came to them and conversed with them and got my full

satisfaction (praise the Lord for his grace) concerning secret sinning,

at which my heart was rejoiced more than I am able to write, not, now,

doubting in the least but that the matter would come to a good result,

until the time that the Franekers came and showed that they did not

abide by their understanding concerning carnal works, as they had

confessed to me. This caused in me sorrow, as bitter as death. In my

affliction I knew not what to do; for there is nothing upon earth I

love more than the Lord's church. But as it is, I see that the

leavening spirit of the false parties has leavened many. . Yea, had not

the gracious breath of the Omnipotent saved me I would probably have

had my mind wrecked. In short, the Franekers would not unite before

they had first consulted Henry Naeldeman. In the course of time, Henry

came to us, and in love, we informed him that we were not those who

thus judge the offensive transgressors; but that, according to the

word, we could not do the will of God by retaining those whom his

Spirit and Word exclude. He was so startled that he openly said before

us all, that he had never so taken the matter to heart, in his life,

hoping to place the Franekers on a better footing. I then left the

country. Not long afterward he again sent for me. He had studied the

matter over; and all we had built before, with the Lord's word, was

again broken, in the poor man. Yea, it is known to me and to the Lord

how unstable and childish he proved himself once or twice, in a short

time, concerning the matter of husband and wife. His own handwriting

shall be my testimony of this assertion.

Behold, dear men, here you have the outline of our action in this

matter of which you so quite partially dare to upbraid me, which I

assert with a good conscience, before the eyes of the Lord. If you had

acted the part of wisdom in this matter and had not inclined your ears

to the backbiting of the ? unpeaceable of the sectarian parties, you

would never have offended against me by such gross falsehood and

slander. Justly did Paul say "That a little leaven leaveneth the whole

lump.," 1 Cor. 5:6.

In the eighth ,place I understand that Lemmekes publishes that I should

have said to him, the people build upon, and look to me so much that I

am afraid that the Lord will yet cause me to stumble, so that they

shall no more look to me or any other man. To which I reply first: If I

should now or at any time say to Lemmekes or any one else?the people

build upon and look to me; then my own mouth would convince me that I

would be like unto a fool who is quick to praise himself. I trust that

not only the word of the Lord but also common sense will teach me

better. And as I have experienced more than once in my time that the

spirit of Diotrephes is not yet dead, 3 Jn. 9, which generally clothes

itself in a sheep skin, sighing and complaining?saying: Oh, oh! The

people build upon and look too much to Menno, whereby the hearts are

turned from love; therefore I have not said once, but perhaps ten

times: If the unversed should thus build upon and look to me, then my

desire is that the Lord would cause me to stumble, but not take his

grace altogether from me, that they might learn to know not to build

their foundation, hope and consolation upon me, but solely upon the

living corner stone, Christ Jesus. Whosoever hath the bride, says John,

is the bridegroom, and that is Christ Jesus, who, according to the will

of his Father (to his honor), has called us in his eternal love, and

married us by faith in his death and blood; and not Menno or Lemmekes.

Oh, that they would not garble my words, and not tell any thing but the

truth which stands before God.

Secondly I answer, If you thus turn to shame the word of my piety,

whereby I only seek the praise and honor of my Redeemer, which I had

not thus expected, then I desire that in love, you point out my error

according to the truth; for although I am a poor sinner who, at times,

is mastered by his flesh, I yet thank God for his grace that he has to

this day saved his poor, weak servant, without any considerable

offense, both in doctrine and in life. But if your sight is so weak and

dim that you call it stumbling, namely, that I teach according to the

Holy Scriptures that we should shun the offensive transgressors until

they repent; or that the ban should be used without respect of person;

or that I am ever prepared to accept a better instruction of God or

admonition and doctrine of his Holy Spirit, as I have done in regard to

the doctrine of carnal abominations?then I may well console myself that

the holy apostles are, in this matter, no less stumblers than I am. For

before God, I do not know but that I teach the essence of their word

unadulterated and walk in the footsteps of their spirit, so far as I

have received grace and strength from my God. O, how quite carnal,

unintelligent, blind and perverse is the judgment of a person who,

before his God, is led away by partiality and envy. If you fear God

then heed what I tell you, Jas. 3:2, 17; 1 Cor. 2:4.

In the ninth place, I understand that you slander and upbraid our

brethren in Frieeland, not a little. To which I briefly reply

It is not necessary that I should be the brethren's advocate, since the

merciful Lord has not denied them his grace, Spirit and gifts. Yet for

myself I would say that the worldly privileges are, or imply that we

should give both sides a hearing. We also read of .Alexander the Great,

that when one party or one side laid in a complaint to him without the

presence of the other side or party, that he would shut up one ear to

give the other side a hearing therewith. Since there was found such

great decency among the gentiles; and as it is the common usage, in all

matters and policies, not to judge until after a hearing has been

granted; therefore you have acted very unscripturally and unreasonably,

not only to give the one party (and that the party which are separated

from the church on account of their contention) a hearing, but besides,

accept them as your beloved brethren, while the other party you reject,

to the great shame of you and your counselors; and because you would

not give them a verbal explanation and hearing, although they so

frequently and brotherly desired it. At which unreasonableness,

unwillingness and childish ignorance we can not sufficiently satisfy

our astonishment. We are of the opinion that it was never heard of

people who seemingly feared God. Yet you proceed on the strength of the

sayings of the partizans with intolerable lying and misgivings, without

any certainty about the matter, and by this violence and wrong doing

you take from us that which, I fear, you can never restore to us. But

if you had given both parties a reasonable and christian hearing you

might have (if you had the gift) passed a just sentence between them,

and thus have sought unity and peace between them, according to the

intent of the holy word. But now you have manifested yourselves to all

mankind, while you see that with your unscriptural ban, now used by you

and your followers these many years, you cannot stand before the

sharpness of the Holy Spirit of Christ and of his strong word; that you

seek to assert and maintain as much as you can; not the desirable unity

and peace, nor the unfaltering, abiding truth which is of God, but your

own ignorant opinion and carnal intentions by wrong and violence,

dissention, partiality, slander and defamation. You should, however,

know that not such wrong and violence as you commit, .is to be the

judgment and decision in this matter but that the Holy Spirit and word

of Christ Jesus are to decide it. In love, take heed.

In the tenth place, I understand that Lemmekes said, "That he would

rather be banned by our elders than to agree with them." To which I

answer: That one of two things is made true by his words; that he

either does not know what the ban is in fact; or else that the elders

are such abominable people . that they are not worthy of the church.

For all the world I would not pass such a sentence. If these elders

were such evil people, even, as his words imply, why be so unreasonable

(since it is his office) as not to show his brotherly love by pointing

out to them, in accordance with the Scriptures their errors and

abominations of which he shows such abhorrence, since it becomes him

before God and his church to seek their salvation, in love. But I

presume that you feared the sharpness of truth and that you, therefore,

were afraid to face them. O, that you would hear the voice of the Lord

and not harden your hearts while it is yet to?day.

I must also, lastly, remind you that you came to us in A. D. 1556, just

before May, and that we had a conference of two days, in the fear of

our God. Yea, such a conference that Lemmekes, the morning of his

departure openly confessed before me, that he quite agreed with us

although not quite satisfied in the matter of husband and wife, but as

he had not confessed this before the brethren, he had come hither that

he and they would come to us, and as he had now opened his heart before

all, his word would thereafter avail but little. And he wished to

further treat with you, on the way, Egod. 17:2; Gal. 6:2; Jn. 3:29.

Behold, such were his pretenses. Besides he said, If the Upperlanders

will not agree, and Zylis and Henry will remain with them, I .will (he

said) go over to the Netherlanders.

Again he said, There are some strangers at Weert who. would gladly come

under the Word of the Lord; and asked: To whom shall I take these? to

Zylis or to the Netherlanders I Besides this he desired of me that when

we would have the consent or dissent of Zylis, to send one?or two

faithful brethren to his assistance, that the ban and shunning might be

thus introduced into his church. Dear friends, that he thus agreed with

us he did not only confess before me, but also before our beloved

brethren Herman of T. and John S. And what is become of all these words

and promises? Were they not all vain wind and falsehood

You must answer in the affirmative. And yet you do not want it said at

Cologne and thereabout that you had thus agreed with us. The most

lamentable of all is that that which he then confessed to be good and

right is now called by him heresy and deceit. Whether such an

inconsistent person can not be justly called an apostate I will

herewith leave to the judgment of all reasonable and intelligent

readers. Zylis and Henry wanted to consider the matter and propose it

to the Upperlanders; they sent a written message, but whether or not

you showed it to the elders of your church, I do not know. But Lemmekes

has written, Yes. And the brethren write, No; and it is said that Zylis

said, No. Their answers are contradictory.

In short, at last we, after long delay and waiting, received an answer

from you and the Upperlanders: That we should not push the ban to its

utmost, for it would have to be broken, and that there were as many

Scriptures concerning marriage as for the ban and shunning. Behold this

was the instruction of scriptural argument, by which he puts aside all

apostolic Scriptures concerning this matter, and rejects them as

useless.

If I do not write the truth, I am willing to bear my punishment. In my

opinion it is come so far with you that, before God, I do not know who

could ever agree with you. For first you agreed with us; afterward

dissented without our knowledge and joined the Upperlanders, Observe,

Lemmekes agreed with us, but the same !!!summer yet turned his back

upon us and again agreed with them. Observe again: Those that were

separated on account of their dissension and shamefulness you again

accepted as your brethren.

Observe, thirdly: Our elders and church you despised, answered their

prayer quite unfriendly and sneeringly, and said that you did not come

on their account.

Fourthly, observe: The spirit of the disquiet partizans you believed

behind our backs.

Fifthly, observe: You belie, upbraid, backbite, slander, and accuse me

and my beloved brethren without any truth; while I for myself never

said an unfriendly word about you, of which God is my witness, but have

ever shown regard for your well being until this hour of your

unbearable action.

Sixthly, mark: The plain word of the holy apostles as regards the ban

and shunning, you reject. Seventhly, mark: You uphold many lightminded,

carnal babblers. Eighthly, mark: You encourage many disquiet,

unpeaceable dissenters and quarrelers.

Ninthly, mark: Many, yea, thousands of faithful hearts who sincerely

seek God and his sure truth, you afflict. Tenthly, mark: Many pious

children who would gladly obey the word of the Lord in this regard, and

thus save their souls, you hinder.

Eleventhly, observe: You beget many defamers, liars, profaners and

upbraiders. In short, you have brewed such beer that, if the Lord does

not save you by his mercy, I fear you will yet stumble over the heaped

pot. For beware, if you again renounce the Upperlanders and also those

whom you, alas, have now given the hand of brotherhood they will not

depict you in very pleasing colors.

And if you, even, remain with them, all intelligent persons must

confess that you build your faith, in this matter, with a sectarian

spirit, upon vain self?conceit, opinion, flesh and man, and not upon

the firm

j rock and foundation of the divine word. If you change your doctrine

which you have so long wrongly practiced and taught in your church,

then you will have to hear that you are miserable teachers, that you

have deceived many souls and that you do not know the light of truth.

But if you do not, you make it manifest that you do not seek and uphold

the souls or the salvation of the church, nor the word of God, but your

own honor and flesh, only.

If, too, you acknowledge that you have, through partizanism, wrongfully

defamed me, a cry from the pious will issue against you, that you have

defamed the reputation of your brethren, without cause, not as faithful

servants of Christ, but rather as envious defamers.

If you do not acknowledge it, nor do such penance as can avail before

God, then the just sentence of his immutable word will be upon you,

that is, the defamers, backbiters, slanderers and liars have no portion

in the kingdom of God and Christ. O, awful is the sentence. Woe unto

those on whom it is inflicted I With fear, trembling and shaking

reflect, I pray you, 2 Pet. 2:18; Jude 1:10; Rom. 1:30.

Behold, dear, chosen men, how perilously you are sailing I Like a ship

that is cast about between two rocks. If she avoid the one she will

sail upon the other. Therefore, take heed. Take heed, that you may

prevent the eternal shipwreck of your poor souls, and yet arrive in the

haven of eternal peace with the Most High, Amen. Amen.

This, now, is the proper content, conclusion, intent and meaning of my

writing to you, and yours, First, that you may behold the abomination

of your actions in this clear mirror, turn from evil, come before the

Lord with a contrite heart and ?sincerely pray for his grace. Secondly,

that also, the simple, and those of little understanding who are, in

this respect, imprisoned by you, may taste and see therefrom that you

have fed and satiated them not with the bread of their heavenly Father,

but with mere swill and chaff',. and human self?conceit.

Thirdly, that you may know that I and the pious who are with me, dare

not, by the fear of our God, be your brethren, so long as there are not

found with you such doctrine, obedience,,, confession, reconciliation

and repentance as to pacify the church of the Lord and to be pleasing

unto him.

This is written in sorrow. If you fear God, then take heed, and

reflect. The God of all grace and the Holy Spirit of peace and of the

love of Christ grant you grace that you may read with impartial hearts,

and that it may be to your service, Amen. Amen. Amen.

By Menno Simon, who loves you souls according to the truth.

January 23rd, 1569.

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A

HUMBLE AND CHRISTIAN

JUSTIFICATION AND REPLICATION,

CONCERNING THE

BITTER, ENVIOUS LIES AND FALSE ACCUSATIONS OF OUR ENVIERS, ON

WHOSE ACCOUNT WE ARE, WITHOUT ANY COMPASSION AND MER

CY, SO LAMENTABLY HATED, BELIED, SLANDERED, UP

BRAIDED AND PERSECUTED UNTO DEATH, AS

MAY, ALAS, BE WITNESSED DAILY IN

MANY CITIES AND COUNTRIES.

BY

MENNO SIMON.

"Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say

all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

Rejoice and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven; for so

persecuted they the prophets which were before you," Matt. 6:11, 12.

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus

Christ," 1 Cor. 3:11.

ELKHART, INDIANA:

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1871.

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TO THE READER.

May the blessing and Salvation be with the Christian Reader:

Inasmuch, christian reader,, as we poor, despised strangers and

pilgrims are rejected and despised by all the world; are accounted the

off?scourings, and that because we diligently seek our salvation, so

that the pious and godfearing heart must tremble and be astounded at

the defamation which they unjustly heap upon the righteous, so that

some who strive after the truth dare hardly join this ardent people;

therefore, christian reader, this book, the band with which 'e shall

tie the arrant liars and their slander, is translated, out of pure

love, and to the profit and use of the reader from the eastern tongue,

which is not used in this country, into the Holland language, that

every godfearing person may stop the mouth of the slanderer. For it is

said, Jacula previsa minus feriunt. Wherefore we pray you to accept in

love this our labor, which we performed to your service. For our

sincere desire, wish, striving and laboring is, that many may come to

the true knowledge of the truth, and be saved. Fare ye well.

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PREFACE.

ALL that we sincerely desire, reasonable reader (behold, before God we

lie not), is, that by our writing, teaching, living, misery. and

confiscation of our goods we may once acquire so much mercy from the

children of men that we shall be allowed a private discussion with our

adversaries, before any number of pious, intelligent, and reasonable

men who love and fear the Lord and who can distinguish between good and

evil, if it cannot be allowed us in public; and that their lies and

accusations ?shall not be believed, until teacher is confronted with

teacher, and the accuser before the accused with equal rights and

liberty, as the word of God, christian love and natural reason teach

and imply, that thus the ungodly may no longer be protected in their

ungodliness, the wicked in their evil doing and that the pious and

righteous be no longer condemned and suppressed, that God's holy word,

by which our souls must live, may be made manifest, the fearful lying

cease and the unmerciful and cruel blood?shedding be stopped, which in

itself is nothing but the manifest works of the infernal serpent, as

Christ himself says; and which are, in appearance of true zeal and love

of God, made use of without fear, reflection or mercy, by those who

boast of the name, Spirit, word, death and blood of Christ, against

those who with Asaph wash their hands in innocence. But we apprehend

that it will not be allowed us. For in both sacred and profane history

we read and find that the pure, wholesome truth, from the beginning of

the world has generally been hated, belied and persecuted and that it

has, as a general thing, only found shelter .with a few. in obscure

nooks and corners, as a hateful, ungodly abomination. And that it can

not be made manifest without tribulation and peril of life.

Because the good, pious Jeremiah reproved the Scribes for their false

doctrine and wickedness; admonished the ignorant, confused and evil

populace to repent, and threatened them with future plagues, he was

called by them a heretic and deceiver, and by the princes a rebel and

mutineer. He had to experience much misery although he was chosen of

God, a prophet from his mother's womb, and spake from the mouth of the

Lord; he had to hear, that on his account, they had to bear such sore

plagues. Ahab, the blood?thirsty and idolatrous king, blamed the pious

and spiritual man that it was he who seduced all Israel, 1 Kings 18:18.

Again King Joram?thought that Elisha had entailed?the great famine in

Samaria, 2 Kings 6.

John, a man sent from God, blessed in his mother's womb, the greatest

born of woman, a burning, shining light, the messenger of the Lord, a

voice crying in the wilderness, the second and spiritual Elias, was

accused that he was possessed of devils, and was at last beheaded

because of his reproving a shameful case of fornication, Luke 1:15;

Matt. 11:11; Jn. 6:35; Mal.. 3:1; Mk. 1:3; Matt. 11:14.

Again, Jesus Christ, the eternal Light and Life himself, was called

Beelzebub, a Samaritan, and possessed of a devil, a mover of

insurrection, a transgressor of the law, a blasphemer, a glutton and

wine?bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners; he was deemed worse

than a murderer; and, at last, he was rewarded for all his glorious

miracles, kindness and love shown to them, by putting on him a mock

robe, a crown of thorns, scourging, cross and death, after they had

derided and blasphemed him to their satisfaction.

How they treated Stephen, Peter, Paul, James and others, the Scriptures

abundantly show, Acts 6, 6, 7; 12, 17, 18, 19, 21.

At the time or commencement of the primitive church, the christians

were called swine by some; others called them robbers of God's glory,

murderers, infanticides, abominable, unchaste persons, who committed

all manner of abominations with their mothers and sisters; and that

they in their worship, shed human blood and also offered their children

to idols; that they were rebels, and that because of their separation

from the priesthood of Salaam, \_and their occasional night?meetings to

partake of the Lord's Supper.

Again, enemies of the human race; unfruitful, corrupted people, because

they would not keep company with the winebibbers, liars, &c., but led a

sober, godly, humble and circumcised life, in the love and fear of God.

Again, enemies of God, accursed malefactors, and rogues, because they

kept aloof from the shameful idolatry, and suffered themselves to be

exiled and freely gave their goods and life blood for the sake of the

testimony of the Lord and true religion and honor of God.

Behold, thus the blind, ungrateful world has ever rewarded and treated

those who sought and feared God, with all their hearts, with all their

souls, and with all their power, as Cyprian, Tertullian and other

historians testify.. Darkness can not bear the light; nor falsehood,

truth. God's word is an abomination to the ungodly, for it is a

treasure of wisdom hidden from them. Christ says, "That light is come

into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their

deeds were evil," Jn. 3:19. The pious and godfearing are ever an

offense and sting in their hearts and are a hurt in their sight. And

this is the cause that the world, which in all its doings will ever

live unrebuked and unhindered in idolatry, pride, pomp, licentiousness

and lust, from the beginning, has so enviously hated,. miserably belied

and so tyrannically persecuted the pious and godfearing.

O kind reader, thus it is to?day as you can see on every hand. The

whole world is saturated with all manner of wickedness. False doctrine,

idolatry, unbelief, licentiousness, shame and blasphemy are in the

ascendency; it will not be reproved nor admonished. It hates all who

would, in pure love, at the cost of their goods and life, gladly

deliver them from their wicked and inordinate life, point and lead them

in the way of peace and save their souls, if possible.

The wise and learned, who ever have plagued and pestered the pious and

righteous the most, as was said in our Confessions, heap one abominable

lie upon another, lest their unreasonable and shameful gain and false

boasting be destroyed. They pretend and cry that we are. Munsterites;

that we do not want to be subject to and obey the magistracy; that we

mean to take cities and countries by force; that like the irrational

creatures, we have our goods and women in common; that we say to each

other, Sister, my spirit desires thee. Again, that we claim to be

without sin, and that we mean to be saved by our own merits and works,

and the like unfounded lies, that they may thus lead from truth, all

mankind and particularly the lords, princes and magistrates which they

have inebriated by their golden cup, that they may embitter and turn

them against all the pious children of God. He is called and considered

a fine, evangelical preacher and a competent teacher well lettered, who

can only quarrel, upbraid, slander and lie sufficiently to move the

magistracy, who perhaps, would be reasonable, kind and favorable enough

if they were not spurred on and vexed by this unreasonable generation

of vipers, to persecution, so that the innocent, belied sheep that

would not injure a hair on any one, are, without a hearing, led

captive, and mercilessly exiled from country, city and town, into

misery and privation, and chased by the ravening wolves until they are

consumed by over?exertion, heat, cold or rain. In this, I think, they

fill the measure of their ancestors of whom Christ said, Oh Lord! oh,.

beloved Lord! how long will these inhuman tyrannies and fearful

abominations continue

Inasmuch as they have so embittered all lords, princes, regents,

potentates and common people against us by their fearful cry of murder,

and by their slanderous lying that we can not acquire sufficient mercy

by all our prayers, beseechings and supplications, by all our

innocence, tears, patience, misery, cross, goods and blood that, we

might be allowed a public conference and discussion with our enviers;

and as according to justice and christianity it becomes the magistracy

to allow us a fair hearing and trial; and that they do not usurp to

themselves, in the judgment seat of the Most High God, to shed innocent

blood; and as we are ever slandered by their unfounded lies, and as

truth is thus smothered; therefore we are impelled by the urging of the

word of God and the love of our neighbors, to publish in writing our

excuse and answer with pure, christian truth, that by our defense in

writing, since they are so enraged that we can not appear publicly to

defend ourselves, the godfearing conscience which would not knowingly

act contrary to the will of God, no matter whether he be a magistrate

or citizen, learned or unlearned, may know that by the beforementioned

abominations we are innocently slandered and belied by our opponents;

or that God would grant that thus the word and truth of the Lord might

become more known and manifest thereby, and that the deceit and feigned

holiness of the learned and priests, must become discovered and

manifest to all the world.

Honorable reader, we humbly beseech you for the .Lord's sake, to

consider impartially why we so often refer to the preachers, admonish

and reprove them of many things which, alas, are not to their honor and

reputation. For, as we clearly see that they are those who, for the

sake of shameful gain and avarice, so falsely console, retain and bind

the whole world in their unbelief, idolatry and impenitent, carnal

life; so miserably break the truth and trample it under foot; so

miserably murder the poor souls which are so dearly bought, not with

perishable gold and silver, but with the precious blood of Christ; so

enviously and scornfully hate, slander and belie the pious and

godfearing and take their goods and even their lives, which is quite

different from the Spirit of the Lord, that they, may hold to their

shameful gain, lustful, vain and fruitless life without reproof; and as

they do not suffer themselves to be admonished, taught and warned by

the word of God, by love, longsuffering, piety and the blood of the

saints; therefore the, glory of God and the salvation of your souls

require us to do so. The Almighty Lord is our testimony, that we aim at

nothing but that those who are reasonably minded and yet do not know

the mystery of unrighteousness, as Paul calls it, 2 Thess. 2:9 (as they

are yet carnally minded, not born of God and kept back by the

preachers), may learn to know the preachers and teachers by such clear

and plain discoverings; further reflect upon it and thus become tired

of their shameful deceit and seduction; and that all lords and

magistrates who dare boast of the name of Christ may know what kind of

people and teachers those are who slander us and to whom they give ear

and faithfully protect by their arms.

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A HUMBLE AND CHRISTIAN DEFENSE.

IN the first place, they complain and accuse us of being Munsterites;

and warn all people to beware of us and take an example from those of

Munster.

Answer. We do not like to reprove and judge those who are already

reproved and ,judged of God and man; yet, as we are wrongfully attacked

and accused by our opponents, and that without truthfulness. therefore

we would say in defense of us all that we consider the Munsterian

doctrine and life, in regard to king, sword, rebellion, retaliation,

revenge, polygamy and the !!!temporal kingdom of Christ as a new

Jewism, and a misleading error, doctrine and abomination which is not

at all in keeping with the Spirit, word and example of Christ. Behold,

in Christ, we lie not.

Besides, I can fearlessly challenge any body; that none under the broad

canopy of heaven can show and prove that I ever agreed with the

Munsterites in regard to the beforementioned articles; for from the

beginning until the present moment I have opposed them with diligence

and earnestness, both privately and publicly, verbally and in writing,

for over seventeen years, and ever since I confessed the word of the

Lord and knew and sought his holy name according to my weakness.

I also, according to my small talent, have faithfully warned every body

against their error and abomination, as I would that it should be done

unto me. And in the mean time I have pointed and returned several of

them to the true way, by the grace, assistance and power of the Lord.

I have never seen Munster nor have I ever been in their communion. And

I trust that by the grace of the Lord, I shall never eat nor drink with

such if there should yet be any, as the Scripture teaches me not to do;

unless they sincerely acknowledge their abomination and truly repent,

and follow the truth and the gospel in a becoming manner.

Behold, kind reader, this is my understanding and opinion of the

Munsterites, as is also the opinion of all those who are known and

accepted of us as brethren and sisters, that is, those of us who, on

account of the false doctrine, unclean pedo?baptism and supper of the

preachers, are visited

with superabundance of misery, tribulation and anxiety, and who assert

and testify unto death their pure doctrine of baptism and Supper, with

an humble confession and a pious, unblamable life.

But all those who reject the cross of Christ, as did the Munsterites;

turn their backs upon the Word of the Lord; again revert to carnality,

idolatry and its communion; walk in all pomp, pride and inebriety; in

short, all those who are on the broad road, although they may be

baptized, we do not know nor accept as brethren and fellows, inasmuch

as they do not abide in the word of the Lord. Behold, kind reader, this

is the truth and it will ever be found so. The learned may upbraid and

garble to their satisfaction, yet they should know that although they

are now honored and respected on earth, as the Psalmist testifies, we

shall at last appear before a Judge who has no respect of person and

who will not judge according to the complaint, nor favor and

partiality, but according to the truth.

But if they should say we are one church with the Munsterites, because

they and we are baptized with one baptism, then we would reply that if

outward baptism has the power to make all those who are thus baptized

with one baptism, one church, and that it causes all those who are thus

baptized to share in the unrighteousness, wickedness and corruption of

every individual, then our adversaries may well consider what kind of a

church or body theirs is, as it is evident and well known to every body

that perjurers, murderers, highway?men, thieves, &c., have received the

same baptism which they have. If we, then are Munsterites because of

our baptism, they must be perjurers, murderers, highwaymen, thieves,

&c., on account of their baptism. This is incontrovertible.

O, no. The Scripture does not teach that we are baptized into one body

by any mere sign, as water, but that we are, baptized into one body by

one Spirit, 1 Cor. 12:13. The prophet says, "The Son shall not bear the

iniquity of the father," but "The soul that sinneth, it shall die,"

Ezek.18:20. Paul says, "Every one shall bear his own burden." And if

they, now, should say that the transgressors are punished by the

magistracy according to the sentence of justice, we would reply, that

we also thus judge and punish them with the sword of the Spirit,

'according to the ordinance and commandment of God, namely, according

to the word of the Lord, that is, we separate from us all those who

turn away from the truth by any unclean or false doctrine or by any

licentious, carnal walk, as was said.

In short, we herewith, testify and confess before God, before you, and

before the whole world, that we, from our inmost hearts detest the

errors and abominations of the Munsterites, as also all evil

sectarianism which are contrary to the Spirit, word and ordinance of

the Lord; and that before God, in Christ Jesus, we neither seek nor

desire anything more than that we may turn the whole world from its

wickedness, to the right way,, and that we may, by the word, grace and

assistance of?the Lord; deliver many souls from the kingdom of the

devil, and gain them to the Kingdom of Christ; that we may lead a

pious, humble and godly life in Christ Jesus, and that we may glorify

his great and adorable name, forever. For we firmly believe and confess

that all false doctrine, idolatry, ungodliness and sin are of the

devil; and that the reward of sin is everlasting death. There.. fore we

labor so diligently and earnestly; and would, the Lord knows, be pious

and fear God, notwithstanding we miserable men are so shamefully

belied, hated and scandalized and often slain, on that account, Rom.

1:26; 1 Cor. B; Gal. 3; Eph. 5; 1 Pet. 3.

In the second place they say that we will not obey the magistracy.

Answer. The writings which we have published during several years past

abundantly prove that this accusation against us is wrong and untrue.

We now publicly confess that the office of a magistrate is ordained of

God, as? we ever have confessed since we serve, according to our small

talent, the word of the Lord. And, in the meantime, we have ever obeyed

them when not contrary to the word of God, and we intend to do so all

our lives; for we are not so stupid as not to know what the Lord's word

commands in this respect. We render unto Ceasar the things which are

Ceasar's as Christ teaches, Matt. 17:22; we pray for the imperial

majesty, kings, lords, princes and all in authority, honor and obey

them, 1 Tim. 2:2; Rom. 13:1. And yet they cry that we will not be

subject to and obey the powers that be, that they may disturb the

hearts of those that have authority and excite them to all

unmercifulness, wrath and bitterness against us, and that, thus, by

their continual cries the bloody sword may be unmercifully used against

us and never be sheathed, as may be seen, Rom. 13:7; Tit. 3:2; 1 Pet.

2:13.

Inasmuch as they ever excite the magistracy by such gross falsehood;

besides, will say yea and amen to every thing the magistracy do,

whether agreeable to the Scripture or not; and as they thus by their

tickling doctrine lead these souls into condemnation, because they seek

not their salvation, but their own enjoyment and gain; therefore love

compels us respectfully and humbly to show all high in authority who

would do right if they knew it, and had one li to point it out to them

(since it was concealed from the preachers), how, according to the word

of the Lord, they should be minded; also, how they should rightfully

execute their office?to the praise and glory of the Lord.

Moses speaks thus, "And it shall be, when he (the king) setteth upon

the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law

in a book out of that which is before the priests, the Levites. And it

shall be with him and he shall read therein all the days of his life;

that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of

this law and these statutes, to do them (dear lords, mark, it reads: to

do them). That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that

he turn not aside from the commandments, to the right hand, or to the

left." "He shall not multiply horses to himself;" "Neither shall he

multiply wives to himself, nor silver and gold," Dent. 1'7:16?20.

Concerning rulers Jethro thus speaks to Moses, "Provide out of all the

people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness,

and place such over them, to be rulers," Ex. 18:21.

Moses says, "And I charged your judges at that time, saying, Hear the

causes between your brethren, and judge righteously between every man

and his brother, and the stranger that is with him. Ye shall not

respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the

great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is

God's," Dent. 1:16, 1'7.

Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, said to the judges, " Take heed what ye

do; for ye judge not for man, but for the Lord, who is with you in

judgment." O, an important and heroic word. '~Wherefore now let the

fear of the Lord be upon you; take heed and do it; for there is no

iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of person, nor taking of

gifts," 2 Chron. 19:6, 7.

Paul says, " Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil (mark

ye rulers). Wilt thou, then, not be afraid of the power 8 Do that which

is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same. For he is the minister

of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid:

for he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God, a

revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil," Rom. 13:3, 4.

Behold, beloved rulers and judges, if you take to heart these cited

Scriptures and diligently reflect upon them, you will observe, first,

that your office is ?not your own but God's office and service, that

you may bend your knees before his Majesty; fear his great and adorable

Name and rightly and reasonably execute your ordained office; and

that?you may not thus freely usurp the kingdom, dominion and

jurisdiction of Christ, and judge and punish by your iron swords that

which belongs solely to the eternal Judgment of the Most High God, as

in matters of faith, which also,?Luther and others wrote in the

beginning. But after they became more exalted they seem to have

forgotten it all. Dear rulers, observe how very much Moses, Joshua,

David, Ezekiel, Josiah,. Zorobabel and others are praised in the

Scriptures, because they feared the Lord and faithfully and diligently

kept his commandments, counsel and word.

If you lift your hearts above all the mountains, and will not hear what

the mouth of the Lord commands you, but only listen to the whisperings

of your flesh; if you will not confess that you are the officers and

servants of the Lord and that you have received of him country and

people to rule, you cannot possibly avoid the punishment of him who has

called you to be such exalted potentates, commanders, heads and

regents.

Beloved, observe, and beware. Before him?Croesus and Irus are alike

respected. Therefore sincerely fear and love your God; examine the

Scriptures and take into consideration how the great Lord in his wrath

has, on account of their tyranny, cruelty, pride, blasphemy,

disobedience, and idolatry, mercilessly upset and destroyed the thrones

of potentates; as of Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, Sanherib, Antiochus,

Saul, Jeroboam, Ahab and others, as may be clearly and plainly read in

the Scriptures.

Secondly, you may understand from these Scriptures that you are called

and ordained to your offices to punish the transgressors and protect

the good; to judge rightly between man and his fellow; to do justice to

the widows and orphans; to the poor, despised stranger and pilgrim; to

protect them against violence and, tyranny, rule cities and countries

justly by a good policy and administration not contrary to God's word,

to the peaceable and quiet enjoyment of the life of all, and that you

should anxiously seek and love the holy word (by which the soul lives),

name and glory of God, and promote, protect and maintain the same as

much as possible, without bloodshed and uproar.

Behold, beloved lords and judges, this is the proper office to which

you are called. Whether you fulfill these requirements piously and

faithfully, I will leave to Your own consideration. I think with holy

Jeremiah that you have all broken the yoke .and rent it in pieces; for

you reject and detest, as a venomous serpent, the dear word which you

should reasonably protect; the false teachers and prophets who deceive

the whole world and whom, according to the word of God, we should shun,

are by you kept in high esteem; and the poor, miserable sheep who, in

their weakness, sincerely fear and obey the Lord and who speak not a

harmful word of any one, because they dare not do aught against his

word; who lead a penitent, pious life; make the right use of his

sacraments according to the Scriptures; abhor all false doctrine,

sectarianism and ungodliness; are exiled from city and country and are

often adjudged to fire, water or the sword; their goods are

confiscated; their children, who according to the?words of the prophet,

are not responsible for the transgressions of their fathers, if the

fathers were, even, guilty, are sent to wander about naked; and thus

the labor and sweat of their parents they must leave in the hands of

these avaricious, greedy, unmerciful and bloodthirsty robbers.

O, ye beloved lords and judges, we will leave it to your own judgment

whether this is to protect the good and punish the evil, to judge

justly between man and man; to do justice to the widow, orphan and

stranger, as the Scriptures teach and your office implies. O no,

beloved rulers, no. Take heed, the matter is changed. The good are

punished and the evil encouraged and protected. For the events of every

day prove that it is as the prophets complained of. Perjurers, usurers,

blasphemers. liars, deceivers, fornicators and adulterers are in no

danger of death, but those that fear and love the Lord are the prey of

all the world. The prophet says, "Behold, the princes of Israel, every

one were in thee to their power to shed blood. In thee have they set

light by father and mother; in the midst of thee have they dealt by

oppression with the stranger: in thee have they vexed the fatherless

and the widow," Ezek. 22:6, 7. Read and diligently ponder upon the

prophetic Scriptures, and you will find what terrible threats the holy

and faithful men of God have ever prophesied of such evils and abuses:

And if you do despise these our admonitions, they, nevertheless, are

the firm truth; this you must acknowledge. For it is manifest and

undeniable that in our Netherlands the lascivious, unchaste, and vain

men whom they call pastors, ministers, masters and teachers, some of

whom defile one maiden and woman after another, who openly live in all

manner of licentiousness, ungodliness, idolatry, and drunkenness, and

who do not rightly live in obedience to the word of God in any

particular, rob, by their shameful treason, many godfearing people who,

before God and his angels, seek nothing but to lead a righteous,

unblamable life, according to the direction of the word of God, of

their country, honor, possessions and, even, life; while they (the

traitors) live at liberty and ease.

Inasmuch as the scale of justice is so very much out of balance; and as

you are chosen and ordained of God to judge without respect of person

and to deliver from the hands of the oppressor all the afflicted and

oppressed strangers; therefore we pray you humbly, most beloved rulers

and judges, for the sake of him who has called and chosen you to your

offices, that you do not believe these cruel and envious men, who,

according to Peter are born to corruption and torture; and who, ever

publicly and privately, make us so obnoxious, by their cries, that we

are not allowed a hearing and facing?so long as they, in our presence,

do not prove (which, we are sure, they cannot do) against us that which

they every day from their throne of pestilencies and mockery, so

shamefully proclaim to the world, to the shame and injury of great

numbers of pious and godfearing children. Beloved rulers, we beseech

you for Christ's sake, to fear and love God sincerely. Believe his true

word and act accordingly, Isa. 1:23;.Ps. 73:6.

In the third place, you will also observe from the Scriptures, that,

although you are chosen authority on earth, yet you dare not act

according to your own option and opinion. But you are to love your Lord

and God sincerely as your Creator, Deliverer and Savior, and to fear

and obey him as your Head, King, Prince and Judge; ever diligently to

follow the directions o1 his word; not to lift yourselves above your

subjects and brethren; and, never to deviate from the ways and

commandments of the Lord. Henceforth, beloved rulers, diligently

observe that you be christians in actions, works and truth, inasmuch as

you boast yourselves such. Water, bread, wine and name make none a

christian; but those are christians who are born of God: are of divine

nature, are of the same mind as Christ Jesus; led by the Spirit of God,

who daily crucify their evil and corrupt flesh; walk not after the

flesh, but after the Spirit; love nothing above God's word; love their

neighbors as themselves; lead an unblamable, humble, pious life; who

meekly walk in the footsteps of Christ and who are become new, changed

and converted men and creatures in Christ. These the word of God calls

christians, 2 Pet. 1:4; Phil. 2: S; loom. 8:14; Gal. 6:24; Rom. 8:2;

Matt. 10:37; 7:12; 16:24.

Beloved lords, observe that we do not read in the biblical Scriptures

of proud, carnal, perjurious, adulterous, drunken, pompous,

unrighteous, idolatrous and bloodthirsty christians. But that the

portion of such shall be eternal weeping and: gnashing of teeth,

darkness, fire, hell, death and devil. Their portion will be in the

lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, Rev. 21:8; Rom. 1.

Dear lords, take heed, and be no longer deceived. For with God there is

no respect of persons. This all the Scriptures teach. It is life

everlasting, with the angels around the heavenly throne, or everlasting

death with the devils in the bottomless pit; for it must all be judged

according to the Spirit, example and word of God. "Therefore if any man

be in Christ, he is a new creature," 1 Cor. G:17.. " He that. saith he

abideth in him (Christ), ought himself also so to walk, even as he

walked," 1 Jn. 2:6. It matters not whether one be emperor or king.

Beloved lords, this is God's word. This is the price and measure after

which you and we should strive. Whosoever does not strive after and

conform himself to this measure, cannot be a christian. Therefore

examine your teachers well; earnestly and diligently consider whether

or not they point you to this narrow way. I presume that they preach

peace to you; make your pillows soft and agreeable, and that they do

not severely reprove your court?manners and practices, such as,

dancing, drinking, fornication, gambling and debauchery in general. In

short, that you build the wall, and they daub it with untempered

mortar, Ezek. 13:10.

Beloved rulers, we do not do so; but we teach and direct you in the

right way which you should walk if you wish to be saved. We do not

point you to the pope, or Luther, or Augustine, or Hieronymus, but

according to Scripture, to Christ Jesus, to hear him, to believe and

faithfully follow him. For he is the Prophet promised of God; the

Teacher sent of God; the Light of the world; the true Shepherd of our

souls. Whosoever shall hear, believe, and follow him has eternal life,

Deut. 18:18; Jn. 3:2; 8:12; 3:15. He calls to emperor, king and to

every one, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye

shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven;" 'I If any man will come

after me (or whosoever will be a true christian), let him deny himself,

and take up his cross, and follow me;" whosoever loves any thing more

than he loves me cannot be my disciple; and is not worthy of me, and

many other passages, Matt. 18:3; 16:24; Luke 14; Matt. 10:38.

Rulers, awake, and learn to know him. He is the Son of the Most High

God, the Lord of lords and the King of kings; the eternal power, word

and wisdom of God. What kind of pomp, ease and comfort he enjoyed on

earth, the Scriptures abundantly teach us. At his birth, there was no

room for him in the inn, Luke 2:8. In his preaching, he had not where

to lay his head, Luke 9:68. His entrance into Jerusalem was not

accompanied with cavalry, guards and knights, but upon an ass. At his

death he had neither water nor wine wherewith to quench his thirst. Why

was it? Was it that we should live a lustful, pleasurable life? O, no.

But, according to Peter, it was that we should die unto sin and live in

righteousness, Matt. 21:7; 1 Pet. 4:3; Rom. 6:7; 2 Tim. 2:11; Col. 3:5.

Behold, beloved rulers, behold! This is the court?practice which the

heavenly Prince, Christ Jesus, has taught all his courtiers on earth,

namely, all christians. O, the narrow way I The strait gate I How few

find, and fewer still who walk therein I Matt. 7:14; Luke 13:24.

I write this admonition that the princes, regents and lords may take

heed, and observe that they are miserably deceived by the preachers,

since they preach such easy and sweet things, and point out such a

broad way, while the word of God shows us such a strait way. I herewith

humbly beseech you, lords, princes, kings and judges, one and all, for

the sake of the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, with which we

are besprinkled, not to think hard of me, poor, miserable, and despised

man, that I have thus faithfully shown my sincere love to you. For I

would joyfully see that your poor souls were saved. My admonition is

general, and I do not mention any particular name. Whosoever is guilty,

let him repent; and whosoever is not guilty, let him take heed. God is

my witness, that I desire nothing but that you all may be such indeed,

that you may be praised and honored by all, by noble lords, and a

christian magistracy, that you will stand impartially between us and

our opponents, the learned, as becomes your office, that the

enchanting, deceiving falsehood may once go down and be destroyed, and

that the unadulterated truth which for centuries has been kept back,

may be restituted. Beloved rulers, the word of God is truth. Love,

embrace and kiss it; for its riches are immeasurable, its beauty

exceeding, its fruits precious and its power is eternal life, in. 17.

In the third place, they say, That we are rebellious; that we would

take cities and countries, if we had the power.

Answer. This prophecy is false and will ever remain so; and by the

grace of God, time and experience will prove that those who thus

prophesy, according to the word of Moses, are not of God. Faithful

reader, understand what I write.

The Scriptures teach that there are two opposing princes and two

opposite kingdoms. The one is the Prince of peace; the other the prince

of rebellion. Each of the princes has his particular kingdom and as the

prince is, so is also the kingdom. The Prince of peace is Christ Jesus;

his? kingdom is the kingdom of peace, which is his church; his

messengers are the messengers of peace; his word is the word of peace;

and his body is the body of peace; his children are the seed of peace;

and his inheritance and reward are the inheritance and reward of peace,

Heb. 7; Isa. 9; Dan. 2:7; Luke 1; Isa. 62; Rom. 10; Jn. 14; Col. 3;

Zech. 8. In short, with this King and in this kingdom and .reign it is

nothing but peace; every thing that is seen, heard and done is peace.

Inasmuch as we have heard the word of peace, namely, the consoling

gospel of peace, from the mouth of his messengers; therefore we, by his

grace, have thus believed and accepted it in peace, and have committed

ourselves to the only, eternal and true Prince of peace, Christ Jesus,

in his kingdom of peace and under his reign, and are thus, by the gift

of his Holy Spirit, by means of faith, incorporated into his body, and

henceforth we look with all the children of his peace for the promised

inheritance and reward of peace, Rom. 10:15; Isa. 62:7; 9:6; Luke 2:7.

As such exceeding grace of God has appeared unto us poor, miserable

sinners, that we, who were formerly no people at all, and who knew of

no peace, are now called to be such a glorious people of God, to be a

church, kingdom, inheritance, body and property of peace; therefore we

desire not to break this peace, but, by his great power by which he has

called us to this grace and portion, to walk in this grace and peace,

unchangeably and unwaveringly unto death, 1 Pet. 2:9.

Peter was commanded to sheathe his sword. All christians are commanded

to love their enemies; to do good unto those who abuse and persecute

them; if any man shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the

other, and if he take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. Say,

beloved, how can a christian, scripturally, retaliate, rebel, war,

murder, slay, torture, steal, rob and burn cities and conquer

countries? Matt. 26:52; Jn. 18:10; Matt. 5:12, 39, ?40.

The great Lord who has created you and us, who has placed our hearts in

the midst of our bodies, knows, and he only, knows that our hearts and

hands are clear of all rebellion and murderous mutiny; and by his

grace, they will ever remain clear. .For we truly confess, that all

rebellion is of the flesh and of the devil, Rom. 1:30; 1 Jn. 3:8; Rev.

21:8; 22:15.

O, beloved reader, our weapons are not swords and spears, but patience,

silence and hope, and the word of God. With these we must maintain our

cause and defend it. Paul says, "The weapons of our warfare are not

carnal; but mighty through God." With these we intend and desire to

resist the kingdom of the devil; and not with swords, spears, cannons

and coats of mail. For "he (God) esteemeth iron as straw, and brass as

rotten wood;" that we may thus, with our Prince, Teacher and Example,

Christ Jesus, raise the father against the son and the son against the

father, and that we may cast down imaginations, and every high thing

that egalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bring into

captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ, Isa. 30:7; Eph.

6:17; Heb. 4:12; 2 Cor. 10:4; Job 41:27; Matt. 10:21; Luke 12:93; 2

Cor. 10:5.

Behold, reader, such a rebellion we seek and cause; but never, a

rebellion of carnality. Not if we were as numerous as the spears of

grass and the sand upon the sea shore, which, however, will never be

the case, inasmuch as all men have not faith. O, that the way is so

narrow and the gate so strait, 2 Thess. 3:3; Matt. 7:13; Luke 13:24.

True christians know not vengeance, no matter how they are maltreated;

in patience they possess their souls, Luke 21:18; and do not break

their peace, even, if they should be tempted by bondage, torture,

poverty, and, besides, by the sword and fire. They do not cry for

vengeance as do the world; but, with Christ, they supplicate and pray:

" Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do," Luke 23:34;

Acts 7:60.

According to the declaration of the prophet, they have beaten their

swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning?hooks. They shall

sit every man under his vine, and under his fig?tree, Christ; neither

shall they learn war any more, Isa. 2:4; Mic. 4:3.

They do not seek your money, goods, injury nor blood, but they seek the

honor and praise of God and the salvation of your souls. They are the

children of peace; their hearts overflow with it; their mouths speak

it, and they walk in the way of peace; they are full of peace; they

seek, desire and know nothing but peace; and are ever prepared to

forsake? country, goods, life and all, for its sake; for they are the

kingdom, people, church, city, property and body of peace, as has been

heard.

Beloved reader, I, poor, miserable man (do not think hard of it), in my

weakness have been writing these seventeen years; have feared the word

of the Lord, and served my neighbors, and, I have unwaveringly borne

his scorn and cross, with much misery, anxiety, tribulation and peril;

and, I trust by his grace I will to the end continue to testify with a

good conscience, his holy, worthy word, will and ordinance, verbally,

by writing and at the peril of life, as much as is in me; and should I

then yet at heart be a disquiet, rebellious; vengeful and bloody

murderer? May the Most High save his poor servant from that!

Again, in Brabant, Flanders, Friesland and Gelderland the godfearing,

pious hearts are, daily led to the slaughter as innocent sheep, and are

tyrannically and inhumanly martyrized! Their hearts are full of spirit

and strength; their mouths flow like the rivulets; their fruits scent

like holy spices; their doctrine is powerful and their life is

unblamable. Neither emperor nor king, fire nor sword, life nor death

can frighten or separate them from the word of the Lord! And should

their hearts yet be ensnared by bitterness, rebellion, vengeance,

robbery, hatred and bloodshed? If so, what vain suffering it would be!

O, no, reader, no. Learn to know what a true christian is, of whom he

is born, how he is minded, what is, properly, his intention and

seeking, and you shall find that they are not rebels, murderers, and

robbers, as the learned accuse them of, but that they are a godfearing,

pious, peaceable people, as the Scriptures teach.

The other prince is the prince of darkness, anti?christ, and Satan.

This prince is a prince of all evil, as rebellion, bloodshed, uproar

and murder, which agree with his proper nature, arts, and doings, Jn.

8:44, his commandments and teachings and his kingdom, body and church

are of the same nature, 1 Jn. 3. Here we need not much Scripture.

Seeing, hearing and daily occurrences and experience prove the truth.

Our opponents charge that we are intent upon rebellion; something of

which we never thought. But we say, and that truthfully, that they and

their ancestors for more than a thousand years have been that of which

they accuse us. If we search history we will be convinced of this

assertion. All those who placed themselves in opposition to their

shamefulness, dishonor and evil?doing, had to suffer for it. Even so

today.

For what they have done these last few years by their writings,

teachings and cries, cities and countries prove. How wily they have

placed potentate in antagonism to potentate and said to them, Since the

sword is placed in your hands ,you may maintain the word of the Lord

thereby, until they prevailed on them, and have shed human blood like

water, torn the hearts from each other's body and made innumerable

fornicators, rogues, widows and orphans; have eaten up and plundered

the innocent civilian, and destroyed and ruined cities and countries.

In short, they have done as if neither prophet, nor Christ nor apostle

nor the word of God had ever been upon. earth. Notwithstanding, they

wish to be called the holy, christian church and body. O, dear Lord,

how lamentably is thy holy, worthy word mocked, and thy glorious works

derided ! as if thy divine and powerful doings in thy church were

nothing but reading, crying, water, bread, wine and name; and as if all

rebellion, warring, robbing, murder and devilish works were allowable.

Beloved reader, behold, and observe and learn, once to know this

kingdom and body. For, if they, with such actions and doings, were the

kingdom and body of Christ, as the learned pretend, then Christ's holy,

glorious kingdom, church and body, would be an inhuman, cruel,

rebellious, bloody, robbing, crying, unmerciful and unrighteous people;

this is incontrovertible. O, damnable error! O, dark blindness ! !

And, yet, it does not suffice that they, by their light minded,

licentious doctrine, lead the whole world into corruption and misery;

and rob their own members of their property, welfare, doctrine, life

and soul; but, besides, in their madness, they must lay hands upon the

innocent, peaceable and humble kingdom and body of Christ, which will

do no harm to the least upon earth. They continually lie, blaspheme,

upbraid, betray and rebel, that we may well say with holy Peter, that

they are born to torture and corruption; for their hearts, mouths and

hands drip and reek with blood.

O, how exactly the Holy Spirit has depicted them, saying, "I saw the

woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the martyrs of

Jesus;" "And in her was found the blood of the prophets, and of the

saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth," Rev. 1?':6; 18:20.

Behold, kind reader, thus you will observe that they fall by their own

sword which they drew against us, as the prophet says. For we may with

clear consciences appear before the world (eternal praise be to the

Lord) and truthfully maintain that we, from the time of our confession

until the present moment, have harmed no one, have desired none of the

property of others, much less laid hands upon it; that we have not

sought the destruction, or blood of any, either by word or deed; and

which, by the grace of God, we never shall do. But what they have done

by their rebellious upbraiding, lying, slander, crying, writing and

treason we will commend to the judgment of the Lord.

The merciful and gracious Lord grant and give you and them wisdom, that

you may learn to know of what spirit and kingdom you are the children,

what you seek, what prince you serve, what doctrine you maintain, what

sacraments you have, what fruits you produce, what life you lead, and

in what kingdom, body and church you are incorporated. This is our

sincere wish.

Kind reader, earnestly reflect upon this our brief treatise. on the two

princes and their kingdoms, and by the grace of God, it will give you

no mean insight into the Scriptures.

In the fourth place, some of them charge that we have our property in

common.

Answer. This charge is false and without truth. We do not teach and

practice the doctrine of having goods in common. But we teach and

maintain by the word of the Lord, that all truly believing christians

are members of one body and are baptized by one Spirit into one body, 1

Cor. 12:13; that they are partakers of one bread, 1 Cor. 10:18; that

they have one Lord and one God, Eph. 4:5, 6.

Inasmuch as they are thus one, therefore it is christian and reasonable

that they divinely love one another, and that the one member be

solicitous for the welfare of the other, for thus both the Scripture

and nature teach. The whole Scriptures speak of mercifulness and love;

and it is the only sign whereby a true christian may be known, as the

Lord says, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples (that

is, that ye are . christians), if ye .have love one to another," Jn.

13:35.

Beloved reader, it is not customary that an intelligent person clothes

and cares for one part of his body and leaves the rest destitute and

naked. O, no. The intelligent person is solicitous for all his members.

Thus it should be with those who are the Lord's church and body. All

those who are born of God, who are gifted with the Spirit of the Lord,

and who, according to the Scriptures, are called into one body of love

in Christ Jesus, are prepared ?by such love, to serve their neighbors,

not only with money and goods, but also after the example of their Lord

and Head, Jesus Christ, in an evangelical manner, with life and blood.

They show mercy and love, as much as they can; suffer no beggars

amongst them; take to heart the need of the saints; receive the

miserable; take the stranger into their houses; console the afflicted;

assist the needy; clothe the naked; feed the hungry; do not turn their

face from the poor, and do not despise their own flesh, Isa. 58:7, 8;

Rom. 12:13.

Behold such a community we teach. And not, that the one should take and

possess the land and property of the other, as many falsely charge.

Thus Moses says, " If there be among you a poor man, of one of thy

brethren, within any of thy gates, in thy land which the Lord thy God

giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand

from thy poor brother." Tobias says, "Give of thy bread to the hungry,

and of thy garments to them that are naked." Christ says, "Be ye

therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful." " Blessed are the

merciful for they shall obtain mercy." Paul says, "Put on therefore, as

the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies," &c., "For he

shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy

rejoiceth , against judgment," Dent. 15:7; Tobit 4:16; Luke 6:36; Matt.

3:7; Col. 3:12; Jas. 2:13; Matt. 18:33; 25:38.

Again, this mercy, love and community we teach and practice and have

taught and practiced them for seventeen years, so that, glory be to

God, notwithstanding our property has to?a great extent been taken from

us, and is yet daily taken; many a pious father and mother are put to

the sword or fire and we are not allowed the free enjoyment of our

homes, as is manifest, and, besides, we have dear times and famine, yet

none of the pious nor any of their children who commit themselves to

us, have been forced to beg. If this is not christianity, then we may

well abandon the whole gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, his holy

sacraments and christian name, and say that the love?like, merciful

life of all saints is mere fantasy and dreams. O, no., " God is love;

and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him," 1 Jn.

4:16.

This I write to shame our backbiters, because of their envy; they are

so blinded that they are not ashamed thus shamefully to slander us, and

wickedly to convert good into evil. For although we, in accordance with

all Scripture, teach mercy and love and?serve the godfearing poor by

the sweat of our brow, and would not let them suffer for want, yet we

must hear That we teach community of goods; that every person should

beware of us; for that we would reach into the chests and pockets of

others. While they well know that it is written, " He shall have

judgment without mercy, that has shewed no mercy," Jas. 2; and, "He

that loveth not his brother, abideth in death," 1 Jn. 3:14; and while

they also plainly see that we daily, and freely sacrifice our goods for

the testimony of Jesus Christ and our consciences.

O reader, it would be well for your souls that you would once take

notice and learn to know your preachers. For how can they teach you

that which is good, while they can hear no mercy?

Is it not terrible hypocrisy that these poor people boast of having the

word of God, and of being the true, christian church, never remembering

that they Have entirely lost their sign of true christianity? For,

although many of them have plenty of every thing, go about in silk and

velvet, gold and silver, and in all manner of pomp and splendor,

ornament their houses with all manner of costly ornaments, have their

coffers filled and live in voluptuousness ? yet they suffer many of

their poor, afflicted members (notwithstanding they are fellow

believers, have received one baptism and partaken of the same bread

with them), to ask alms; and poor, hungry, suffering, old, lame, blind

and sore people to beg their bread at their doors.

O, teachers, teachers! Yea, beloved teachers, where are the fruits of

the gospel you preach? Where is the signification of the supper you

administer? Where are the fruits 'of the spirit you have received? And

where is the righteousness of your faith which you so beautifully adorn

before the poor, ignorant people? Is it not all hypocrisy that you

preach, maintain and assert? Be ashamed at the vain preaching and

bread?breaking of your easy gospel which you have these many years

practiced with your doctrine and sacraments which you have preached to

your needy, miserable members of the streets, notwithstanding the

Scripture plainly teaches and says, "Whoso path this world's good, and

seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion

for him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" Also Moses, There shall

be no beggars among you, 1 Jn. 3:17; Dent. 15:8.

Behold, kind reader, thus his charge is false and wrong in fact, as are

also their other charges. For although we know that the apostolic

churches, from the beginning have practiced it, as' may be seen by the

acts of the apostles, yet we may observe from their epistles that it

went down, in their times, and (perhaps not without cause) 'was not

practiced. Since we do not find that it was continually practiced by

the apostles as we said, therefore we also leave it behind and have

never taught nor practiced community of goods. But we diligently and

earnestly teach and admonish assistance, love and mercy, as the

apostolic Scriptures abundantly teach us this. Behold, in Christ we

tell you the truth and lie not.

And, even if we did teach and practice community of goods, as we are

charged, we would but do that which the holy apostles, full of the Holy

Spirit, did in the primitive church at Jerusalem, although afterward

abolished, as was said.

But the reason why our opponents charge us with it may be?easily

immagined. For generally, their hearts are filled with avarice, as

Peter says, and they know that their disciples are intent upon the

lusts of the flesh, money and goods. They are all covetous, as the

prophet says, and therefore they make the charge, that thus the

precious gospel, the limpid truth of our Lord Jesus Christ, which now

springs up in many places, may become a stench and abomination to all.

Behold the arts and wiles of the serpent!

Reader, beware; let not such liars deceive you. Adam and Eve believed

the deceiver, and thereby so wickedly sinned against their God. Israel

was miserably deceived by the false prophets. And what good things they

have done in the gospel times and yet do, their deeds and fruits openly

show.

In the fifth place some of them falsely charge, That we believe in

poligamy; that we have our women in common; that we say to each other,

Sister, my spirit desires your flesh.

Answer. As to poligamy we would say, The Scriptures show that before

the law, some of the patriarchs had many wives. Yet they did not take

the same liberty under the law and before the law. For Abraham, who was

before the law, had his own sister for wife, as he himself testifies

before Abimeleck, the king, saying, "And yet she is my sister; she is

the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother," Gen.

20:12. Jacob had two sisters for wives, Leah and Rachel, the daughters

of Laban, his mother's brother, Gen. 22. These liberties to marry their

own sister and to marry two sisters at once, were afterwards strictly

forbidden Israel under the law, Lev. 18.

As each period has had its particular liberty and usage according to

the Scriptures; and as we now, under the New Testament, are not pointed

by the Lord to the usage of the patriarchs before the law nor under the

law, in the matter of. marriage, but to the beginning of creation, to

Adam and Eve (which word we sincerely desire to obey); therefore we

teach, practice and consent to no other than the one which was in the

beginning in Adam and Eve, namely, one husband and one wife, as the

Lord's mouth has ordained, Matt. 19. .,

We say one husband and one wife, and not one husband and two, three, or

four wives, and these counted as one, as many, alas, charge us without

any truth. These two, one husband and one wife, are one flesh, and

cannot be separated from each other, to marry again, otherwise than for

adultery, as the Lord says, Matt. 5:19; Mark 10; Luke 16.

Behold, this is our proper foundation, doctrine and practice concerning

marriage, as we here confess by the Holy Scriptures, and by the grace

of God, it will ever remain the foundation of all pious souls, no

matter what false charges and slander may be preferred against us. For

we know and confess truly, that it is the express ordinance, command,

intent and unchangeable, plain word of Christ.

But as to the charge of the shameful licentiousness of having our wives

in common; we reply with Solomon: "Answer not a fool according to his

folly, lest thou also he like unto him. Answer a fool according to his

folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit," Prov. 26:4, S.

Kind reader, I am heartily ashamed to touch upon such accursed charges

of licentiousness and roguishness before the ears of blushing, pious

persons. For they are not only in opposition to the Scriptures but also

to all rationality, intelligence and virtue. But as they not only

charge us hereby with shameful roguery and knavery, but also with the

worst of doggery, and as the pious, virtuous hearts who, if possible,

would rather die ten deaths than commit such abominations, may see how

they are spit upon by some indiscreet slanderers; therefore it is no

more than reasonable to do so for the purpose of defending our

reputation in a christian manner to the praise of the Lord, and to ward

off such slander from us, to the extent possible.

We hereby testify, now and forever, in this place, before God, that we,

with the angel of the church of Ephesus, hate the words of the

Nicolaitans, which, also, God hates, Rev. 2. We teach, as from the

mouth of the Lord, "That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after

her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart," Matt.

5:28. And with Paul, That the adulterers and fornicators cannot inherit

the kingdom of God, 1 Cor. 6.

As we are thus so plainly taught by the Scriptures, and as, by the

grace of the Lord, we not only believe so, but also teach others so by

virtue of the divine word, and besides, as we are in constant danger of

apprehension, prison and death; are tied to the stake by threes and

fours, by sixes and sevens; are tortured, burned or drowned, and thus

unmercifully murdered, therefore judge whether we would yet practice

such terrible abominations and shame, at which every reasonable person

should stand astounded, and which, according to many Scriptures, are

rewarded by everlasting death and eternal, unquenchable, hell fire. O,

what miserable men we should be! It is shameful slander! No, no. We

trust, that in our weakness, by the grace of the Lord we have reared

our bodies and members for a temple and dwelling place of the Holy

Spirit, according to our received gift. We trust, by the grace and

assistance of the Lord, that we shall never commune with adulterers and

fornicators, understand, if they do not repent, Rom. 1; 1 Cor. g; Gal.

S; Eph. C; Heb. 13; Rev. 21.

But how our slanderers and backbiters are minded; into what body they

have incorporated their bodies and members, and by what kind of spirit

they are urged, their intolerable lies and slander plainly show. Christ

says, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," Matt.

2:34. Every tree beareth fruit after its own kind. Seneca says, "As the

man, so is his word." Yea, if these vain men were christians, and if

they had but a little of the ,Lord's word and a spark of his Holy

Spirit, as they boast of having, they would never think of such

abominable slander against their neighbors who, as is plain, sincerely

seek and fear the Lord, much less would they mock and deride them.

, Ye indiscreet slanderers (I mean all those who are guilty of the

shamefulness), Do you think that we are irrational creatures? and that

there is no rationality left in us? Be ashamed of your inhuman lies and

slander. This disreputable report and bad repute is saddled upon us who

are innocent, by many who are guilty of this very thing. If my writing

is wrong, then I am willing to bear the punishment. It is manifest and

undeniable that many of your fellow?believers miserably defile their

own members. For, by their deception, sleekness of tongue, promises and

gifts, they seduce many a young maiden, who is, by one baptism, faith

and supper incorporated into one body with them. In your brotherhood,

many an honorable man's bed is defiled! many a shameful adulterer is

found! many an unsuspecting soul is deceived! and many an illegitimate

child is born! We will leave it to the judgment of all pious persons if

that is not adultery, and a desire to have the women in common.

Beloved reader, judge aright and know the truth. Is not your church

full of such debauchees, defilers, perjurers, and adulterers? are there

not others that are keepers of houses of prostitution? Can we not hear

and see unchaste women sing and drink, throng and act indecorous in

allies and streets? Do they not live in city and country in open

prostitution? Your answer must be, yes; for it cannot be denied. And

all these are your fellows in faith, members of your body; grains of

your bread. , vain doctrine and faith! , fruitless baptism and supper!

, unclean body and church! I

Behold, kind reader, if you are reasonably minded you must admit that

our slanderers are guilty of the things with which they charge us. My

friend, beware lest you commit violence against the godfearing, with

these slanderers. Syrach says, Whosoever accustoms himself to evil

saying and whoring will never reform. For as we hate all abominations

which are contrary to. the word of God, and not only reprove them by

our teaching, but also at the risk of life, how much more, then, this

abomination? For it is not alone contrary to God's word, but also

contrary to reasonableness. , dear Lord, thus are those slandered who

sincerely glorify thy name, who walk in thy ways, and sacrifice

property and life for the sake of thy holy word.

In the sixth place they falsely charge, That if one, after he has made

confession and received baptism, again falls into his sins, we refuse

such an one all penance and grace.

Answer. This charge, if true, would be a fine excuse for the licentious

to persecute the truth. But, happily, it is false and wrong in fact, as

are their other charges, and can never be substantiated.

Inasmuch as the charge is false, and as there might be some among the

pious who are not acquainted in the matter, therefore I will present my

foundation and confession, as taken from the word of the Lord, of the

nature of different sins; which will be forgiven and which are

unpardonable. And thus present it to the pious and godly reader, to

ponder diligently upon it.

In my opinion the Scripture speaks of different kinds of sin. The first

kind is the corrupt, sinful nature, namely, the lust or desire of our

flesh, contrary to God's law, and contrary to the first righteousness,

which is inherited at birth by all descendants and children of corrupt,

sinful Adam; and is not inaptly called inherent sin. Of this sin, David

says, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother

conceive me." Again, the Lord said unto Noah, "The imagination of man's

heart is evil from his youth." Again, Paul says, "We were, by nature,

children of wrath, even as others,' Ps. 511: s; Gen. 8:21; Eph. 2:3.

Yea, kind reader, as we are all stained by this evil, we would all have

abided in death, if the righteousness, intercession, death and blood of

Christ Jesus were not given us as a reconciliation to God our heavenly.

Father, Rom. 6:8. But now, for Christ's sake, it is not accounted as

sin, Rom. 3:6, 6, 8.

The second kind are the fruits of the first sin, and are not inaptly

called actual sins, by the learned. They are these: Adultery,

fornication, avarice, debauchery, hatred, envy, lying, theft, murder

and idolatry. These are also called works of the flesh, by Paul, Gal.

6; and that, because they have their origin in the flesh which is born

of Adam, corrupt and sinful, Rom; S; Eph. 6.

But if inherent sin which is the mother, and actual sin, which is the

fruit, are connected together, there is no forgiveness nor promise of

life; but there wrath and death abide, unless they are repented of, as

the Scriptures teach.

If this inherent sin is to loose its effect, and actual sin be

forgiven, then we must believe the word of the Lord, be regenerated by

faith, and thus, by virtue of the new birth, by true repentance, resist

the inherent sin, die unto actual sin, and be pious:

For, as the carnal birth which is of Adam, is unclean and sinful and

begets all evil and unrighteousness unto death, at the instance of thh

devil?thus, on the other hand the heavenly birth which is of God, is

clean and pure, and begets all righteousness and piety unto life,

according to the will of God, Rom. G; 1 Jn. 3: s.

The third kind are human frailties, errors and stumblings which are yet

daily found among the saints and regenerated; such as untempered

thoughts, careless words and rashness in our actions. These although

they spring from those sins mentioned, as the sins of the unbelieving

and impenitent, are yet not of the same kind; and have this difference:

the unbelieving which are yet unchanged in their first birth, commit

sin unrestrainedly and fearlessly, because of the blindness of their

corrupt nature they do not realize the wickedness of their sins; and

besides, they do not consider their actions sinful. For sin is not made

manifest unto them by the law, because of their unbelief.

But those who are born from above are fearful of all sin; they know by

the law that all which is contrary to the first, righteousness, is sin,

be it inwardly or outwardly, important or trifling; and therefore they

daily fight, in spirit and faith with their weak flesh; sigh and lament

about their errors, which they, ? with Paul, sincerely abhor. For, they

know them to be contrary to the first righteousness and God's law, and

are, therefore, sins; they daily approach the throne of grace,. with

contrite hearts, and pray: Holy Father, forgive us our trespasses as we

forgive those that trespass against us. And thus, they are not rejected

by the Lord on account of such transgressions, which are not committed

willfully and intentionally, but contrary to their will, out of mere

thoughtlessness and frailty. Yea, even as Peter, although he thrice

denied the Lord; for they are under grace, and not under the law, as

Paul says. The seed of God, faith in Christ Jesus, the birth which is

of God, and the unction of the Holy Spirit abide in them. They exercise

themselves continually in warring against their flesh; die unto their

lusts; watch and pray incessantly and, although they are such poor,

weak children, the are ?rejoiced in the sure trust of the merits of

Christ, and praise the Father for his grace, Heb. 4; Matt. 6; Luke 12;

Rom. 6; 1 Jn. 3:6; Job 7; Eph. 6; 2 Tim. 2; Gal. 5; 2 Cor. 6; 1 Pet. G.

Behold this deficient and weak nature all the saints have ever

lamented; and hence John says, "If we say that we have no sin, we

deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us; if we confess our sins

he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from

all unrighteousness," 1 John 1:8, 9.

The fourth kind is, that after one is enlightened in his heart by the

heavenly luster of the everlasting truth; has received the true

knowledge of Christ and his holy word, has tasted the heavenly gifts,

the kindness of the Lord, and the enjoyment of the future world, has

partaken of the Holy Ghost and is born of God; he again, by

stubbornness,malice and willfulness, contrary to his heart, mind and

spirit which is in him, renounces all knowledge and grace; rejects the

Spirit and word of God,; ejects the sweet, new wine; hates and

blasphemes all truth willfully with the Pharisees and scribes; ascribes

it to the devil, notwithstanding his conscience convinces him that it

is the will, word, power and work of God; returns to the broad way and

says at heart with all evil disposed, I will not submit. What kind of

sin this is, I will leave to the sentence of the word of the Lord, Num.

15; Matt. 12; Mark 3; Luke 12;1 Jn. 6; Heb. U. '

Kind reader, understand me. I do not speak of such persons as are

overtaken in a fault, even though their transgressions were as great as

the fall of David (from which the great Lord save all his), who was so

miserably deceived by the lusts of the flesh, but I speak of those who,

out of mere petulance, willfully trample upon the Son of God, deem the

blood of the New Testament unclean, and profane the Spirit of grace.

O reader, kind reader, take heed, and remember that it is written, "It

is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," Heb.

10:31.

And although such willful blasphemy and sin had no offering in Israel,

Num. 15, and the sinning against the Holy Spirit has no forgiveness, as

Christ says, Matt. 12; Mark 3; Luke 12; yet I would advise all the

godfearing, as far as I am able, that if any should revert to the works

of the flesh and of death, after his confession and baptism, wisely to

consider the matter and not make a mistake in such a case by an

unseasonable and undue sentence; for the Lord,\_ to whom nothing is

concealed, knows what sin he has committed; whether he has sinned

against the Holy Ghost or not; but let them admonish such according to

the word of the Lord. If he be converted, if he show true fruits of

repentance according to the Scriptures; if he again receive a broken,

contrite and penitent heart, and besides, a peaceable, joyful and

cheerful mind, then it is manifest that he did not sin against the Holy

Ghost. But if he remain unrepentant, continue in his perverseness. and

this unto the end, willfully despise Christ and his word, then his work

shows what sin he has committed, and that his end and reward will be

death, Rom. 1:8; 1 Cor. 6; Gal. s; Eph. s; 1 Jn. 3:6; Rev. 21:22.

Behold, kind reader, thus we believe that all sins, both outward and

inward, have their reconciliation in the merit and power of the blood

of the Lord, if truly repented of; according to the Scriptures.

Let every one take heed that he walk in the fear of the Lord and accept

the grace, lest he be given to the wrong spirit, fall into the judgment

of the Lord, and the penance, which avails before God, be refused him.

For Christ says, "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin."

Peter says, "Of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in

bondage." Let therefore none be overcome of sin, else he will be the

servant of sin. This is incontrovertible. Jn. 8:34; 2 Pet. 2:19.

I think that this our confession and also the ban or separation, which

the Scripture teaches and which we practice, by which we seek the

scriptural shame of the degenerated to their reformation, fully prove

that we are vilified by our opponents in this regard. Yea we testify

before the Lord and before you that we desire nothing upon earth more

ardently than that we may return a poor, erring sinner to the right

way.

But this we say, That the promises of God of eternal salvation, as

preached by the gospel, are not made to the unrepentant sinners,

hypocrites, avaricious, earthlyminded, mockers, nor perverse; but they

are made to those who, with all their heart, hear, truly believe the

lovely word of our Lord Jesus Christ, and thereby become new men born

of God; become dead unto this fearful world of ungodly pride, pomp,

vanity and lustfulness. For the unrepentant would boast of the

Scripture and console themselves thereby, while their life is contrary

thereto, and is open blasphemy. Christ says, " If ye continue in my

word, then are ye my disciples indeed," Jn. 8:31. " Ye are my friends,

if ye do whatsoever I command you," Jn. 15:14; for the vine bears after

its own kind.

In the seventh place. they slander us and say, That we are vagabonds,

sneak?thieves, deceivers, new monks and hypocrites; that we claim to be

without sin, heavenstormers and work?saints, who want to be saved by

our own merits and works; that we are an ungodly sect and conspirators,

murderers of the souls of infants, anabaptists, profaners of the

sacraments and possessed of the devil.?

Answer. These and like slanders, Christ Jesus, together with 'the holy

apostles, prophets and saints of the primitive church, had to hear many

times, as was said in the preface. " If they have called the master of

the house Beelzebub, how much more they of his household" "The disciple

is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord." Yet we trust

that it is known to all honorable, pious and reasonable men that all

these slanders are spoken against us by our opponents without any

truth, out of mere hatred and envy, that they may thus hinder and

oppose. the course of the word and afflict the innocent, Matt.

10:25,24.

Reply to the charge, Vagabonds. Vagabonds are rogues, evil?disposed and

idle persons, and evil?doers, who on account of their criminality,

wander from place to place without a home. But we are poor; miserable

pilgrims, and, according to the flesh, strangers, who, not on account

of any crime, but for the testimony of Jesus Christ and our

consciences, must flee, with our wives and children from before the

tyrannical, bloody sword, to save our lives, and thus we have to earn

our bread in foreign lands, in anxiety and tribulation, hearing many

scornful and abusive words, we who, agreeable to Scripture and reason,

should be received in love, and provided for and protected, and not be

so unmercifully rejected and slandered as we are, at present, on every

hand, 1 Pet. 1; 1 Cor. 4; Ex. 22:24; Isa. 58:6; Jer.'7:5; Zech.7; Matt.

25; Rom. 13; 1 Pet. 4; Heb. 13.

Reply to the charge, Sneak?thieves. Sneaks are thieves and murderers,

who secretly enter houses for the purpose of taking the property or

lives of others. Also perjurers, adulterers and fornicators who are

intent upon defiling the houses of their neighbors. For such wait for

the darkness, and say, 6 ' No eye shall see me; and distinguish his

face. In the dark they dig through houses," Job 24:15, 16. But this is

not the case with us. Yet it has gone so far by the lying, upbraiding

and cries of the learned, that alas, one cannot publicly say anything

about the word of the Lord, although it is the only bread whereby our

souls must live; and as we learn and understand from the Scriptures

that Moses and all Israel ate the passover at night, Ex. 12; that

Christ admonished Nicodemus at night, Jn. 3:2; that the church

assembled at night to pray, Acts 12:12; that Paul taught the word of

the Lord all night, Acts 20; and that the primitive church assembled at

night to break the bread of the Lord, as the Scriptures mention;

therefore we confess that it is admissible to preach the word of the

Lord at night as well as in day time, to the praise of the Lord; and

thus we ofttimes assemble in the fear of God, without injury to any

body (the Lord knows) at night in a christian manner, to teach the word

of the Lord and to admonish and reprove in all godliness; also to pray

and administer the sacraments in a manner as the word of the Lord

teaches us.

Reply to the charge, Deceivers. Deceivers are those who call

impenitent, carnal persons, christians, and console them in their

blindness, avarice, pride, pomp, splendor, debauchery and idolatry,

with water, absolutions, bread, wine and ceremonies; who so shamefully

adulterate the word and sacraments of God and lead the poor, miserable

souls into death for the sake of a meal of bread or a handful of

barley, all of which, before the Lord, we are innocent, by his grace.

For we teach the word of the Lord unadulterated and with a good

conscience, without respect of person. We seek the salvation of every

soul and not their favor and gifts. We administer the Lord's baptism

and Supper according to the direction of his holy word. And although we

are poor, weak, miserable, and of evil, unclean flesh, and diseased

sinners, yet we would gladly, in our weakness, act rightly and be pious

and live unblamably before the world.

We seek and desire, by the grace and assistance of the Lord, according

to our small talent, to re?establish that which is fallen; make right

that which is wrong; seek that which is lost; humble the highminded;

direct the hungry into the right pasture; lead the thirsty to the true

fountain and the blind in the right way, that we may thereby sow the

gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in many hearts, to the praise of our

God, and publish his great and adorable name, Ezek. 34; 2 Cor. 10.

Reply to the charge, New Monks. We would consider those to be new monks

who formerly established churches, cloisters, human statutes, and the

easy epicurean life, in the semblance of zeal, which they have

abandoned and in its place accepted a more lustful, pompous and carnal

life, without change of heart and remained in their sins, and these

placed the firmness of their faith, hope and salvation, from the

beginning upon human choice, opinion and flattery. It is the manner and

custom of monks to follow human statutes, commands and institutions,

and not the word of God. They have their abbots, priors and pursers or

procurators, and are called by their founders and masters,

Augustinians, Franciscans, Dominicans, Bernardinians and Jacobins.

Not so with us. But we trust, by the grace and mercy of the Lord, that

we are children of God and disciples of Christ. We know of no other

Abbot than him on whom all true christians call in spirit and truth,

and say, "Abba Father," Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6. Our head or Prior is

Christ Jesus, Col. 1; Eph. 1.

Our procurator or purser who distributes his gifts to every one, is the

Holy Spirit, 1 Cor. 12:11.

Our profession is, the sincere, frank and fearless confession of faith,

Matt. 10; Rom. 10:9, 10.

Our statutes and laws are the express commandments of the Lord, Matt.

19:17.

Our cap and cloak are the garments of righteousness, with which we

would gladly clothe ourselves, Matt. 22:11.

Our cloisters are the assemblage of the saints, the city of the living

God, the heavenly Jerusalem, Heb. 12:22; Rev. 21:2.

Our easy, monk?life and pleasure are daily expectation of prison and

fetters, fire and water, and to be exiled with our wives and children,

to suffer hunger, tribulation, anxiety and pain, for the testimony of

Jesus.

Behold, kind reader, this is the monkhood which we confess and

practice, and none other. By the grace and power of the Lord, we also

hope to abide therein un?

changeably, all our lives. U, indiscreet slanderers and blai3phemers!

Jn. 4

Reply to the charge, Hypocrites. According to the Scriptures,

hypocrites are those who, for the outward world, put on a holy

appearance by words and gestures, such as the Scribes and Pharisees,

Matt. 23, and who are inwardly full of all unrighteousness, avarice,

hatred and deceit, as our opponents are, who pretend to be christians,

talk much about the word of the Lord, boast much of the gospel and

christianity, claim that they practice the true doctrine of Christ and

that they are his holy church; while at the same time, they adulterate

the word of God, call the wholesome administering of the sacraments,

heresy; hate all the pious, and practice the works of the flesh,

openly, as may be seen. We will leave all intelligent persons to judge

whether such are not the companions and fellows of the Scribes and

Pharisees.

The reason why we are accused as hypocrites, and why we are thus belied

that we claim to be without sins,, is because we teach penitence

according to the Scripture; because we testify with holy Paul, that

perjurers, adulterers, idolaters, wine?bibbers, avaricious, liars and

unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God, 1 Cor. 6:10; Gal.

!i:21; Eph. S: ti; that those who are carnally?minded shall die, Rom.

8:13. And with John, that those who sin (understand, willfully) are of

the devil, 1 John 3:8, and that we, therefore, in our weakness, abhor

such works; although with Moses we have often confessed, verbally and

in writing, as we ever will confess, that none is clear before God, on

account of the inborn nature, Gen. 6:5; 8:21; with Isaiah, that we are

all as the unclean; with David, that there is no living man righteous

before Clod, Ps. 14:3; with Paul, that nothing good dwells in our

flesh, Rom. 7:18; with John that if we sap, we are without sin, we

deceive ourselves and no truth is in us, 1 John 1:8, and with James,

that in many things we offend all, Jas. 3:2.

Behold, kind reader, this is why the preachers call us hypocrites who

claim to be without sin. Such abominable lies are told by those who

pretend to preach the word of God! Reply to the charge, Heaven

stormers. Henceforth, because we teach from the mouth of the Lord: That

if we would enter into life we must keep the commandments, Matt. 19,

1'7; Mark 10:19; Jn. 15:10, that in Christ neither circumcision nor

uncircumcision avail; but the keeping of the commandments of God, 1

Cor. 7:19, and that the love of God is that we keep his commandments;

and his commandments are not grievous, 1 Jn. 5:3, therefore we are

called by the preachers heaven?stormers and work?saints; and that we

want to be saved by our own merits; although we always have confessed,

and by the grace of God, ever will, that we cannot be saved by means of

anything in heaven nor in earth other than by the merits, intercession,

death and blood of Christ, as has been amply demonstrated above, Jn.

14:3; Acts 4:12; Phil. 2:10.

Behold, thus the best of these perverse people have been changed to the

very worst, and do not observe that the whole Scripture, condemns, all

licentious, obstinate despisers and transgressors of the commandments

of God, to death, who plainly prove by their deeds that they do not

confess the saving grace of God; do not believe in Christ Jesus, and,

according to Scripture, abide in damnation, wrath and death, Jn. 3:36.

For whoso doeth unrighteously, showeth by his works whose disciple he

is.

Reply to the bitter slander, Ungodly Sects and Conspirators. So far as

regards the bitter, envious slander and charge that we are a perverse,

ungodly sect and conspirators we answer: If we were allowed an

impartial hearing with our opponents before a tribunal of persons who

understand the word of God, we would soon be cleared of the infamous

charge and they would be found guilty. For what kind of conspirators

they are, this Scripture testifies, " There is a conspiracy (mark,

conspiracy) of her prophets in the midst thereof, like a roaring lion

ravening the prey; they have devoured souls; they have taken the

treasure and precious things; they have made her many widows in the

midst thereof," Ezek. 22:25.

All may find a place in their sect who will but keep their ceremonies

and acknowledge them to be the true preachers and messengers no matter

what kind of life they lead if they but steer clear of falling into the

hands of the executioner. No drunkard, no avaricious or pompous person,

no defiler of women, no cheat or liar, no thief, robber or shedder of

blood (understand, by going to war), no curser or swearer so. great and

ungodly but he must be called a christian. If he but say, I am sorry.

It is all ascribed to his weakness and he is admitted to their supper;

for, say they, he is saved by grace and not by merits. He remains a

member of their church notwithstanding he remains in all his doings an

unrepentant, obdurate and ungodly heathen; to?day as yesterday; also,

to?morrow as today notwithstanding the Scripture so plainly testifies

that such shall not inherit the kingdom of God, Rom. 1:32; 1 Cor. 6:10;

for they are of the devil, Jn. 8:44; 1 Jn. 2:11.

O, preachers, preachers I learn once to know your own sect and

conspirators, we pray you for Christ's sake. You boast that you are the

true, christian church, but we fear you are a new Sodom, Egypt and

Babylon. Oh I oh 11 For many years we have drank from the same goblet

with you and walked in the same Spirit; we have received one crisma and

anointment with you, we know very well; but we have received mercy, and

spewed out the inhaled abomination and willingly entered into the

lovely communion of his saints, into the house, kingdom and body of

Christ; who hate all ungodliness and sinfulness, and with all their

strength, strive after and desire righteousness and godliness. Although

they are called by you and all the world an ungodly sect and

conspirators, yet, they are peaceable and joyous in spirit, and are

assured in their consciences that truth is on their side; and that they

are not an ungodly sect and conspirators, but God's own peculiar

people, church and body, 1 Con 12:13; Eph. 1: S; Col. 1:18; 1 Pet.

2:10. O Lord, how lamentably thy small flock is ever slandered I Rom.

12:4; Eph. 1:23; 6:27.

Reply to the slander and false charge, murderers of the souls of

Infants. In the same manner we must often hear from these poor, blind

people who seek the salvation of their children in the baptism of their

preachers, that we murder the souls of our infants, because we believe

the word of the Lord that the kingdom is promised them by grace, by the

election of God our heavenly Father through the merits of Jesus Christ,

as he says, " Suffer little children and forbid them not, to come unto

me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven," Matt. 19:14; Mark 10; 14;

Luke 18:16; and that we therefore do not suffer to have them baptized

with the baptism of anti?christ, For not the baptism of anti?christ but

the promise of Jesus Christ assures us of the salvation of our little

children if they die and depart from here. But if the good Father

suffer them to grow up and grant them his grace, then we would educate

them in the instruction and .fear of the Lord as much as we are able.

When they can understand God's word and believe it, the Scripture

directs them to be baptized, Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:16. But those who

practice such manifest hypocrisy and anti?christian works, banish the

devil from the innocent vessels which are cleansed with the blood of

the Lord; they conjure, salt, anoint, and consecrate them, baptize them

on the faith of others, while they find not a single commandment to

practice such flummery and mockery, in all the Scriptures.

The parents console themselves with the thought that they are now

christians; and thus they are, from the cradle on, raised in all manner

of blindness, pomp, splendor and idolatry, without the fear of God, so

that when they become of understanding age ?they have no information of

the word of God, and walk all their lives, trusting in infant baptism,

upon a crooked and dark way, without confession, faith and new birth,

without Spirit, word and Christ. What such do to the souls of their

little children I will leave to their own consideration and to the

sentence of the word of the Lord.

Reply to the base charge of being Anabaptists. We must also be called

anabaptists by the learned, because we baptize at the confession of

faith, as Christ commanded his disciples to do, and as the holy

apostles taught and practiced, as did also the worthy martyr Cyprian,

all of the African bishops; and besides, because we, with the Nicene

Council, cannot accept the heretical baptism which is of anti?christ,

as christian baptism; and because we are also informed by the

Scriptures that St. Paul rebaptized some of those who were baptized

with the baptism of John which was from heaven, because they did not

acknowledge the Holy Ghost, Acts 19:3. Inasmuch as we but baptize

according to the command of Christ and according to the teaching and

practice of the holy apostles; nor do any more than Cyprian did,

together with the council of Carthage and Nice, in this matter

(although we acknowledge that we do not believe in all their doctrine);

and, inasmuch as we rebaptize those who are not baptized with a divine

baptism (as were those who were baptized of John), but with the baptism

of anti?christ, and had at the time of their baptism no knowledge of

divine matters, as both nature and the Scriptures teach, since they

were yet unconscious infants, and as we are for this reason called

anabaptists by the learned; therefore, indeed, Christ and his apostles,

Cyprian and his bishops, the Nicene Council, the holy apostle Paul also

must have been an anabaptist. This is incontrovertible.

Reply to the blind charge that toe are profaners of the Sacraments.

Again, some of the learned, also, call us profaners of the sacraments,

because we do not believe that the bread and wine of their Supper is

the actual, real flesh and blood of the Lord; or, as some have it,

because we do not believe that we, through the wine and bread, actually

partake of the flesh and blood of the Lord; notwithstanding that we

reverentially administer the supper to the penitent (as far as man can

judge), as a figurative or sacramental sign, with fear and trembling,

also with thanksgiving and joy, according to the Scripture and

according to the practice of the fathers, such as Gregory, Augustin,

Chrisostom, Tertullian, Tyrill, Eusebius, &c., and, in our weakness,

diligently strive rightly to commemorate and fulfill the holy, glorious

mystery, the Lord's death, love, peace and the unity of his church and

the communion of his holy flesh and blood which by this sign of bread

and wine are symbolized to all true christians.

The poor slanderers do not observe how fearfully they profane the

sacraments of the Lord, if we call those sacraments, which they

administer. Although they believe that they distribute the actual flesh

and blood of the Lord, they yet esteem it so trifling that they

distribute it to \_ known drunkards, avaricious, liars, impenitent, &c.,

as if the Lord's Supper were to be partaken of by the penitent and

impenitent alike. Whether this is not profaning the sacraments you may

judge according to the Scriptures.

Reply to the pharisaic charge that we are possessed of the devil. We

consider those of the devil who speak his words, who teach falsehood

instead of truth, Gen. 3:4, steal the glory from God and miserably

deceive souls. But we trust, by the grace of the Lord'(eternal glory be

to God), that we hate the word of the devil from our inmost hearts; and

that we are very desirous for the words of eternal truth, and of the

fruits of the Spirit, according to the talent received, which is a

decided proof that we are not of the spirit of the devil, but of the

Lord. For if we were of the devil, as we are charged, we would walk

upon a broader road and be befriended by the world, and not so

resignedly offer our property and blood for the cause of the word of

the Lord. Yet it is but just that the disciple be not above the master.

The Father of the house himself had to hear that he? was of the devil,

Jn.10:20; 8:48. .The Pharisees and Scribes must manifest their nature

and Spirit. For if they can not stand with their foolish wisdom before

the power and truth of the Lord (for the spirit of Belial must ever

give way to the Spirit of the Lord), they break forth in madness, heap

falsehood upon falsehood, upbraid and lie with all their might, and

ascribe it to the devil, although their consciences testify that it is

the Spirit of the Lord. By what kind of a spirit such are urged their

words and works sufficiently testify.

Behold, kind reader, here you have our reply to the principal

slanderous charges with which we are greeted by our backbiters,

opponents and persecutors. With such slander their writings are filled

and their mouths overflow. We are pictured in such colors (the

Lord?forgive them) that we will quite likely be considered a. perverse,

ungodly people, by the great mass who walk upon the broad way, so long

as the world shall stand. O, perverse nature! " O, generation of vipers

(says Christ), how can ye, being evil, speak good things," Matt. 12:34.

I fear that they are members of the awful beast which arose from the

sea, which was like unto a leopard, whose feet were as the feet of a

bear and whose mouth as the mouth of a lion; and which opened his mouth

to blaspheme the name of God and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in

heaven, Rev. 13:2, 6. For what is there which is holy and right

according to the Scripture which they do not trample with their feet

and blaspheme, with their mouth as an ungodly, accursed abomination? O,

dear Lord, save all thy beloved children from this lying, deceiving

generation, forever I

Eighthly and lastly, they say, Well, if truth is on their side, let

them come before the public.

Answer. We would faithfully admonish the reader to consider well from

what motive and with what intention they say so. For most of them say

so from motives of mere envy and blood?thirstiness, we are sure,

thinking that if we would do so it would soon be brought to an end.

Others, perhaps, through simpleness ands ignorance; thinking that we

cannot defend it by virtue of the Scripture, since Christ and his

apostles, as also the prophets, generally preached in public before the

people, and were also sent for that purpose. To those that do so from

motives of bloodthirstiness, we would say that they, with the Pharisees

and Scribes, have burdened themselves with the blood of the innocent;

and are counted as murderers, Matt. 23\_ 34; Jn. 10:16; Luke 11:49.

But to those who do so through ignorance (if there be such, which we

hope there may be), we would say in all love, diligently to search all

the Scriptures to see if they will find any passages to show that the

apostles and prophets went forth publicly to preach when they were

sure, beforehand, that it would cost them their lives, as we know to be

the case if we would publicly go forth. No, no. If I mind aright, they

ever avoided the places and cities which they were sure would seek

their lives; or else they kept themselves concealed, as did Baruch and

Jeremiah, when king Joachim had commanded that they should be taken,

Jer. 36:19.

They have all feared death and fled from it however much they were

gifted with the Spirit of the Lord. "Moses cried unto the Lord, saying,

What shall I do unto this people 8 they be almost ready to stone me,"

Egod. 17:4.

Jeremiah says, " O my lord the king, let my supplication, I pray thee,

be accepted before thee; that thou cause me not to return to the house

of Jonathan the scribe, lest I die there," Jer. 37:20.

David fled before Saul from one mountain to the other, and from one

wilderness to another.

Urijah of Kirjath jearim, a prophet of the Lord, fled from before the

sword of the king of Judah, into the land of Egypt, Jer. 26:20, 21.

Elijah, the spiritual man of God, fled to the wilderness, before the

threats of Jezebel, 1 Kin. 19:3. From fear of those of Nineveh, Jonah

wanted to flee into Tarshish, Jonah 1.

When Paul knew that they were laying in wait for him he was let down by

the wall in a basket, by night, Acts 9:24, 26.

Behold, kind reader, thus the exalted men of God have feared and

avoided death, and did not, generally, go where they feared violence,

until they were admonished to do so by an oracle or by a revelation

from angels.

So also Elijah appeared before king Ahab, after the long drought and

famine, 1 Kin. 17. Thus the apostles freely spoke the word of the Lord

in the temple, after they were led from prison, by an angel, Acts 5:19;

12:7; 26; 20.

Thus Paul preached at Corinth one year and a half after the Lord, in a

vision, spake unto him, "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy

peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee:

for I have much people in this city," Acts 18:9, 10, and other like

Scriptures. We are aware, beloved reader, that God has the power to

save his own, if it be his will. For he smote the Syrians with

blindness, who wanted to take Elisha. He sent Jonas through the

turbulent waves, in a whale, to Nineveh. He took from the fire its

power, and shut the lions' mouths. He delivered the apostles by the aid

of angels. He is the Lord who lives unchangeable in his power and

glory, 2 Kin. 6:18; Jonah 1:17; Dan. 3:27; 6:22; Acts 12:11.

But as these are particular miracles of God which are not shown to

every one, and as no Scriptures direct us to go there where we surely

know that we shall die or be imprisoned for life, but as we are

admonished in plain words to flee from the tyrants; and as the faithful

men and servants of God, filled with the Holy Spirit, have done the

same, ?as was said; therefore we simply say (and that with a good

conscience) that we will not now, nor at any future time, publicly go

forth unless it is proven to us in sincerity of heart, by Scripture

(which we know, is impossible), that we should do so before we are

urged as were the apostles and prophets by the power of the Lord, be it

by a revelation from angels or by the urging of the Holy Spirit, as was

heard. But in such a case we are at all times prepared to do the will

of the Lord, and publicly to teach his holy word and administer his

sacraments, at the peril of our lives, Matt. 10:23; Jer. 1:7; Matt.

2:13; 4:12.

It is also well known to the honorable reader, and to all who are

acquainted with us, that we are called rebels and mutineers every where

by the learned, notwithstanding that we are ever quiet and act justly

with all mankind; and, if we now, should publicly teach the word of the

Lord in the face of the upbraidings of the learned, of the mandates, of

the rulers and of the mad cries of the populace, some of them would

cry, rebels! rebels!! although we are, thank the Lord, clear of all

rebellion and bloodshed, as has been heard.

Others would say, and not unjustly, that we killed ourselves by

unlimited zeal, as we were well aware what was, in places, resolved

against us, and we yet in the face of it publicly taught our doctrine.

We further desire the reasonable reader to take into consideration that

a true teach\* er who preaches the word of the Lord un= blamably cannot,

at the present time, safely dwell in any kingdom, country or city under

heaven, so far as our knowledge goes, if he be known. If he be not

allowed to dwell safely, how can he safely preach and teach?

Besides, we plainly see that the innocent sheep must suffer and be led

to the slaughter though they are no teachers, and should the teachers

then, who are blamed for all, and who with Christ are hated above all

evil?doers, yet go before the public in these mad, fearful times of all

evil and tyranny $ It would be foolishness; for to do so is not taught

by common sense nor by the Scriptures.

And although we do not teach at public meetings where all classes

assemble, yet the truth is not kept silent but is preached here and

there both by day and by night, in cities and country, verbally and in

writing, at the peril of life. This is testified to by judges,

tormentors, prisons, fetters, water, fire, sword and stake.

Also must Flanders, Brabant, Holland, Gelderland, &c., confess at the

last judgment that the word was preached to them, for they, on account

of the word being preached, have shed innocent blood like water; it is

so preached in these countries that we may well say with holy Paul, "If

our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of

this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not," 2 Cor.

4:3, 4.

Besides, I have, about the year 1545 or 1546, asked of the preachers of

Bon a public meeting and discussion, under bishop Herman of Cologne, on

condition of safe conduct.

I have also twice asked this in writing of those of Emden, and once of

those of Wesel, on the same condition.

But, although those of Bon, and also those of Wesel had offered this to

some of the brethren, still, when they found that I was willing to do

so, it was, under a false pretense of necessity, refused by those of

Bon. as also by those of Emden.

Those of Wesel wished that the devil might treat with me.

Again, I have also offered to discuss with them for many years, in

print; but it was not accepted.

Behold, kind reader, thus we have from the beginning of our service,

been prepared and ready to give an account of our faith to every person

who desired it in good faith, no matter whether he were ruler or

citizen, learned or unlearned, rich or poor, man br woman. And we are

to?day ready to do so as far as possible; we are not ashamed of the

gospel of the glory of Christ. If one desire to hear from us, we are

prepared to teach; if one desires to know our foundation, we sincerely

desire to explain it clearly, if our writings do not suffice. If any

one desires to discuss with us, no matter who he be (except those who

have renounced us after scriptural exhortation was exhausted in their

case), in sincerity of heart, the matter of our faith, without

philosophy, flattery and garbling, and according to the unadulterated,

evangelical doctrine and truth, the commandments, prohibitions, usage,

Spirit and example of Christ and of his disciples, and that Without any

trickery, deceit or roguery, as did, in their time, Hilarius and

Augustin and others, with some who were suspected in their doctrine; we

will not, by the grace of the Lord, refuse to do so, if we possibly can

before a public meeting or before twenty or more impartial, reasonable

witnesses. For our most ardent desire is that the truth may be made

manifest. But the bloody murder of anti?christ must be omitted; for it

is devilish and unbecoming in a christian, Rev. 17:18; Jn. 8:44.

Inasmuch as our adversaries and opponents make our life and doctrine

suspicious with many, by saying, that if truth be on our side we should

come out in public (although they say so out of mere vindictiveness for

they know very well that we can not do so, as there are tyrants and

bloodshedders every where, as may be .seen); therefore we give them

this discreet answer.

Further, I would say, that if the truth be on the side of our opponents

and not with us, as they claim, and, as they can freely go abroad

before the whole world (understand each sect in its way) to preach

their doctrine, faith and life; and, as we have to be subjected daily

to suffering and torture they should, therefore, show enough of reason

and love toward us, poor creatures, to obtain liberty for us from the

magistracy whom they have, by their crying and slander against us,

caused to be so bitterly opposed to us (something which does not become

reasonable men, not to say christians), that we may thus, in their

presence, before a public assembly or before twenty or more impartial,

reasonable witnesses, as was said before, cause our foundation,

doctrine and faith to be heard and explained according to the sure and

true testimony of the Holy Scriptures. If they, then, have any thing to

advance against our foundation, doctrine and faith, let them do so in

the name of the Lord. Truth shall bear the crown. If not, let them lay

their hands upon their mouths and keep silent and never more blaspheme

that which is right and just.

Kind reader, if this could be accomplished many hard words would be

saved; many miserable souls which are now kept by them in such accursed

blindness, would be delivered from the snares of hell; and the noble,

glorious truth, now so very much hated and despised by the world, would

be made manifest in splendor and beauty. But so much discretion has not

been found up to the present time.

As we are not allowed a public discussion, in a christian manner, as we

have anxiously, and at different times asked of them, and as the

ignorant and unversed yet cry, If they be right why do they not come

out publicly; therefore we will leave it to the consideration and

judgment of the intelligent reader, from what motives they thus cry;

what kind of faith, love, gospel and truth they have, and by what kind

of a spirit they are urged. For, whosoever has the truth will never

come to shame; for truth is great, stronger than wine, kings and women.

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CONCLUSION.

Here, dear reader, you have our defense and discreet reply to the

bitter, envious falsehoods and slanders of our enviers by which we will

live or die, and appear before our God at the judgment day, for which,

perhaps, I shall not be thanked by many. Yet, since they, on every

hand, by such inhuman falsehoods and slanders, rob us of our honor and

reputation; so lamentably adulterate and suppress the precious, worthy

word of our Lord Jesus Christ; maintain and uphold all the earth in

their impenitent, ungodly being and cause so much misery to many a

pious child; therefore we have written this in this emergency as a

reasonable defense and christian reply of all pious and godfearing

persons, that thereby all intelligent and reasonable readers, who

cannot hear our verbal defense, may rightly judge between us and our

opponents, may see the innocence of us all, and may learn to confess

the poor, despised truth which is so lamentably stolen from them by

their preachers; and we would herewith place in the hands of the Lord,

this and all other shameful charges and accusations which are so

enviously published against us, and leave them to his last judgment.

They may prove the nature of their father and fill the measure of their

bloodthirstiness, for they will not do otherwise. We trust, by the

grace of the Lord, to possess our souls in patience, and not turn our

faces from the spies until the coming of him who shall come. Then shall

they see him whom they have pierced, Rev. 1. And I would herewith

sincerely pray the readers and auditors, be their station high or low,

learned or unlearned, for Christ's sake to accept this my labor in love

and to rightly interpret it; for I have performed it for no other

purpose than to the praise of my God and to the service of all

well?disposed persons; and with the intention that the rulers (I mean

those who are reasonably minded, and would not willfully act contrary

to the I will of God) may be warned against protecting this ungodly

state of affairs and against heaping upon themselves the innocent

blood, that the preachers who err unwittingly may no longer serve and

protect the kingdom of hell by their falsehood, slander, upbraiding,

ungodly doctrine, sacraments and lives; that the common people may

place their trust in the word of the Lord, seek the right way, fear the

Lord, die unto their sins and reform their sinful life.

Cordially beloved reader, be not repulsed if it should taste bitter to

your flesh. Behold, in Christ, it is the truth, to which we have here

testified; nor will there ever be found any other foundation, doctrine,

way, light and truth.

Therefore I desire that it be not kept hid from any reasonable persons;

but that it may be read by or to every one, no matter who or where they

be, if it might be of use to them, and they be not intent upon the

corruption or blood of any one, that thereby the saving truth of Jesus

Christ may be extended and the accursed falsehood of anti?christ be

destroyed.

May the Almighty, eternal Father, the Creator of all things, the God of

heaven and of earth, grant all my hearers and readers the heavenly gift

and power of his Holy Spirit that they may hear and read this my humble

treatise in the true fear of God, and with pure, impartial hearts, may

wisely examine, well understand and accept it with true faith, and

humbly fulfill it in willing obedience, to the praise of their God and

the salvation of their souls, by his beloved Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

To him be the honor, praise, kingdom, power and glory for ever and

ever, Amen.

"Lying lips are abomination to the Lord: but they that deal truly are

his delight," Prov. 12:22; 8:17.

"Devise not a lie against thy brother: neither do the like to thy

friend. Use not to make any manner of lie: for the custom thereof is

not good," Eccl. 7:12, 1s.

MENNO SIMON. blank page

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A

BRIEF AND CLEAR CONFESSION

AND

SCRIPTURAL DEMONSTRATION,

FIRST,

OF THE INCARNATION OF OUR BELOVED LORD JESUS CHRIST.

SECONDLY,

HOW BOTH THE TEACHERS AND THE CHURCH OF CHRIST SHOULD BE

MINDED ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES.

WRITTEN TO

John A' Lasco and his Fellow?laborers at Emden.

A,D., 1544.

BY

MENNO SIMON.

"If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know

the truth, and the truth shall make you free," Jn. 8:31, 32.

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus

Christ," 1 Cor. 3:11.

ELKHART, INDIANA:

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1871,

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PREFACE.

Menno Simon wishes the learned John A'Lasco aced his fellows, and to

all the people of East Friesland, of whatever class or condition in

life they be, true faith, true light and knowledge, the Holy Spirit,

the lovely fear and pure love of the Lord, an unblamable life and the

eternal life of God our heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, his

beloved Son, our Lord, who has loved us and washed us in his blood. To

him be the glory, honor, praise, kingdom, power and majesty for ever

and ever, Amen.

BELOVED friends and brethren, as I, in the latter part of the first

month of the year 1543, met you at Emden to discuss with you for three

or four days, the disputed articles of our faith and religion, for

which purpose I was invited to come, by writing; first, the incarnation

of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ, to which, you well know, you forced

me against my will; secondly, infant baptism. Not agreeing in this, you

let me depart in peace at our separation, desiring however, that I

should send to you, by U. L., the foundation of my faith, which I had

compiled in writing, inside of a stipulated period, which was three

months,, so that you might thus show to your god?called rulers, our

faith, diligence, desire, seeking and life (which, however, is very

weak); upon what foundation, Scriptures and reasons our intended

doctrine, faith and life was founded. I hope and trust, by the grace of

the Lord, that you have desired and required this of me without any

malice or bad intention.

Therefore I have promised to fulfill your kind bidding and desire,

rejoiced in spirit; because also through U. L., our faith, doctrine and

life could be best explained to those of high, social standing, to

whose care the carnal sword was entrusted, and thus the suspicion be

destroyed which is held against us by the pernicious uproar and

shameful doctrine and practice of the false prophets, who, under a holy

semblance, ever creep into society to the hindrance of the wise and

intelligent; as before God, who knows our hearts, we are certainly

clear of all their abominable doctrine, uproar, mutiny, bloodshed,

polygamy?and the like abominations. Yea, we hate, and with sincere

affection fight against them as acknowledged heresy; as snares to the

conscience; as deceit, seduction and fraud, and as pestilential

doctrine, accursed by all divine Scripture. For how should the true

brethren and sisters of Jesus Christ, the well?disposed children of

God, who, with Christ Jesus, are born of God the Father, and the

powerful seed of the divine word in Christ Jesus; regenerated by

Christ, partake of his Spirit and nature, conform unto him, are

christian and heavenly minded, teach rebellion of any kind? inasmuch as

they are ever prepared, according to the measure of their faith, to do

the will of the eternal Prince of peace, who has taught his disciples

nothing but patience and eternal peace, saying, " Peace I leave with.

you, my peace I give unto you," Jn. 14:27. Again, "Peace be with you."

For his kingdom is a kingdom of love, of unity, of peace, and of

reformation; and not of hatred, rebellion, blood, disquiet and

destruction. Again, In peace we are called of God; peace should rule in

our hearts to him by whom we are called. Again, Blessed are the

peace?makers. Paul says, "The God of hope fill you with all joy and

peace in believing," Rom. 15:13. I am aware, kind reader, that the

cited Scriptures have, for the most part,?reference to the inward

peace, which comes through Christ; yet, whoever has this inward,

Christian peace in his heart will nevermore be found guilty, before God

and the world, of rebellion, treason, mutiny, murder, robbery or such

unbecoming acts. For the Spirit of Christ which is in him seeks no

evil, but good; no destruction, but healing; no corruption, but

assistance; seeks to live everywhere in peace with all mankind, as far

as possible. He follows "peace with all men, and holiness, without

which no man ?can see the Lord," Heb.12:14; Jn. 14:17; 21:15; Rom.

14:19; 1 Cor. 7:15; Col. 3:15; Matt. 5:9; Rom. 15:13.

Behold, beloved friends and brethren, by these and other Scriptures we

are taught and warned not to take up the literal sword, nor ever to

give our consent thereto, Bxcepto ordinario potestatis gladio,

indebitum usum verso; but to take up the two?edged, powerful, sharp

sword of the Spirit, which goes. forth from the mouth of the Lord,

namely, the word of God. By this we intend to destroy the kingdom of

satan, constrain all the world to regeneration and salvation and

bruise, crush and pierce all petrified and obdurate hearts. Desiring, I

say, by the grace, Spirit and power of the Lord, therewith to

circumcise all flesh, high, low, rich, poor, learned or unlearned, of

all. pride, vain show, pomp, avarice, usury, smuggling, lies, deceit,

robbery, shedding of innocent blood, hatred, envy, adultery,

fornication, unchastity, unnatural desires, gluttony, wine ? bibbing,

drunkenness, debauchery, cursing and swearing, blindness, vanity, and

of the fearful,. unbecoming idolatry; that all of them, no matter who

they be, by the pure fear of the Lord, of whom comes the sure knowledge

of the judgment of God, become first inwardly humble before him, and

then, by the sure knowledge of his blessings, so .abundantly shown to

us, .be refreshed and consoled by Christ Jesus, and thus willingly

renounce, by the power of their faith, working by love, their own

wisdom, intelligence, philosophy, sophistry, unwillingness, sloth, evil

lusts, unbelief, disobedience and the very erroneous, carnal, mad life

of this world, and enter into all divine wisdom, truth,. love, zeal and

soberness; the true sacraments and true religion, in fall obedience to

God and Christ and in all the christian fruits which flow from a pure

heart, good conscience and unfeigned faith, Tit. 2:7; 1 Pet. 1:23; Eph.

6:7; Heb. 4:12; Rev. 1:16; 19:15.

Thus we do not contend with carnal, but with spiritual weapons,

patience and with the word of the Lord, against all flesh, world and

devil, trusting in Christ. Nor shall there ever be found other weapons

with us. Therefore, be not afraid of us (behold, in Christ Jesus I lie

not); for we do not desire your destruction, but your regeneration; not

your condemnation, but your everlasting salvation; not your flesh and

blood, but your spirit and soul; on account of which I have these seven

years suffered and yet suffer slander and scorn, anxiety, suspension,

persecution, and great peril of being imprisoned.

The more the word of the Lord is extended, by the grace of God, to the

reformation of some persons, who, however, are few, the more hatred and

bitterness increases against me; so that up to this hour I could not

find, in all the country, where, alas, the mere boasting of the divine

word is a great deal more plenty than the fear of God, a cabin, or but

(blessed be the Lord) in which my wife and little children can safely

sojourn for a year or two. O, cruel, unmerciful christians! O, that all

magistrates and princes, as also all the wise and learned knew the

seeking, intention and desire of my heart, as also of my beloved

brethren who, by the grace, Spirit and word of God, are converted into

a new spirit or new birth I If they rightly understood our teaching how

soon their hearts and minds would be changed into a different sense I

But as all of them, with but few exceptions, are nothing but earth and

flesh and not gifted with the Spirit of Christ; therefore, alas, we

hear nothing from them but upbraiding and slander, can expect nothing

from them (I mean the evil?disposed) but the stake, water, fire, wheel

and sword, as a reward of gratitude, that we have sought and yet seek

our conversion, salvation and eternal life, and that of the whole

world, with such diligence, solicitude, pains and labor from our inmost

heart. For I strive after nothing, of which God is my witness, but that

the God of heaven and of earth, through his blessed Son, Jesus Christ

may have the glory and praise of his blessed word; that all men may be

saved; and that they may awaken in this convenient time of grace, from

their profound sleep of sinfulness; that they may lay by all adhering

sin and the damnable works of darkness; that they may put on the armor

of light, that they may thus become, with us by true penance, faith,

baptism, Supper, ban or separation, love, obedience and true life, one

holy, christian church and body in Christ Jesus. Something which the

whole world to?day yet opposes with all its strength with both

shoulders and horns; not being willing that Christ Jesus, forever

blessed, shall reign over them. Yea, they persecute, banish, burn,

murder, and destroy all those who willingly teach and uphold the glory,

praise, honor, will and commandments of the Lord. De bis sans, Heb.

12:16; Rom. 13:11; Heb. 12:2; Rom. 13:12; Luke 3:3; Matt. 3:1; 28:19;

Mark 16:16; Acts 2; Matt. 18:17; 1 Cor. 6: ti; 2 Thess. 3; 1 Tim. 1:20;

Luke 19:47.

Inasmuch as I do your kind bidding in this matter by briefly compiling

in writing my doctrine, faith and seeking, as I did before, verbally,

which I am ever prepared to do to all mankind, according to the

doctrine of Peter, as was said above, therefore I desire of you, so

dear as Christ is to you, that you do not look upon this my confession,

which is the word of God, with carnal, blind eyes, as the mad,

unintelligent world do who want to have all things taught according to

their own fancy and will, under the name of christianity; that you will

not measure and judge according to the carnal way, as with logical

questions and other like human wisdom; but that you will look at and

judge it according to the word and truth of the Lord, as those would

who understand spiritual matters, as unblamabie, regenerated christians

who are full of the knowledge, love and fear of God; are urged by the

Holy Spirit, and do not seek human favor) praise and honor, self and

carnal welfare, but alone the honor and glory of God, and the eternal

salvation of their brethren. For such, alone, can judge of spiritual

matters; and not the carnal minded, 1 Cor. 14:29. The Spirit of God

teaches, judges and understands all things. Paul says, "What man.

knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him $

even so the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God," 1 Cor.

2:11. Therefore try your intention and the inmost of your hearts, as if

before God who seeth all things. Search yourselves thoroughly and open

your hearts before the Lord. In case you yet seek any carnal liberty,

lusts, honor and profit, then, doubtlessly, your judgment in spiritual

matters (especially as regards the mere confession) will be quite

carnal, selfish, partial, unjust and false; you will also garble and

pervert the plain testimony of the Holy Scriptures, by logic and false

reasoning, to free yourselves and to please the world. Beware, lest you

do so, and thus the terrible wrath of the Lord come upon you. I know

why I write this. I am in doubt about your sincerity. Remember what I

mean. And if your hearts be sincere, clean and pious before God, as I

hope; and if you actually are desirous of the truth, then you will

confess, by the grace of God, that our humble, plain doctrine, faith,

sacraments, and the life of nearly all, particularly the outward,

unblamable, christian, evangelical life, is conformable to the Spirit

and word of God.

And if God, by his loving kindness, should grant that you sincerely

acknowledge it in your inmost soul as being the unchangeable word and,

will of God, even as the Spirit and power of God; then I pray you by

the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ to receive it in gladness

and gratitude of heart and let it be examined by your ordained rulers

and by all men and let them know what your heart, spirit or conscience

testifies concerning our doctrine, faith, sacraments and lives. Fear

not the exalted position of any man, nor despise his humbleness. Go

upon the kingly highway speaking the truth to all mankind, with a clear

conscience, lest you teach, judge or testify contrary to your inward

understanding, judgment and conviction, .

to your everlasting condemnation. For you are certainly taught by the

word of the Lord that whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it

shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world

to come, Matt. 12:32; Luke 10:12; Mark 3:28. Therefore, most beloved,

search your spirits. If you be spiritual then your judgment,

doubtlessly, will be spiritual, just and right. If you be not, and

judge spiritual matters according to your own will, woe unto you I I

speak to you as to one whose soul I seek and love with all my strength.

Although you are more learned than I am, yet I teach and admonish you

to judge justly in all things, without carnality or partiality. For I

am afraid that there were not a few, part of whom were also famous men,

excelling in learning, who, in semblance of fearing God, for the sake

of shameful gain, worldly honor and carnal lusts have shamefully

written, judged and taught the blessed word of the Lord by garbling the

Scriptures, against their own consciences, to the despising of the

cross of Christ, in order to please those who are in authority.

Be this as it may, let every soul seek the pure, christian truth, in

purity of heart; and strive after the same with all diligence, and he

will be successful. Jesus says, " If ye continue in my word, then are

ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth

shall make you free," again, those who trust in him, shall understand

the truth, and the believing in love shall be agreeable unto him.

Again, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will

show them his covenant," Jn. 8; 31, 32; Ps. 26:14.

May the Almighty Father, through his blessed son Jesus Christ, give you

all, in all things, a true understanding and clear vision to judge

rightly in all things, to distinguish rightly between that which is

holy and that which is unholy; between good and evil; right and wrong,

and between the clean and unclean, according to the evangelical truth;

that all those of you who have renounced gain, honor and fame, for the

sake of the gospel of Jesus Christ, may, henceforth, be taught by the

sure and true confession of Scripture, be impelled by?the Holy Ghost,

and enter into all divine wisdom, truth, righteousness and obedience to

him who has taught us by his powerful word, drawn us by his Spirit and

bought and delivered us by his precious blood, that is, Christ Jesus,

Amen.

Judge aright, and confess the truth.

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A TRUE CONFESSION

AND

SCRIPTURAL DEMONSTRATION OF THE MOST HOLY INCARNATION OF OUR

BELOVED LORD JESUS CHRIST. WRITTEN TO JOHN A'LASCO

AND HIS FELLOW?LABORERS AT EMDEN.

BELOVED LORDS, friends and brethren, when this matter of the

incarnation of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ was first mentioned by the

brethren, on hearing it I was terrified at heart, lest .I should err in

the matter and be found, before God, in pernicious unbelief. On account

of this article I was often so troubled at heart, after receiving

baptism, that for many days I abstained from .food and drink, by the

overanxiety of my soul, beseeching and praying God in extreme necessity

that the kind Father by his mercy and grace would disclose unto me,

poor sinner, who, although in extreme weakness, desired to do his

blessed will and pleasure, the mystery of the incarnation of his

blessed Son, to the extent necessary to the glorification of his holy

name and to the consolation of my afflicted conscience.

Thus wandering about for days, weeks and months, I have frequently

asked the opinion or belief of some of you in regard to this matter

which bore so heavily upon my heart. Yet none could instruct me

sufficiently to quiet my conscience. For gross misunderstanding of some

Scriptures which they alleged as proof of their assertion, I found with

them, not only according to my opinion, but according to the meaning of

the Scriptures; so that, at last, after much fasting, weeping, praying,

tribulation and anxiety, I became, by the grace of God, quiet and

refreshed at heart, firmly acknowledging and believing, assured by the

infallibly sure testimony of the Scriptures, understood in the Spirit,

that Christ Jesus forever blessed, is the Lord from heaven, 1

Cor.15:47; the promised spiritual seed of the new and spiritual Eve,

Gen. 3:15, namely, the eternal Truth, Jn. 14:16; the powerful Conqueror

of the serpent and his seed, Gen. 3:15; Luke 11:21; Jn. 16:33: Heb.

2:14; which promised seed is the eternal Truth and word of God, and, in

the fullness of time, was sent forth from the Almighty and merciful

Father, Gal. 4:4, in a pure virgin, Mary, Isa. 7:14, conceived by the

Holy Ghost and power of the Most High. She heard and believed the

heavenly message and pleasure of the Father, that was brought to her by

Gabriel, Luke 1:28; this eternal Word of God is become flesh; it was in

the beginning with God and was God., Jn. 1:2. Conceived and begotten of

the Holy Ghost, Matt. 1:18; generated and nourished in Mary, as a

natural child is by its mother; a true Son of God and a true son of

man, born of her, truly flesh and blood, suffering, hungry, thirsty,

passive, mortal according to the flesh; immortal according to the

Spirit, like unto us in all things, yet without sin, Heb. 2:9; 4:15.

Truly God and man, man and God: Not divided nor separated as being half

heavenly and half earthly, half of the seed of man and half of God, as

some express it; but an unmixed, whole Christ, namely, spirit, soul and

body, as Paul says, all men are, "Who, being in the form of God,

thought it not robbery to be equal with God. But made himself of no

reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in

the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled

himself," (mark, humbled himself ), Phil. 2:6??8. He who was more

exalted than the angels, is made a little lower than they are. For as

he was subject to death; he became flesh and blood, Heb.2:9. I believe

and confess without a doubt that he was thus, according to the flesh,

conceived and come of the Holy Ghost, born of the seed or lineage of

David and of Abraham, and made of a woman, under the law, Gal. 4:4,

circumcised the eighth day, obedient unto his parents, growing and

waxing strong in Spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was

upon him, Luke 2:40.

This same man, Christ Jesus, preached, was crucified, died, was buried,

arose, and ascended to heaven and is there seated at the right hand of

his Almighty Father, according to the testimony of all the Scriptures,

and from thence he will return to ,judge the sheep and the goats, the

good and the evil, the quick and the dead, 2 Cor. 6:10; 2 Tim. 4:1:

Thus I believe and confess that the pure word of God, Christ Jesus, the

Creator, Commander and accuser of Adam, instituted himself in Adam's

stead, that is, in his wrath, death and curse, and has, by his great

compassion, love and mercy, taken upon himself the accursed burden of

his erring creatures; that he himself became like Adam in the flesh.

And. thus he has, by his death, again given life; and by humbling

himself, by his righteousness and obedience, he has reunited and

fulfilled the eternal righteousness of the righteous God, as he speaks

through David, "I restored that which I took not away," Ps. 69:4.

God has not reconciled the world unto himself by Adam's flesh, for by

his righteousness it was subject to the wrath and curse. And what can

be reconciled by wrath and curse? But he has done so by himself, by

mere grace, by his eternal Word, that is, by his blessed Son, who

became like unto the first Adam in all things except in

unrighteousness, disobedience and sin, that all honor and praise should

belong to God and not to us or to Adam. Yea," Christ Jesus, who of God

is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and

redemption, that, according as it is written, He that glorieth let him

glory in the Lord," 1 Cor. 1:30, 31.

Behold, beloved lords, Mends and brethren, thus I believe that God has

sent "His oven Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin (which

he conquered, or for which he was offered), condemned sin in the flesh;

that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us; who walk

not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," Rom. 8:3, 4. Again, " He

hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made

the righteousness of God in him," 2 Cor. 6:21. And thus he is become

our only offer and sacrifice, fulfillment and requisition, by whom God,

the Father is reconciled, by whom his righteousness is fulfilled, the

malediction removed, the devil, sin and everlasting death conquered and

eternal life restored, yea, grace, favor, mercy, peace and eternal

life. Paul says, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up

for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

Rom. 8:32.

Thus I believe and confess that " God was made manifest in the flesh,"

1 Tim. 3:16; "That God. was in Christ reconciling the world unto

himself," 2 Cor. 6:19; that he has blotted out our sins, and has. again

seated himself at the right hand of the Majesty on high; and all the

angels of God worship him there, Heb. 1:6. And with this doctrine of

the conception and incarnation of Christ, all scriptural testimony and

truth agree.

First, Paul says, "What is it but that he also descended first into the

lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that

ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things," Eph.

4:9, 10. Again, Christ himself says, " No man hath ascended up to

heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is

in heaven." Again, "He that cometh from above, is above all; he that is

of the earth, is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh

from heaven, is above all, and what he hath seen and heard, that he

testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony," Jn? 3:31, 32. Again,

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of

this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my

flesh, which I will give for the life of the world," "both this offend

you? What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was

before?" Jn? 6:61, 81, 62. Again, " I came forth from the Father, and

am come unto the world; again, I leave the world and go to the Father,"

Jn. 16:28. Again, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given

me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou

hast given me, for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world,"

Jn. 17:24. Again, " That which was from the beginning, which we have

heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and

our hands have handled, of the word of Life (for the life was

manifested)," 1 Jn. 1:1; and also many other Scriptures, particularly

of John.

All those who, by the grace of God, clearly and intelligently see into

and confess this doctrine of the incarnation of our beloved Lord Jesus

Christ, will rightly confess and comprehend the unspeakable grace,

favor, compassion, mercy, and the inexpressibly great love of God the

Father expressed and manifested in Christ Jesus, as he himself says,

"For God so loved the world that he gavehis only begotten Son, that

whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting

life," Jn. 3:16. Again, "In this was manifested the love of God towards

us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we

might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that

he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins," 1

Jn. 4:9, 10. For how could God show greater paternal love to us than so

to humble his eternal Wisdom and Truth, his pare, powerful Word, his

blessed Son, by whom he created all things; who was like unto him in

form, the image of his blessed being, that he became less than the

angels, a poor, despised, passive, mortal man or servant, who alone had

to bear the trouble, labor, transgression, curse and death of the whole

world. He so humbled him that he became the most miserable of men, 1

Pet. 2:24; Isa. S3:6, " a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and

despised of the people," Ps. 22:6; and thus the innocent, the true, the

wise, the righteous, the obedient and the pure Christ Jesus had to wash

off, blot out, and satisfy the guilt, falsehood, foolishness,

unrighteousness, disobedience and uncleanness of all men. Say, beloved,

who ever heard of greater love.

Beloved, holy father and brother, this is, before God, my doctrine,

faith and confession of the consoling incarnation of our beloved Lord

Jesus Christ; which is, in my opinion, very strong and incontrovertible

by the Holy Scriptures; nor can I, therefore, be convinced by .any view

of the matter, by any of your reasonings and writings hitherto advanced

by you against ? our doctrine, faith and confession; as you turn and

explain them according to a natural and carnal sense, and not to the

true explanation and sense of the Holy Spirit; which, doubtlessly,

should not be the case in this matter, since this glorious work of the

incarnation of Christ is wrought and accomplished by God through his

Holy Spirit, above all natural causes solely in faith, as the pleasure

of God directs.

I repeat, this is my confession to those who desired to hear my belief

and feeling in regard to this article. Yet, I never teach it so

profoundly in my common admonitions to the brethren and friends; nor

have I, heretofore, ever taught it thus profoundly, as I have told you

verbally. But I simply teach that the blessed Christ Jesus is truly God

and man, a Son of God, and a son of man, conceived of the Holy Ghost,

born of the virgin Mary, a poor, despised man, like unto us in all

things, except sin; that it is he who was promised in the law by the

prophets, and is our true Messiah, Christ, King, David, Prophet, Bishop

and Priest, the Deliverer, Savior, Sacrifice, Reconciliation,

Fulfiller, Shepherd, Teacher, Example, Mediator, Advocate, Ruler,

Commander, Bridegroom, Light of the world, the true Door to the fold,

the eternal Wisdom, the image of God, the Father's Word, the right Way,

Truth and Life, &c. For I know full well that there are few who can

understand this particular matter, even after it is explained to them.

Therefore, I say, I deem it unnecessary for me and for all teachers to

teach this matter of the incarnation of Christ further than, simply, to

the teaching of the regeneration of the church, to love, to

consolation, to the sanctification and to live and act according to his

holy doctrine and life. Would to God that we were all of such a mind.

But in case one wants to search further and inquire into this matter,

if meet to know and his understanding reaches far enough, it will not

be ?hidden from him; if not it will be said unto him, A litora to ne

quaefieris, Eccl. 3:21.

Well, as this is our doctrine and understanding, not otherwise than

according to j the testimony of the Scripture, as we can by the grace

of God, best understand and comprehend it, we yet fear that our

explanation from the word of God will not satisfy and convince you to

unite with us in this matter, but that you will persevere in your

adopted reasonings and arguments and try to explain it literally,

naturally and humanlike; not observing that Isaiah, Matthew, Luke and

John clearly testify that it' was brought about by faith in Mary, by

the power of the Holy Ghost, as was said above.

O, let us not humble the Almighty Father in his mercy I Let us not rob

the blessed Son of God of his glory. Beloved brethren the Scripture

remains eternal and unbroken. Take heed, lest you err. Thus speaks

Isaiah, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son," Isa. 7:14.

Again, the angel of the Lord said unto Joseph, "That which is conceived

in her is of the Holy Ghost," Matt. 1:20. Again, when Mary asked the

angel the manner of the conception, how it shall be, he answered: "The

Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall

overshadow thee," Luke 1:36. Again, this is the sure testimony of John

the servant of God and of Christ, concerning the incarnation of Jesus

Christ. "The word was made flesh," Jn. 1:14. He does not say, The word

took unto itself flesh.

Behold, dear brethren, however incontrovertible these reasons and

Scriptures be by which we try to establish our assertion, yet I fear

that we, on account of this article, will be judged and considered as

being sectarian, heretical and deceitful, notwithstanding there may be

many among us who fear the Lord from their inmost hearts, who never in

their lives, heard a word spoken in regard to the mystery of this

matter as previously expressed with great clearness; nor ever inquired

into it, besides they neither knew nor understood anything about it;

but they are satisfied with the Father's favor through Christ; obey his

holy word, follow his example, love, doctrine and life, and are

rejoiced, solely, at the remission of sins, freedom of the Spirit,

grace, favor, promise, mercy and eternal life, which they have received

through him. , that all the wise and learned, even all the men of this

world would satisfy themselves with the plain, humble teaching of Jesus

Christ and his apostles, not climbing higher nor remaining lower; would

seek God, with purity of heart?and firmly believe, fear, love and obey

his blessed word. , what precious talents and what glorious gain would

then, by the grace of God, be gathered into the treasury of the Lord.

But, as it is, there are many, alas, whose faith and knowledge is not

in their hearts but solely upon their lips and tongues, non loquor ad

erubescentiam proborwm, who find pleasure in foolish and useless

questions and in disputation; who are versed more in the wisdom of man

than in the wisdom of God; who are of broken minds, who ever learn and

never come to the true knowledge of the eternal truth; and who ever

contradict and reprove them by the plain word of the holy gospel of

Jesus Christ, out of mere brotherly love, is from that moment

considered by them as being a shameful sectarian or a wicked perverse

heretic; Ipsi judicate, an ne verwm sit quod dicoI notwithstanding that

their own unbelieving hearts are quite earthly, carnal, and devilish

and their whole life nothing but mere flesh, pride, vanity, laziness,

unchristian like avarice, hatred, cruelty, blood?thirstiness,

drunkenness, flattery, in short, nothing but sin and shame. , might it

be that I lie and do not tell the truth!

Nevertheless let' them slander and upbraid as much as they please; we

will willingly bear it. We will all be judged by one Judge who will

scrupulously try and reward their doctrine, faith, zeal, seeking and

life, as well as ours. Then it will appear who have anxiously sought

the everlasting truth of God, the praise and honor of the Lord, and the

everlasting salvation of all mankind. Brethren, beware, lest you become

like these fruitless disputers. Take heed, if you would save your

souls, that you sincerely seek, desire, believe, receive, and live

according to the saving truth of God, Amen,

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OBJECTIONS.

As I have shown and confessed to you the firm foundation of. the

incarnation of the Lord, that he did not become flesh of Mary, but that

he became flesh in Mary; and as I have also, in part, adduced the

reasons and Scriptures by which we are forced to such belief therefore

I will now briefly reply to your Scriptures and arguments, hitherto

advanced, by which you teach and undertake to prove that he did not

simply become flesh in Mary but of Mary.

First, you ask, "If he is not the seed of woman?" We answer, Yes, Gen.

3:15.

From this you conclude that if he is the seed of woman, he is also man

born of woman. We answer by asking, had not the deceiving serpent a

body? You must answer, Yes. For God said, "Upon thy belly shalt thou go

and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life." Again, Was not the

deceived woman corporeal? Doubtlessly so. If the natural and corporeal

seed of the deceived woman be bodily, then the seed of the serpent must

also be a natural, bodily seed, of which God himself has spoken and

testified in Genesis. Or else you must admit and confess that the one

should be understood spiritually and the other literally. Not at all,

beloved brethren. But the bodily serpent represents the spiritual

serpent, namely Satan, Rev. 12:14, and has his spiritual seed, which is

falsehood, Jn. 8:44. Thus also, the woman, who is the mother of all

mankind, a like image of Adam, flesh of his flesh, and bone of his

bone; subject to her husband, after she had sinned?the image of the new

spiritual bride, namely, of the church of Christ, which is the image of

Christ, Rom. 8:29, flesh of Christ's flesh and bone of his bone,

subject to Christ, Eph. 5:3(). If the bride be spiritual then the seed

must be spiritual, namely, the eternal truth, which truth is Christ

himself, Jn. 14:6. Behold, most beloved, thus the serpent is spiritual

and his seed is spiritual of which he begets all his children of

accursed falsehood. On the contrary, the bride is spiritual and her

seed is spiritual, of which she begets all her children of the saving

truth. Between these is constant opposition, as may be plainly seen.

Yet truth triumphs, and falsehood is vanquished, notwithstanding

falsehood opposes with all its power. O, brethren, do understand the

Scriptures aright, lest we, through misunderstanding or pernicious

obduracy, deceive ourselves and with us many souls. If you be not

satisfied with the clear explanation of these Scriptures, but still

maintain that both the woman and the seed must be corporeal, then we

know and confess that this same woman conceived in her womb the

beforementioned seed, which is God's word, Jn. 1:1; not from her body

nor of her body, but of God, by the power of the Holy Ghost, Matt.

1:18, through faith, Luke 1:34.

Secondly, You ask, If he is not called the seed of Abraham? We answer:

Yes, Gal. 3:16. From this you conclude that he must, according to the

flesh, be descended from the flesh and blood of Abraham. In

confirmation you cite the saying of Paul, "For verily he took not on

him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham;

wherefore in all things it behooved him to be named like unto his

brethren," Heb. 2:16, 1'7. To this iih the first place we reply, That

your conclusion is according to the flesh and not with the word of God.

John says, "The word was made flesh, and dwelt among us;" and it is of

the Holy Ghost, Matt. 1:25; therefore it was not Abraham's natural

flesh and blood. But by grace it was promised the beloved father

Abraham, that he, that is, the true blessing of all nations, should not

come of the seed of his brethren, nor of the gentiles nor

uncircumcised, but of his seed, that is, of his generation, as it is

written, " In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed," Gen.

12:3. Thus is Christ Jesus promised, to Abraham and born of his seed,

according to the promise, as Christ himself says; that "salvation is of

the Jews," Jn. 4:22, and thus he is called the seed and son of Abraham,

Gal. 3:16; Matt. 1:1. For he is, doubtlessly, according to his blessed

flesh which is conceived of the Holy Ghost of Abraham's seed, come and

born for the salvation of us all.

Again, the saying of Paul which you allege to sustain your cause was

not taught and spoken by the Holy Ghost in such a sense as you claim;

but Paul says, "Both, he that sanctifieth and they who are. sanctified

are all of one (that is, you say of "of one Adam." But we say they are

of one, that is, of one God), for which cause he (the Savior) is not

ashamed to call them (the sanctified) brethren, saying, I will declare

thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing

praise unto thee," Heb. 2:11, 12. For as Christ Jesus was born from

above of the Father and is therefore called God's child or Son, having

God as Father, thus, also, all who receive Christ " to them gave he

power to become the sons of God," Jn. 1:12. Such also have God as their

Father. As the regenerated are born, together with Christ Jesus, of one

God, and have one Father, therefore he calls the sanctified who, with

him, are born of God, his brethren, not because of the flesh but

because of the new birth. If it were otherwise you would have to

consent and admit that all wicked, unbelieving and perverse men and

women were brethren and sisters of Christ Jesus as well as the

believing, sincere and pious ones. Not so, for Christ Jesus says,

"Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same

is my brother and sister, and mother, Matt. 12:60. Read and understand

it rightly. Further, Paul says,?" Behold I and the children which God

hath given me," Heb. 2:13. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers

of flesh and blood, he also himself partook of the same (that is,

mortal, as a consequence); that through death he might destroy. him

that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who

through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage, which

was the seed and generation of Abraham, and, by the terrible threat,

subject to the heavy burden and intolerable yoke of the law of Moses.

For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; if you understand

it as meaning the good, then you should know that they did not sin; but

if you take it as meaning the evil ones, then you should know that he

rejected them and keeps them in the bondage of eternal darkness unto

the great judgment day. Therefore Paul says, "For verily he took not on

him the nature of angels; but he took on? him the seed of Abraham.

Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his

brethren (to wit: weak and mortal), that he might be a merciful and

faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make

reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath

suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted,"

Heb. 2:16?18. Now, judge for yourselves whether this is not the right

meaning of this Scripture of Paul. In the third place you declare and

say thus: Paul plainly teaches that Christ Jesus is born of the seed of

David according to the flesh, and is proven to be the Son of Clod, with

power; according to the spirit of sanctification. Therefore he is,, you

conclude, according to the flesh, of the seed or loins of David, and

according to the Spirit, alone, born of God.

To which we reply: It is true that it would follow in the common course

of nature that Christ was born of the seed or loins of David; but it is

not in accordance with the testimony of Scripture. The reason is this

Because the Scripture teaches that the "Word was made flesh," and that

it came forth from the Holy Ghost, Jn. 1:14; Matt. 1:20; Rom. 1:2.

Therefore, beloved brethren this is the true meaning of Paul in regard

to this and like Scriptures; the consoling promise of the future Savior

was given to Abraham; that he should be born of his seed or generation.

Abraham's offspring were, Ishmael, Isaac, and the children of Keturah.

The promise of the patriarch was again given to Isaac, and not to the

others. Isaac begat Esau and Jacob. Not Esau, but Jacob again received

the promise given to his father Abraham and Isaac. Jacob multiplied

into twelve tribes; and, that the promised Savior might not be looked

for from the tribe of Reuben, Dan, Gad, or any of the eleven .tribes,

therefore the Holy Ghost points to Judah and not to any of the other

tribes, Gen. 49:10. Judah, multiplying into many branches, the promise

is renewed in David, 2 Kin. 7:12. Thus the merciful Father has ever

testified and shown beforehand, from one patriarch to another and from

one generation to another, that all men might know from which

patriarchs and generations the promised Savior and Deliverer of all

mankind should be born, according to the flesh, as the Jews well knew

by such showing of. Scripture, saying, " Hath not the Scripture said

that Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of

Bethlehem," Jn. 7:42. "He came unto his own and his own received him

not." He is come of the seed or generation of David, according to the

promise; but they did not receive him. Yea, the appointed hour is come.

Gabriel was sent of God to a virgin named Mary who was promised to a

man. Mary believed the word of the Lord; the Holy Ghost overshadowed

her, &c. The Word, in her, became flesh, Jn. 1:14. It is conceived and

brought forth of the Holy Ghost, Matt. 1:20; and according to this same

flesh, or with this same flesh, which was conceived of and brought

forth of the Holy Ghost, he is born of Mary, the pure virgin, who was

of the seed and generation of David; David was of Judah; Judah of

Jacob; Jacob of Isaac; Isaac of Abraham; and thus the divine promise

was fulfilled, which God through grace alone had promised and given to

the abovementioned patriarchs; and thus was born, according to the

flesh, as was said above, of the seed or generation of David; and by

his saving Spirit is proven to be?the living Son of God, Rom. 1:4. For

if he were to prove or declare himself to be the Son of God, it must,

without doubt, be according to his sanctifying Spirit, inasmuch as he

could not be such according to the flesh as he had humbled himself, and

was forsaken of the Father, was weak, despised, hungry, thirsty,

passive, mortal, and like unto us in all things, yet without sin.

Beloved brethren, take heed. The alleged Scripture of Paul is very

clear, and has every where a scruple, Rom. 1:13.

In the fourth place, you say, Christ is called a fruit of the loins of

David. Therefore he must be the natural and pleasing seed of David.

Answer. These words, according to the letter were spoken of Solomon and

not of Christ; which Solomon was naturally born of the loins of David.

Thus Nathan spoke unto David, "And when thy days be fulfilled, and

thou?shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee,

which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish thy

kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will stablish the

throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he shall be my

son (now note of whom it is spoken). If he commit iniquity, I will

chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children.

of men," 2 Sam. 7:12?14. Now, Christ never committed iniquity; for he

knew not sin; neither was guile found in his mouth, 1 Pet. 2:22. Again,

in the Psalms, "The Lord bath sworn in truth unto David; he will not

turn from it; of the fruit of thy body will f set up on thy throne. If

thy children will keep my covenant, and my testimony that I shall teach

them, their children shall also sit upon thy throne for ever more," Ps.

132:11, 12. That this is literally spoken of Solomon, he himself

testifies in plain words, 1 Kin. 3: (3; 8:20; which Solomon, without

doubt, represented in figure, Christ Jesus, as \_ in his glory, wisdom,

building of the temple, &c. Behold, most beloved, thus we should not

take the letter for the spirit and the spirit for the letter. But that

the promise according to the Spirit had reference to Christ, is

incontrovertible; for this the holy prophets of God plainly show; and

particularly, Isa. 9:6; Jer. 23:5; 33:15.

In the fifth place you ask, If he is not a fruit of the womb of Mary

Answer. Yes, Luke 1:38. From this you conclude,

If he be a fruit of the womb of Mary then he is also brought forth of

her flesh and blood by the power of the Holy Ghost. For if he were not

of her flesh and blood then he could not be called a fruit of her womb.

But because he is of her flesh he is called the fruit of her body, as

an apple is called the fruit of a tree, because it grows upon the tree,

and partakes of its nature, through the strength of the earth.

Answer. According to the course of nature your conclusion is in part

right, but according to scriptural testimony quite wrong. For the

Scriptures say, that Mary, the pure virgin, by faith, conceived the

eternal word of God which in the beginning was with God, and was God,

that it became flesh, Jn. 1:14; conceived and brought forth of the Holy

Spirit, Matt. 1:20; that it was human and natural?like; nourished in

her; and was in due time born as a natural child is born of its mother.

Thus Christ Jesus remains the precious, blessed fruit of the womb of

Mary, according to the words of Elizabeth, which was conceived not of

her womb but in her womb wrought by the Holy Spirit through faith, of

God the omnipotent Father, from high heaven, as we have frequently

shown.

You allege a natural reason concerning the tree and its fruits in proof

of your assertion. Inasmuch as you do so, I will reply to your

reasoning according to nature, namely, I have a well prepared field,

well pulverized and manured, bearing abundance of wheat, corn, or rye.

I say, ah, that is a beautiful crop, which fruit this field could not

produce of itself, however welltilled and rich the same was, and

however much it was induced to do so by the heat of the sun and the

moisture of the atmosphere, until the seed was sown in by the sower.

Being sown, and grown up it is called the fruit of the field,

notwithstanding it was first sown thereon. An apple is called the fruit

of the tree, although it is produced and grown by the soil on which the

tree is grown.

In the same manner the heavenly seed, namely, the word of God, was sown

in Mary, and by her faith, being conceived in her by the Holy Ghost,

became flesh; and thus it is called the fruit of her womb, the same as

a natural fruit or offspring is called the fruit of its natural mother,

Jn. 1:14. For Christ Jesus, of his origin, is no earthly man, that is,

a fruit of the flesh and blood of Adam; but he is a heavenly fruit or

man. For his beginning or origin is of the Father, Jn. 16:28, like unto

the first Adam, yet without sin. Given to Adam and his children, in

case they hear and receive him in his holy word, to their everlasting

salvation and deliverance, of God the merciful Father alone through

grace and mercy; without price and without any previous mention on our

part.

In the sixth place you say, God could not suffer. If Christ's flesh

were not of earth or of Adam, but from heaven, then he could not have

been passive, and conae\* quently he could not have died.

Answer. Be impartial and judge rightly. Your meaning is, that Christ

Jesus according to the Spirit alone, is of the Father, in which Spirit

he was impassive and immortal, as you say, but that he was not of the

Father according to the flesh. But according to the flesh, in which he

suffered and died, you teach that he is of earth, that thus the law

(wherewith earthly man was cursed on account of his disobedience)

concerning the earthly man, namely Christ, might be fulfilled, that he

by obedience might save, and we in him, by the communion of his human

nature and blood, whereby he has fulfilled the righteousness of the

Father in our flesh. This foundation is implied in your Latin

syllogisms. We will not controvert this by subtle syllogisms nor by

acute human cavilings, for we do not have them; but we controvert it by

the plain testimony of the word alone, which cannot. be turned by

flatterings, nor broken by human reason.

First, we confess and consent before all the world that God, the

Almighty, eternal Father is quite impassive and immortal; for with him

there is no change, Jas. 1:1'7. Ego Deus, inquit Propheta, &c., non

motor. But God, the Son, the eternal Word is humbled, has denied

himself, became less than the angels, miserable, mortal flesh or man,

Jn. 1:14.

You say, God cannot suffer; but the Scripture says otherwise, that God,

the Son, has suffered, for he himself says, I am the first and the

last, I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for

evermore, Rev. 1:18; 22:13. Adam's flesh was not the first and the

last; but he who was before every creature, by whom all things were

created, Eph. 3:9. Whose goings forth were from the beginning and from

eternity. This is the first and the last; this same one is become

flesh; he has suffered, he died, he again became living and shall live

forever. Take heed, lest you willfully oppose the Scriptures. Christ

can not be divided into two parts, as you think.

I repeat, the Father is impassive, immortal and unchangeable; but for

our sakes the Son is humbled, became passive and mortal, according to

the testimony of the Scriptures, Phil. 2:'7; Heb. 2:14; 1 Pet. 1:19,

and many other Scriptures. Therefore he prayed his beloved Father that

he might again acquire the glory that he had with the Father, which he

had lost in becoming man, Jn. 1'7: G. If he remained unchanged in his

divine form, and if he suffered in that which he took of Bart)i, as you

say, then tell me, beloved, what he had lost that he desired again to

acquire of his Father 8 Examine the Scriptures rightly and pray, and by

the grace of God, your eyes will be opened to behold the truth of

Christ.

Again, in the second place we answer, that the whole Christ Jesus went

forth from his Father, Jn. 1:14; 3:31; 6:27; 8:.42; 14:24; 16:28; 17:8;

that the word of God became flesh in Mary, the Lord himself from

heaven, 1 Cor.16:4'7; and that he was afflicted and oppressed in the

flesh, soul and Spirit, according to the testimony of the Scriptures.

In the flesh, because he was crucified. In his soul, because he himself

says, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. In the Spirit,

as he said Jn. 13:21, Turbatus est Jesus spiritu, " He was troubled in

spirit." Which Christ Jesus (that he might be an offering unto God),

suffered the judgment of the unrighteous; died according to the flesh,

but was made alive according to the Spirit.

Again,. in the third place we reply to your syllogisms, thus: The

commandment was not given to the heavenly Christ, but to the earthly

Adam and his seed, through Christ, that is, through the word. Adam,

transgressing, was condemned to death through the Word Christ, Gen.

3:19. As the righteousness of God is unchangeable and eternal, as you

yourselves say, therefore disobedient Adam must die according to the

immutable righteousness of God. As Adam was earthly and of earth, and

was cursed by the word on account of his disobedience and had to die,

therefore nothing could be expected nor taken from earth but earth,

from curse nothing but curse, and from death nothing but death, as Paul

plainly shows, Rom. 6:12. Adam, being disobedient to the word which

created him, in not giving heed to it, and eating what it had

forbidden, had to die involuntarily the death, with his seed, which the

word had promised him. Because it was for righteousness' sake that Adam

and his descendants had to die, he having sinned and not having

wherewith to requite; therefore it is solely grace, mercy and love that

he should live. But how? Through the righteousness of Adam's flesh? Not

at all; but the word which had made Adam a living being, which gave him

the commandment and promised him death, if he should commit iniquity,

as was said above. This same word (as death had to be the consequence,

according to righteousness, as truth had spoken) which God again

promised to Adam, was to become flesh; that, as he was deceived by the

liar, and therefore, according to the justice of God, had to die, he

might again be delivered by the promised truth, and thus by grace and

mercy alone, inherit life eternal. Adam believed it and was consoled,

and as a sign of the truth of the promised favor and love, God made

unto Adam and unto his consort, coats of skins and clothed them, Gen.

3:21.

Thus has not the earthly, guilty, transgressing, accursed and mortal

flesh of Adam requited the righteousness, and appeased his wrath, as

you claim, but only the heavenly, innocent, obedient, blessed and

quickening flesh of Christ, as the Scriptures testify; that he bare our

sins, 1 Pet. 2:24; Isa. 63:8; by his wounds are we healed. For the

promised Word, Christ Jesus, is become man and has fulfilled the

righteousness required by the law, as Paul says, "For what the law

could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his

own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in

the flesh. That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us,

who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," Rom. 8:3, 4.

Hence. it follows that all those who are born of Adam, and remain his

in not receiving by faith the promised seed (I am speaking of those of

understanding age), must, by the immutable righteousness of God,

inherit the curse of Adam, that is, death, as a reward of sin. Christ

himself says, "He that believeth not shall be damned," Mark 16:16.

Again, Paul says, "The wages of sin is death," Rom. 6:23. For they have

no communion of the most holy flesh and blood of Christ Jesus; nor can

they ever enjoy his deliverance, kindness, merits and blessing unless

they be truly converted from the shameful darkness of unbelief and sin,

to the eternal, clear, heavenly light, Christ Jesus, 1 Jn. 1:7. But

those who, with Adam, truly receive the promised seed and thus become

renewed and consoled in God, who are born anew by this same seed; who

are changed or converted from the disobedient nature of Adam, into the

obedient nature of the Word, Christ Jesus, these he calls flesh of his

flesh and bone of his bone; he gives these unto himself, by mere grace,

and makes them partakers of his righteousness, merits, cross, blood and

bitter death, yea, his whole life, love and Spirit; for they are one

body and one Spirit with him; so that they willingly fulfill, by this

spirit of love which they have received of him, for God is love, all

that which the merciful Father, by his saving truth, Christ Jesus has

commanded as John testifies, saying, "And whatsoever we ask, we receive

of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things. that are

pleasing in his sight," 1 Jn. 3:22. Again, Paul?says, "Love is the

fulfilling of the law," Rom. 13:10. Again, Christ says, "He that hath

my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me," Jn. 14:21.

Besides you say, What is born of the spirit is spirit. Just brethren,

we do, not say Christ is born of the Spirit, but we do say with the

Scripture that he is incarnate and conceived by the Spirit. Now it is

different as you know, to be born of the Spirit and to be incarnate and

conceived by the Spirit. Who doubts, moreover, but that to be born of

the Spirit is regeneration! I beseech you therefore, through the Lord

as not being led rightly by the Scriptures, if you hold these things,

you are ready to defend your cause. Herewith, beloved lords, friends

and brethren, I conclude this my confession of the incarnation of our

beloved Lord Jesus Christ. I write you this in accordance to your

desire, and place it before you in all clearness, as one who is not

ashamed of his faith; although I do not thus deeply go into the matter

in my admonitions to the brethren; but, alone, in an apostolic manner

admonish them to regeneration and love. I desire; by the grace of the

Lord, that you will rightly see into all things and rightly observe who

have sinned. On the contrary, who has requited sin; that we may put on

Adam and his descendants, their unrighteousness, darkness, sin and

shame; and give to Christ Jesus his righteousness, brightness, praise

and honor. Praying you, I say, not to follow in this and other matters,

human wisdom, but the wisdom of God; not intelligence, but Scripture;

not flesh, but Spirit; not the writings and opinions of the learned,

but alone the testimony of Christ and his apostles, fearing God in

purity of heart from your inmost souls, as I should, also myself, that

we may not be like unto them who are ever learning and never come to

the knowledge of the truth. Observe well that you do not otherwise ask,

hear and answer, but by sincere zeal. Before God, faith and works

avail. In all things be prepared ?to do the will of God and not the

will of your idle,. vain unwilling flesh.

I know there are many who are disposed to nothing but to search,

inquire and dispute, and have never once confessed and received the

most necessary things, without which none can be saved, namely, the

piercing, regenerating and sanctifying faith, the urging fear of the

Lord, and the burning love of God and their brethren. Be not like unto

them. But, beloved brethren, seek and strive after true wisdom; open

unto her; she stands before your door; behold her beauty; taste of her

fruits; search her strength, and you will love, embrace and gladly

receive her; your flesh will go under and the Spirit arise, and go

before you in the word and truth of the Lord, until Adam dieth in you

and Christ prevail. May God give us all his divine grace, Amen.

" Take ye heed, watch and pray," Mark 13:33.

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AN

ADMONISHING CONFESSION

AND CLEAR DEMONSTRATION

TO THE LEARNED JOHN A'LASCO, ARCH?BISHOP AT EMDEN, EAST FRIESLAND, ALSO TO HIS

BRETHREN. HOW THE PREACHERS OF THE DIVINE WORD AND THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

SHOULD BE MINDED, ACCORDING TO THE TESTIMONY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

BELOVED sirs, friends and brethren, as I have disclosed unto you, at

your own request, the foundation of my faith and feelings concerning

the very consoling incarnation of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ,

although I do not teach the same so deeply before the church, therefore

I will now briefly point out my foundation and feeling how the teachers

and church, who can rightly be called christians, should be affected

and minded before God and before all the world, according to the

showing of the Scriptures, so far as we can, by the grace of God,

comprehend and understand it from his word; yet I will not dwell upon

this matter long, lest I become tedious.

First, I would say in regard to the preachers and adduce this

Scripture, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you," Jn. 20:21.

Ever remain unchangeable in the church of God, thus: As all true

teachers and preachers are sent of Christ Jesus, as he is sent of his

Father, therefore we should rightly consider how and who this Christ

Jesus was, how and what he taught when the Father sent him. He is

doubtlessly the Son and image of God, the Teacher of righteousness who

has taught and testified nothing but the truth, namely, the word of his

Father. He taught it in the power of the Spirit and was urged by the

Holy Ghost through an unquenchable fire of love to the service of all

mankind. Besides, he was the burning, shining light of the world, the

true pattern of all virtue who could truly say, "Learn of me, for I am

meek and lowly of heart." Again, "For I have given you an example,"

&c., and therefore he gloried by the true testimony of his Holy Spirit,

saying, "I am the good Shepherd," Jn. 18:37; 7:18; 1:9; 3:19; 8:12;

12:36; Matt. 11:29; Jn. 13:15; 10:11.

This Christ Jesus, the Bishop of bishops, and the Shepherd of

shepherds, who was faithful in all things unto which he was sent of his

heavenly Father, never sends any other bishops, teachers, shepherds and

laborers in his vineyard, to his members, children and sheep to care

for them, to pasture and, protect them, than those who are of one body,

Spirit and mind with him, as he is one with his Father, who, by the

divine Word, which is Christ, in him and in his heavenly nature, are so

renewed, converted and changed that he may truly say of them, Behold,

these are the children which God hath given me. Whosoever shall hear

you shall hear me, as the Father testified of Christ, saying, "This is

my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him," Matt. 17:5.

Again, those who are of one spirit with Christ Jesus are members of his

holy body, full of the love of God and of their brethren, who with

Christ Jesus, their Bishop, seek nothing but the eternal gain, honor,

glory and praise of God, and the inward conversion, regeneration and

eternal salvation of those whose brotherly care is entrusted and

commended to them of God. Yea, he sends such as are unblamable both in

doctrine and life; as are urged by the Holy Spirit; who sincerely

lament. with Christ, about those who do not acknowledge the gracious

time of their temptation, who are rejoiced, with all the angels of God,

at the conversion of a sinner, who so thirst after the salvation of all

mankind as a hungry person hungers after bread; who so apply the word

and truth of the Lord that they dare not teach or practice a word

otherwise than Christ Jesus himself has taught, practiced and

commanded, namely, the pure, unadulterated, biblical word in the true

sense and meaning of Christ and of his holy apostles; who practice the

sacramental signs conformable to the gospel of Christ, namely, the

baptism of the believing (and not of infants), and the Supper under

both forms, in such church as is flesh of Christ's flesh and bone of

his bone; such as are outwardly unblamable and inwardly of one heart,

spirit, soul and body in Christ Jesus. Yea, he sends such whose

doctrine is a salt; whose life is as a shining light, long suffering,

meek, lowly, merciful, hospitable, not avaricious or selfish, not

desirous of shameful gain, not puffed up, of good report among those of

the world, ruling well his own house, having a well?minded consort, if

they have the gift of cleanliness and obedient children. Yea, in all

things chaste, sober, unblamable, having the Spirit, fear and love of

God. Again, so minded in all things that they can truly say with Paul,

to their entrusted sheep, " Be ye followers of me, even as I am of

Christ." "Be thou an example of the believers in word, in conversation,

in charity, in Spirit, in faith, in purity," Heb. 3:2; Jn. 17:11\_; Heb.

2:13; Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15; Eph. 5:30; Matt. 5:14; 1 Tim. 3:2; Tit.

1:6; 1 Cor. 4:2; 11:1; 1 Tim. 4:12; Phil. 2:17.

Behold, most beloved, thus the teachers should be minded who shall

serve the Lord's church, that they may not hear from the obdurate and

refractory: " Why do you teach others and not yourselves?" Nor can they

otherwise teach to the glory of God; for the service of the New

Testament is a service of the Spirit and not of the letter, 2 Cor. 3:6.

Therefore Christ never chooses as laborers in his vineyard, as servants

and builders, such as are avaricious, drunkards and idlers, that the

kingdom of God, which h spiritual, may be taught in purity of heart,

pasturing the sheep of Christ, not by force, but willingly, not being

intent on shameful gain but on affection, not as those who seek

dominion over others, but as examples to the flock of Christ, not

serving for a certain benefice, pension, or stipulated salary as do

your teachers, but, solely, for the gain of the souls which Christ

Jesus has so dearly bought with his precious blood. Entrusting and

commending to the God, who, by his grace, created, delivered,

regenerated and sent them to his ministration, to the care of their

temporal necessaries of life, diligently feeding themselves, by the

grace of the Lord, from their own or their rented lands, or from the

labor of their hands, so far as is possible; that they do not sell the

free word of God, given them without price, and thus live on shameful

gain, robbery and theft. Let all sincere and pious servants. of Christ

beware of this, and whatever they cannot obtain by due prudence and

diligence will doubtlessly be provided for them by the begotten

brethren who fear the Lord, for whom they sow spiritual things; and not

by inconvertible heathen, drunkards, usurers, whoremongers and such

like. For such teachers are the oxen which tread out the corn, which

should not be muzzled, 1 Cor 9:9; 1 Tim. 5:18; Dent. 25:4; they are

those who are worthy of double honor, with whom all things should be

shared, and who shall live by the gospel according to the Lord's own

ordinance, as the priests under the law, lived by the altar; these are

the true laborers worthy of their reward as Christ says; such teachers

we shall acknowledge, honor, maintain in love, and for their labors'

sake keep peace with them, as Paul teaches, "For they watch for your

souls as they that must give account," Heb. 13:17.

Behold most beloved sirs, friends and brethren, thus has God, the

merciful Father, sent his blessed Son, who was in his own form, and

minded like him in all things, namely, Christ Jesus, who has sent such

as were of one spirit, soul and body with him, without a staff, purse,

shoes, scabbard, money, gold and silver, that is, without all

solicitude and avarice. The apostles ordained, at all places where

they.had begotten churches, such bishops and teachers as were

unblamable both in doctrine and in life, and have never mentioned

annual incomes, benefices or rents. For they were men of God, servants

of Christ, full of the love of God and their beloved brethren, who

labored, taught, sought, pastured and watched through mere love, urged

by the Spirit, not only for one, two or three hours a week, in the

synagogue, but at all hours and places, in synagogues, streets, houses,

mountains and fields. And, as they had received the knowledge of the

kingdom of God, the truth, love and Spirit of God, without price, so

they were, again, prepared to dispense it diligently and teach it

without price, to their needy brethren; and, as for the temporal

necessaries of life, the begotten church was sufficiently urged by

love, through the Spirit and word of God to give unto such faithful

servants of Christ, and watchers of their souls, all the necessaries of

life, to assist them and provide for them all such things they could

not obtain themselves. O, brethren, flee from avarice!

Again, those teachers did not go about offering their services, as

these do, but they were called of God, as were Aaron, Jeremiah, Isaiah,

Zechariah, Paul and others. Others, born of the unblamable church of

Christ, were chosen by lot, as was Matthias Acts 1:26. Being called,

they were constrained by the Spirit, to teach, to admonish, to console,

to reprove and to serve and protect their poor brethren and sisters

according to God's holy word, with all their strength. As they were

thus called, and felt in them an urging spirit and moved by love, as

was said above, so they reasonably filled their office with all

solicitude and diligence, watching night and day for the eternal

salvation of their sheep, working diligently in the vineyard of the

Lord, ruling the people of God with the rod of the Lord; they did not

doubt, made use of no flattery; but in a good conscience they reproved

the great as well as the small, the rich as well as the poor, the

learned as well as those that were not learned; the word was proclaimed

in their church, wholesome and unadulterated, at all times and in all

places, as was said above, according to the measure of their faith and

Spirit which God, by his grace, had given to every one of them. Most

beloved, do not excuse yourselves because all who boasted themselves as

being teachers of the church of Christ, even in the times of Paul, were

not sincere, pious, and urged by love, as appears from Phil. 1:15;

2:21; 3:2. Verily, I say unto you, they boasted of being such, but in

truth, before God they were not. For it is not hidden from you what

kind of fruits they produced and how Paul regarded them. As you are

aware that it is not the intention and will of God, nor ever shall be,

that his holy word should be proclaimed to the erring world unto

salvation, either by drunkards, whoremongers, avaricious, idolaters,

despisers of the Scripture, gluttons, proud, thieves, bloodthirsty,

vain talkers, enemies of the cross of Christ, by those whose belly is

their God, by those who are already condemned by the word of God, or by

the carnal or earthly?minded. But only, by the truly regenerated

christian, unblamable men who sincerely seek God from their inmost

souls, urged by the Holy Ghost and constrained by love, as Christ said

thrice unto Peter, " Lovest thou me? Yea, Lord (answered Peter); thou

knowest all things and knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him,

Feed my lambs," J n. 21:15.

O, most beloved, take heed what spirit urges you, what love constrains

you, what church calls you and what things you seek. Follow the good

and not the evil. I tell you in Christ Jesus that my soul is troubled

for your sakes. I pray you, beloved brethren, receive it with a will. I

must frankly speak my mind; for as much as I can deduce and understand

from my past actions and from your apparent fruits, you are all, none

of your teachers excepted, urged by your flesh and belly, and are

therefore all hirelings and not shepherds, Jn.10:12. Or, at best, are

such shepherds as seek the wool, milk and flesh and do not care for the

Lord's sheep. For wherever the fattest are, there are also ?the best

sheep. O brethren, consider what the Lord's prophets have so often

threatened on such. Yea, how many are found among you who, for the sake

of an earthen house, or for ten guilders, move from one place to

another, as if they were not all bought equally dear at one price? I

fear that you would all do it.

O brethren, if you confess this to be true then judge for yourselves

what is your seeking, and if you will not verbally confess it, swperbia

,five pertinacia impediente, it can yet not be denied by the

intelligent. God has been mocked long enough. Brethren, be converted

As the teachers are serving their bellies. avaricious, desirous of

shameful gain, earthly?minded, as Paul says, not to say proud, lazy,

vain, drunken, spiteful and envious, so are also minded, all those who

are taught and begotten of them, as may be plainly seen, inasmuch as

both teacher and church live and walk so shamefully that all heaven

must be ashamed and astounded thereat. For their avarice, unchastity,

pride, pomp, greed, drunkenness, hatred, envy, fornication, adultery,

bloodthirstiness, usury, fraud, vanity, and all manner of shame have no

limits or bonds. Moreover, we find open fencing?schools, gambling

houses, houses of ill?fame and drinking houses. For as the teachers

are, so are also their doctrine, sacraments and church, as is said,

Qualis Papa, We Bvangeliwm and omnia. Verily, I say, believe it if you

choose, Christ does not send such avaricious, selfish and carnal

teachers, nor does he acknowledge such a self?conceited, carnal and

blamable church. But those who are sent of Christ Jesus have his

Spirit, crucify the lusts and desires of their?flesh, that they,

preaching to others may not be found shameful, seeking alone, the

praise of God and the salvation of their beloved brethren, refusing all

shameful gain, presents and gifts, so long as they have wherewith to

maintain themselves, honoring none for the sake of gain, living

unblamably, teaching the word wholesomely and using the sacraments

according to the commandments of the Lord, excluding all degenerated

sisters and brethren, again proclaiming grace to those that are

converted, having eternal vigilance and care for those whose care is

entrusted to them of the Lord's church.

As you are not such as the Scriptures require you to be, but are as yet

in opposition to the true doctrine, and also, blamable in life, as is

apparent, therefore I admonish you in all earnestness and fraternal

love, to become first sincere christians before you undertake to

impress and teach Christ unto others. Let us examine ourselves, that we

may learn to know our own ailings, and knowing them, die unto them: For

before God, neither smooth words nor semblance will avail. Brethren, I

must tell you the plain truth which may be galling and bitter to you

because there is found neither Spirit nor power, nor trust in Christ,

nor fear of God, nor love of the brethren with your teachers, but only

a vain calling of words for the sake of a stipulated salary, without

any show of christian fruits. Therefore all your calling is nothing but

to sow on the shore to reap the wind; for the pure word of God and the

teaching of the Holy Spirit cannot be pointed out and taught by

servants who are unclean and carnal. To this all intelligent persons

must, doubtlessly, consent.

As you then, I say, are blamable both in doctrine and in life, and as

your doctrine, such as you have, is hired for a salary and without

spiritual fruit, and as no unblamable church is begotten of you, and as

the signs of the Word are abused by you; therefore it is apparent that

you are not the true messengers of God, but you run your own course,

urged by the flesh and not by the Spirit; not sincerely seeking the

salvation of the church, but rather the temporal profits and rents, and

that with such rapacity that you are not ashamed to receive them as a

reward and price of your preaching, which were in ancient times, by

feigned words and fraudulent commerce, as Peter says, nay, by nothing

but theft and sly robbery, taken from the true and legal heirs.

Thus you sell, first, the precious, free word of God which, by grace,

was given us of God, without price. And secondly, it is paid for by

that which was stolen. Here lies hidden more than I will disclose. Qui

de furto vivit and rapina non dubiwm est, quip fur est and raptor. Do

look at the matter in a christian light. Behold, feel and taste your

manifest error, unworthiness and plain avarice. I here speak of all

your preachers; for they all enjoy such gain. Your teachings,

benefices, pensions and rents are such an abomination before my eyes,

that brethren, verily I would rather be beheaded, burned, drowned or

torn into quarters by four horses than to receive, on account of my

preaching, such benefices, pensions or rents. Yea, when giving salaries

to preachers was established, there surely crept into the church of

Christ a very fearful, corrupting pestilence; which has corrupted so

that, alas, there are scarcely any left who have retained the breath of

Christ in them. To this you must all consent. What other reason is

there than this that the preachers have sought the temporal gain of

their own bellies more than the eternal gain of the souls of Christ 8

As you freely accept and enjoy the beforementioned shameful gain, and

what is still worse, as you diligently seek and desire the same, how

can you defend yourselves and say that you are not desirous of the

filthy lucre I 1 Tim. 3:3, and that you do not honor the person for

filthy lucre's sake 8 O, brethren, I wish you would awaken, to consider

the matter, and ?that you were all of one mind with us in this matter;

for it would doubtlessly be profitable to both the praise and truth of

God, and to your poor souls, that we would without pay, dispense the

precious word of God, the word of eternal salvation and heavenly grace,

which can be merited by no works nor requited by money, as we, by grace

only, received it of God without price, that we again would dispense it

without pay, and solely by brotherly love would teach it to the

hungering consciences, God surely would not forsake us, but would in

every emergency paternally care for us and protect us. But it can not

thus be with you because you are devoid of faith and love.

As you are all buried to your ears in filthy lucre; earthly and

carnally minded in all things; not yet dead unto the flesh by the power

of regeneration, not yet received Christ Jesus in all his words, and on

that account, are not yet wholesome in doctrine, do not conform the

ministration of the signs to the word of God; are blamable in doctrine,

as is plain, and as there is found with you no power, no fruit of the

Spirit, no true fear of God and no brotherly, love; but rather heresy,

upbraiding, blasphemy and profaning of the teachings and lives of the

pious saints and children of God, who for the testimony of their

consciences, confirmed by the word of God, have fled from their country

and kindred, and for the sake of the testimony are prepared for water,

fire and sword if God so will. Besides, your doctrine being quite

powerless and fruitless, the church which you beget being quite earthy,

carnal and contrary to the testimony and fruits of the holy word of the

Lord; therefore, we repeat it that you are not the true messengers of

Jesus Christ. Be not angry with me, most beloved.

It is for the beforementioned reasons that we will not hear nor attend

your preaching, nor partake of your supper. For we shall never desire

to enter into your church and to become one body with you until you

sincerely repent and embrace a free, christian doctrine, not hired nor

sold out, but solely urged by the Holy Spirit through brotherly love, a

true use of the sacramental signs, according to the command, doctrine

and usage of Christ and his apostles, and an unblamable life and walk,

led in the love and fear of the Lord. If we do so before these are

found with you, we are sure that we sin against God and his holy word,

from which may the kind, merciful Father save us. For before God, it

does not become us to commit ourselves to such doctrine, admonition and

church, who first, err in doctrine, and secondly, do not in the least

show by their lives that they are the truly regenerated children of

God, or the true church of Jesus 'Christ. But most beloved, it behooves

you, as you have not the unblamable doctrine and walk of Jesus Christ,

to renounce your doctrine and life and voluntarily bid adieu to all the

lusts of the flesh, to seek the kingdom of God in sincerity of heart,

to enter with us, into all obedience to our beloved Lord Jesus Christ

with all your strength, if you do not desire to err willfully, that we

together, may become the holy, christian and unblamable church, godly,

holy, clean, obedient unto God, serving all mankind, powerful in truth,

shining forth in righteousness, dead unto sin, living by the Spirit,

nay, in all things christian, heavenly and unblamable in Christ Jesus.

Do receive my admonishing confession, in good faith, and do not

understand it as too far?reaching, namely, such words as, clean,

unblamable, and the like. For they are spoken of Christ Jesus himself,

and of his holy apostles to the church of the Lord,. Jn. 13:10; Phil.

2: ls. Do not understand it, most beloved, that we deem ourselves so

clean and unblamable as being without sin. Not at all, dear brethren;

for I know full well that holy John teaches, saying, "If we say that we

have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us,"' 1 Jn.

1:8. Again, James says, In multis enim labimur omnes. " In many things

we offend all," Jas..3:2. Yea, beloved brethren, with Paul, I find the

disposition to commit sin, at all times, so strong in my flesh, that I

often think recklessly,, speak inconsiderately and `.` the evil which I

would not, that I do," Rom. 7:8, 19.

But the abominable, shameful sins and offenses, such as adultery,

fornication, hatred, envy, inebriety, pomp, splendor, cursing,

swearing, gambling, desire of filthy lucre, abuse of the ordinances of

Christ and fraud I verily, detest from the inmost of my heart, and they

should never, by the grace of the Lord, be practiced by any sincere,

godfearing christians, inasmuch as they hate and oppose them; for the

spirit which is in them is a deadly enemy to all ungodliness,

wickedness and sin (in the mean while we often find that we are born of

Adam). Besides, their spirit strives and hungers after the truth,

righteousness, will and commandments of God, yet in great weakness; for

they are very much retarded in the works, fruits, and fulfillment by

the heavy burden of the sinful flesh. Nevertheless, because the good

Spirit of God abides in them, they do not cease to fight their tardy

flesh. For the life of true christians is nothing but a continual

combat upon earth. Whosoever shall valiantly battle and overcome, will

be clothed in white raiments, and fed with the heavenly bread of the

tree of life, Rev. 2:17.

Behold, most beloved, inasmuch as you and your church have never

triumphed in this battle (I judge from what I hear, and from your

actions which I see), but still serve the world, the flesh and the

devil carelessly; therefore we deem, according to the testimony of the

Scripture, that you vainly and wrongfully boast of the name, grace,

deliverance, merits, death, blood, and promises of Christ; as you have

not his word, and by the word, his faith, Spirit, fear and love, and

consequently do not follow them.

Therefore, I pray you by the mercy of the Lord, to consider once, what

kind of teachers you are, what kind of spirit urges you, what kind of

love prompts you, with what intentions and by what motives you teach,

what kind of fruits you produce, what kind of ordinances you use, and

unto what kind of a church you teach and minister. Judge all things

according to the divine testimony, without self?love, flesh and

partiality. I doubt not but if you examine the matter rightly, you will

not be surprised that we will not hear your doctrine, nor use your

sacraments, and refuse unto death to become members of your church. For

this remains incontrovertible, eternally unchangeable; that as Christ

Jesus is of one mind with the Father, and sent of him, so all teachers

should be of one mind with Christ Jesus who can be considered as sent

of him. Those who are one with Christ in Spirit, love and life; who

teach that which was commanded by Christ, such as repentance and the

peaceable gospel of grace, which he himself received of God, and taught

to the world, all those who hear, believe, keep and fulfill the same in

true fear, are the church of Christ, the truly believing, christian

church, the body and bride of Christ, the ark of the Lord, the mount

and paradise, the house, people, city and temple of God, the spiritual

Eve, flesh of Christ's flesh and bone of his bone, children of God, the

chosen generation, the spiritual seed of Abraham, children of the

promise, branches and trees of righteousness, sheep of the heavenly

pasture, kings and priests, a holy begotten people which is God's own.

Besides, they are chosen to proclaim the power of him who has called

them from darkness into his marvelous light, Col. 1:14; 1 Cor. 12:27;

Heb. 12:22; Matt. S:14; 2 Cor. 6:16; 11: S; Eph. G:30; 1 Pet. 2:9; Rom.

9:8; Isa. 61:3; Ps. 95:7; 79:13; Rev. 1:6; 1 Pet. 2:9.

All those who have not the Spirit, love and life of Christ, nor

sincerely desire them, nave no snare in the glorious Jerusalem of God,

that is, in Christ's church; no matter whether they be teacher or

disciple, prince or subject, man or woman; besides they have neither

prayer, nor God, nor Christ, nor promise, nor remission of sins, nor

any sure consolation in eternal life, so long as they do not sincerely

repent, receive God's word, and fulfill it in the true fear, as Christ

himself says, "He that believeth not is already condemned," Jn. 3:18.

Dear brethren, you may contradict this as much as you will, yet this

foundation shall stand forever, and will never be changed. The words of

Paul shall never be broken, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ,

he is none of his," Rom. 8:9; and where the Spirit is there shall also

be the fruits of the Spirit; as it is infallible that if the Spirit is

in man, the evil one as well as the good, it will manifest itself by

its fruits, Gal. 5:16; Matt. 7:17.

Lastly, most beloved, if you want to be the true church of Christ and

boast of the truth, grace, word, Spirit, and blood of the Lord, then

separate, first, all your preachers who are urged by the unclean spirit

and flesh, who, therefore are not of the church of Christ, namely, all

those who are desirous of filthy lucre, as was said above. Again, also,

all drunkards, wranglers, flatterers, proud, envious and avaricious;

for all these testify by their fruits that they have not the Spirit of

Christ. And if they have not the Spirit of Christ, how can these poor,

miserable men, then, teach and impress the Spirit, power and will of

God, the word of grace, and the word of eternal life, which they do not

confess? Yea, brethren, it is impossible for me to teach the things

which I do not know myself, and how shall I serve in the house of the

Lord while I myself am a castaway? Judge for yourselves.

Secondly, cleanse your church, also. Exclude, according to the word of

God, all adulterers and fornicators, drunkards, slanderers, swearers,

those who lead a shameful and inordinate life, the proud, avaricious,

idolatrous, disobedient unto God, whoremongers and the like, that you

may become the holy, christian church which is without spot or blemish,

which is as a city built upon a rock. In case these are truly observed

and found with you, and, besides, a free; christian doctrine, the true

ministration of the sacraments of Christ, not according to the opinion

of men or of the learned, but according to the true doctrine of Christ

and his apostles?again, the fear and love of God, and an unblamable

life, according to God's word, then you will ever have us as your

brethren; for it is such we seek. But if you remain as you are, then I

say publicly, Better to die than to enter into your doctrine,

sacraments, life, and church, as was said above.

Beloved brethren, it is no use to allege the Scripture of the Pharisees

sitting in the seat of Moses, Matt. 23:2; nor that Herod sent the wise

of the east; nor that some say, If the devil should preach the word of

God, why not. hear it? Christ Jesus did not send the Pharisees, the

servants of the letter, to preach the word of the Spirit and of life;

Herod did not send the wise, with good intentions; nor has the devil

ever sincerely given praise to God; nor does God want the praise of the

devil, for Christ says, "Hold thy peace, and come out of him," Luke

4:35; therefore it is useless to adduce such reasons, inasmuch as God,

by his mercy and grace, has so opened the eyes of our mind that we

surely know that the spiritual service of the New Testament can be

administered by none but by servants of the Spirit impelled in love by

the power of the Holy Ghost; for it is and remains a service of the

Spirit and. not of the letter, 2 Cor. 3:6. Enough has been adduced on

this.

In short, deny yourselves, be prepared to do the will of God, seek

nothing but his honor and praise, and the eternal salvation of your

brethren, and hunger and thirst after the righteousness of God. Believe

and receive Christ Jesus rightly in his blessed word, and you will

undoubtedly understand and comprehend the true way, the truth, and life

eternal, to the praise of God, and to your own salvation. May God, the

kind and merciful Father, grant us all this, Amen, Matt. 5:6; Jer.

31:25.

As I, dear brethren, have diligently reproved the preachers, on account

of the receiving of filthy lucre, in this my admonishing confession,

according to the word of God, therefore I do not doubt but that there

are some who will bitterly?contradict me in this matter, and say,

"Beloved Menno, you can not deprive us of the privileges Christ Jesus

has given us; as you have alleged from Paul, that those who serve the

gospel shall live by the gospel. Say why seek you to take away that of

which we have the privilege 3" To those who contradict me thus, I would

first reply by asking, If the teachers, to whom this privilege is given

of Christ by the gospel, are not sent of Christ Jesus? They must answer

in the affirmative. Then I say again, as they are sent of Christ, who

enjoyed this privilege given of Christ, therefore those have not this

privilege, who ran their own course and are not sent of Christ.

Again, I ask if these teachers to whom this privilege is given by the

Scriptures, were not men of the Spirit of love and of truthl

Doubtlessly so. Then I reply: If they are men of Spirit, of love and of

truth, to whom this privilege is granted by the gospel, those who do

not teach .and serve by the Spirit, love and truth, may not appropriate

and make use of this privilege; for they are not the teachers to whom

it was given and promised by the word of God.

Thirdly, I ask, if the teachers which are sent of Christ Jesus, who,

according to the Scriptures may enjoy this privilege, led a shameful

life after their being called? and if they led a shameful life, and

were found corrupt before God and his church, if they could longer

remain as teachers in the unblamable church of Christ? They must

doubtlessly answer, No. Then, if they answer, no, as it is in truth,

that those whose life and walk in the church of Christ, are no more

pure and useful than the filthy carrion by the roadside, are no

teachers is the church of the Lord; such as drunkards, perjurers, those

filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness,

maliciousness; full of envy, murder, deceit, debate and malignity. For

if the salt have lost his savor, says Christ, it is thenceforth good

for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men,

Matt. S:13; 1 Cor. 5:10; 2 Cor. 6:10; Rom. 1:29. And if the church is

to be unblamable, and without spot or blemish, how much more so the

teachers, as?Christ himself teaches, saying, Ye are the light of the

world. Ye are the salt of the earth, Eph. C:30; Matt S:13. Inasmuch as

the beforementioned, carnal teachers are already excluded from, and

deprived of the christian office of teacher, by God's own ordinance and

word, as they do not live up to the doctrine, and by their apparent

unbelief and inordinacy are not in the church of Christ; therefore they

can not enjoy that privilege; for Christ Jesus has promised and given

sincere, pious, spiritual, meek, true, unblamable teachers, sent of

God, and not inordinate, lazy, vain, idle, drunken, shameful, lying,

pompous, gluttonous, avaricious and carnal rogues, Rom. 10:16; Isa.

51:7; 62:6.

Fourthly, I ask, whether the men of God, the prophets, apostles, and

teachers sent of God, were also hired or bought at a stipulated, annual

salary, to teach and proclaim the free word of grace? I know that the

answer must be, no. For they did not teach but by the urging of the

Spirit and love. I say again, Inasmuch as your preachers are hired and

bought at a stipulated salary or rents, and do not preach unless they

are hired, they must acknowledge that they are hirelings, and not

teachers that are sent; for they do not teach by the urging of the

Spirit and love, but are, enticed and drawn on as was Balaam by the

promised salary, benefices and rents. Qui id negat, Sole= in die

splendere minus concedet.

Fifthly, I ask, if the teachers, sent of God, men of the Spirit, of

love and of truth, enlightening both in doctrine and in life, lived of

a stipulated salary, benefice or rents; or whether they did not live by

the services or assistance of the brethren, so far as they could not

obtain it of themselves? They must confess that it was by the

assistance of the brethren, and not of certain benefices, pensions or

rents. This I teach, seek and sincerely desire. Therefore this is my

brief conclusion and christian admonition to all preachers and

teachers. Brethren, humble yourselves and become unblamable disciples,

that you may hereafter become called teachers. Try your Spirit, love

and life before you commence to pasture and to teach. Run not your own

course, but wait until you are called of the Lord's church; I say,

Lord's church, of the Spirit of God, and are constrained by urging

love. If this is the case, brethren, then pasture diligently, preach

and teach valiantly, cast from you all filthy lucre and booty; rent

lands, milk cows, learn a trade, if possible, do manual labor, as did

Paul, and all that which you then fall short of will doubtlessly be

given and provided you by the pious brethren, by the grace of God.

Understand it not as 'superfluously,' but as `necessarily.'

Such privileges the holy gospel grants to the unblamable preachers

which are sent of Christ Jesus, and nothing further. But the preachers

who run their own course, are earthly and carnally minded, are blamable

in doctrine and in life, " serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their

own bellies," who, on account of their lazy, gluttonous, easy flesh,

teach and serve to please the world, as hired servants, at certain

wages, the Scriptures do not know. Therefore I say for once and for all

time, If they will not do differently, but always say in their

hearts?Erret quilibet homo ad libitum, nikil ad nos, modo ventri nostro

proviswm ficerit?then I will leave them in the hands of him who shall

judge them and us according to his most holy word and to his pleasure.

Brethren, decide the more wisely, and living in the great God through

all things, refuse not to bid adieu to your carnal bodies.

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CONCLUSION.

HERE you have, beloved sirs, friends, and brethren, our plain

confession of the incarnation of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ, which I

thus sincerely confess and believe; for you requested me to do so, and,

I trust, with a good intention. , Therefore I have not hidden my faith.

Now, judge the matter rightly, if you be spiritually minded, and if I

should, as you think I do; err as is natural to man, which I trust I do

not, then do not think that I do so out of obduracy, or partiality, but

before God, my Creator, it is because I know no better but that it is

the firm, immutable foundation of God's word and truth. Brethren, do

not look at me as one who seeks something contrary to the will of God.

Not at all. The eternal truth, word and will of God, I am prepared to

do, at the risk of all that his paternal kindness may inflict upon me.

This I say in sincerity of heart, and have no doubt. Therefore I say to

you, that if you have any plainer Scriptures in support of this article

of the incarnation of Christ; if you have a clearer foundation, truth,

or clearer proof than we ha: e, then assist us. I will, by the grace of

the Lord, change my heart in regard to this matter, and follow your

doctrine. But, above all, brethren, I want you to understand that I

will not accept nor listen to human doctrines, nor cleverness, nor

garbling of the Scriptures, nor flatterings, nor presumption, in regard

to this but solely to the plain Scriptures, truth and immutable

testimony; as we have presented to you, in this matter of our

confession, nothing but scriptural truth and immutable testimony. But

if you cannot advance such, then give heed, keep your peace and leave

us our faith in peace; for, most beloved brethren, before God, I seek

nothing but the pure, unadulterated word of God and its testimony.

Besides; I have here presented to you, how and in what manner I

admonish and teach the open hearted brethren; with which doctrine no

godfearing consciences can be afflicted, nor christian souls be

deceived. I pray and desire you to do likewise, that you may build `and

not break. Brethren, if you do not then take heed how and what you

teach, I can beseech and admonish you in love, but it behooves me not

to force you, even if I could. Every person shall have to render an

account of his teaching and doing, before God and not before men.

In the third place you have my admonishing confession how both teacher

and church should be minded according to the Scriptures. Again, I pray

and desire by the mercy of the Lord, that you will not accept this

scriptural truth in bitterness; for that which I have written is the

unchangeable word and will of God, and will remain go forever.

Therefore take heed that you do not be angry with me on account of my

writing, because it is contrary to your flesh. It verily is not mine,

but the doctrine of Christ; not my will, but the will of Christ. If you

be angry, you are not angry with me, but with Christ, who has thus

taught and instructed us in his holy gospel or word. And in case you

fear God, you will doubtlessly love me the more, because I, by the

grace, Spirit and word of God, as far as he bestows on me, open unto

you the kingdom of heaven, and show you the right .way. Yea, because I,

fearlessly, and in true brotherly love, of which God is my witness,

speak unto you and point you to the eternal, immutable truth; because I

cut the cankering flesh from your wounds, and do not flatter you; for I

seek not your carnal, but your spiritual friendship; not your praise,

but the praise of God; not your goods and gifts, but your salvation and

souls. For these reasons I tell you the pure truth of God, and do not

spare you. O, brethren, receive it in gladness of heart. It is the only

word and will of Christ. If you reject it, you do not reject me, but

Christ Jesus who has so dearly bought us all. Therefore take heed to

awaken yet to?day, and no longer wander and proceed in darkness and

deadly blindness. And let the poor, ignorant people, the poor, innocent

souls, no longer err under your name and cover. The whole, wide world

depends upon you learned. As you pipe, so they dance; as you teach, so

they believe; and as you proceed, so they follow. Therefore, woe unto

you if you teach wrongly; if you destroy and do not gather; if you

deceive and do not pasture; if you corrupt and do not convert.

Receive eyes of wisdom, that you may rightly teach and lead others,

according to the will of God; and that the word which Christ spoke be

not applicable to you, "I the blind lead the blind, both shall fall

into the ditch," Matt. 16:14. Lastly, I shall soon send you, if God

please, my treatis .on the baptism of the believing, with other

doctrines, from which you may clearly learn my foundation, doctrine,

seeking and intentions; why I labor, after what I strive, and by what

Scriptures and for what reasons we assert the baptism of the believing;

and for what reasons we deem and consider infant baptism as vain,

idolatrous and contrary to the word.

Read it all in sincerity of heart, ponder upon it, follow alone the

true sense of the divine Spirit and truth. Let opinions go, let flesh

and adroitness be destroyed. Many have been deceived thereby. This our

doctrine concerning the preachers, concerning the unblamableness of the

church, concerning the?baptism of the believing, concerning the Supper

of an unblamable assembly, and concerning the separation of the

penitent, is, doubtlessly, the eternal, immutable word, will and

ordinance of God; therefore, by the grace of the Lord, we will never be

reasoned out of it by human wisdom, cleverness, threats nor tyranny.

Yea, at all times I am prepared to testify and assert this doctrine

before God and my brethren, with the sure testimony of my conscience,

at the cost of all anxiety, persecution, blood and death. Let the

merciful, kind Father treat me and all those who sincerely seek and

fear him, according to his divine, blessed will. Read it discreetly and

judge it in a christian way.

This is briefly my foundation and conviction of the articles of the

christian church; that before God neither baptism, nor Supper, nor any

other outward ordinances avail if partaken without Spirit and the new

creature. But before God, only faith, love, Spirit, the new creature or

regeneration avail, as Paul plainly shows, Gal. 6:Ei. All those who, by

the grace of God receive these from above, suffer themselves to be

baptized according to the commandment of the Lord, and rightly partake

of his Supper, Acts 2:38; 9:19; 8:38; Matt. 28:19.

Yea, they with ardent desire commit themselves to the ordinance and

doctrine of Jesus Christ, and shall nevermore willfully oppose the holy

will, and plain testimony of God. For this reason I amicably beseech

you, most beloved, from my inmost heart, not to dispute with me, nor

any oth er person concerning any outward articles and literal

ordinances; but first conquer and subject yourselves; that is, your

unbelieving, miserable, refractory, obdurate flesh which yet keeps and

hinders you from the truth, faith, knowledge, righteousness and

obedience of God. Yea, doubtlessly, if that is rightly vanquished, you

will see into all of the ordinances of God, confess and practice them.

But as long as it lives in you and has its sway, you will dispute and

oppose, and nevermore comprehend, understand and follow the immutable

foundation of eternal truth. Beware.

No more at present. But rightly compare Christ with yourselves; his

love and Spirit, with your love and spirit; his seeking, doctrine,

sacraments and life, with your seeking, doctrine, sacraments and life;

and you will, no doubt, find wherein you fall short.

May God, the merciful Father, grant unto you and to us all, true

wisdom, understanding, faith, knowledge and true judgment; an ardent

heart, true fear, love, doctrine, life, sacraments and ordinances,

through Christ Jesus, our Savior and eternal Deliverer of the world,

Amen.

"Enter ye in at the strait gate," Matt. 7:13.

Amara est veritas, and qui ecvm prcedicant repktus cmnaritudine, dicit

Hieronymus.

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A

VERY PLAIN AND POINTED REPLY

TO THE

anti? Christian Doctrine

AND

FALSE ACCOUNT BY MARTIN MICRON CONCERNING THE DISCUSSION BE

TWEEN HIM AND MYSELF, BEFORE MANY WITNESSES, HELD A. D.,

1553, CONCERNING. THE INCARNATION OF OUR LORD JESUS

CHRIST, ACCORDING TO THE TRUTH AND POWER OF THE

HOLY SCRIPTURES, TOGETHER WITH A SINCERE EPIS

TLE OR ADMONITION TO HIM, TO LEARN TO

KNOW HIMSELF, TO REPENT AND BE SAVED.

BY

MENNO SIMON.

WRITTEN A. D., 1556.

"This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God and Jesus

Christ, whom thou hast sent," Jn. 17:3.

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus

Christ," 1 Cor. 3:11.

ELKHART, INDIANA:

PUBLISHED BY JOHN F. FUNK AND BROTHER.

1871.

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PREFACE.

To the well?disposed Reader:

It is manifest, honorable reader, that as Satan, the envier of the

divine honor and of our salvation, in the beginning of creation, used

the serpent as an instrument to lead Adam and Eve off the way of life,

and thus to lead them into death, as he actually did, Gen. 3:19, he now

uses his false authors and preachers to do so, some of whom he clothes

with an angelic appearance of innocence, by using many garbled

Scriptures, philosophy, sophistry, words of human wisdom, and by

leading a reasonable, private life, whereby he detains and ensnares the

poor, bound souls in their great blindness and abominations, and robs

them by his many wiles of their only means of salvation, which is Jesus

Christ.

For the serpent said unto Eve, " Ye shall not surely die." Thus, now,

our opponents say, Should Christ be the Son of God? No, he is not. The

man Christ has no father, and like expressions. For from the beginning,

the devil neither did nor could confess?the true faith in Christ Jesus,

namely, that we should acknowledge him to be the true Son of God, as

may be plainly understood from 1 Jn. 2:22; 4:3; 2 Jn. 7. "Whosoever

shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he

in God," 1 Jn. 4:16. In short he has life everlasting. Such destroy,

the dominion of the devil and the kingdom of falsehood. Yea Christ

himself had to suffer death because he confessed himself to be the Son

of God, Matt. 26:64; Mark 14:62, Jn. 5:18; 19:7.

If Satan, then, did not confess such faith, in the beginning, as was

heard, how shall he now suffer, as by the righteous judgment of God, he

is arisen, through anti?christ and his servants, to full dominion, for

the sake of sin, and has bound all earth by his deceitful doctrine,

explanations, flatterings, statutes, commandments, idolatry, tyranny

and violence?

We see clearly, since Christ Jesus, by his grace, has shown himself

through the clouds so that we, with Peter, and with all the Scriptures

confess him in power and truth to be the Son of the true and living

God, and submissively seal this faith with the sign of the holy

baptism, as did the Ethiopian, Acts 8:36, according to his command,

because we would, in our weakness, walk according to his commandments

and be saved by his grace; how terribly we are upbraided, slandered,

belied, accursed, persecuted and murdered by this wicked, perverse,

blind, and carnal generation, on that account. For Satan, never, from

the beginning confessed true faith in Christ Jesus, nor submissively

sealed it by true baptism. Nor will he ever do so, unto the end.

The apocalyptical Apollyon has so corrupted things by the locusts of

the bottomless pit, that but little truth remains with man; for it is

manifest that not only the Turks and the Papists are inimical to the

clearness of the most holy birth of Jesus Christ? in which consists

true faith, to the nature, power, fruit, impression and sealing of

faith,?but also those of whom we should expect better things, as may be

seen by the writings of our opponents.

Oh I oh I how very little these poor children have and know of the

kingdom of God, and of the power of his holy word, although they may

think, perhaps, that they understand a great deal. For it is very clear

that an earthly, carnal minded heart, an ambitious, proud mind, a

spiteful, envious person, and an untrue and false tongue is not of the

good, but of the evil one, 1 Jn. 3:8; that the writings of our

opponents were prompted by an earthly, carnal, hateful and false

?heart; that they did not seek the glory, name and honor of God, but

their own; and that they are partial and untruthful, can be easily

deduced from the fact that from begnining to end they do not speak a

kind word about me nor our beloved brethren; that they are quite silent

upon the favor, faithfully rendered them in need; nor once mention that

they were so often silenced and could not present any excuses,

something which I do not mention to our honor, but to the praise of the

Lord; also, that they did not at all in their writings touch upon their

confession which they made before us all, that woman has no seed,

whereby, in fact, his whole cause was already lost. Again, that there

were two persons in Christ; and that the crucified one was not the Son

of God; something which does not become an impartial writer who does

not seek his own honor, but sincerely seeks the honor of God; also,

that they call me quite ignorant, yea, as a cuckoo (as he also calls

me) which always sings the same song, and passes himself for a

spiritual master, versed in Scripture, while, before God and his angels

and before all present, it was actually found to be quite different,

as, by the grace of God, will be found and clearly seen from my

following writings, if judged according to the divine truth. Very

little, alas, have they meditated upon the Scripture of Paul, saying,

that we should not be desirous of vain glory, Gal. ti:26. Inasmuch as

they give such an untrue account of the discussion, and as they have so

lamentably profaned the Father and his Son, and their precious, dear,

powerful and true word and all their confessors as also, our beloved

brethren who daily, piously suffer and die for the sake of the Lord's

word, and who are slandered as if their whole life and death were but

madness, and their forsaking possessions and kindred, were but heresy;

therefore I am impelled, as in duty bound, and for the love of my Lord

and Savior Jesus Christ and his holy church (not urged by wrath; for

this I leave to him who in due time shall judge us all without respect

of person), faithfully and truthfully to annotate all that which Micron

has willfully suppressed, to the dishonor of Christ find his holy word.

Besides also, how slanderously he has blasphemed the Father and the

Son, the Word and its confessors, and how wrongfully he opposes our

faith and doctrine concerning the incarnation of Christ, which is

taught and testified to throughout the Scriptures in incontrovertible

power and clearness.

I therefore beseech all readers, for the Lord's sake, to peruse this my

explanation, with impartial hearts, to consider well the foundation and

to pray the Lord for grace and understanding. I trust to be able to

show and explain it, by the aid of God, with such power and clearness

of the holy Scriptures, that it will be plainly seen that

anti?christian deceit is on the side of our opponents and that the

clear ground of truth is on our side. Therefore I would have the

judicial term, Alteram partem audito, that is, hear also the other

party, applied, and to compare my writings with theirs and not be

mistaken through prejudice as do the partial.

I also beseech you not to think hard of my having to use such terms as,

seed of man, seed of woman, &c.; God knows how unwillingly I do so; but

necessity forces me to make use of such terms, that the glory of Christ

Jesus may not be obscured with many, and that the heavenly brightness

of his most holy birth may not remain obscured by the anti?christian

flattering and sophisty of the breath of Micron.

I can not sufficiently wonder at the man's heart and mind that he dares

publish such absurd fables to the world, and that he dares show himself

so ambitious and proud (something which, before God, I must deduce from

his writings), as it will doubtlessly be read by many an intelligent

person; for what else does he do all through his,writings, but exalt

himself, and trample me in the dust as is the nature of all the

ambitious, something which I would not have written if it only touched

me, and not the honor of God, while so many godfearing, pious men were

present who heard the discussion from beginning to end. Yet besides, it

is well known, perhaps, to thousands, as I presume, to whom it is known

through my printed writings which are daily read here and there, that I

have frequently solicited a public discussion, at the risk of being

burned if I could not maintain my faith and doctrine by virtue of the

Scriptures; but which, alas, has never been accepted.

If I, now, were so entirely ignorant, as must be understood from his

writing, it would be very curious why such a discussion should have

been so long denied me, as he might thereby have gained many a soul,

might have redeemed many a child, if we were wrong; and as he might

have won such a fame and reputation, if he had been successful, among

those of high standing and also among the whole world. But Micron has

not yet forgotten how they were situated with us, notwithstanding he

wrote thus sneeringly. If Micron and Herman had feared God as they

pretend by their sheep's clothing, they would not have acted so

foolishly as they have done by their writings. But I presume that the

one who urged Pharaoh to persecute Israel (not withstanding he had seen

such miracles in Egypt by the hands of Moses and Aaron), and found his

punishment in the Red Sea, Ex. 7:26; 8:2; 9:6; 10:14; 11:5; 14:28; who

urged Antiochus to turn Jerusalem into a death?pit, and on his way met

the punisher; that this same one has urged Micron and Herman to write

thus, that their covert hypocrisy, their many gross falsehoods,

ambitious partiality (I call it as I judge them before the Lord),

ingratitude, slander, adulteration and willful garbling of the holy,

divine word, their corrupting flatterings, sophistical philosophy,

miserable deceit of the poor, despised souls, abominable,

anti?christian doctrine, blasphemy of both the Father and his blessed

?Son, palpable blindness, and their vain, carnal hearts, may once be

made manifest through this our explanation; and that thus the hearts

which are bound by their snares through the falsehoods which they

publish against us, by the fine appearance they put on, and by the

garbled Scriptures which they teach by smooth, flattering words, may be

unbound and delivered, to the glory of the Lord.

I do not know what else to say or think of the matter. For, more than

two years ago I warned him by a man of considerable. name and one of

his fellow?believers, that if he would put it in print (for I was told

that he intended to do so), and would not tell the tale just .as it

truthfully happened, for I observed that he did not spare falsehood, I

should reply to him, if I lived and the Lord granted it. But he was

aware that if he did not tell it differently from what it was, he would

have acquired but little fame and honor with the world; for it would

have sounded: Micron lost it all; something that conceited, proud flesh

does not like to hear.

Yet, I would never, in my life, have thought that he was of such

extremely ambitious,, partial, untrue, infamous, and shameless mind, if

I had not been convinced thereof in our discussion and by this writing

of his: I thought that his intellect would have told him, even without

the warning of any one, .that if he should do as he did, while I am yet

living, that it would produce him nothing but shame and dishonor with

all reasonable readers and auditors. But Micron had to speak, as his

heart was full.

But perhaps, he hoped or thought that I might, in the mean time, die,

and that he might thus acquire fame and honor, unrebuked, with the

world. He was also aware that he could not offend the world, who gladly

accept and hear false consolations and slanders, by abusing me; for

whosoever can best belie, defame, upbraid, and depict me and my

brethren in evil colors, is, with them, a great prophet, and a pleasing

preacher. Let them run their course until hindered by the Lord! John

says, " They are of the world, and therefore they speak of the world,

and the world hear them," 1 Jn. 4:6. If possible, the beloved Lord

grant them grace. Let the reader take due notice of the following

reply, that he may learn to know Christ, do right, and be saved.

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A VERY PLAIN AND DISCREET

ANSWER TO MARTIN MICRON'S

ANTI?CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE, AND UNTRUE ACCOUNT OF THE DISCUSSION

OF 1553, ACCORDING TO THE TRUTH AND POWER OF

THE HOLY, DIVINE SCRIPTURES.

How and when the so called English came to us, and what faithful love

our brethren showed them.

IN the year 1553, a little before midwinter, it happened that it was

told the brethren that a ship?load of people had arrived from Denmark,

who, on account of their faith, were driven from England, and that they

lay a short distance from the shore, frozen up in the ice.

When the brethren heard of this, they were moved by christian mercy on

their account, as was proper. They counseled together and concluded to

lend them their assistance to help them out of the ice and properly

escort them to the city, without any commotion, as they also did;

although they conjectured that it might cause trouble with their

governments, as was also the fact.

They met them with wheat bread and wine, so that if there should be any

sick among them, they might refresh and stimulate them therewith. And

after they had escorted them into the city they made a collection of

twenty?four thalers out of their poverty, and presented that sum to the

leading ones of them, to be distributed among the needy if such there

should be among them. They .refused the money, and said they had

enough'; but would like that labor might be procured for some of their

number; in which our brethren assisted them as much as they could.

,One of our number offered to take the children of John A'Lasco into

his house, and to do the best he could for them. To which Herman

Backereel answered: No, this can not be granted; for John A'Lasco is a

man who has dealings with lords, princes and other high personages. It

might (oh! reader observe) injure his reputation if his children should

sojourn with such people. On hearing this, I observed that we had not

met with the true, plain and humble pilgrims of Jesus Christ.

Behold, thus was their arrival and reception by us; and such faithful

love have our brethren. shown them, which was, not long afterward,

taken quite amiss by ungrateful Herman; and as appears, is not touched

upon in Micron's account, merely out of hatred of the truth and out of

disfavor to the brethren, lest piety should be ascribed to them.

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HOW THE ENGLISH CAME INTO DISCUSSION WITH US.

AFTER they had been a few days in the city, Herman and his followers

called some of us together and desired a discussion with them, and

after many broad assertions he said unto them, "I am a teacher, and

would like to have a teacher put against me; for I have heard that

Menno was to be in the city. Therefore I would have him or some other

teacher to discuss with me. For I have had discussions with hundreds of

yours, and when they would be vanquished they would invariably appeal

to their teachers." Behold, thus he spoke! I might here write a good

deal about his false pretensions and ambitious expressions; also about

his infamous talk behind my back, and seeking if he could not find a

splinter about me to magnify into a beam and to tie this upon my back

as a sign of shame. Also, how he inquired of an unconscious child about

my secret shelter, &c. But, as it can not be serviceable to the reader,

therefore I will commend it to the Lord, and leave the shame of Herman

untouched, that the reader may not think that I wish to retaliate evil

with evil, from which may the Lord forever save me. Yet it is my

heart's desire that he would be more truthful, and more impartial of

heart, and that he would fear the Lord, his God, more.

The discussion was .agreed upon with Herman and his fellows upon this

condition: That they were to tell none where the discussion took place

(as I was a poor, weak man, hated of all the world). Upon which they,

on their part, gave our brethren their hands that they would never tell

it. But how they kept their word their deeds have shown. For it was but

a short time until it, was known in the streets of Emden where Menno

lived, and that Micron and his fellows had a discussion with him: And

besides, they have published it in print, to all the world. If

honorable, pious persons are not bound to respect their word and pledge

(which is considered the same as an oath by all reasonable people)

better than this, I will leave to the judgment of all readers, both

those for and against me.But there are many who think that they cannot

misuse us.

In the same manner they have been ungrateful to the city which showed

more mercy to them than all Eastland and Denmark, when in midwinter

they knew not where to find shelter; as they, with their unsalted,

partial writings, have made the city suspicioned by lords, princes and

other cities, that the city maintained us; while the city knew no more

of my sojourning than they knew of the hour of their death.

Lastly, they registered the names of some good persons who had not

merited such treatment, that they might be known in all countries to

which they might move. A reward of thousands has been offered for the

apprehension of one and his little children, who have rendered them

such great services if the Lord, by his grace, do not prevent it. If

they had now, in all this considered the unfeigned, pure love (which

wishes harm to none, much less does it), common honesty, and their word

and honor, since such a course instructs none upon the earth, nor makes

them better in God, and appears more like the work of a traitor, than

of a pious man; then, according to my opinion, the evangelical,

christian character, spirit, discipline and reasonableness would have

been more uniform than it now is. The Lord's word is true: The fruit

shows what the tree is, Matt. 12:33. Behold, thus have they acted who

pretend to be christians and say that we are heretics; who call upon

God as their witness and judge that they have faithfully described the

discussion, while they are well aware that the first sentence they

wrote was a falsehood. And how quite untrue it is, will, by the grace

of the Lord, be shown by self?evident truths from my following

explanation of the discussion between Herman and myself.

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DISCUSSION BETWEEN HERMAN AND MYSELF.

IT happened when we met for the purpose of a discussion, that I briefly

admonished them in regard to the suffering, oppression, tribulation,

persecution and cross of the true christians. To which he immediately

answered: " That I wished to make his doctrine suspected." Something of

which I had not thought of in the. least. I then quit, and said, Well

Herman, I presume you would rather discuss the question of the

incarnation I He answered in the affirmative. Then, I said, confess

your faith. When he had made his confession, I said, Beloved Herman,

take heed of your words. For behold, all these inconsistencies follow

from your belief. And enumerated eight of them.

And behold, when I had finished my discourse there was one among them

(J. M. whose name is frequently referred to in Micron's writings), who

asked me if I could prove that to be the fact, according to Scripture?

thinking that I had thus spoken in regard to my own faith. I told him

that he might ask Herman, as it was his faith and doctrine. On hearing

this he dropped his head and was silent. I told him thrice,

successively, to get Herman to prove it to him, according to the

Scriptures. I have yet to receive his answer.

When I observed such partiality, I was very sorry. I said, Great God,

are we thus to treat the word of the Lord. . O shame I When you thought

that it was my doctrine you wanted Scripture; but since you find that

it is the doctrine of Herman, now you have Scripture enough! O, friend,

I said, repent and be ashamed before God; for you do not treat his

word, as becomes a true christian. And this is one of the principal,

impartial witnesses, as Micron wrongfully boasts.

Afterward Herman replied and said, "I will scatter these

inconsistencies as the wind scatters the dust." Dear Herman, I said, do

not speak so boldly, it does not become a christian. I know you can not

do it. And, praise to the Lord for his grace, it is verified to the

present time as I can plainly see by Micron's Appendix, notwithstanding

they have revolved the matter in their heads for more than two years.

The inconsistencies remained unreplied to; and it was mostly granting

that could be heard from him. So at last I said, My dear sir, show me,

where do you find it written that he took on him our flesh or our human

nature, as you claim? He then answered: Paul teaches us that Christ

"took on him the form of a servant," Phil 2:7.

When he had finished his discourse I asked him whether. or not he

agreed with John A'Lasco, in doctrine? He answered in the affirmative.

I replied: Well, A'Lasco has made an antithesis of this Scripture of

Paul " In the form of God," and, "the form of a servant." That as he

was in a divine form and thereby truly was God, he has thus, also,

taken upon himself our sinful form and was thereby, truly, made man,

"but" (he says), "the sins, on account of which we are called servants

in Scripture, he did not have:"

From which antithesis one of two things must be true. Either, if he had

the sinful form and not the sin, that he then, by virtue of the

antithesis, also, must have had the divine form; but he did not have

the divine form. Or if he had, and therewith the .divinity also, that

he, also, must have had the sinful form, and therewith sin; else the

antithesis is false and can not stand, in fact. In this view of the

matter one of two things is true, that Christ Jesus was either a

sinner, or else he was not God. And how such doctrine agrees with the

Scriptures, I will leave to your own judgment.

Then he replied: "The Scriptures testify that he was without sin." It

is true, I said. Therefore it is manifest that this antithesis of

A'Lasco is false, and that you can not maintain your doctrine by this

Scripture. But if the Scripture is to remain unbroken, then this is the

true antithesis; as Christ was in the godly form, and was thereby truly

God, as he humbled himself and did not take on himself the form of a

potentate, emperor, or king, whom we should serve, but the form of a

poor servant, because he wanted to serve; for as he has been truly God

in God, and with God his Father, from eternity; thus he became our true

servant, in due time, Isa. 7:16; 9:5; 40:28; Jer. 23:5; 33:15; Jn. 1:2;

Rom. 9:26; 1 Jn. 5:5; Matt. 12:18; 20:28.

He then abandoned that Scripture, and said, " There is another one much

plainer, which has it that," "He has taken on him the seed of Abraham,"

Heb. 2:18. Not so Herman, I said. We should not thus adulterate the

Scriptures. For it does not read that he has taken on him the seed of

Abraham, but it reads that he took it on himself. Which taking on shall

last unto the end.

He then took the words of the same chapter and said, "That Christ had

taken upon himself the children's flesh and blood, and is thus, on

account of the flesh, called our brother."

On hearing this I replied: That that was again an adulteration of the

Scriptures; for it is written that he took upon himself flesh and

blood; but not the flesh and blood of children. Therefore let us get at

the meaning of these words at the start, lest we adulterate the

Scriptures. Thus Paul says, "He that sanctifieth, and they who are

sanctified, are of one." Now I ask, to whom has it reference? To God or

to Adam? He replied: "To Adam." Then it follows, I said,

incontrovertibly, that all ungodly children of the devil, such as

thieves, murderers, drunkards, haters, idolaters, whores and rogues,

are Christ's brethren and sisters. He frankly admitted this to be the

case.

It would further follow, if we were Christ's brethren and sisters on

account of the flesh, then also we would be his children on account of

the flesh; for Paul says, "Behold, I and my children," &c. From which

it would surely follow that the one brother had generated the other,

and the children their father, according to the flesh. And I will leave

you to study out how such a generation could be, according to the

Scriptures, and according to the ordinance of God.

After passing some other words concerning the partaking of, I asked him

if Adam had not partaken of flesh and blood? He answered in the

affirmative. Well, said I, of whose flesh and blood did he partake, if

we are to understand participation as you do? Therefore beloved Herman,

take heed. Your learned ones deceive you. . Thus Paul says, "He that

threshes in hope, should be partaker of his hope," that is, that he may

obtain that for which he hopes. Again, in the same chapter: "If others

be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather?" 1 Cor.:9:10,

12, that is, if others have this power. Again, "We are made partakers

of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto

the end," Heb. 3:14. Not that we partake partly but wholly.

Therefore, beloved Herman, I warn you, let the Scripture remain

Scripture and do not garble it to suit your opinion. For Paul . does

not say that the unsanctified, such as, liars, haters, proud,

adulterers, and the children of the devil are one with Christ, our

Savior, but that the sanctified are of one with him, that is, those

who, with him are born of one God. On account of which birth of God,

and not of Adam, we are his brethren; for the regenerated with him,

have one Father, as he is the first begotten Son of God, thus he is

also the firstborn among many brethren, Heb. 1:6; Rom. 8:29.

As holy Paul, then, teaches us that he is thus the first?begotten among

the brethren; therefore it is very plain that he is not our brother of

Adam, but of God; for he was not the first?begotten of Adam, therefore

Adam's children must, through regeneration by faith, also become the

children of God, Jn. 1:12, and thus be Christ's brethren, Matt. 12:50;

Mark 3:35; Luke 8:21; Heb. 2:11.

Behold, he is not ashamed to call his brethren, such regenerated and

sanctified ones who, with him, have one Father (no whores, rogues and

children of the devil), saying, Thy name (he means his Father's name

and not Adam's) I will promulgate to my brethren. Again, I will trust

in him (namely, in the Father, and not in Adam). Again, behold, "I and

the children which God (not Adam) hath given me." Inasmuch as it is

very plain that his children are not the carnal, but the spiritual

children (for he had no carnal children) then his brethren must be

spiritual brethren; or else one Scripture must be understood

spiritually and the other carnally, then, also sister Mary must have

generated her brother Christ, in the flesh. This is incontrovertible.

Although now such regenerated, the sanctified, are his brethren and

sisters they yet have, contrary to their own will, communion with flesh

and blood, through the inherent sinful nature; they frequently sin,

stumble and transgress, and are thus through the beforementioned

communion, conscious of guilt according to the law which requires

perfect righteousness. And behold, therefore he is their Savior,

first?begotten Brother, and Father Christ, who in like manner, has

partaken of flesh and blood, not of the children, for it does not read

so, and in that case he must have been one of two sons, one of whom was

of heaven, eternal and immortal, the other of earth and mortal, but the

Word itself (I add some words for explanation) is become flesh, that

is, a truly passive, mortal man, in Mary, as John says, "The word is

become flesh," like unto his sanctified brethren in all things, except

sin, that he might fulfill the law in his innocent flesh and not by our

guilty flesh; that he might take away the deserved death by his

innocent death; destroy the devil who had the power of death; bruise

the Serpent's head; sanctify us unto God, his Father, by virtue of his

precious blood; and assist, must in all our temptations and besetting

sins which result from our wicked flesh and the inspirations of Satan.

Behold, this is the proper explanation of Heb. 2:14. And by such

explanation Christ remains the undivided Son of God, the Scripture

remains unbroken, Christ remains the Sanctifier and we are the

sanctified. Brethren and children, there is not a single Scripture

which contradicts this, while Herman's confession and faith are very

inconsistent as? has been heard.

When I again touched upon the inconsistencies, he asked me to confess

my faith, as he had done his; and he was going to show, he said, more

inconsistencies (although he had not yet heard it) in my faith than I

had shown in him. And when I had made my confession, he said, "This is

too long for me; I can not reply to it." I then made a brief statement.

Yet I was shown no? inconsistency.

Behold, worthy reader, these are the principal points and Scriptures

which Herman and I discussed concerning the incarnation of Christ. I

say the .principal ones; for to repeat all the words which passed

between us, is impossible.

After meal time we came to the discussion of pedo?baptism, which he

tried to make right by the assertion, that the children, as he said,

are accounted as believing, by the Scriptures, and that Zaccheus (he

insisted upon Zaccheus, notwithstanding I told him that it was not

Zaccheus), and his whole house were baptized.

Kind reader, if I were to give an account of the discussion as it

happened it would i seem to some readers as if I were partial; again,

to others, who know me, that it was very foolish of him to challenge us

while he did not know more of Scripture. I told him twice, dear Herman,

you are too young; you will have to learn a great deal before you ought

to try to defend your, cause. What is become of all your bold

assertions which you made at the start? Yet, Micron writes that some of

their weak brethren were very much strengthened by Herman during the

discussion. I will leave the matter here. Thus they hoodwink the reader

that he may not observe that Herman acted so childish, to their shame.

I know to a certainty that Micron was written to immediately after the

discussion, as his own writing implies. For their brethren who were

with us were in great need, inwardly and outwardly. What he means by

'inwardly I I will leave the reader to judge.

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HOW PARTIALLY MICRON NARRATED OUR FIRST DISCUSSION; HOW SILENT HE IS ON THE

PRINCIPAL POINTS; HOW HE GARBLES MY WORDS AND HOW HE ADORNS HIS OWN.

WHEN we were met for the discussion, I said to Micron, I hear that your

name is Martin Micron. You are unknown to me; and I have never heard of

you before you came here. But I understand that you have made quite a

reputation at London, England, that you have published writings, as I

hear. Therefore my fraternal admonition to you is, that if you hear

more powerful truths and firmer foundation in this our discussion, than

you have heard or learned before this, that you seek not your own fame

and honor, but the praise and honor of God. To which he replied:

"Menno, this is also my admonition to you." I said, I am here for that

very purpose; and I have suffered for many years because I would gladly

have the truth and follow it.

This brotherly admonition, given him in faithfulness of heart, he has

lamentably disregarded in the latter part of the discussion, as he was

every time conquered in his false, anti?christian doctrine, and he said

it before my face that I had blamed him with seeking his own praise and

honor by his writing, in London. Something which I had, then, never

thought of; for I was not acquainted with him.

He called upon his own as witnesses, which poor, enchanted children all

agreed with him. at which I was very sorry, and said, Is the fear of

God, then, not before you? There are now ten of you, all of whom answer

to suit him. If there were ten thousand more besides you, you would not

tell the truth in this matter. For how could it be possible that I

should at the first start run up to a man with whom I was not

acquainted, and of whom I had heard nothing but a good report, and say,

that he had sought his own honor with his writings.

Also, all of our brethren contradicted him, and said, "Good Micron, you

are mistaken; for so and so has Menno admonished you, and thus you have

answered him." Yet it was of no avail. These unkind, bitter, lying, and

defaming words must, alas, be published in his book. What kind of a

spirit this is; how he follows the unadulterated, christian truth,

piety and love; and how faithfully he narrates the matter, I will let

all impartial, reasonable readers judge by his dishonest adulteration

of my words which I spoke to him with such good intentions. We then

discussed some articles with which my writings are replete; and to

which it is useless to reply. Lastly, we came to the discussion of the

incarnation, for the sake of which we are called such abominable

heretics and deceivers by them, namely, because we confess with God,

the Father, with Christ, with the angel Gabriel, with Peter, and with

all the Scriptures that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, Matt. 3:1'7;

1'7:6; Mark 1:11; 9:7; Luke 1:31; 3:22; Jn. 1:46; 6:22; 8:36; 7:21;

8:23; 9:37; 10:36.

His proper confession and foundation was, That, there are two Sons in

Christ. The one eternal and impassive; the other temporal and passive;

and that the one which was crucified for us, was not the Son of God.

Which confession he did not make thoughtlessly and by mistake, but with

premeditation and a sober mind, before us all; and he has repeated it,

at least four or five times. Yet he calls on the judgment and name of

the Lord, that they frequently confessed, with us, that the Son of God

died for us. Syrach truly says, "Many would rather do the worst than to

lose their honor; and do it for the sake of the ungodly," Syr. 20:24.

[7]

I proposed the inconsistencies of his belief and after many long and

broad assertions I let him read undisturbedly an hour or an hour and a

half from the Bible, about the seed of woman, the seed of Abraham, and

of David; and about the fruit of the loins of David. When he had

finished reading, I asked, what he wanted to assert thereby? " I assert

thereby, he said, that the man Christ is of the fathers, and that the

word did nut become flesh, as you say." This was the amount of his

words.

I replied, I cordially acknowledge and confess all these Scriptures to

be right and good; for they teach us, and testify that such a Savior

should come. But now we will find out from the Scriptures of whom the

human fruit comes; whether it comes of the father or of the mother. On

hearing this, he said, 6 ' Are you going to find that out I" I answered

in the affirmative; for I trust, by the grace of God, to .be able to

prove by virtue of the holy, divine Scriptures, that the origin of the

child is of the father, and not of the mother, but through the mother.

This, I think, was something new to him; for he said, "Sir, let us hear

it." I pointed him to 1 Cor. 11:8, where Paul says, "Man is not of the

woman, but the woman of the man." On hearing this he interrupted me and

said, "This is spoken of Adam and Eve." Hold, said I; but it further

reads: " Even so is the, man also by the woman." Was Adam, then, by

Eve? He was then silent, as one who is beaten. I showed him many plain

Scriptures, as Gen. 1C:4; 17:6; 19:32; Rom. 9:7; Heb. 7:10; 11:12.. I

also referred him to the genealogy, Matt. 1, that Christ, according to

his foundation, must also have been a Syrian, Canaanite, Moabite and an

Ammonite. I also made some natural illustrations, as of the sower, his

seed and soil; from which he tries to make it appear. to the reader

that I made use of my intellect and not of the Scripture, against him.

But, as the saying is, Micron's little finger knows full well that the

seed of the land and the seed of man are called by the same name, in

the Scriptures; and that also Abraham cast his seed, that is, sowed it,

Heb. 11:11, although he garbles it in his writings and would apply. the

casting to Sarah. What we are to judge of such willful adulterers of

the holy, divine word, I will leave to the impartial reader. It is the

same means of which the serpent made use when he led Adam and Eve into

death, Gen. 3:1. Kind reader, ag the Scriptures, together with daily

occurrences, openly testify to us by the ordinance of God, that there

are sowers, and also that there is seed, which is sown, there must also

be a fit soil to be sown; for neither in the unplowed land, nor upon

houses, trees and rocks do we sow, as may be seen. And whether or not

my comparison of the husbandman, of his seed, and of his field can

stand according to the Scriptures, I will not leave to the calumniating

Micron and Herman, but to the reasonable reader.

When I had finished my argument I said, Behold, Martin, this natural

comparison which I have proposed, you may take into consideration, at

your leisure, but let us have a reply to my Scriptures. Then he

appeared as one who is in doubt, and said, "Away with this plilosophy

of the seed of woman." On hearing this, I replied: I have proposed to

you the plain Scriptures whereby I have proved that the child is

originally of the father, and not of the mother; and you want it to be

of the mother, without the Scriptures. Say, kind sir, which of us two

makes use of philosophy ? You or I ? He made no reply at all. But he

now writes as if he had then said, thus, "The words of Paul, 1 Cor.

11:7, should be understood as having reference to Adam and Eve; for

Paul wanted to humble the men that they should not exalt themselves

above woman, on. account of their glory," which in one sense is right,

yet not according to the sense of Paul in this instance. For Micron

desires to apply it to Adam and Eve, and Paul spoke it, in reference to

all who are born: of Adam and Eve. For he says, "For as the woman is of

the man, even so is the man also by the woman." Mark, he says, By the

woman. If Onan had done as he did, Gen. 38:9, a thousand times; and

besides, all men with him, who were from the beginning, no human fruit

would be born therefrom. For the seed must have a proper soil to

produce fruit and to generate according to the word and ordinance of

the Lord, and therefore Paul says, "Neither is the man without the

woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord," 1 Cor. 11:11. I

trust that such plain Scriptures can be understood.

Again, concerning the Scripture, Wis. 7:2, Micron says, "It does not

read of man's seed alone." To which I, reply: Micron must be a man who

esteems the judgment of the Almighty God too little, that he is not

afraid to adulterate such plain words, or to obscure them by the breath

of the abyss, as it is so plain that the Holy Spirit in plain words

here ascribes to the father that which belongs to the father, according

to the ordinance of God, and to the mother what belongs to the mother.

\* \* \* I repeat it, that such plain words of the Scriptures are easily

understood.

Again, to my pointing him how Sarah conceived of Abraham, and Rebecca

of Isaac, Heb. 11:11; Rom. 9:7, he replies thus, but in the discussion

he did not refer to it, the reason why Abraham. and Isaac are called

the origin of their descendants, he says, is to exclude other men, and

also, because woman has lost her privilege through sin. This is such

glozing as if both the Scripture and that were lost. Therefore this is

my brief reply: God does not require of any one that which he has not

given, nor does he envy any one for that which is given him; for he is

a God of the truth and not of a mere name. And if the Lord had done so,

for the reason given by Micron, then God would have had pleasure in the

name, and not in truth. He would also have given more to those

patriarchs than truthfully belonged to them, and taken from woman what

belonged to her. Mark what kind of a God the sophistry of Micron

teaches.

As for the privilege, of which he writes, I would in all love ask him

what kind of a privilege this was, which woman has lost through sin? If

she is no more woman, and if she is become unfit to fulfill her

maternal calling and office to which she was ordained of God? That she

is woman still, and necessary to fill her place in the world, is too

clear to need arguing. Therefore I do not know what the privilege might

be, as the Scriptures say no more than, " I will greatly multiply thy

sorrow, and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children:

and thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee,"

Gen. 3:16. But thus something must. be done to deceive the humble

reader, when flattery will not give it a scriptural appearance.

Oh I oh I ! If we poor children were to treat the Scriptures the

twentieth part as they do (something from which may the Lord save us),

and would wail the eyes of the ignorant as does Micron by his

flatterings, great god! how they would be offended. They would also

have full right to do so. Nevertheless, however they teach and do, it

is a welcome gospel to the poor, deceived world, as was commonly the

case from the beginning with all false prophets and their followers. He

is allowed to break the bones of the passover, and to cut off Samson's

hair, Ex. 12:46; Num. 9:12, until the time comes that it is ended with

him and he has to give an account of his deceit before the Lord.

After some passing remarks, we came to the inconsistency that they had

an impure Christ; and I asked him if he confessed Mary to be of the

impure and sinful seed of Adam? He answered, "Yes." But he said she was

pure, because the angel said unto her, " Blessed art thou among women,"

Luke 1:28. To this I replied: The Lord said unto Abraham, "I shall

bless thee;" ~'and I will bless them that bless thee," Gen. 12. Again,

he promised to the obedient parents under the law: "Blessed shall be

the fruit of thy body," Deut. 28:4. Were, thereby, Abraham, together

with all those that bless him, and all those who are born of such pious

parents, pure and without sin

He said, " Christ was pure and without sin, and that because he was not

of human seed." I replied: From such explanation the greatest

inconsistencies would follow.

He then replied: "God was the cause that the nature of Adam was

corrupted." I noticed that he was unable to reply, and that he knew not

what to say. I asked him, Why! Because, said he, " God said," "In the

day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." So I hear, I said,

that God was the cause of the transgression of Adam? together with some

other remarks. "No," he said, "I do not say so." Oh, Micron ! I said,

Consider what inconsistencies you advance and what a weak, unscriptural

foundation it is which you would assert and maintain I He did not reply

again, yet he claims in his writing that he asserted and maintained the

purity of Christ, against us. If that is not seeking one's own honor

and to give an untrue account of the discussion, I will leave the

reader to judge. And how the assertions which he now makes in his

writings, will stand according to the Scriptures, we will show by the

Scripture. Thus he writes: " We can conclude nothing under sin, but

that which the Scriptures conclude under it." In this he is right, yet

contrary to himself. For the Scriptures conclude Adam and all his seed

under sin. Therefore it must be so with Adam and all his seed; this

cannot be denied, 1 Cor.15:21; Rom. 6:18; Gal. 3:22; Eph. 2:1. He

further writes: That which the Scriptures make free, we also should

consider free. Again he is right; but contrary to himself, for the

Scripture makes Christ free, and therefore we also consider him as

free, because he is from above, of God who is pure, and not from below

of impure Adam; which Adam, I repeat, according to the Scriptures, is

concluded under sin, with all his seed, and the Scriptures do not

contradict themselves.

He further writes that the apostles and prophets had no need of saying

so much about the holiness of Christ, if he were from above, and not of

Adam. This is so simple, that it looks surprising. For, if Christ were

such ,a pure man of impure Adam, as our opponents say, then the

Scriptures would contradict themselves; or else Adam must have had two

seeds of which one was corrupt and the other remained pure, which is

not thus taught by holy writ. Observe what blind arguments he advances.

Lastly, he writes: "That which God testifies to be holy; man can not

make common or unholy," and adduces, Acts 10:15. Here the most holy

holiness of the flesh of Jesus Christ is compared, by him, to the flesh

of the animals, which, under the law, were forbidden Israel to eat,

Lev. 11; Dent. 14:7, and which are now, under the gospel, allowed as

clean, Matt. 15:11; Mark 7:15; Acts 10:15; Rom. 14:20; Tit. 1:15, as if

Adam, thus, by one word (as the animals under the law), was made

unclean; and now, again, by one word (as also these animals), was made

clean, in this his seed'(of which, according to him, Christ should be

generated); by which he blasphemes the most holy holiness of Christ's

flesh. O, abominable flattery!

Behold, dear reader, this is the best foundation upon which Micron can

build his assertion of the purity of the flesh of Christ, after a study

of two years of which he, at the time of the discussion did not advance

a single word. You may consider for yourselves whether he does not make

his doctrine suspected by such flattery.

And when he was defeated in his assertion about the seed of woman, by

virtue of the Scripture, and could find nothing to solve the

inconsistency, and was hedged in on all sides, he proposed the

following question, as if he was so confused that he knew not what to

say and yet wanted to say something, that it might not be said?that he

was silenced: "Do you, believe that Mary was a human being ?" For God's

sake, hear what he has proposed!

On hearing this, I became recklessly excited, and answered

thoughtlessly: She certainly was no brute. What is this for a base

question 2 Behold thus the .brute came into play; upon the cause of

which he is silent; and which he adduces quite strangely, and little to

my honor.

I confess before him and before all readers that I did not answer him

respectfully; and I am ?sorry for it; for it would have been proper to

have given him a considerate answer; and not to return foolishness with

foolishness. But to which of us the greatest blame should be

attributed, to Micron with his surprisingly indiscreet question, or to

myself with my .unseasoned answer, I would gladly leave to his own

consideration if he were impartial.

After this had taken place I had but very little desire to discuss with

him at that time, as I saw that he so quite partially placed himself

against the truth although he had nothing to advance whereby he could

defend his foundation, so that I was forced to say, Good Martin, do not

take it amiss; it would be well if you would learn to know yourself

better, for you are yet too much of a novice in the Scriptures ~ to

defend the foundation of your doctrine in regard to this matter.

"Attend," he said then, "I will tell you something else." But as it had

no foundation at all, and was nothing but nonsense; and as he went from

one thing to another, I recklessly answered: Away with your talk. All

you adduce is nothing but anathema.

He then became very angry and cried out thrice: " The pope has taught

you this." No, I answered with the same words, thrice, Not the pope,

but Paul has taught me this, Gal. 1:8. For it is a strange gospel, your

philosophy about Christ, which is not taught us by the apostles nor by

the Scriptures; and I did not say a eord about 1 Cor. 16:22, although

he, without any truth, said and wrote so, the like of which alas, he

often does to defame me, out of malice.

I again acknowledge that I might' have borne with him more patiently

than I did. Yet the Son of God has not lost his son?ship and rights, by

my inconsiderate answer; nor was Micron's anti?christian doctrine

thereby rendered the christian doctrine. I became very tired of

answering his foolish questions; for I began to observe by what kind of

a spirit he was prompted.

Besides, he has quite reversed the narration of the discussion; has

enlarged his ten words into very many, to flatter his cause; has

abreviated mine in many instances, to weaken our cause, and has written

many things which were never thought of; and such by which he was quite

stunned, he has not mentioned at all. Yet this audacious man dares call

on God as his witness that he has given a true narration. O Lord!

Well, every one will have to give an account of himself before his God,

let him adorn his falsehoods and seal them as much as he pleases. By

the grace of God, I shall affirm my humble truth with yea, and nay, as

Scripture teaches. Whosoever will, may therewith believe my writings;

and if he will not I can not help it. I will call on nothing higher. I

have suffered much pain and trouble for about twentyone years for the

sake of truth, yea and nay, and have borne it submissively; nor shall I

by the merciful assistance of the Lord leave it in my old age, on

account of Micron and all anti?christians' false doctrine, however

Satan may portray me by his authors and servants.

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[7] German Bible.

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HOLY AND WHAT MICRON CONFESSED DURING OUR SECOND DISCUSSION,

AND HOW UNFAITHFULLY HE HAS NARRATED IT.

IN the second place, I asked him if he admitted the confession which he

had made, concerning the two Sons in Christ, at the time of our first

discussion? He answered, "Yes." Then I desired Andrew whom he calls

Cananeus, to write it down, which he did in Micron's presence, and

reads thus: Two sons in Christ. The first, God's eternal Son, born of

him before time was, without mother, and impassive. The second, Mary's

son, or the son of man, born of her in due time, without father, and

passive. In which passive son of Mary, the impassive Son of God, dwelt.

So that the man Christ who died for us, was not the Son of God; for he

had no father." Behold, this was his confession which we all heard from

his own mouth, and which was written down in his presence.

When Andrew had written it down, Micron said, "Read it to me." After it

was read I asked him if he had not written it down right. He replied

"Yes." And now this untruthful man comes and writes that they

frequently confessed that the Son of God died for us; while it did not

happen otherwise than it is here narrated; and comes now again in his

writing and says that he had no father. For on the thirtysecond page he

writes: "As to the real origin of the human substance (which he called

before us, the second son), he had, according to the testimony of the

Holy Scriptures, no father; and refers to Matt. 1:2, 3. And thus the

pure, Holy Scriptures (because they call Mary a virgin), must be the

cover of his abominably false doctrine; notwithstanding it clearly

testifies in many places that God is his Father; and that he is the Son

of God, Luke 1:31; 9:35; Matt. 3:17; 14:33; 16:16; 17:5; Mark .3:11;

9:6; 15:39; Jn. 1:45; 3:16; 6:69; 7:28; 8:23; 9:37; 10:36; 11:27.

Behold this is the man who, according to his own writing, has so

cleverly discussed and so powerfully asserted the foundation of his

doctrine, as he falsely makes his followers believe; and who has, to

his own everlasting shame, placed such a bright crown upon his head, as

he claims in his book. The proverb, " That honor shames those that seek

it," is true.

In the third place, I asked him, since he says that the man Christ had

no father, whether he did not call him the Son of God ? He answered, "

Yes." I asked him again, for what reason he called him so; whether it

was on account of his birth, or of regeneration, or of his creation, or

of the acceptation? For if he should be truly called such it must be

because of one of these .four reasons; or else one would speak a

falsehood as often as he would call him such. I received this answer: "

On account of none of these four reasons." This is all the answer he

gave me; but he sought another retreat, that he might not be caught in

the net of truth. This question (then left unanswered) he now, adduces

quite garbled, and says, page 173, " That he is called the Son of God,

on account of the union of the two sons" (which he artfully calls two

natures that it may not sound too strange), of which union we can find

not a letter in all the Scriptures, whereby he confesses publicly that

the crucified Christ Jesus who has borne the sins of all the world and

reconciled it unto God his Father, was merely called the Son of God;

and that God is therefore but a God in name, and not a God in truth.

Surely, this is too much of blasphemy, that the Almighty, great God and

his blessed, beloved Son must hear of such a man.

In the fourth place, T asked him if he knew that Gellius Faber had

issued a publication against us, and if he had read it? He answered,

"Yes." Well, said I, how do you like it? "It is a very fine thing," he

said, "I have also let our brethren read it."

Ah, Martin! said I, do you endorse that ungodly homily which is so

replete with falsehood, by which the word and ordinances of the Lord

are so lamentably broken, and wherein the most holy flesh of Christ is

called a boose?.qeld [8] and ransom? If the Lord will help me he will

he replied to, for when this happened mine was almost in print. Behold,

I tell the truth. Then Micron said, " I have spoken to Gellius about

the boose?geld; and he claims that it is a mistake of the printer, and

that it should be loose?geld (a ransom). Then one of ours said, loose

means, in this?sense, false or frivolous." Should Christ's flesh, then,

have been a false or frivolous money? &c.

On hearing this, I said: I have often thought to myself how is it

possible that a man could thus write? It must be a mistake. Reflecting

upon the matter, I said, I remembered that John A'Lasco and he were

unanimous in this doctrine; and that A'Lasco wrote: "If Christ be holy

why was he then condemned by the judgment of the Father, on account of

sin Z" Again, "Christ partook of no other flesh but that of sin, that

he might be tempted, and subject to death." Inasmuch as they agreed, I

thought, and as these sayings of A'Laseo openly testify, that he

(Christ) was not holy, but that he was of a sinful flesh, guilty of

death, therefore it might, in the same manner, be called by the

learned, a boose?geld and ransom. Behold, thus I answered, and not

otherwise.

When I told it thus, Micron desired to read the sayings of A'Lasco, and

said at last, after having studied about them: "It is very obscure."

Yes, certainly, I Paid, Not obscure but ungodly. And this discreet

reply of mine he has not only suppressed, but lamentably garbled, to my

disadvantage. Besides, he has left the writings of A'Lasco out of the

narrative and thus he blames me of what others are guilty. I will leave

it to the all?seeing God and to his own mind whether he has written it

with the Spirit of truth, which is quite impartial, and with true,

christian love, as if standing before God.

Inasmuch as I have thus found it printed in his book, and as the

sayings of A'Lasco imply that Christ's flesh was guilty of death; as

has been heard, which may rightfully be called a boose?,geld and

ransom, as he deems it to be sinful, then say, beloved, what have I

said about which to make such an ado? and, as he perhaps thinks, on

account of which he has so mortally wounded me; besides, according to

truth it is their foundation and the unmistakable result of their

doctrine. But thus he must render Gellius a favor at my expense,

although he once spoke quite differently to some preachers at Emden,

about Gellius' book.

We then came to the inconsistency of concluding two persons in Christ.

To which Micron answered: " We do not assert that there are two persons

in Christ; but we say there is but one. For although the Word, from

eternity, was one person, yet when it was conceived in Mary it was no

person." Beloved, mark, what indiscreetness he uses.

He further said: "Although every man is a person, and although the man

Christ was a man as any other man, yet the man Christ, for himself

alone, was no person." Is it not a shame that one has to repeat such

ignorant words before intelligent persons? Paul truly asks: "Where is

the disputer of this world?" 1 Cor. 1:20. When we had finished our

arguments in regard to this matter, I said, I understand that some of

you say, "?Menno said sometime ago that the whole Christ was God's Son;

but he did not prove it by the Scripture." Therefore I desire to do so

now; and I will read the Scriptures of the New Testament to you, which

testify that the whole Christ Jesus, from head to foot, visible and

invisible, is God's own, only and first?begotten, true Son, if you will

patiently attend, as I did when you were reading. "Do so," he said.

I read about twenty?four or twenty?five strong, plain Scriptures, to

some of which I shall here refer. The first wars, " The Holy Ghost

shall come upon thee and the power of the Highest shall overshadow

thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall

be called the Son of God," Luke 1:35. Here the angel of the Lord

testifies that Christ Jesus should be the Son of God, and you, Micron,

say that he was not.

The Father himself says, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well

pleased," Matt. 3:17; 17: G; Mark 9:7; Luke 3:22; 9:35. And you,

Micron, boldly contradict it, and say that he is not. Again, Christ

said unto the blind man, " Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He

answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I may believe on him? And

Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that

speaketh with thee," Jn. 9:35, 36. Here the visible, speaking Christ

confesses himself to be the Son of God. And you, Micron, say he is not.

Christ says, "What and if ye shall see the son of man ascend up where

he was before?" Jn. 6:62\_ Here Christ testifies that the Son of man was

from above, and that he would again return thither. And you, Micron,

say that the son of man is not of heaven, but of earth.

Peter answered Christ to the question:" Whom say ye that I am?" " Thou

art the Christ, the Son of the living God," Matt. 18:16; and Christ

blessed him for it. And you, Micron, say that the man Christ is not the

Son of God.

The centurion confessed him to be such; at the cross. He said, " Truly

this man was the Son of God," Mark 15:39. And you, Micron, controvert

it, and say that he was not.

All the apostles confessed Christ to be the Son of God, Matt. 14:33;

also, John, the Baptist; Nathaniel and Martha, Jn. 1:45; 11:2Z. And

you, Micron, are not ashamed to say that he is not.

John says, "These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the

Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through

his name," Jn. 20:31. Beloved Micron, take heed. At another place it

reads, " He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar; because he

believeth not the record that God gave of his Son," 1 Jn. G:10. "He is

anti?christ that denieth the Father and the Son," 1 Jn. 2:22. Behold,

Micron, what kind of spirits you are we will let you judge by this

Scripture of John. What is your answer to all those plain Scriptures,

which I have read ~

He was again puzzled as before, during the first discussion when he was

overcome on the subject of woman's seed. Both he and Herman became pale

(as the brethren told me, for I did not notice it), and Micron said, "

Most of these Scriptures I confess to be right and just." Not all? I

asked. I have not added a single word; but merely read from the Bible.

Tell me which are not right.

I received no answer at all. But again he asked a strange question

three or four times, which I refused to. answer, desiring an answer to

the Scriptures which I had read. At last he spoke, but merely

deceitfully, that he might lead me off my Scriptures which he could not

answer because they were too powerful and plain, and also because he

yet wanted to make a show: " They shall be answered," he said. Then ask

on, said I. "Do you believe," he said, " that Christ was born of the

Father, and seated with the Father, from eternity?" I let him ask the

question again.

Martin, said I, you do not act as becomes a true and pious man. Is that

an answer to my Scriptures? Immediately he began to boast that I could

not answer his question. I was sorry that I had commenced to discuss

with such a perverse man; for I saw clearly that he was not prompted by

the spirit of truth. I further said, that I have never read of such a

birth, in the Scriptures, as the one which he enquired about, which

implied a seat with God from eternity. If you read of it, I said, then

show me where to find it.

"No," he said, "We want to find it out by you." Martin, said I, be

ashamed. When I want to see the Scriptures you are not willing to show

them. He again said, "He wanted to find it out by me." Man, man, I

said, By this you show what kind of a spirit there is in you. What

indiscreet perverseness, to require of me to show that which is not to

be found in the Scriptures. Heaven and earth have not yet stood six

thousand years, and the Scriptures say that heaven is God's throne, and

earth his footstool, and that God is an eternal God who has neither

beginning nor end. If I should ask, now, what were God's throne and

footstool before heaven and earth were created, would you be obliged to

answer me, while the Scriptures say nothing about it? I again received

the answer: "We want to find out by you." Mark with what kind of a

spirit this man discussed with me.

Observing that the bait which he threw out was to get something

peculiar from me, I said to him: Micron, since you can not stand before

the truth, I can see what your object is. Therefore understand me, that

you may give a true account of me. Whatever the Scripture testifies

concerning the eternal, divine form of Christ, I sincerely believe,

although I may not thoroughly comprehend it, as that his goings forth

have been from of old, from everlasting, Micah 5:2; that he is the

Alpha and Omega, Rev. 1:8; 2:8; the eternal Word of the Father, his

Wisdom and Son, by whom all things were created, Gen. 1:1; Ps. 33:6;

Prov. 8:22; Jn. 1:3; Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2; the firstborn of

every creature, Col. 1:15, who is before Abraham was, Jn. 8:58, and

other like Scriptures I do not comprehend. But that there was a birth

from everlasting, as you say, I can not. find in the Scriptures.

Inasmuch as I can not find this in the Scriptures, and, as I am

prepared to obey them unto death, therefore I ask you to show me (as

you ask it of me) where it is written, and, by the grace of God, I will

not in the least controvert it; for I was certain that he could not

show it. He answered again: " No, we want to find out by you." Now

judge of the spirit of the discussion.

I will now leave this to the judgment of all impartial, reasonable

readers whether Micron has met us in discussion as a godly, humble,

kind and pious christian, to teach me and all of us, or to be taught of

us in the matters pertaining to Christ Jesus, by the Spirit and word of

the Lord; or, whether he met us as an ungodly, proud, cruel and

infamous pharisee.

A more abominable discussion I never heard of. In the first place,

because he wanted to find out by us something which is not in the

Scriptures. And in the second place, because I desired him to show it

to me, and he would not do it for the sake of truth and love. But

Micron knew that he could not find it in the Scriptures, yet, by such

trickery, after he had lost this foundation, he tried to make a show

among his followers who understood so little about the Scriptures. But

he was caught in the net he set for us, as you may clearly see from the

following account. For, when I observed that he had lost all christian

reasonableness; that no Scriptures would avail anything in his case,

and that he strove for nothing else but to catch me at some. expression

or other, which he might, by falsely adding to it, himself, fasten upon

us, to our disadvantage, I desired of him to explain his question a

little better, namely, whether he believed that Christ, from

everlasting, was born of the Father, or that he was from eternity

seated with the Father, and separated from him? Three or four times, he

said, " Born."

Born? I said, I do not contradict it; for you have heard my confession,

clear enough, but explain your question. It was again, "Born."

Then I said to Herman, Do tell, what is your faith? He spoke in his

usual, thoughtless manner and frankly said, " That he was seated,

separate from the Father."

Well, Micron, I said, is that your faith also? He again answered, Born.

For the fog was afraid that he should be caught in his den.

Micron, said 1, sap yes or no. We have heard enough of your, Born. Then

he said, " Yes I" Well, I said, give attention I

I presume, I said, that you have read that there was?a sect in ancient

times which was called Triticode or Tritoites (Tritheists), [9] because

they worshipped three Gods. If you have the same faith concerning the

Holy Ghost, that you have concerning the Father, and the Son, then it

is plain that you are Tritheists; for you so divide them, as being

seated separate, one from the other, as was seen. He made no reply to

this, at all.

In the second place, I said, You are aware that Arius was deemed a

heretic, because he said that Christ had a beginning I He answered,

"Yes." This is right, I said. But reflect. If Christ was from eternity

with the Father, separated from him, as you say, having, neither

beginning nor end., then he is not the Father's Son; for in such case

he is not born of the Father; and if he be born in such a manner, that

he was divided from the Father, and separated. from him, as you have

it, then he must have had a beginning; for that the begetter must be

before the begotten, in a natural sense as you assume, is as clear as

day. And if you, then, are not Arians, I will leave to your own

judgment. I am yet to be answered.

In the third place I said, Some ancient authors have compared the

eternal, divine Being to the Sun, that is, they have compared the body

to the Father, the Word or Son to the brightness, and the Holy Ghost to

the heat. For as these three, the body, the brightness and the heat are

one sun, thus the Father, his Word, and his Holy Ghost are one God.

And, as the brightness cannot be separated from the sun and yet remain

brightness, thus the Word can not be separated from God and still

remain the Word. Yet the Word is not the Father, nor is the Father the

Word. And therefore you daily sing in your temples, Lumen de lwmine,

that is, a Light of lights. Also says Paul, "He is the brightness of

the glory of God," Heb. 1:3.

Behold, dear Micron, this the beforementioned writers have confessed

concerning the eternal, divine Being, and you confess thus. I will

leave it to your own judgment whether you did not forsake their faith

and whether you did not make them false writers, by your confession. He

did not reply at all to this.

In the fourth place I said, You surely confess that Christ Jesus from

everlasting, was the Almighty word, wisdom and power of God? He

replied, "Yes." Well, I said, if such a birth, then, took place, as you

say, that he was seated, divided and separated from the Father, then

the Father must have been seated without wisdom, word and power from

eternity, inasmuch as they were separated, as you claim. This is too

plain to be controverted, Jn.1:1; Gen. 1:1; Isa. 40:8; Bar. 3: G. Dear

Micron, consider how you blaspheme God. Not a word did he reply to

this.

But now he comes and says that Christ, from eternity was born of the

Father, although yet remaining in the Father. Mark. what a double

tongue and unsteady spirit it is. At the time of the discussion, Christ

was, from everlasting, seated, divided and separated from the Father;

and now; he remained in the Father. In such a short space of time he

has changed his mind on five points concerning the incarnation of

Christ, as is shown in the "Admonition" written to him, and now he

comes to cast upon me the base stains of his own unsteadiness; while

the merciful Lord has, by his grace and power, for about twenty?one

years, kept me steady in one sense and foundation of the doctrine,

notwithstanding the many artifices devised against me by so very many

crafty spirits, as all must testify who have impartially read my books

and heard my admonitions.

Here I would faithfully admonish all readers, in love, and would humbly

pray them, for God's sake, that none will say or think that I, by these

four answers to his proposed and explained question, would change or

forsake my doctrine concerning the birth of Christ, the eternal Word,

before every creature. Not at all. For, with all those who, with holy

Paul, in truth, confess Christ Jesus to be the first ?born of every

creature, and that without the intermixture of any human philosophy,

with these I hereby confess to be unanimous, now and forever.

I declare that if Micron had asked, in accordance with the Scriptures,

if I confessed Christ, according to his divine form, to be the first ?

born of every creature, then I would immediately have answered him in

the affirmative. It would, then also have prevented his irrelevant

questions. But as his questions were the result of reason and not of

the Scriptures, and as he would thus make of the word a separate

person, from everlasting, of which not. a single word is found in the

Scriptures, before his ascension, therefore, he was immediately

defeated by the four inconsistencies concerning the eternal, divine

Being, from which he could not extricate himself at all, as was heard.

Mark also, that he has reflected upon the foolishness of his wisdom

which he, without any Scripture, used against me, so that he is now

ashamed of his own confession and words; for he says, " If I received

the correct news, that he never talked about" "being seated." If this

is true, then, alas, it is too gross a falsehood. He also writes now

that he is born of the Father, from everlasting, but, that he yet

abided in him as is also the doctrine of the Nicene council,

Athanasius, Erasmus of Rotterdam, Luther, Pomeranius, Melanchthon,

Bullinger and of the most learned persons, as can be easily deduced

from their comparison of the sun, as also from the writings of some of

them.

He again makes use of philosophy and not of the Scriptures, as he did

in his first. which he has now eaten up. For the spirit of wisdom has

not left us a single word concerning the ineffable, incomprehensible

mystery of the eternal birth, at all; whether he became separate from

the fatherly Being at his birth, before all creatures, or whether he

remained ineffably one therewith. For God is a Spirit, Jn. 4:24, and

that Spirit is ineffable.

As he again makes use of philosophy and not of the Scriptures, the

searching, curious philosopher might again ask him in regard to the

word, born: How can one be born and yet remain in the begetter? I do

not know where Micron can find a direct answer, wherewith he could

stand before the disputer. Therefore I would that the ineffable mystery

was left with God. For all who want to follow their own intellect in

this ineffable mystery, and maintain their opinion thereby, are

immediately caught in the snare of the disputer. No matter how he

manage.

Inasmuch as we clearly find and know that the Holy Ghost has hidden

this mystery in the Scriptures, and that he has not, in any manner,

revealed it unto us, neither by prophet, apostle nor by the Son

himself; and, inasmuch as it is manifest that it can not be explained

by intellect how short or how long; how near or how far he was to the

Father; or whether at birth, he became separate from the Father or not;

as he is a Spirit; besides, as we learn from history, and find in our

own time how many piercing eves are dazzled by this impenetrable

brightness; therefore I warn all pious hearts that would walk with a

good conscience before their God, not to speculate about this ineffable

and indescribable majesty of the immeasurable, eternal Godhead and not

to conclude, assert, teach or maintain any thing more than the Holy

Ghost has revealed and taught, lest they, by their fancies, make

themselves, a god which is not revealed unto them, by the Scriptures.

For it is sufficient for all godly souls that they have such faith in

God, as his word directs and points out, that Christ Jesus is from

everlasting; the ineffable, eternal word, wisdom and power of the

Father, and firstborn of every creature, an eternal, true, perfect,

divine substance or being in, by, and with God, and that this same, by

the power of the Almighty, eternal Spirit, according to the promise,

became, in due time, a true, passive, mortal man, in Mary, as the

Scriptures teach.

For, if we should have needed more knowledge and understanding of this

ineffable birth, the Holy Spirit which rightly teaches his unto all

godliness, would undoubtedly not have hidden it from us, but would have

revealed or explained it to us by some of his holy apostles, or

prophets, or by the Son himself.

I hereby pray all pious hearts, for Jesus' sake, to submit their

intellect to the word of the Lord, to feel and believe of God as the

Scriptures command and teach, not to ascend higher nor descend lower,

and to walk before God and his church with a patient, humble, contrite

heart, and he shall find peace therein. Whosoever feareth God, let him

reflect upon what I write.

When he was again met in his question, and unable to reply, he broke

forth with a disturbed mind, as it appeared, and said, "Do you also

believe that Christ was nourished by Mary?" Yes, I said, I sincerely

believe so. "Fy!" he said then, "what an impure Christ; for if he was

nourished by her, then he must also have become impure." He knew not,

as I thought, what to say, for surprise.

Dear Micron, I said, control your heart and tongue. We speak of his

origin and not of his nourishment. And if nourishment could make him

impure, which is contrary to Christ's own word, Matt. 15:11; Mark 7:15,

how much more the substance taken from such body of which the fruit

should have come as you say and teach, and that Mary was born of the

impure, sinful seed of Adam, of which you say the flesh or humanity of

Christ came; this you admitted yourself; nor could you produce a single

Scripture by which you could prove her spotlessness, as I mentioned

sufficiently plain in the narration of the first discussion.

Behold, honorable reader, here you have the principal foundation of

that which Micron and Herman have suppressed in their narration. It is

easy to guess for what purpose and with what intention they have done

so.

Inasmuch as it did not happen otherwise than we have here told, and as

it is well know to the all?seeing God, to Micron and Herman, as also to

their own witnesses and all of us who were present, that . he was quite

outdone in the argumentation in regard to the question under discussion

and on which their whole foundation rests, whereby the cause was

already lost, had he not again admitted it, as also, that there were

two sons in Christ, and that the crucified one was not God's Son,

whereby he had already forsaken the Son of God; and as he could not

prove by the Scriptures the spotlessness of the flesh of Christ,

according to his view of the matter; nor that there were two persons in

the one Christ, as he professes to believe, nor did he know how he

could show the fatherless Christ (as he makes him) to be the Son of

God; and as he could not reply a single word to all the plain

Scriptures which I produced to prove that the visible, palpable,

speaking and crucified Christ Jesus was God's own Son; and, lastly, as

he was so inextricably caught in his unscriptural, strange question;

and as he is silent on all these, not even touching them, and yet calls

upon the name and judgment of the Lord, and upon my own conscience,

that he has faithfully narrated the matter in discussion; therefore I

will leave it to the judgment of all reasonable, impartial readers

whether he has written as a true writer or as a false one; whether he

gained the discussion or lost it; whether he has done justice to truth

and to us, or whether he has done wrong; whether he sought the honor

and glory of God, or his own honor and fame; and also, whether he

should be deemed a pious, praiseworthy, honorable, unblamable, true

teacher, or an impious, unfaithful,, ungodly, blamable and lying

deceiver and calumniator; as he wrote through envious partiality and

carnality, without truth, and yet, to affirm his falsehood, so highly

seals it, alas! as was heard.

When I had answered his last question, they left me, and went to the

front part of the building. What was said there I can not say to a

certainty; for I was not there myself. But I was told by the brethren

that he was still arguing there, notwithstanding the weapons were

knocked out of his hands by force of the Scriptures. Also some of their

members about the doors next the street were too noisy in their talk.

For which reason some of the brethren said they would better go, and

asked them to help us all out of the gates. Of which he so unworthily

has made, thrust out, that he might thereby make a greater stench and

hatred for the pious and true, and make them a bad name.

Justly has the Holy Spirit likened this generation unto the fearful

apocalyptic locusts whose shapes were like unto horses prepared unto

battle, who have crowns on their heads, like gold; which however are

not gold; of which Micron and Herman have placed one on each others

head, by their writings; their teeth are as the teeth of lions, and

they have tails like unto scorpions, and there are stings in their

tails, Rev.9. Consider what the Holy Spirit means, as also that the

serpent should bruise the heel of the seed of woman, Gen. 3:15. I think

they have not stung a little by this writing of theirs. The Lord

forgive them and grant that they may yet sometime find his merciful

grace, if possible.

Had they now been people of contrite hearts, as they should reasonably

be expected to be, insignificant in their own sight, born of truth, and

gifted with the power of the word, they would have thought: What is the

use to write. Our cause is lost. And if we now defame them we do so out

of partiality, and not with truthfulness; for it is manifest that they

do not hate us, because they have shown us such faithfulness and love,

in time of need. But, alas, there was not so much prudence,

honorableness, reasonableness; reflection and love found with them.

As we have truthfully and plainly shown all that which Micron has

artfully suppressed in his narration, to the dishonor of God and of his

holy church, as was heard, thus we shall now, by the grace of God,

briefly show to the reader how far we differ with them in regard to

this matter, that, thereby, truth may be the more clearly distinguished

from falsehood, and light from darkness.

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[8] Booee is Dutch means wicked.

[9] Tritheist, One who believes that the three persons in the Trinity

are three distinct Gods.

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THIRTY?ONE ARTICLES AHD DIFFERENCES, PRESENTED TO THE READER,

TO SHOP THAT MICRON SAYS THIS, WITHOUT THE SCRIPT

URES, AND WE THAT, ACCORDING TO SCRIPTURE.

first. Micron and Herman have clearly and publicly confessed before us

all, " That Christ Jesus was so born of the Father, from everlasting,

that he was separated from the Father, and seated separate from him,

from eternity," Mark that this being seated separate from the Father,

is without the Scriptures.

We confess, and that according to the Scriptures, that Christ Jesus was

from eternity the Father's wisdom, Prov. 8:12. His eternal Word, Jn.

1:1, by which all things are created, Gen. 1:1; Ps. 23: g; Jn. 1:3;

Eph. 3:9; Col. 1: lts; Heb. 1:2; that his goings forth were from the

beginning and from the days of eternity, Micah 5:2; that he was before

Abraham was born, Jn. 8:58; that he was before John the Baptist, and

came after him, John 1:3; the first and last, Rev. 1:8; 2:8; the

firstborn of every creature, Col. 1:15. But of such a birth which

implies a separate seat, from everlasting, as Micron and Herman

confessed before us, we do not read in the Scriptures. Consider whether

this our confession is not in accordance with the Scriptures.

Secondly. The doctrine and belief of our opponents is, " That this

separate Son of God, in due time, became a real son, body and soul, of

the flesh and blood of Mary." Mark, two Sons, and a divided Christ.

Our doctrine and belief is that this same Word, Wisdom, or Firstborn,

as we have confessed, in due time descended from heaven, and that he

became a true, passive, mortal man, by the power of the Most High and

his Holy Spirit; not of Mary, but in Mary, above all human

comprehension, as John says, "The word is made flesh." Observe if this

our confession is not in accordance with the Scriptures.

Thirdly. Micron and Herman frequently confessed before us all, " That

there were two Sons in Christ; the one, the eternal Son of God, the

other the temporal son of Mary." Mark, again, two sons, and a divided

Christ. We confessed, as said before, that he who was the Word, Wisdom

and first?born from everlasting, became the son of man, in due time, an

only, undivided Son, whose Father was God, from everlasting, and whose

mother was Mary temporally, Luke 1:31; Matt. 1; Jn. 1:49. Observe if

this our confession is not according to the Scriptures.

Fourthly. Micron and Herman frequently, have plainly confessed before

us all, and do so in their narration many times, that the son of man

had no father, sometimes they say, no near father, which is the same as

no father. Mark, how they blaspheme both the Father and the Son,

Christ.

We confess with the angel Gabriel, Luke 1:28; with the heavenly Father,

Matt. 4:17; 17: S; Mark 1:11; 9:7; Luke 3:22; 9:20; with Christ

himself, Jn. 3:16; fi:22; 6:69; T:28; 8:23; with all the apostles,

Matt. 14:33; with Peter, Matt. 16:16; with John, the baptist, with

Nathaniel, Jay. 1:49; with Martha, Jn. 11:27; and with all the

Scriptures, that God is his Father, Jn. 1:14; 9:38. Observe whether

this confession is not right according to the Scriptures.

fifthly. Micron and Herman have frequently confessed before us all, and

yet do so in their narration, "That the crucified Jesus, who died for

us, was not the Son of God and is one with the other." Observe if this

is not forsaking the Lord who has purchased them, as Peter says. We

confess according to the Scriptures, that the crucified Christ Jesus is

God's first and only begotten, own true Son, whom he has not spared,

for our sake, Rom. 8:3;2; but sent him to be the propitiation for our

sins, by his paternal, divine love, 1 Jn. 4:10, by whose blood we are

cleansed and bought, 1 Cor. 6:20; 7: ~3; who also, in the last

extremity confessed God the Father to be his Father, crying, " Father,

into thy hands I commend my Spirit," Luke 23:46. Mark, whether our

confession is not right according to the Scriptures.

Sixthly. Micron makes use of a parable that as body and soul are an

undivided man, thus the Son of God and the son of Mary are an undivided

person. Mark, in the third place, two Sons, and a divided Christ.

We call one what the Holy Scriptures, and all the world call one, that

which is one; and that which they call two, are two. If there are two

sons in Christ which generated at different times, the one from

eternity, the other in due time, of different persons, namely, of God

and of Mary, in different forms, the one invisible and impassive, and

the other visible and passive, as is the doctrine of our opponents,

then there must also be two persons in him; or else the Word was no

real Son of God, or the son of Mary no real son of man, or else the one

must be taken away by the other and absorbed thereby. Of this, we can

not, by the grace of God, be convinced by human reasoning, without the

Scriptures.

Nor is such a parable of body and soul, in regard to this matter, known

to the Scriptures; nor such a Savior and Christ, who was changed from

one Son into two sons, from one person into two, persons, from earthly

into heavenly, from holy into sinful, from good into evil, from pure

into impure, from blessed into cursed, and who was changed from man

into Jesus Christ.

Seventhly. The foundation and doctrine of our opponents is, "That as

the man Christ was born of Mary, he was, therefore, also of her flesh

and seed;" and refer to Matt:1:16. Mark, fourthly, two Sons, and a

divided Christ.

We say, Obed is also born of Ruth and Solomon of Bathsheba;

nevertheless 1Boaz and David were their fathers, who begat Obed of

Ruth, and Solomon of Bathsheba, thus, also, the man Christ was born of

Mary; yet, God the heavenly Father, was his Father, Matt. 1:20; Gen.

17:6; 19:32; 35:11; Wis. 7:2; Rom. 9:6; Heb. 11:11. Observe whether I

do not rightly teach you according to the Scriptures.

Ninthly. The foundation and doctrine of our opponents is, "That the man

Christ is of the natural seed of David," because the Scriptures say,

"Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne," Ps. 132:11;

89:4. Mark, fifthly, two sons, and a divided Christ.

We say, according to the foundation and doctrine of the Holy

Scriptures, that he is David's supernatural, promised and given eon;

for if he were David's natural son, as our opponents have it, then he

must have been of Joseph's natural seed (for the evangelists count to

Joseph), and the Word did not become flesh. Observe whether we do not

teach according to the Scriptures.

Tenthly. Again, the foundation and ?doctrine of our opponents is, "

That the man Christ was of David's seed, and refer to Rom. 1:3; 9: G."

Mark, sixthly, two sons, and a divided Christ.

We say that the foundation and doctrine of the Holy Scriptures are,

that the same who was God's Almighty, eternal Word, from eternity, in

due time, according to the promise, became man by his Almighty power,

in the virgin Mary, who was promised to a man of the generation of

David, called Joseph, to which Joseph, the evangelists count, Matt.

1:16; Luke 3:23; Matt. 1:18; Jn. 1:14, and was thus, in due time, born

according to the flesh of the same generation of which he was

incarnated, as the Lord had promised unto David. And thus Christ is

born of the seed of David, that is, of the generation of David; but did

not become flesh of the seed of David, as our opponents claim, by

garbling this Scripture. Observe whether we do not teach rightly

according to the Scriptures.

Eleventhly. The foundation and doctrine of our opponents is, " That the

man Christ is flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone, and that our

flesh is seated at the right hand of the Father." This he advocates in

his book on " The Doctrine of the Church of God." Mark, seventhly, two

sons, and a divided Christ.

We say that the foundation and doctrine of the Holy Scriptures are,

That the regenerated church of Christ is flesh of his flesh, and bone

of his bone, as Adam testifies of his Eve that she was flesh of his

flesh and bone of his bone, Gen. 2:23, but Eve was not thus of Adam.

Thus Christ also testifies of his church which he has begotten by

virtue of his holy word in the sprinkling of his most holy blood, by

faith, that she is flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone; but the

church can not thus testify of Christ, Eph. 6:30. See if we do not

rightly teach you according to the Scriptures.

Twelfthly. The foundation and doctrine of our opponents is, "That the

man Christ, and we, are of one Adam, and are thus brethren by virtue of

the flesh." The foundation of this assertion is that Paul says, "He

that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one," that is,

of " one Adam," they say. Mark, in the eighth place, two sons, and a

divided Christ.

We say that the foundation and doctrine of the Holy Scriptures are,

that Christ and his regenerated church are of one God, Jn. 1:12, that

is, those who hear and obey his word, Mark 3:36; Luke 8:21, and

therefore he calls them his brethren, and says, "I will declare thy

name unto my brethren;" for as he is God's firstborn Son, Heb. 1:6,

thus he is also the firstborn, of the brethren, Rom. 8:9. If he were

our brother in Adam, as is the doctrine of our opponents, then he must,

also, have been Adam's first?begotten son, as he is the firstbegotten

of the brethren, as was heard. Then, also, all the ungodly of the whole

world, who have the devil as their father, Jn. 8:44, must be Christ's

brethren and sisters, as well as the regenerated who have Goal as their

Father. See if we do not teach you rightly according to the Scriptures.

Thirteenthly. The foundation and doctrine of our opponents is, " That

Christ has partaken of the flesh and blood of his children; which can

not be explained or understood otherwise than that he has received his

flesh and blood of the children." Mark, in the ninth place, two sons,

and a divided Christ.

We say that they thereby deny the word of the Lord and the ordinance of

creation. For the Scriptures say, only, that he partook of flesh and

blood. If they should say that the children are spiritual children (as

is also the case, because Christ had no carnal children), and, if then

the brethren should yet be carnal brethren, then they first break the

Scripture, in explaining the one word, which is so closely connected to

the other, as being understood in a spiritual, and the other in a

carnal sense. And, secondly, they assert an inconsistency. Consider

whether they teach according to the Scriptures.

Fourteenthly. Micron frequently writes that Christ has taken unto

himself the seed of Abraham, and?refers to Heb. 2:16. In the tenth

place, mark, two sons, and a divided Christ.

We say, and that truthfully, that Micron lamentably adulterates the

text; for Paul does not say, has taken, but he says, takes unto himself

the seed of Abraham, that is, the children and descendants of Abraham.

Mark, bow he deals with the Scriptures.

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Eighteenthly. Micron confessed before us all, " That although Mary was

of the impure, sinful flesh of Adam, she was, nevertheless, pure and

holy, because the angel said unto her, 'Blessed art thou among women,'

" Luke 1:28. See whether such doctrine can stand the test of the

Scriptures.

We confess, and that according to the Scriptures, that as Mary was of

the sinful seed of Adam, as we are, she, therefore, was concluded under

sin, the same as we; for the Scriptures except none of Adam's seed,

Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 15:21; Gal. 3:22; Eph. 2:3. For if she would have

been pure on account of such, as Micron says, " Then God might have

cleansed the whole world by such a word; and it would have been vain to

have sent his beloved Son into this wicked world, in such an humble

form." Oh no. It required another who must requite the debt, fulfill

the law and be the pleasing sin?offering for Mary, no less than for us,

if we were to be saved. Observe and see if we do not rightly teach you

in accordance with the Scriptures.

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Twentieth. Now Micron writes, " That we should free from sin whatever

the Scripture frees therefrom; and that man should not declare common

or unholy that which God testifies to be holy," and refers to Acts

10:15.

We confess and say, and that in accordance with the Lord's word, that

the Scripture frees none from sin but him that is free indeed, namely,

Christ Jesus, Isa. 63:12; 2 Cor. 2:15; 1 Pet. 2:22; 1 Jn\* 3:5; whereby

it is plainly shown that he is not of Mary's flesh, which was also

concluded under sin; but that the Father's most glorious word, which

knew not sin, became flesh, Jn..1:14. For he is holy, and that in

truth, and shall ever remain holy. Therefore, in my opinion, it is

blasphemy against the most holy flesh of Christ, which is the true food

for our souls, the living bread, given in such great love, to the

reconciliation of the sins of all the world, thus to compare it to the

flesh of irrational animals which were forbidden as food, under the

law, and were, therefore, deemed unclean; and which are now again,

under the gospel allowed as clean and free, as was once heard. See if

we do not teach in accordance with Scripture, Jn. 6:51; Lev. 11:4;

Dent. 14:7; Rom. 14:20; Matt. 16:11; Mark 7:15; Acts 10:15; Tit. 1:15.

Twenty?first. The doctrine of our opponents is, "That the Son of God

has fulfilled the law in our flesh." In the fourteenth place, mark, two

sons, and a divided Christ.

We say, that it is the doctrine of the Holy Scripture that none born of

the accursed and sinful flesh of Adam, could fulfill the law which was

spiritual; for the seed of Adam was too much corrupted, and was also,

by the righteous judgment of God, subject to the curse, Dent. 27:26.

Inasmuch, then, as it is become so quite impotent and weak in Adam, and

as the law accused us before God, therefore he, in his great love, took

pity upon Adam and all his seed, and did not spare his own Son, but he

sent him in the form of sinful flesh, Rom. 8:3, 32, who fulfilled the

law for us, Matt. 5:17; Eph. 2:13, who innocently died for us guilty

sinners that through him we might live, 1 Pet. 2:24; and thus he became

our holy, innocent and spotless High Priest, Mediator, Advocate and

Reconciler, with God, his Father, Heb. 6:1; 6:20; 7:26; 8:1; 9:14;

10:12; 13:12; 1 Tim. 2:5;1 Jn.1:2. And thus the glory is to God our

Almighty Father, by his blessed Word or Son, alone, as the Scriptures

teach; and not by the accursed, sinful flesh of Adam, as our opponents

teach, Rom ? 7:14. Observe whether we do not teach you in accordance

with the Scriptures.

Twenty?second. The distinct doctrine of our opponents is, "That the man

Christ who died for us, was not of heaven, but of earth." In the

fifteenth place, mark, two sons, and a divided Christ.

Our foundation and doctrine is, according to the Scriptures, that he

was of heaven and not of earth, as he himself says, "I am the living

bread which came down from heaven;" " and the bread that I will give,

is my flesh," Jn. 6: Cl. Again in verse 62, "What and if ye shall see

the son of man (mark he says, The son of man, who Micron says, was of

earth) ascend up where he was before?" Again, "I am from above; ye are

of this world," Jn. 8:23. Again, "He that cometh from above, is above

all," Jn. 3:31. Christ says, "I came forth from the Father, and am come

into the world; again, I leave the world, and go to the Father,"

Jn.16:28. Paul also says, "The first man is of the earth, earthy; the

second man is the Lord from heaven," 1 Cor. 15:47, and many other

similar Scriptures. By the grace of God, we will, at the proper time

plainly show what kind of spirits those are who deny these plain

Scriptures and point the poor, ignorant people to a divided, earthly,

impure and sinful creature and Christ, as also what abominations they

commit by their ,false doctrine. Observe whether we do not rightly

teach in accordance with the Scriptures.

Twenty?third. Micron writes: " They testify sufficiently that the name

without truth and works is vain; and, that none can be saved by the

name, unless he have, above all, the reality of the being; for the name

cometh of the truth." Mark how he here judges himself.

We say, that he is right, that the name without the reality avails

nothing; and yet he confesses in different parts of his writings that

the man Christ (as he calls him), had no father, still. he calls him

the Son of God; he calls him of heaven, yet he says that he is of

earth; he calls him pure, yet confesses that he is of the impure seed

of Adam, and says other like things. Whether or not Micron proves

thereby that he calls vain names and does not speak the truth?for

according to his doctrine the Son of God is the son of man, and the man

Christ, the son of God. I will let himself and all intelligent persons

judge according to his own word.

Twenty?fourth. Micron writes:" As, then, the same human nature (he

means, the whole man of Mary's flesh) in which he suffered, was his own

flesh and body, and; was none other; therefore it can not be concluded

therefrom that God's Son did not suffer for us." Mark how, here, the

mere name, and not the reality, must avail with him, contrary to his

own doctrine.

We say that Micron manages it so with his flatterings that they may not

be too much alarmed; for at different places he says that Christ,

according to his human substance and nature, had no Father, and that he

suffered in this same human substance and nature, which had no father;

and here he says that this was God's Son, and that he suffered for us.

What kind of a flatterer and writer Micron is, and what one should

think of his foundation and doctrine, I will let each one judge for

himself, from his own writings. This is not simply truthful declaiming,

as he writes. I know not what greater shame one could think of.

Twenty?fifth. Micron writes that the Scriptures say, "That the Son of

God suffered and died for us. This he writes for 'two particular

reasons. First, to prove the inseparable union of both the, divine and

human natures, in one person, Christ. Secondly, to show that Christ's

suffering, in his body and flesh, could not conduce to man's salvation

otherwise than by such inseparable union of both the divine and human

natures in one person, Jesus Christ." In the seventeenth place, mark,

two sons, and a divided Christ.

We say, Micron generally sings the same tune about the union of both

natures all through his appendix, of which not a single word can be

found in all the Scriptures. We ask nothing more than that he shall

show us where the Scripture says, "This is the divine nature is

Christ," or, "that is the human nature in Christ," although I confess

both natures to be in Christ; but not as the doctrine and teaching of

our opponents have it. Or else, that he show us where the Scriptures

say this is the union of the two natures in one person, as he generally

writes; or that he show us where the perfect Son of God is called only

of divine nature, or the perfect man, body and soul, only of human

nature, as he would make the reader believe, that we may reflect upon

it. If it is no Scripture, it is anathema, Gal. 1:8, and if it is

Scripture, let it be shown us, and we will yield. O, God! what

abominable deceit which they falsely teach the poor, ignorant people

under semblance of the Scriptures I

I would further say, that if it were such inseparable union, and that

the same made his suffering have the power unto salvation, as he says,

then it is manifest that also the divine nature suffered. For that

which is inseparable cannot be separated, and in other places he says

that the divine nature did not suffer; whereby he makes the natures

separable. Thus he contradicts himself, and deceit remains deceit

however he garbles the Scriptures by his flatterings. See if we do not

rightly teach you according to the Scriptures.

Twenty?sixth. Micron writes, "Those speak very unintelligently of this

great and holy mystery of our salvation, who say that Mary's flesh was

crucified for us, when the man Christ was born of her, for they don not

consider that Christ was not only man, but also God." Mark, two sons

and a divided Christ.

We say that Micron makes his glozings worse and worse, so that it must

be apparent that he advocates the cause of antichrist. I leave it to

the judgment of all the world if the man Christ (mark what he means by

saying the man Christ) were of the seed of Mary, born of her, as the

wine is of the vine, and the blossom and tfruit are of the tree, if he

was not, then, Mary's flesh and blood who was crucified for us?

Although one could not say when Absalom hung upon the tree, there hangs

David, as he writes, yet one could have truthfully said, There hangs

David's flesh and blood; neither do we say, that Mary was crucified,

but Mary's flesh and blood (mind, I speak this in the manner of Micron)

was crucified; that is, if he were born of the flesh and blood of Mary;

or else the whole Scriptures must be wrong, which say that we are the

seed, children, flesh and blood of Adam, on account of our carnal

birth. Mark whether we do not rightly teach you in accordance with the

Scriptures.

Twenty?seventh. Micron says," That David confessed Christ to be his

Lord, according to his divinity, and to be his son, according to his

humanity," Ps.110:1; Matt. 22:42. Mark again, two sons, and a divided

Christ.

We say that the prophets call him, without any distinction as to his

divinity or humanity, our "Immanuel," Isa. '7:14, "The mighty God" and

"everlasting Father," Isa. 9:6, "The Lord Our Righteousness," Jer.

23:6; 33:16. Paul calls him our Lord, 1 Cor. 8:6; 12:3. Thomas called

him, "my Lord and my God," Jn. 20:28. Christ says, "All power is given

unto me in heaven and in earth," Matt. 28:18. Paul says, "That at the

name of Jesus, every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things

in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should

confess that Jesus Christ is Lord," Phil. 2:10, 11. As also, that all

things are put under his feet; and that the Father gave him to be the

head over all things to the church; " and set him at his own right hand

in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and

might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this

world, but also in that which is to come," Eph. 1:21; that he is the

Lord both of the dead and living; and if he is thus not also David's

Immanuel, the Powerful, God, Father, Jehovah, Lord, Head, and Judge,

all those may reflect upon in the fear of the Lord, who rightly confess

the Lord and his wbrd. Consider whether we do not rightly teach you

according to the Scriptures.

Twenty?eighth. Micron writes, "If the flesh of Christ were of the

substance of the heavenly Father, as Menno dreams, then the heavenly

Father must also have flesh and blood; or else Christ could have no

flesh and blood; but would .only be a Spirit, as God is a Spirit."

Behold what blind reason, and no faith.

We testify and confess before God and all our readers, and that in

accordance with the word of the Lord, that the eternal, ineffable word

is of the eternal, ineffable substance of the Father., and must be, if

it be God. For what can be God, with God and in God which is not of his

substance or being? And, also, that this same word came down, in due

time, and that it became truly man in Mary, by the Almighty power of

God, Jn. 1:14. Behold, thus the Holy Scriptures teach, and thus we

believe, notwithstanding Micron dares call it " dreaming."

The holy angel Gabriel, and the dear evangelist, together with John the

Baptist, Peter, and all the apostles, nay, Christ himself certainly

knew as well as Micron and the learned do, that God the Father was a

Spirit, and that he was not of flesh and blood; yet they confessed

before all the world that the visible, palpable, eating, drinking,

speaking, sleeping, waking, walking, teaching, sighing, weeping, dying

and resurrecting Christ Jesus was the invisible, eternal and living Son

of God, as may be plainly seen by the general tenor of the whole New

Testament. O God, what abominable snares to catch the poor souls and to

drag them to the pit of destruction.

Twenty?ninth.. The foundation and doctrine of our opponents is, "That

the word was God from the beginning, and could therefore not suffer."

They refer to Jn.1:1. "It was flesh, and could, therefore, not become

flesh." Mark, it is reason, and not faith.

We say and confess, and that by the strength of the Scriptures that

this same Word, which was, in the beginning with God, and was God, in

due time became man, and dwelt among us, Jn. 1:14. For "God so loved

the world," says Christ himself, "that he gave his only begotten Son."

He spared not his own Son, says Paul, but delivered him up for us all,

Rom. 8:32; and John says, "He sent his Son to be the propitiation for

our sins," 1 Jn. 4:10.

All those who controvert this, deny first, the eternal love of God who

so loved us that he gave his only begotten Son, Jn:3:16; 1 Jn. 4:10.

Secondly, they deny the promise of truth whereby God promised .that the

Messiah should be our Immanuel, Iaa. 7:4, our God, Isa. 40:10, and the

Lord Our Righteousness, Jer. 23:6;"33:16.

Thirdly, they deny the Almighty power of God, by which he can do

whatsoever he will. They make Gabriel a false messenger, as he said

that nothing was impossible with God, Luke 1:37.

Fourthly, they are in opposition to all the Scriptures which testify,

without any separation, that Christ Jesus is the own, only and

first?begotten Son of God, Jn. 1:14; 3:16; 1 Jn. 4:9; Heb. 1:5; Rom.

8:32.

Fifthly, they make the Father a liar; for they do not believe the

testimony which he has given of his Son, 1 Jn. 5:10.

Sixthly, they have neither? Father nor Son; for they deny the Son, 1

Jn. 2:22.

Seventhly, they remain under the wrath of God; for they believe not in

the name of the only, begotten Son of God, Jn. 3:36.

Eighthly, they attach to Christ all the gross inconsistencies which

neither Micron nor any other man can explain away, as may be clearly

seen by his writings, if one has spiritual eyes. Consider whether we do

not rightly teach you in accordance with the Scriptures.

Thirtieth. Micron and Herman say," That if the Word became flesh, and

did not take on himself the flesh of Mary, there must have been a new

creation in Mary. Mark, how diametrically they oppose the foundation of

truth.

We say (note it) that if all miracles and powers of God, by which many

things were changed into different beings or forms from what they were

before, were to be called a new creation, then we would find many such

new creations in the Scriptures, as when water was changed into wine,

Jn. 2:9, it was turned into blood, Ex. 7:20. Lot's wife was changed

into a pillar of salt, Gen. 19:26. All the dust of Egypt was changed

into lice, Ex. 8:17; and many other miracles. The omnipotence of God

was thereby acknowledged; yet it is not called a new creation in the

Scriptures.

But we will let the polite, impartial reader judge according to the

Scriptures, if there would not have taken place a new creation in the

case of Christ being born of Mary, as was in the beginning the case

with Eve being made of Adam's rib, if our opponent's foundation were

true. Consider whether we do not rightly teach in accordance with the

Scriptures.

Thirty?first. Micron writes "That we place in the stead of the true

Christ, a new, unknown Christ whom neither the .patriarchs, prophets,

apostles, nor the many thousands of martyrs, &c., ever confessed."

We say that Micron, as also all the false prophets, thereby lamentably

slander the pious patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and witnesses of

Christ; and that he thereby denies their sure, true testimony, left in

the Holy Scriptures, concerning Christ Jesus the Son of God. For it is

manifest that the prophets confessed him to be their Immanuel; and that

he was to be the son of a virgin, who was to conceive of the Holy

Ghost, Isa. 7:14, for God himself was to be his Father, Luke 1:31?35.

They confess him to be their mighty God, and everlasting Father, Isa.

9:6, their Jehovah who would make them and us righteous, Jer. 23:6;

33:16; that his goings forth were from everlasting, who was to be Lord

and Prince of Israel; that he was the wisdom of God, and was to show

himself on earth and dwell among men. David confessed him to be his

Lord, Ps. 110:2, he was to be the Lord, strong and mighty, and to be

the Lord Sabaotb, Ps. 24:8, which no man of Adam could be. Also, all

the holy apostles, Matt. 14:33, the angel of God, Luke 1:28, the

Father, Matt. 3:17; 17:16; Mark 1: ll; 9:7; Luke 3:22; 9:35, and Christ

himself, Jn. 9:35, John the Baptist, Jn. 1:34; 3:28. Nathaniel,

Jn.1:49, and Martha, Jn. 11:27, confessed him to be the true Son of the

true and living God, nay, to be his only, and first?born, inseparable

Son, all through the New Testament. I say inseparable; for, that the

son of man was God's Son, and that the Son of God was the son of man,

Peter plainly confessed, upon which, also, salvation was promised him

of Christ; that the church would be built thereupon, and that flesh and

blood had not revealed it unto him, but the Father which is in heaven,

Matt.. 16:17.

And now these thoughtless people come and ,divide Christ, without

Scripture for it; he must not be the Son of God, on account of the

flesh; but is only called so for the sake of their garbled union; rob

us of both Father and Son, make false and untrue all the. Scriptures,

together with all the apostles and prophets, nay, also, the Father and

the Son, and take the innocent apostles, patriarchs, and prophets, with

,whom we agree in all particulars, as a mere cover for their falsehood;

they point us from the firm foundation of truth to the quick?sands of

criticism, garbled Scriptures and glozing; build their church upon a

man and creature of the impure, sinful seed and flesh of Adam, without

father. And although they, poor children, are quite earthly and carnal,

as map be seen by their writings and works, yet they boast that they

rightly teach Christ; which none can do but by the revelation of the

Father through the Holy Ghost, as Christ himself says, "No man knoweth

the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the

Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him," Matt. 11:27.

Observe whether we teach a Christ to whom the prophets and apostles

have not pointed us, as these unfaithful people falsely accuse us of,

before all the world.

Oh! That they meant God! that they sought the glory of God and the

salvation of their neighbors, and not their own vain honor and glory!

How gladly would they confess that we had the pure, saving truth, and

they the impure, accursed falsehood. But as it is, it is hid from them

by their earthly, carnal vision.

Behold, honorable reader, here you have distinctly presented to view

the principal differences between us and our opponents, concerning this

article. And I will now faithfully show you, for further explanation,

their unscriptural confessions, garblings and adulterations of the

Scriptures, together with their principal glozings of which they make

use without the Scriptures, or with a false and garbled understanding

of them, whereby they quite obscure the brightness of Jesus Christ the

Son of God, break the foundation of truth, ensnare the simple reader,

deprive him of the Father and Son, anal thus detain him in the curse,

sin and death, as has been heard.

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FORTY?FIVE UNSCRIPTURAL CONFESSIONS,

EXPLANATIONS, FALSE GLOZINGS, ADULTERATED AND GARBLED SCRIPTURES, PRESENTED

TO THE READER FOR THE EXPLANATION OF THE MATTER.

First. We do not read in the Scriptures, that Mary, who was a natural

daughter of the impure and sinful flesh of Adam, was without sin and

pure, as Micron confessed before us all, at the discussion, or:

Secondly. That such pure, innocent, spotless and blessed fruit, as was

Christ Jesus, was born of such impure, sinful flesh, guilty of death,

as was the flesh of Mary, since she was a daughter of the impure seed

of Adam, as Micron says, or:

Thirdly. That Adam bad two seed's, of which the one was holy and pure,

as was Christ, and the other sinful and impure, as we are; as must be

concluded from the doctrine of Micron, or:

Fourthly.. That Christ was born of the Father, from eternity, that he

was seated separate from the Father, and outside of the Father, from

eternity, as Micron and Herman confessed before us all, or:

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Eleventhly. That the Word, or the eternal Son of God, without mother (I

write it according to their foundation), thus united himself with a son

of man, without father; that he accepted, or took on the same, that he

dwelt therein, and thus became one person and son, as is the foundation

and doctrine of our opponents, or:

Twelfthly. That there were two sons in Christ, as was heard, of which

one was visible, passive, and earthly?the other invisible, impassive,

and heavenly, as is the foundation and doctrine of our opponents, or:

Thirteenthly. That the divine nature thus united itself with the human

nature (whereby he means, two perfect sons) into one person, which he

so often repeats, or:

Fourteenthtly. That such a union ?of God's Son and Mary's son, as

Micron says, should be compared to the union of the body and soul of

man, or:

Fifteenthly. That such a divided, double, earthly and heavenly,

righteous and unrighteous, pure and impure Christ was promised by the

prophets, and preached by the apostles, as Micron says, without any

truth, or:

Sixteenthly. That Christ was God and man in such a sense as Micron

teaches, or:

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Eighteenthly. That the Son of God is called the son of man, and the son

of man is called the Son of God, by reason of such union, as our

opponents assert, without any Scripture, or:

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Twentieth. That the flesh of Christ was sinful, and guilty of death, as

John A'Lasco (with whom Micron agrees) blasphemously teaches, or:

Twenty?first. That the word, which from the beginning was God, thus

took its tabernacle, tent, or dwelling in our flesh, as John A'Lasco

philosophizes, or:

Tzoenty?second. That the Son of God thus covered his divinity with

humanity, so long as he was upon earth, as John A'Lasco writes, or:

Twenty?third. That the one who had transgressed, also, had to requite

it in his nature, as is the foundation of our oppon'ents, or:

Twenty?fourth. That the Son of God fulfilled the law and reconciled the

Father in our flesh, as is the foundation of our opponents, or:

Twenty-fifth. That we could not have partaken, unto salvation, of his

heavenly and spiritual attributes, such as his life, holiness,

righteousness, merits, &c., if Christ had not had our human nature,

form and substance, as Micron writes, or:

Twenty?sixth. That the son of man, who is confessed to be the Son of

God by Peter, by John the Baptist, by the angel and by all the

Scriptures, said in any part of Scripture: No, I am not the Son of God,

but he that dwelleth in me whom you do not see, is the Son of God, and

for his sake I am called his Son, as is the doctrine of our opponents,

or:

Twenty?seventh. That the angel Gabriel told Mary that such a divided

son would be conceived in her, Luke 2:28, as Micron garbles it, or:

Twenty?eighth. That Christ Jesus was not God's Son, according to his

most holy humanity, as well as according to his eternal divinity, as

our opponents teach, or:

Twenty?ninth. That the man Christ was of earth and was called heavenly,

only, on account of some honorable attributes as Micron writes, or:

Thirtieth. That the flesh and blood of the seed of Adam, as our

opponents say, that the flesh of Christ is the true bread of life, on

account of some divine attributes as they garble the word of Christ,

Jn. 6:51, or:

Thirty?first. That Abraham and Isaac were called the autores or origin,

in the Sciiptures, that it should not be attributed to strange men, as

Micron says, without the Scriptures, or:

Thirty?second. That Christ took on him our sinful form as John A'Lasco

?says, Phil. 2:7, or:

Thirty?third. That Christ took on him the seed of Abraham, as Micron

garbles the text of Heb. 2:16, or:

Thirty fourth. That Christ partook of the flesh and blood of the

children by generation, as our opponents garble or falsely explain the

text, Heb. 2:14, or:

Thirty?fifth. That God was manifested in our flesh, as our opponents

explain the Scripture of Paul, 2 Tim. 3:5, or:

Thirty?sixth. That Christ dwelt in our flesh by generation, as our

opponents explain, 1 Jn. 2:4, or:

Thirty?seventh. That we are to compare to purity the most holy flesh of

Christ with the cleanness of the animals which were declared clean, as

Micron compared Acts 10:15, or:

Thirty?eighth. That the most holy flesh of Christ Jesus was flesh of

our impure, sinful flesh; as our opponents make the poor people

believe, or:

Thirty?ninth. That Christ would be the Immanuel in our flesh as our

opponents claim, or:

Fortieth. That Christ and we, are brethren on account, of the flesh, as

Micron teaches the unrepentant, ignorant world, without the truth, or:

Forty?first. That the children of the devil, such as liars, haters,

murderers, adulterers of the Scriptures, blasphemers, &c., are Christ's

brethren and sisters as well as the children of God, as we must

conclude from the teachings of our opponents, or:

Forty?second. That the Son of God united himself with human nature,

that is, with a man of the flesh of Mary, and that he ascended with

such flesh, as Micron unscripturally garbles Eph. 4:10, or:

Forty?third. That our flesh is seated at the right hand of the Father,

as is the doctrine of our opponents, or:

Forty?fourth. That Christ is our Head, and we, his body, members and

brethren, on account of the flesh, as we must understand it from the

teachings and foundation of our opponents, or:

Forty?fifth. That a man of the impure, sinful seed of Adam is our

Advocate, Mediator, Reconciler and High Priest with God the Father;.

and, that with him we should worship, honor and serve him as the true

and living God, as our opponents teach.

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CONCLUSION.

Here, observe, kind reader, that the whole foundation and belief of our

opponents concerning this article is built upon mere carnal wisdom,

philosophy, explanation, glozings, adulteration and garbled Scriptures

whereby they make it appear as if their anti?christian doctrine was the

doctrine of the Son of God, and whereby they cause themselves to be

called the true teachers, and us the deceivers, by the world who, alas,

are little versed in divine matters. But how they will stand at the

coning of Christ, before his impartial judgment seat, I fear most of

them will find out too late.

I will now point out to you, by the grace of the Lord, the

inconsistencies that must follow from their doctrine and faith, in such

clearness that you can see that their doctrine is not of the Fountain

of the eternal Wisdom, as Micron dares boast, without any truth, but

that it is exhaled from the abyss by the locusts of Apollyon. Take

heed.

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FOURTEEN INCONSISTENCIES, WHICH MOST RESULT AND FOLLOW FROM

THE FOUNDATION AND DOCTRINE OF OUR OPPONENTS.

FIRST, it follows incontrovertibly from their doctrine and faith that

there are two sons in Christ, of which one was the impassive, eternal

Son of God, without mother, and the other the son of Mary or the son of

man, without father. And whether or not such doctrine and faith is not

an inconsistency, I will leave you to judge according to the

Scriptures.

Secondly, it follows incontrovertibly that there are two persons in

Christ; for where there are two actual sons there must be two persona.

Or else the one must have taken unto him the other, and by the

fictitious union quite absorbed the other. If this can not be called an

inconsistency you may judge according to the Scriptures.

Thirdly, it follows incontrovertibly that the eating, drinking,

sighing, weeping, passive, dying and crucified Christ Jesus was not the

Son of God, notwithstanding he is confessed by all the Scriptures to be

the first and only begotten, own Son of God; for, they say that he had

no Father. You may judge by the Scriptures whether this may not be

called a blasphemous inconsistency and denial of the Son of God.

Fourthly, it follows incontrovertibly that they utter a falsehood as

often as they call the man Christ, the Son of God; for how can he be a

Son of God according to their doctrine 8 for they publicly write and

verbally confess that he was not of God but of Mary. You may judge

according to the Scriptures whether this is not a blasphemous

inconsistency, which is not conformable to the tree God who deals

according to truth; and does not use idle names.

Fifthly, it follows incontrovertibly that it is a divided Christ, who

became a Savior, and Jesus Christ, of God and man, of the heavenly and

earthly, of the pure and impure, of the righteous and unrighteous, of

the good and evil, and of the blessed and accursed, as was once heard

above. Yon may judge by the Scriptures whether this may not, also,

rightly be called an inconsistency.

Sixthly, it follows incontrovertibly that the eternal expiatory

offering, once offered for all the world, is not the spotless lamb

which the Scriptures confess him to be, but an impure, sinful, and

accursed man of the impure, sinful and accursed flesh and seed of Adam.

Yon map judge by the Scriptures whether this is not an abominable,

blasphemous inconsistency.

Seventhly, it incontrovertibly follows that, as the holy apostle Thomas

confessed the crucified, visible Christ to be his Lord and God, and, as

all Scripture testifies that he is our Reconciler, Mediator, Advocate,

High Priest, Savior, and Deliverer, and if he were a man of Adam's

impure seed, as our opponents assert, then it is manifest?that an

earthly, impure, sinful and accursed creature, of the earthly, impure,

sinful and accursed flesh of Adam is our Reconciler, Mediator,

Advocate, High Priest, Savior, Deliverer, Lord and God. You map judge

by the Scriptures whether this map not, also, be called a blasphemous

inconsistency and anti?christian abomination.

Tenthly, it incontrovertibly follows that if the man Christ were of the

unclean, sinful flesh. of Adam, as is the foundation of our opponents,

that one of two things must be true, either that the Scriptures do not

rightly teach us, or that all are idolaters who worship, honor, thank

and serve such an earthly, sinful and accursed Christ, as our opponents

teach and advocate without the Scriptures; for they say, "Thou shalt

worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve," Matt. 4:10;

Dent. 8:13. The prophet, also says, I will give my praise to none

other. And it is clear that one does not worship our Savior Christ any

less than he does the Father himself. You may judge according to the

Scriptures whether this is not also an idolatrous inconsistency and an

infamous blasphemy.

Twelfthly, it incontrovertibly follows, if I understand the writing of

Micron, that the eternal Word became the Spirit of man, and that it

only took on itself a tabernacle of Mary's flesh. For, as I think, he

alleges Peter for such a purpose, and says he was put to death in the

flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, 1 Pet. 3:18.

If he understands the Spirit of Christ as being the Spirit which he

commended to the Father, as also, being the immortal Son of God with

which, according to his doctrine, be was united, then Peter did not

write enough by merely saying "quickened by the Spirit," and not, " as

also 'by the immortal Son of God with which he was united." Mark what I

say.

And if he understand it as solely having reference to the Spirit of

Christ, and not, also, to the immortal Son, as he confesses him to be,

then the Son of God must have become, according to his doctrine, a

spirit of man; or else I do not know for what purpose he adduces this

Scripture. You may judge by it whether this is not an abominable

inconsistency, and blindfolding of the poor, ignorant world.

Thirteenthly, it incontrovertibly follows, if the doctrine of the

learned is right, that the Almighty Word, whereby heaven and earth were

replenished, must have united itself with such a small body of the

flesh of Mary, and thus sighed, wept, ate, drank, suffered and died

with it and lay dead in the grave; or else it must have merely

sheltered in Christ's Spirit, and thus, at death, departed therewith,

and at the resurrection again united therewith, the second time, Wis.

18:15. You may judge by the Scriptures, whether this may not rightfully

be called a wonderful inconsistency.

Fourteenthly, it incontrovertibly follows that if the word or the

eternal Son of God?thus took on him such a man of Mary's flesh and

blood, and united himself therewith into one person and son, as our

opponents, by their philosophy pretend, then, God the Father, was not

the true Father of Christ, Mary not the true mother, Christ not a true

Son; and all the Scriptures are thereby denied, which confess Christ to

be the first and only begotten, true Son of God, without any

distinction between divine or human, between spirit and flesh,

invisible and visible, immortal and mortal, as we have clearly

explained above and shall still further explain below, by virtue of the

word of the Lord. You may, in the fear of God, judge by the Scriptures

whether this can not be rightfully called a blasphemous inconsistency,

and a direct denial of both Father and Son.

Behold, chosen readers, it is such an unscriptural, divided, unclean,

sinful and earthly Savior and Christ which our opponents teach and

point to by their anti christian, covert, garbled, mysterious and

obscure reasonings of human wisdom. I place before you, in plain and

clear words the mirror of their deceit. If you will, you may clearly

see how lamentably you are deceived by them.

Inasmuch, then, as their doctrine and faith is nothing in fact but

anti?christian deceit, and the temptation of the old serpent, for it is

all taking unto, uniting two into one, divine and human nature,

honorable virtues and the like whatever we read or hear from them, of

which we find nothing in Scripture; and as they make these assertions.

and adorn them with many broken Scriptures, glozings and false

explanations; therefore I say, first, in Micron's own language, that

all they philosophize and teach avails us nothing, since it is not

according to Scripture. And secondly, in the language of holy Paul, it

is anathema, since it is a strange gospel of which not a single word is

taught in the Scriptures, neither by the prophets, nor by Christ, nor

by any of his apostles, in such a sense as our opponents teach it. Take

heed.

We will now, by the grace of the Lord, present to view, in the first

place, the foundation of the confession and doctrine of our opponents,

concerning this article, together with its proper contents, fruits,

end, and promise, and, in the second place, the foundation of our

confession together with its proper contents, fruits, end, and promise,

that you may, by such comparison in black and white, the more readily

guard against the deceit of the old serpent, and find the sure and firm

foundation of truth, and believe and follow it, with a sure conscience,

without any fear.

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THE FOUNDATION AND FAITH

OF OUR OPPONENTS CONCERNING CHRIST JESUS, TOGETHER WITH THEIR PROPER CONTENTS,

FRUITS, ENDS, AND PROMISE.

HONORABLE reader, take heed. The following is the whole contents,

conclusion, sense, explanation, foundation and meaning of the faith and

doctrine of our opponents, concerning the incarnation of our Lord,

whereby they, by their human wisdom and the cunning of the old serpent,

proclaim that all the glorious promises concerning Christ, the Son of

God, contained in Moses and the prophets, such as, of grace, mercy,

remission of our sins, peace of conscience, reconciliation, and life

eternal, are concluded, in the unclean, sinful flesh of Adam, which

they call clean although they confess that it is of him without any

Scripture.

They confess publicly (witness their own confession), that there are

two Sons in Christ; of which the one is the Son of God, from

everlasting, without mother, and impassive; and the other, the son of

Mary, or the son of man, without father, and passive. Which two sons,

they say (but without Scripture), are united into one; so that the man,

Christ., who visibly walked, ate; drank, sighed, wept, and hung on the

cross, and who cried to his Father: "Father into thy hands I commend my

Spirit," and who lay in the tomb three days, was not the Son of God.

They make the Holy of holies, the ever blessed Christ Jesus, a sinful

and accursed man; [one of their number asks publicly: If Christ were

holy, why was he adjudged unto death by the judgment of the Father, on

account of sin 1] and say that he partook of sinful flesh, that he

might be tempted. and be subject to, or guilty of death. They place

their salvation in an earthly, sinful creature of the unclean, sinful

seed of Adam, and make Christ Jesus not alone of the sinful and

accursed flesh of Adam, Abraham and David, but also, a gentile of the

gentiles, namely, a Syrian of the daughters of Bethuel and Laban, Gen.

24; 29:18, a Canaanite of Rahab, a Moabite of Ruth, Matt. 1:6, and an

Ammonite of the mother of Rehoboam, of the Son of Solomon, 1 Kin.

14:21.

They make a creature of the unclean, sinful flesh and seed of Adam,

their seat of grace, and sin?offering, their High Priest, Mediator,

Advocate, Intercessor, and Reeonciler, and falsely call him the Son of

God. I say falsely; for they publicly confess that he had no father.

Call them their Lord and God, still, they say and write that he is of

earth, and not of heaven. They worship, honor and serve him as they do

the Father himself. Oh, abomination I

They garble and break the Scriptures, because they do not believe the

testimony of John, that the Word was made flesh. They adulterate the

plain confession of the angel of God, concerning the Father and the Son

himself, of John the Baptist, of Peter and of all the apostles, of

Paul, and of all the Scriptures, which unanimously testify that the

conceived, born, suffering, whole Christ, outwardly and inwardly,

visible and invisible is inseperable, the first and only begotten Son

of God.

They break and contradict the whole gospel and the precious epistle of

John in which he testifies more than sixty times that Christ confessed

himself to be the Son of God and confessed God to be his Father. Also,

frequently, that he went forth from the Father, that he was sent and

came from heaven.

They garble and profane the Holy Scriptures quite lamentably, heap one

abominable flattery and fictitious explanation upon another. Christ,

say they, has taken on himself our human nature of Mary; then, there

are two sons and natures combined into one person and Son. Now the Son

of God has put on the flesh and blood of Mary, dwelt therein, placed

his tabernacle or tent therein.

One of their learned writes, "That the Son of God has brought all his

attributes to the son of man." Another writes, "That the man Christ was

God's adnptivus filiw, that is, the adopted and well?pleasing Son of

God." Still another, " That the one nature in Christ was quite divine,

and the other half divine and half human." Some write, "That the divine

nature also suffered." Others write and say, "That he only suffered in

his human nature and not in his divine nature. Micron says, "That

Mary's blood became in her, our flesh; that Christ's flesh is of our

flesh, and that, notwithstanding he is of earth, and of Adam's seed, he

is still called heavenly, on account of certain virtues," and other

like anathematic words and self?conceited glozings and abominations, of

which not a word is found in the Scriptures.

Is it not a pity, nay, a horrible thing, to wade in such pure, limpid

waters, with such filthy feet, and thus to obscure the precious and

bright sun of righteousness with such infernal exhalations of the

anti?christian doctrine g Rev. 9:2. And that for no other reason than

that they do not trust the testimony of John and of the angel; do not

believe the Almighty power of the Father, judge every thing according

to nature and not according to the Scriptures, and attribute more to

Mary than belongs to a true mother, according to the ordinance and word

of the Lord.

From which it incontrovertibly follows, and is manifest, according to

the doctrine and testimony of John, that they, alas, have neither the

Father, nor the Son; " Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the

Father," 1 Jn. 2:23, that the wrath of God abides on them, and that

they shall not see life; for they do not believe in the name of the

only begotten Son of God; that they. must die in their sins; for they

do not believe that it is he, Jn? 8:24; that they do not vanquish the

world, that they are not in God, nor God in them; for they do not

confess that Jesus is the Son of God, 1 Jn. 4:3. Oh I how well it would

be if these poor people would take heed, rightly confess Christ, the

Son of God, and give him his due praise and honor.

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OUR DOCTRINE AND FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST,

THE SON OF GOD, TOGETHER WITH THEIR PROPER CONTENTS, FRUITS, END, AND PROMISE.

OUR foundation and faith is, and that, according to the Scriptures, in

power and truth, that the whole Christ Jesus, visible and invisible,

outwardly and inwardly, mortal and immortal, is the first and only

begotten Son ?of God, Heb. 1:6; Jn. 1:14; 3:18; 1 Jn. 4:10, as the

angel, John the Baptist, the apostles and all the Scriptures confess

him to be; that he is the ineffable, eternal word, by which all things

are created, ineffably come from heaven, and that, by the power of the

Holy Ghost he became man in Mary, the virgin, who was promised to a man

of the house and generation of David, named Joseph, above all human

understanding, and that, according to this flesh he was generated in

her, and in due time born of her, an only, undivided person, Son, and

Christ, God's true and natural Son, by virtue of his origin; and Mary's

supernatural son, by virtue of his conception, I say, supernatural; for

it was not brought about by the will of man; who was promised that he

should be born of the generation of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah and

David; as it also happened; that he is, also, by reason of his mother,

Joseph's wife, called in the Scriptures the righteous branch of David,

a rod out of the stem of Jesse, the fruit of the loins of David,

represented by the literal Solomon; that he is the Wonderful,

Counsellor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, our Immanuel, our

God, The Lord Our Righteousness, The Wisdom of God, the Lord of David,

the Strong and Mighty God, who in the beginning founded the earth, and

made the heavens; our new and spiritual Solomon, seated upon the new

spiritual throne in the new and spiritual kingdom and reign of David;

God's true Son, I say, by reason of his Father; Abraham and David's

son, by reason of his mother; an only, undivided Son of God and Mary,

gone forth from the Father, come down from heaven; conceived in Mary,

born of her, a true man, like unto us, poor children of Adam, in all

things except sin; that he hungered and ate, thirsted . and drank,

tired and rested; that he was made in the likeness of men; that he has

fulfilled the law for us; that he sought the lost sheep; taught the

kingdom of God, and that he confirmed his sending by miracles; and that

he, at last died the bitter death, innocently, for us who were guilty

(when we were yet ungodly and enemies); that he ', has thus purchased,

sanctified and cleansed us by his own blood, and not by the blood of

another; that he has reconciled us with God, our Father, nay, made us

kings and priests; that he was delivered and resurrected from the bonds

of death, and ascended to his Father, where he was before, and that, by

his precious innocent blood, he became our only and eternal High

Priest, Intercessor, Mediator, Advocate and Reconciler, with God his

Father; that he is our Lord and God, whom we, in our weakness, should

honor and praise because of his ineffable love and merits, even as we

honor the Father himself, Gen. 1:1; Pa. 33:6; Jn. 1:3; 3:13; 8:23;

16:28; 1 Cor. 15:47; Eph. 4:10; Matt. 1:20; Luke 1:23; Jn. 1:14; Rom.

1:3; Gal. 4:4; Luke 1:30; Gen. 12:8; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14; 49:10;

2 Sam. 7:12; Rom. 1:3; 9:5; Matt. 1:18; Luke 2:7; 3:23; 2 Tim. 2:8;

Jer. 23:6; 33:16; Isa. 11:1; 1 Kin. 5:5; Pa. 89:37; Matt. 1:16; Lake

3:23; Acts 2:30; lea. 9:6; 7:14,; Matt. 1:23; lea. 40:3; Jer. 23:6;

33:16; Prov. 8:12; Bar. S:36; Ps. 110:1; 24:8; Heb. 1:10; Isa. 9:5;

Luke 1:28; Jn. 16:28; 6:32; Eph. 4:10; Matt. 1:18; Luke 1:31; Jn. 1:14;

Luke 2:7; Gal. 4:4; Heb. 2:14; 4:15; Jn. 4:6; Phil. 2:7; Matt. 5:17;

Rom. 8:3; Eph. 2:13; Col. 2:13; Ezek. 34:23; Matt. 18:11; 4:17; Jn.

2:11; Rom. 5:8; 1 Jn: l:7; 1 Pet. 1:19; Heb. 9:12; Eph. 2:15; Col.

1:20; 1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:6; 5:10; Matt. 28:6; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:6; Jn.

20; Eph.1:20; Mark 16:19; Acts 1; Jn. 6:62; Rom. 3:25; Heb. 3:1; 5:1;

6:20; 7:24; 8:1; 9:11; 10:11; Rom. 8:27; Heb. 7:25; 1 Tim. 2:5; 1 Jn.

2:1; Heb. 9.:11; 12:24; Jn. 20:28; 5:22.

We confess and believe that, as the Almighty, eternal Father, through

mere grace and love, has, in the beginning, created Adam and Eve by

Christ, his Almighty, eternal word, Gen. 1:27. He, also, now by pure

love and grace, has again raised them and all their seed (since they

fell) by the same word, now incarnated by his Almighty power, and that

he has again accepted them as his children, Jn. 1:14, that we may give

the eternal honor and praise to God, for his grace, by his Word or Son,

and not to the sinful flesh of Adam, of which they are.

And behold, such a confession concerning this matter leaves the whole

Scriptures unbroken and unchanged. Not an inconsistent flattery, nor an

adulterated Scripture is found, as is, alas, the case with the

confession of our opponents.

The Almighty, eternal God alone, retains his glory and honor, by his

Word or Son. The Father remains the true Father of the whole Christ,

the mother the true mother, and the Son the true Son of both his Father

and his mother, which Son is from above and not from beneath, who is

from heaven and not of earth; pure of the pure God, an only Son and

person, the Potentate and Lord of heaven and of earth, the Savior of

all the world, in whom all the present and future promises are

fulfilled, and by whom they are given and received, Eternal praise be

to his adorable,. glorious, and exalted name, Amen.

All those who can thus firmly believe this miraculously high work of

the ineffable, great love of God, and who can confess, with Peter and,

all the Scriptures, that Christ Jesus is the true Son of the true and

living God, they ?have. both the Father and the Son, 1 Jn. 2:23; they

vanquish the world; they are in' ,God, and God is in them, 1 Jn. 4:15;

they are freed from the wrath of God, and have eternal life; they

acknowledge the severe justice and the merited curse which came upon

Adam and all his descendants through Adam's disobedience. They,

therefore, fear God, bury their sins, and turn from evil. They also

acknowledge the inexpressible love of God, so richly shown us in Christ

Jesus; they enter into newness of life with Christ, Rom. g:4; they

believe in the name of the only begotten Son of God, Jn. 3:18.

Honorable reader, take heed. I warn you in sincere and faithful love;

for it avails eternal life, or eternal death. If you be not quite

blinded you must observe the deceit of Micron by these "Thirty?one

differences," " Forty?five unscriptural confessions, explanations,

fictitious glozings, adulterated and garbled Scriptures," and by these

"Fourteen insolvable, blasphemous inconsistencies;" and you must

observe that his inconsistencies, together?with the foundation of their

confessions concerning this matter, which I have faithfully and plainly

set, forth, are nothing but anti?christian deceit of the old serpent;

and that our foundation and faith, on account of which we must, alas,

hear and suffer so much, are the firm, immutable, invincible rock and

stone of the eternal truth which the holy apostles and prophets,

together with all the pious witnesses of God in the primitive,

incorrapted church, before the man of sin entered into, and was seated

in the temple of God, who cannot bear this foundation, as may be seen,

1 Jn. 2:22; 4:3; 2 Jn. 1:7, confessed with us.

Not a single Scripture is adulterated or broken by us. We make use of

no glozing. No inconsistency is the result. It is the plain Scripture

and its foundation which we present to the reader, as you may feel and

see.

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OF GEN. 3:15, "I WILL PUT ENMITY BETWEEN THEE AND THE WOMAN,

AND BETWEEN THY SEED AND HER, SEED."

MICRON, in his writing, reports that I said that we should not

understand the seed of woman, Gen. 3:16, in a carnal, but in a

spiritual sense only. To this I reply unreservedly, that the assertion

is without foundation. For never in 'my life was it my intention that I

would exclude Christ from this promise. For, as deceived Eve was a

literal woman, thus also, was the deceitful serpent a literal serpent,

through which the devil deceived her. For the Lord said, "?Upon thy

belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life,"

Gen. 3:14, something which the devil, who is a spirit, could not do. If

we,, now, are to understand the seed of woman as a generative seed, as

does Micron, then also?, the seed of the serpent must be understood as

being a generative seed, between which two the enmity would exist,

solely; for the one seed must be after, its own kind, for the reason

that it is of one name. In that sense the literal serpent, only, was

vanquished by Christ. Understand rightly what I write.

On the other hand, if the serpent be a spiritual serpent (as it indeed

is) represented by the deceitful serpent, then the woman must also be a

spiritual woman, represented by the deceived woman, and thus, again,

the seed be after its own kind; for as the serpent is spiritual, so

also, is her seed spiritual, which is falsehood, Jn. 8:44, of which

alas, she begets such children as write such deceiving, lying,

infamous, and partial books as Micron and Herman have done in this

instance.

In the same manner, as the woman is spiritual, Eph. 5:25; Rev. 12:6;

19: ?, thus, also, is her seed spiritual, that is, the truth of which

(eternal glory be to God for his grace), she begets such children as

walk in the truth, sincerely speak the truth, and for the sale of the

truth, willingly submit to death with yea, and nay.

And behold, between these two, the children of truth, and the children

of falsehood, there is an eternal enmity. The seed of woman vanquishes,

and that by sincere, firm faith, in christian patience by the Spirit

and word of the Lord; yet it receives many stings in the heel from the

vanquished seed of the serpent. For their name is slandered, their

doctrine is ridiculed, their life is hated unto death, their effects

are stolen, their flesh is burned, and they are drowned, and must

expect to be daily bitten by the venomous, blood guilty seed, as I, in

my weakness, have experienced for more than twenty years.

Behold, if we understand it in such a sense as we have here shown, the

spiritual things remain spiritual, carnal things, carnal, and the

Scriptures remain unbroken. But the Lord save me from hereby excluding

Christ from the promise. For I am aware, by the grace of the Lord, that

Christ is the power, the beginning, means and end of the whole promise,

and that he will remain such forever. For he is the spiritual husband

of this spiritual woman, Jn. 3:6; Rev. 19:7; Eph. 5:25. His Word is the

seed of woman, which Word be is himself, as he says, "Even the same

that I said unto you from the beginning," Jn. 8:25. He spoke and taught

the truth and he is the truth, Jn. 14: H. He spoke and taught love, and

he is love, 1 Jn. 4:8. In short, he spoke of wisdom, righteousness,

holiness, and deliverance, and he is himself Wisdom, Righteousness,

Sanctification and Redemption, 1 Cor. 1:30.

He alone is the victorious Prince, and triumphant Conqueror who was

promised by those words, who has bruised the serpent's head for us, and

also, we in him, by him, as Paul says, "In all these things we are more

than conquerors, through him that loved us," Rom. 8:37. And " I can do

all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," Phil. 4:13, and,

"Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus

is the Son of God 1" 1 Jn. 5:5.

Inasmuch as it is manifest from all this, that Christ and his Spirit,

word, wisdom, truth, righteousness, sanctification, peace, deliverance,

and all other attributes can never be separated in power and truth; and

as it is manifest that where the one is the other must be also,

therefore I will not leave it to the judgment of Micron and Herman, but

to the judgment of the impartial reader, whether I exclude the man

Christ, in whom our salvation is, from this promise, and say that it

should only be understood spiritually, notwithstanding the allegory is

spiritual in him, as Micron reports.

It has always been my understanding that he was hereby promised unto us

of a woman, and have so stated it in some of my books; yet he must thus

misquote my writings, as alas, he often does. I would not know for what

reason I should contradict it, as he is not here promised of a man, but

of a woman, Isa. 7:14, of a virgin; from which we must deduce that he

was not to be the impure seed of mortal man, but the Son of the Most

High.

Behold, here you have our incontrovertible reply, founded on the

Scriptures, to all the unfounded, wordy, sophistic and powerless

arguments which Micron and Herman adduce in their writing about the

seed of woman.

I do not see why the godly women, of which he writes and to whom he

complains, should not submit to this, as I allow their husbands and

lords, whose honor, all virtuous and honorable wives should gladly

maintain, and to themselves each in her sphere, according to the

measure of eternal truth, that which their God the Lord, has allowed

them himself, by his word, by the works of his creation, according to

his divine pleasure.

I will not say anything about what shame Micron commits against all

honorable women by his unseasoned writing; I do not delight in chiding

and upbraiding. It suffices men to assert the foundation of our

doctrine, to the praise of the Lord. He must once in a while

maliciously pierce me, that he may thereby the more embitter some

hearts against me, and that he may make truth still more hated and

abhorred by our hated name.

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MICRON'S CONFESSION, IN HIS NARRATIVE, THAT CHRIST IS THE SON OF

GOD, AND OF MAN.

Micron writes: Jesus Christ is called the son of God on account of his

eternal and ineffable generation of God the Father, according to his

divine form. Thus he is also called the son of man on account of his

being born in the fullness of time, of a human being, of Mary,

according to the flesh or human nature, Matt. 1. HACILLE.

Answer. I would here faithfully admonish the kind reader earnestly to

consider my reply to Micron's confession, and to judge it with a frank,

impartial heart. I trust, by the grace of God, that if he do so he will

discover the adulteration and deceit of our opponents in great

clearness; and he will see, on the other hand, that the truth is with

us.

In the first place, if we compare the verbal confession which he made

to us, with his confession in writing, he appears to be as slippery as

an eel. For at the time of the discussion he confessed repeatedly

before us all, that the crucified Christ Jesus had no father or near

father; and says so yet at different places in his writing.

Nevertheless he now comes and writes, but without the truth, that they

repeatedly confessed before us, that the Son of God died for us. He

repeats the same song, but he sings it to the unintelligent, and to a

little better tune.

It would sound too much out of tune thus bluntly to forsake the

crucified Christ Jesus., and say, that he had no Father, as he did

before us.

In fact; I do not know what to say or to think of this man. Now the man

Christ is the Son of God, then again he is not; now God is his Father,

then again, he had no father. For be writes pointedly that the man

Christ, who died for us was generated not of God, but of the seed of

Mary, and that he had no father. If he then, be of her seed, And not

generated of God, and if he had no father, as he says, then it is

plainly falsehood, lies and deceit, to say that the Son of God died for

us. If we take the best view as to his meaning he can be no more than

an adopted, or a nominal Son, without truth, let him gloze the matter

over as much as he can. I will leave the impartial reader to consider

whether this is a simple and plain reasoning according to the truth, or

an equivocal and dark .argument of falsehood.

Now observe, first, his equivocation together with the unconformable,

wavering, lightminded foundation of his doctrine, and his intolerable

error, to teach that the crucified Christ Jesus was not God's own true

Son, but merely a nominal Son, as was heard. I do not see what greater

blasphemy one could commit. Yet he is a good teacher and writer, and

that for the reason that he has so finely, but falsely, portrayed the

old heretic, Menno.

Thirdly, so long as they do not prove to us by the Scriptures that the

Son of God is called the son of man, and the son of man, the Son of God

for the reason that there was a union of the two as they frequently

assert without the Scripture, so long, they mistake the truth as often

as they call the Son of God the son of man, and the son of man the Son

of God; for the name is given, as Micron himself confesses, in truth

and in fact. And how this assertion of his agrees therewith, the reader

may consider. To mock man is disreputable; but to mock God is too

abominable and blasphemous.

Fourthly, so long. as they do not prove to us by the Scriptures, that

such union took place, as they assert, so long it is the lies and

deceit of the old serpent, as it is not according to Scripture. For it

is manifest that it is no union, as they call it, but a fearful

division of the most holy and undivided person of Christ, whereby he

manifestly makes two persons and sons in Christ, which are born of two

different persons, at two different times, in two different forms; that

he robs the crucified Christ Jesus of his beloved Father, and the

Father of his only begotten, beloved Son; that he makes the greater

part of the most holy flesh of Christ of gentile origin; that he

esteems the man Christ no higher than an adopted or nominal Son of God;

that he points us to an unholy, sinful, accursed offering, to an impure

seat of justice, High Priest, Savior, Mediator, Advocate, and Christ,

of the unholy, sinful, accursed and created flesh of Adam; that in

fact, he makes Mary buth the father and mother of Christ; that he

breaks and disputes the whole Scriptures, together with the ordinances

of God concerning generation; and that he includes so many abominable

inconsistencies in Christ that a feeling heart is pained thereat, when

the matter is earnestly considered.

Behold, upon such a foundation has Micron built his false doctrine of

the union of the Son of God, which he teaches all through his book, in

so many smooth sentences and garbled Scriptures. It is easily perceived

what kind of an abomination, Babylon, the mother of whoredom, pours

from her golden cup, by her messengers and servants. Woe unto those

that drink thereof; for she will so enchant them that they will become

drunk, and fall.

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HOW CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD, IS ALSO THE SON OF ABRAHAM AND DAVID, ACCORDING

TO THE SCRIPTURES.

IF we would have the true understanding of Christ being also the son of

Abraham and David, and not break or go beyond the Scriptures, then we

must keep in view the ordinances of God, and as it is manifest that

Christ?Jesus is not in truth confessed to be the Son of Joseph, but the

Son of God, by the Scriptures, therefore it may be easily discerned how

or in what manner Christ is also the Son of Abraham, and of David, and

why he is thus called in Scripture, because of his human birth, as Paul

says, "To Abraham and his seed (that is, his sons), were the promises

made. He saith not, And to seeds; as of many; but as of one, and to thy

seed, which is Christ," Gal. 3:16; Rom. 1:3; 9: ti; 2 Tim. 2:8.

In the same manner we should consider also that both the evangelists,

Matthew and Luke, count the genealogy up to Joseph, and not to Mary.

Luke makes no mention at all of Mary, but says, "Being (as was

supposed), the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli,". &c., Luke

3:23. Mark what the evangelists mean. From this it is plain that they

do but show the generation of which, according to the promise, is born

he who is forever the Jehovah, Immanuel, Savior, and Lord of the

world.For, if such a man as was Christ, should have been begotten of

human seed, as our opponents say he is, who was to be the Deliverer of

the whole world, as is Christ Jesus, then the Scriptures would point to

the one of whom he was generated and originally came, and not to the

one of whom he was not. For the Holy Ghost is a Spirit of truth, which

teaches and instructs rightly. According to the foundation of the

learned, our salvation would not be attached to the Scriptures, but to

an uncertain meaning. For it is manifest that there is not a word found

in them, which shows that Mary was of David's generation. Luke says

that she was a cousin to Elisabeth who was a daughter of Aaron, Luke

1:5, 36.

Kind reader, understand me. I do not mean that Mary was not a daughter

of David, but I say that the Scripture does not say so: But, inasmuch

as our opponents found their whole structure upon the ground that the

man Christ was to be a natural seed and son of David, and that by Mary,

therefore they must have the sure testimony of the Holy Scriptures

whereby they can prove it to be as they assert, before one can accept

such an importaut thiug concerning the salvation of all the chosen.

Since it is founded on mere presumption and not on the Scriptures, it

may be that she was a daughter of David, and again, it may be that she

was not, inasmuch as they did not follow one rule in regard to

marriage, as may be seen by sacred history, and whereas it has nothing

to do with the matter, and was, according to the evangelists sufficient

that she was the wife of a son of David, that the promise might be

fulfilled in the generation to which it was promised, as was frequently

said, therefore I do not contradict it in the least that she was a

daughter of David. But a sure testimony of the Holy Scriptures, on

which the foundation of eternal salvation should be built, they can not

adduce, to prove their doctrine.

If they should say that it was to be a virgin, according to. the word

of?the prophet, and that therefore, it could not be of the seed of man,

then I would answer in plain words that they thereby pronounce their

own sentence that Christ was not the natural seed and son of Abraham

and David, but their supernatural and promised seed. For he was not of

one of Abraham and David's sons, but of one of their daughters, who was

a virgin, and knew no man, but was promised to one of David's sons,

begotten of the ineffable, eternal word of the Almighty, great God,

which she conceived by faith, Jn. 1:14. Being the first and only

begotten, true Son of God, on account of his eternal Father, and the

promised, given, .and born son of Abraham, Judah and David, on account

of his mother, who was a daughter of Abraham, and the wife of Joseph,

the son of David, as heard, Heb. 1:2; Jn. 1:14; 3:16; 1 Jn. 4:16.

I will now conclude all the passages of the Holy Scriptures which treat

about the seed, fruit and branch of Abraham and David, with the

following remarks. Inasmuch as the Savior, King, Prince, Conqueror, and

Prophet, graciously promised to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah and David,

Gen. 12:3; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14; 49:20; 2 Sam. 7:12, was, in due

time, born a true man of one of their daughters, according to the

promise, Luke 2:7, to whom the kingdom and throne of David was promised

beforehand by Isaiah, and again at his conception, when it was already

fulfilled in the letter by the angel, that he was to reign forever

therein, Isa. 9:6; Luke 1:29, which kingdom and? throne he did not

receive literally, but spiritually, for it was then all ready

fulfilled; his kingdom is eternal, Luke 19; and shall not be left to

other people, Dan. 2:44; and as he is acknowledged all through the

Scriptures as the first and only begotten Son of God, which he could

not be if he were generated of impure human seed, as our opponents say,

and not of God; and as his house or temple which he builds, is not a

literal house, of literal wood, stone, metal, gold, and silver, as was

the perishable house of Solomon; but as it is built of living precious

stones, of the imperishable gold and silver, 1 Cor. 3:12, upon the

immutable foundation of the holy apostles and prophets, put together by

the Holy Ghost, Eph. 2:19; 1 Pet. 2:4, 19, therefore it is thereby

manifest that the promise made to David, should be understood in the

old, literal form, as fulfilled in Solomon, and in the new spiritual

being, Christ, 1 Kin. 6:5; Ps. 89:37; 132:11; for if we measure the

genealogy of his blessed flesh the most minutely, in the line of David,

then we find that he was no more than the son of the daughter of David,

while there is not a word in all the Scriptures to prove that she

actually was one of David's daughters.

Behold, such a foundation has the strong argument of Micron, as he

boasts, that the gates of hell will not prevail against it, something

which they, doubtlessly, will not; for they would rather strengthen and

aid him in such a cause; it is the strongest fortification and shield

of hell, as may be clearly seen by John. But it takes a heavenly gate

to prevail against it, the strong Spirit and word of the Lord, against

which neither the gates of hell, nor the devil can prevail.

Whosoever desires to have more information upon this subject may

examine our reply to John A'Lasco, impartially, and by the grace of

God, he will find the true foundation and meaning thereof.

And behold, thus our foundation and doctrine remain firm and

invincible; that Jesus Christ is the only, first?born, and undivided

Son of God, Heb. 1:6; Jn.1:49; 3:16; 1 Jn. 4:9; Rom. 8:32, by whom he

has created heaven and earth, and the sea with their fullness, Gen.

1:1; Ps. 33:9; Jn. 1:1; Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:16; and that he is not the

impure, sinful, accursed, earthly seed of Abraham and David, as our

opponents philosophize it.

Truly, he is the new Melchisedec, the King of perfect righteousness and

of eternal peace, whose Father, mother, and generation, according to

the true foundation of the Holy Scriptures are unknown to the whole

world, the glorious Prince and wise Lord, the peaceful Solomon, who is

seated upon the spiritual throne of his father David, prepared for him

by his eternal Father, In eternal glory, and shall reign forever over

the house and kingdom of Jacob, Isa. 9:6, 7; Luke 1:29. Consider

whether we do not rightly teach you in accordance with the Scriptures.

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CONCERNING THE TWO NATURES IN CHRIST, HOW IT SHOULD BE RIGHTLY UNDERSTOOD

ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES.

MICRON criticises my sixth point, and remarks concerning my saying,

That God's Son did not die for us according to their doctrine, is

caused by a misconception on my part, that I do not, or will not

understand the union of the two natures, the divine and the human, into

one person, Christ; and says, That in both discussions they have

repeatedly stated that God's Son died for us.

To which I reply thus: First, that they can not truthfully say that

they once stated, during the discussion, that the Son of God died for

us. For they have distinctly asserted, all the time, that the man

Christ had no father, or as Micron sometimes said, that he had no near

father, and repeats it in different places in his book, as any one may

read and see.

O, dear Lord, what a terrible abomination that mortal man and an

earthly creature dares so boldly lie against ?his own conscience, that

he dares so lamentably belittle the King of all honor, so

unrestrainedly deceive the poor souls, and commit such great deceit and

shame against the word of the Lord 1 O, that they could see what they

are doing I

Secondly, I reply as I did before him, that there can not be a word

found in all the Scriptures about this union of the two sons, of God's

Son and the son of man, in one person, Christ, which he, generally,

artfully calls two natures, and which he compares to the union of the

body and soul of man.

That the body and soul of a living man are one person, is as clear as

the light of the sun.

But, that such a man, body, and soul, which is a perfect person, was

thus united into one with the Son of God who is eternal; or, that the

eternal Son of God thus united himself with the son of man (which two

sons they call two natures, without Scripture), may, be read in the

flatterings of Micron, but we do not find it written in the Scriptures.

You may further consider what kind of a Christ they teach you, by

comparing this criticism of ours with the Scriptures.

Thirdly, I say that if Micron desired to deal with the readers as a

faithful teacher, he would not make use of such equivocal and dark

reasoning, but would express and explain his foundation and meaning

without any duplicity, and say that the eternal, immortal Son of God

put on a temporal, mortal son, body and soul, of the flesh and blood of

Mary, and that he has thereby delivered us; for this is, in this

matter, the proper meaning, sense and understanding of all their

writing, flattering, and teaching, as their public confession, before

us all, clearly testified and implied, as was heard.

But now he deals unfaithfully; for. he means two actual sons, of which

one was divine and the other human and calls them but two natures, that

the unsuspicious reader may not be offended at the harshness; which

nature is but a property of him who possesses it, and which is not the

one himself who possesses it. For, if one sees a man, he does not say

that is a human nature, but that is a man; for the property is not the

being itself, but the being possesses the property. And if Christ had

but the properties, namely, the natures, and if he had not the being

itself, which are the sub stances, then he was neither God nor man; for

the natures are not the being itself, but the being possesses the

nature. Therefore it would be becoming in Micron to deal unequivocally,

and not to deceive his readers and hearers by such incomprehensible,

strange words, that they might comprehend the foundation of his

doctrine, and understand what he means. For we teach in such a manner

that it may be understood.

But it would offend the thoughtful reader thus boldly to confess and

teach that there are two Sons in Christ, and say, that the crucified

Son was not God's Son, but a sinful, acccursed man, of the sinful,

accursed flesh or seed of Adam. And therefore they must fix it so as to

retain their honor and name with the world, and enjoy their salaries

and liens at ease.

Behold, thus we must, by virtue of the Scriptures, lift the fine cloak

of the Babylonian whore, which Micron and the preachers would keep down

by their glozings, wrong explanations and adulterated Scriptures, since

they live off her table, that you may rightly observe and see their

infamy, loathsome diseases, lumps, and deadly leprosy, understand it

spiritually, and that you may, in the fear of your God beware thereof.

I cordially admit, however, that Christ had two natures; but not in

such a sense as Micron believes, but in a scriptural sense; in this

manner Peter writes to the church of God, and says, Ye are partakers of

the divine nature, 2 Pet. 1:4; whereby he clearly testifies that there

are two natures in a christian; the one, the human nature with which he

is born of Adam, and the other, the divine nature of which he partakes

by faith, in the birth, which is of God, by the Holy Ghost.

If there are, then, two natures in one christian, as there are in

truth, why then not in Christ? For, as he is the only and true Son of

God, having no other origin but of God, then he must also have the

nature of the one of whom he is, this is too plain to be controverted.

That he had the divine nature he has proven by these manifest, apparent

attrributes of a true, divine nature; as by his perfect righteousness,

truth, holiness, love, and miracles.

As he had the divine nature, I say, on account of his divine origin,

thus he also had the unblemished, pure, human nature (like unto the

nature of Adam, before the fall), and that by reason of his true

humanity. For as truly as he was the Father's Almighty Word from

everlasting, so truly. also, he, in the fullness of time, became a

true, passive, mortal man, Jn. 1:14; 1 Jn. 1:1. And as he thus became a

true man he must also have had the property of a true man, which is a

true, human nature (though not corrupted), or else he would not have

been a true man; this is incontrovertible.

Although the Scriptures say nothing about the two natures in Christ,

yet I admit it with the above understanding; for I am sure that one can

not separate the nature from any thing any more than he can separate

the light from the sun, the heat from the fire and humidity from water.

That he had the true, human nature as well as the divine, he has shown

by the apparent fruits of the real, human nature, as by hungering,

thirsting, being wary, sighing, weeping, suffering and death.

Behold, thus I plainly confess according to the style and ordinance of

the holy, divine Scriptures, that there were two natures in the only,

undivided person and Son of God, Christ; and not as Micron does, who

makes one Son of two sons, and one person of two persons, without the

Scriptures, which he calls two natures, and according to his glozings,

were born at two different times, of two different persons, in two

different forms, and which several natures remained distinct, and were

incomprehensibly united, into one person, Christ, according to his

writing, without the Scriptures. Observe which of us points you to the

Scriptures.

It is hardly necessary to reply to some Scriptures which he adduces,

whereby he tries to prove that not the Son of God, but the son of man,

suffered. Of these Scriptures, in my opinion, the strongest is, that

Peter says, Christ was "put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the

Spirit," 1 Pet. 3:18. For who ever suffered but in the flesh? Also,

"Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm

yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in

the flesh hath ceased from sin," 1 Pet, 4:1.. Mark, Christians also

suffer in the flesh, as Christ himself did, yet they are not one son,

composed of two sons, as Micron says that Christ is.

Nobody can suffer otherwise than in the flesh, for Christ himself says,

" Fear not them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul,"

Matt. 10:28; Luke 12:4. Again, to the murderer, " To?day thou shalt be

with me in paradise," Luke 23:43. His flesh hung upon the cross, and

was afterward buried, from which it is very plain that it was said in

regard to his immortal Spirit.

Again, Christ said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit." He

did not cry, Father, into thy hands I commend thy Son with whom I have

been united into one person, and which was my Spirit. For one of three

conclusions must be drawn from Micron's writing. Either the indwelling

Son of God whom he generally calls the divine nature, and the son of

Mary, whom he generally calls the human nature, together, must have had

one Spirit or soul, and this Spirit he must have commended into the

hands of the Father; or that the two remained alive at the death of

Christ. First, the immortal, eternal Son of God, which had dwelt in

him. Secondly, the Spirit or soul which he had received of Mary, or

else the eternal Son of God must have become the Spirit of a mortal

man, which had put on a dwelling place or tabernacle of Mary, which he

offered for us, as was said in treating about the inconsistencies.

From which it follows that it is mere quicksand upon which they build

their doctrine of the two natures, or two sons in Christ, according to

their manner; and that it can stand no better before the power of the

divine word, than the stubble can stand before the fire. And thus we

firmly hold our ground that Jesus Christ is the only, undivided, and

true Son of God; and that he is not one Son composed of two different

sons, as is the anti?christian, false foundation and doctrine of our

opponents.

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THAT GOD THE FATHER IS THE TRUE FATHER OF THE WHOLE CHRIST, HIS SON; AND THAT

THE WHOLE CHRIST IS A TRUE SON OF GOD, HIS FATHER, WHICH MICRON

CONTRADICTS IN MANY PLACES, AND SAYS THAT IT IS NOT SO.

Micron writes at some places, "That the son of man had no father, or

near father." He often said so at the time of the discussion, too.

Something which is so diametrically opposed to all Scripture that one

must be astounded and ashamed thereat.

Since he so indiscreetly denies the Father of Christ Jesus, according

to his humanity ?therefore, I trust I will show to the reader, who is

the Father of Christ, by a number of scriptural references and by their

power that he must say, if he be not entirely given u?p, that Micron

and the learned, by their writings, have lamentably deceived him, and

that they have taught nothing but an anti?christian foundation.

Thus spake the angel of the Most High to Mary, when she wondered how

this should be, as she knew not a man: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon

thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore

also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the

Son of God," Luke 1:35.

Which plain Scripture Micron has ob. scured by his infernal smoke,

saying, "The angel meant to say to Mary, that her child should not be

man, only (ho moans of her flesh), but also truly God, and his Son, aG

cording to his eternal, divine being." Not a single word did the angel

say to that effect; nor did he make such a division in Christ, as does

Micron. But the angel merely made it known that she should conceive,

and that the fruit should be the Son of God, and that God should be the

Father of the .child. Behold, thus Micron breaks the testimony of the

holy angel, which he, at God's command, bore to Mary from high heaven,

that the holy thing which should be born of her, should be the Son of

God.

Again, the heavenly Father himself testifies of Christ Jesus, saying,

"This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye him," Matt.

17: C; Mark 9: ?'; Luke 9:35. Here the Father proclaims him to be his

beloved Son, without any division. And Micron says that he is not.

Again, Christ said unto the blind man, "Dost thou believe on the Son of

God? He answered and said, who is he, Lord, that?I might believe on

him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he

that talketh with thee," Jn. 9:35. Here the palpable, visible Christ,

who, according to the foundation of Micron, was only the son of man,

confesses himself to be the Son of God, without any division; and

Micron says that he is not. Again, at another place Christ says, "What

and if ye shall see the son of man (mark, he says the son of man)

ascend up where he?was before?" Jn. 6:62. Here Christ himself confesses

that the son of man was from heaven; and Micron says that he?was of

earth, and that he is called heavenly, on 'account of some virtues, as

if Christ was a nominal Christ and not a Christ in truth.

Again, when Christ asked his disciples, saying, " Whom do men say that

I, the son of man, am g" (mark, he asks about the son of man). Then

Peter said, "Thou art the Christ (without a division), the Son of the

living God," Matt. 16:16, &c.; and Micron says that the son of man was

not the Son of God.

Again, John the Baptist says, " He that tent me to baptize with, water,

the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending,

and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy

Ghost. And I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God," Jn.

1:33. Here John confesses the visible Christ (who, according to our

opponent's foundation, was only the son of man), to be the Son of God;

and Micron writes that he is not.

Again, the centurion, on Golgotha said,. "Truly, this man (mark, he

says, this man) was the Son of God," Mark 15:39; and Micron says, he is

not. Paul says, " God sent forth his Son, made of a woman," Gal. 4:4;

and Micron writes, God sent forth his Son, who came of a woman. At

another place, Paul writes, "He that spared not his own Son," Rom.

8:32. Mark, he says, His own Son, and we are reconciled to God by the

death of his Son. Rom. G:10. John says, "The blood of Jesus Christ his

Son cleanseth us from all sin," 1 Jn. 1:77. At another place, "He (God)

sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins," 1 Jn. 4:10, which

reconciliation, according to Micron's false doctrine, is not brought

about by the blood of the Son of God, as John and Paul teach, but by

the blood of the son of man, who, according to Micron, had no father,

as has often been heard.

Kind reader, if you closely observe it you will find more than sixty

instances in the New Testament where Christ Jesus confesses God the

heavenly Father to be his Father, and himself to be his Son. And from

the beginning to the end, you will not find anything about such a

division and union as our opponents teach, neither in Christ's words,

nor in those of any of the holy apostles or evangelists.

Micron writes at more than one place, "If God, the Father, is the

Father of the man Christ, then he must have also had flesh and blood."

From which it is manifest, first, that he does not allow the crucified

Christ a Father. Whereby the angel of God, the Father, and the Son,

themselves, also John the Baptist, Peter, John, Paul, Nathaniel,

Martha, and the whole Scriptures are made bare?faced liars and false

witnesses, by him, Luke l:31; Matt. 17: s; Jn. 9:36; 1:33; 3:16; Matt.

16:16. For they have repeatedly confessed him to be the true Son of the

true and living God.

Secondly, it is manifest that all such writing is not of the living

Fount of the Holy Ghost; nor of an enlightened, firm, believing heart

which, without all wavering, trusts, with Joshua and Caleb, in the

power and true promise of the Almighty God; but that it is solely of

human wisdom and an unbelieving, carnal heart, which can not judge but

according to nature; and yet, through excessive blindness, destroys the

ordinances of this same nature, which God established in the first

creation.

Kind reader, take heed I The Almighty power of God, the ineffable

miracle of his divine love, and the undeceiving, sure word of his

eternal truth should avail more than the blind intellect of our

corrupted nature, if we would rightly learn to know Christ, and follow

and obey his holy word.

The dead body of Adam, created of the dust, by the breath of God,

became a living soul, Gen. 1:27, and the water gushed forth from the

rock, Ex. 17:6. Yet the earth, from which the living Adam was made, was

no living soul, neither was the rock from which the water flowed for

Israel to drink, the ingredients of water. If they should now say that

this was done by the power of God, by supernatural means, as is the

case, too, then I would reply again: Thus was also brought about the

miraculous incarnation of Jesus Christ, in Mary, by the omnipotence of

God by which he can do any thing he pleases, as the angel says, 'I The

power of the Highest shall overshadow thee;" for with God nothing is

impossible, Luke 1:36.

I entertain the opinion that all those who believe, in power and in

truth, that God was able, in the beginning, to create heaven, earth and

sea, and the fullness thereof, by his mighty word, and now, by the same

word, rules, disposes and maintains all this; and who believe that he

is able to raise Adam and all his descendants, at the end, by the same

power, from the dust, and reclaim them from the undermost parts of the

earth and the depths of the sea, and place them before the sight of his

majesty, will also believe that this same God had the power to send his

ineffable, eternal word from heaven and to let it become, by the power

of his Holy Spirit, a true, passive, mortal man, in Mary, as John says,

" The Word was made flesh," Jn. 1:14.I repeat it, in Mary, for in the

Father, or in heaven, before he was conceived, he was not flesh. This I

have often confessed in plain language, and thoroughly proved by the

Scriptures. Notwithstanding this he is not ashamed so to garble my

words as if I should have said that the Word was flesh in the Father,

or in heaven. Something which I can say with a good conscience never to

have thought of in all my life.

I do not see what difference there can be between the spirit of our

opponents and the spirit of the Pharisees and of the false prophets.

For as they always garbled the words of the pious prophets and of the

Lord Christ, and were always intent upon making them disreputable, and

thus, out of mere hatred and envy of the truth, make way with them by

violence, falsehood and wrong; thus these, out of mere hatred and envy

of the truth, deal with me, old, !!!afflicted man; for, alas, they have

portrayed me all through their book, in such colors, that I do hot see

how they could have depicted Behemoth and Beelzebub in more unpleasant

colors than they have depicted me; notwithstanding that, I have never

in my life, wished them any harm and much less done them any; but have

shown them all christian faithfulness and discretion by giving them

good counsel in their need, as the love which is of God teaches all

true christians to do. Yet, however, they have written this lying,

infamous and? slanderous falsehood against me, undeservedly, as thanks

for mV faithfulness, whereby they cause me to be tenfold more obnoxious

in all countries; than I was before. And this for no other reason in

fact, than that we confess Christ Jesus to be the true Son of the true

and living God, with the angel Gabriel, with the Father, with Christ

himself, with John the Baptist, with Peter, and with all the

Scriptures, and that we, in our weakness, would gladly hear and follow

his word, commandments, prohibitions, ordinances and unblamable

example, that we might thus be saved by his grace, which our opponents

utterly hate and oppose. For they publicly avow that the son of man,

whom we confess to be the Son of God, according to the Scriptures, was

not the Son of God. They contradict his express ordinance of baptism,

which he taught and commanded us with his own mouth, whereby all the

regenerated; believing children of God submissively testify before

Christ and his church that they are prepared and willing to follow his

holy word and divine will, unto death.Beloved, do observe what

abomination and poisonous draught it is which they pour out for you

from the Babylonian cup! True and immutable remains the testimony of

the Father: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased," Matt.

3:17; 17:5; Mark 1:11; 9:7; Luke 9:35; 2 Pet. 1;17.

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HOW THE DIVINE WORD, IN THE FULLNESS OF TIME, ACCORDING TO

THE SCRIPTURES, WAS MADE FLESH.

You have heard that God, the Father, is a true Father of the whole

Christ, and that the whole Christ is the true Son of God, his Father.

We will now show you, by the grace of the Lord, by virtue of the holy,

divine Scriptures, what kind of divine substance, matter, seed, or

being it was of which this same Son of God and Mary was brought forth,

that you may confess and see the clearness of the human birth of Jesus

Christ, according to the Scriptures, through the smoke ' of the

bottomless pit, cleared away by the power of the strong word and

scattered by the breeze of the Holy Ghost.

Thus John teaches us, saying, "In the beginning was the Word, and the

Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning

with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any

thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light

of men." "And the Word (which was in the beginning) was made flesh, and

dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only

begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth," Jn. 1.

Behold, dear reader, here John shows us as a true witness of the truth,

the divine being of the man Christ, the ineffable, eternal Word.

If you would have an immutable, true and firm foundation of faith, and

the true sense of these words of John, and not be deceived by the lying

seed of the old serpent, nor be robbed of your Savior by the subtle

deceit of anti?christ, you must well observer and hold to these

facts.First, that God the Father is confessed to be the tree Father of

his Son Christ, by the Scriptures, Matt. 3:17; 16:16; 17:5; Luke 1:31;

Jn. 1:45; 3:16; 5:22.

Secondly, that Christ Jesus is confessed to be the true Son of God, his

Father, by all the Scriptures, Matt. 3:17; 14:33; 18:16; 17:5; Mark

1:11; 9:7:15:39; Luke 2:48; Jn. 9:37.

As it is plain that God the heavenly Father is a true Father of Christ,

his Son, and that Christ is a tree Son of God, his Father, as is

testified all through the Scriptures; therefore it is sure and manifest

that we should leave the testimony of John unglozed and unbroken, where

he says, "The word was made flesh." For since Christ is God's true Son,

and God the Father, Christ's tree. Father, the Father must also have

had his ineffable Word, by which all things were made that are made, as

was heard.

If our opponents should say, "That the Word was Spirit from the

beginning, and could therefore not become flesh," then you may answer,

first, If the Word could not become flesh, as you say, the power of the

Father is made less and his arm is shortened, by which he can do

anything he pleases; and the angel bore a false testimony to Mary, when

he said that there is nothing impossible with God, Luke 1:37.

Secondly, you may answer: If the Word was not made flesh, as you say,

then all the Scriptures deceive us, which testify and teach, without

any division, union, or exception as to nature, sons or persona, that

,Christ Jesus is God's Son, and that God is his Father, as was said.

Thirdly, you may answer: If the Word was not made flesh, as you say,

then the Holy Scriptures testify falsely, that he is of heaven and not

of earth, Jn. 3:31; 8:23; Eph. 4:10, that he came forth from the

Father, Jn. 16:28, that he is the bread and Lord from heaven, Jn. 6:35;

1 Cor. 15:47, that he is the Alpha and Omega, Rev. 1:8; 22:13, and

other like Scriptures.

Fourthly, you may answer: If the Word could not become flesh, as you

say, then tine or the other of you must be wrong. Either you who say

that he could not become flesh, or John, who says that he was made

flesh, as was heard.

If they should further say, that the Word put on, by generation, of

Mary's seed, as they actually do, you may answer then thus: First, Then

we desire that you show to us where this? is written in the Scriptures

or else we say, that it is the flattering and falsehood of the old

serpent, and not the Lord's truth.

Secondly, you answer: By such acceptation you rob the Father of his

Son, and the Son of his Father. You divide Christ into two parts, into

good and evil, into righteous and unrighteous, into heavenly and

earthly. You point us to a sinful creature and an impure offering. 'You

idolize the earthly and sinful flesh of Adam. You make all the pious

witnesses of Christ, such as John the Baptist, Peter, &c., false and

lying, and yourselves anti?christ; and make the Scriptures

contradictory.

Thirdly, you may answer: Becoming is becoming, and putting on is

putting on; nor will it be found otherwise in the Scriptures. Thus when

Christ became twelve years of age, he did become twelve years of age,

counting from the time of his human birth. Christ became a curse, Gal.

3:13. He became such, so as to be hung between two murderers, on the

cross, Matt. 27:38; Mark 15:27; Luke 23:32. Water was made wine, and it

was made, John 2:9; Lot's wife became a pillar of salt, and she did

become one, Gen..19:26. For becoming I say, is becoming, and cannot be

explained in any part of the Scriptures as meaning putting on.

If they would still follow their intellect and say," If the Word is

become flesh, it has lost its first being by the change," you might

answer, first: John has taught us that it was made flesh, and he has

not said L word further, as to how or to what extent it was changed;

something that you, inquisitive ones, want to know and hear of us,

without any Scripture.

Secondly, you might answer: Adam was made a living soul, 1 Cor. 15:45;

yet ho remained dust, for the Lord said unto him, "Dust thou art, and

unto dust shalt thou return, Gen. 3:19.

Thirdly, you might reply: We ought to believe sincerely, and not

intellectually comprehend. For Paul says, that" Faith is the substance

of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," Heb. 11:1.

Fourthly, you might reply: Paul says, That he is God, and Christ says

that he is a Spirit. Zophar the Naamathite says, "It is as high as

heaven; deeper than hell; longer than the earth; and broader than the

sea," Job 11:8, 9. And the prophet says, that he comprehended the dust

of the earth in a measure, Isa.40:12; also, "saith the Lord, The heaven

is my throne, and the earth is my footstool," Isa. 66:1. There is no

man born of Adam who is so intellectual and wise that he can measure

this God and Spirit, or comprehend his being, therefore it would be

well for them to abandon their high, soaring intellect to search such

ineffable profundity, to humbly bow themselves under the word of the

Lord, and to ponder on the saying of Solomon, "It is not good to eat

much honey; so for men to search their own glory is not glory," Prov.

26:27. Read also Syrach 3:21.

Kind reader, if intellect were to avail in this ineffable, deep matter,

and not the Scriptures, then I would ask them an intellectual question

concerning their faith, of which they could scarcely extricate

themselves. It would be this: Whether or not they believe that the

Almighty, ineffable Word, of which heaven and earth are full, Wis.

18:16, and which is also, the eternal wisdom and power of the Almighty,

eternal Father, has placed itself out and out in such concrete

sanguine, as Micron calls it at one place, as is his doctrine now? I

presume they will leave the question unanswered. For if they say that

it was therein, out and out, than they make a Father who has separated

his word, wisdom and power from himself, and placed it outside of

himself. And if they say that it was not all therein, then they make

their own foundation untrue and false; for they say and teach that the

Son of God (which is God's eternal Word, wisdom and power) has put on

the son of man or of Mary, and that he has united himself therewith

into one person.

Therefore I repeat that it would be well for them to leave such

ineffable profundity unsearched, to stay under the clouds, and not to

soar above heaven, with their earthly, ignorant intellect; for, I

presume that when they have measured the height of the heavens and the

depth of the abyss, have weighed the mountains and enumerated the drops

of rain, then they will give me an intelligent answer, and explain how

this thing is, about which I asked concerning their faith, foundation

and doctrine. And therefore I say that I do not at all charge my mind

with this incomprehensible miracle, but adduce the word of the Lord,

whereby I am plainly taught that Mary, the Lord's mother, conceived the

Almighty, eternal Word of the Father (by which all things were made

that are made), by faith, Luke 1:31, and that the same, by the great

power and operation of his Almighty, eternal Spirit, became a true,

visible, palpable, passive, mortal, pure and holy man, not of her, but

in her, above the comprehension of all mankind. And thus he who was

already the first?born of every creature, and, also, according to his

human form, the first and only begotten, true Son of God, was

supernaturally born unto God, his Father, of Mary, according to the

flesh, as Isaac was naturally born unto Abraham by Sarah; Solomon ?unto

David, by Bath?sheba, and John the Baptist unto Zacharias, by

Elisabeth, Gen. 21; 2 Sam. 12:24; Luke ~ 1:12; which first and only

begotten, true Son of God became also, according to the promise, a son

of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, and David on account of his mother

(but in the genealogy of Christ, Joseph's son, Matt. 1:16; Luke 3:23),

who graciously fulfilled the spiritual law which no flesh of Adam could

fulfill, for all of the descendants of Adam, in perfect righteousness,

Rom. 8:2; and who innocently trod the wine press of bitter death, Isa.

63:3; Rev. 19:15, to whom the law and all the prophets point, and in

whom all the glorious promises of the inexpressibly great grace and

love of God are fulfilled. And thus, after he had done the service of

his divine love he again ascended up where he was before, Jn. 6:62. He

has all power in heaven and upon earth, Matt. 28:18, and is, through

faith in his blood, our only and eternal Propitiator, Reconciler, High

Priest, Mediator, Advocate, and Peace?maker with God, his Father, Rom.

3:26; Jn. 4:26; 1 Tim. 2: C; 1 Jn. 2:1.

Behold, thus the most high, most gracious, and most merciful God and

Father retains his glory, praise and honor through his blessed, eternal

Word and Son; and not through the unclean, sinful flesh of Adam,as our

opponents teach and pretend.

Mark, now, beloved reader, how our opponents are deceived in this

matter by their earthly, carnal intellect which would explain this

miracle, not according to the Scriptures, but according to the laws of

nature, and therefore, do not believe that the Almighty God had the

power to let his eternal Word become flesh, and a true man; for which

reason they have depicted me in such unbecoming colors, although these

poor souls are doubly what they would make us to be, namely, false

teachers, and perverse heretics. For they say and teach without any

Scriptures, that the man Christ who died for us, was not the Son of

God, and that he had no Father; and we say that he is God's Son, and

that God is his Father, according to all Scripture.

They say and teach, without any Scripture, "That the Word has put on a

whole man of Mary's flesh and seed;" and we say and teach, according to

the plain testimony of John, That the Word was made flesh, not of Mary,

but in Mary.

They teach, " That there are two different persons and sons, one

divine, the other human, in the one Christ," without Scripture; and we

say that there is but one undivided person and Son, according to the

Scriptures.

They say and teach, "That the visible Christ was earthly, of the

earth," without the Scriptures; and we say and teach that he is

heavenly, of heaven, according to the Scriptures.

They say and teach, "That he is pure of impure Adam," without

Scripture; and we say and teach that he is pure of the pure God,

according to the Scriptures.

They point us to an " accursed, sinful offering," without Scripture;

and we point to a spotless, innocent offering, according to the

Scriptures.

They worship an Adamitic flesh, contrary to all Scripture; and we, the

Almighty, eternal Word which became man by the infinite power of God,

according to the Scriptures.

In short, they place their whole salvation in the unclean, sinful seed

of Adam, that is, in a man, who, according to their fabulous writing,

and contrary to the word and ordinance of God, 'was generated from the

seed or blood of Mary, without father; and we, in the Almighty, eternal

Word, which became man in the fullness of time, by which all things are

made, ruled, and have their being, forever, which was from everlasting

the eternal wisdom, power and glory of God, his Father, one with God,

his eternal Father and the eternal Holy Ghost, blessed forever, Amen.

Invincible and firm remains the word: "The word was made flesh," Jn.

1:14; 1 Jn. 1:1. O, merciful, gracious Lord, enlighten the eyes of all

the blind, that they may see thy heavenly brightness and rightly

confess the majesty of thy honor, Amen. Dear Lord, Amen.

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CONCLUSION.

HONORABLE reader, here you have our fundamental explanation and plain

reply to the untrue, and partial narration, and anti?christian, false

doctrine concerning Jesus Christ the Son of God by Micron and Herman,

wherewith I am now and at all times willing and ready to appear before

God and his angels, before friend and foe, and before. the whole world,

unto water, fire, sword, and before the coming judgment.

I would pray you all, reasonable readers, through Jesus, as if before

God, to reflect earnestly what kind of spirits and people they are who

have written the "Narration" and its appendix and articles concerning

us, as they have kept quite silent about the beneficence so faithfully

shown them in their need; nor said anything about the distinct

confessions which they made, as above stated, whereby they had already

lost the whole point in discussion, as also, that they were frequently

so puzzled that they knew not ?what to say, and as they have not

written a single, discreet word about me in their whole book; and from

the beginning of the discussion to the end of their writing, they have

only studied and aimed how they might most expertly defame me, and thus

make our doctrine, which is the pure doctrine of Christ, a stench to

many.

In several instances they have lamentably garbled and misinterpreted my

words; have added to, or subtracted therefrom, and changed the meaning

of their own. The order of the discussion they have changed, made many

unscriptural glozings, adulterated the Holy Scriptures, made false

witnesses of the Father himself and his blessed Son, of the angel of

the Lord, of John the Baptist, of all the evangelists, apostles and of

all the Scriptures, as may be seen.

However, they fill the measure of their predecessors, the false

prophets, who, from the beginning, have praised and taught falsehood by

hypocrisy, have hated the truth, and upbraided the faithful servants of

God, and defamed them; who have taken amiss the faithful service of

their love, accused them before .lords and princes, have hindered them

in the doctrine and true religion, and at last, have taken their lives

and confiscated their goods. It is but little to me, that they have

thus trampled upon me, and caused me to be a stench to many; for I am

aware that I am unworthy of honor, since I am born of Adam, of impure

seed, an unworthy sinner; as all those have complained, from the

beginning, who were rightly overshadowed by the glory of the Lord. But,

the Lord forbid that I am such an unsteady falsifier, and artful rogue,

as I am depicted to be by our opponents through the infamous, false,

indiscreet and bitter spirit of envy. Many pious people of both the Old

and the New Testament had to hear this same thing, with me. Christ

promises us a great reward in heaven; for it is done for his name's

sake, Matt. 5:11; Luke 6:22. But it pierces my soul night and day that

they so lamentably blaspheme the Son of God, adulterate the Scriptures,

and so falsely console the poor, unenlightened souls by such open

falsehood, and thus encourage and keep them in their accursed

blindness. For which reason I was urged to write this reply, to the

praise of the Lord, and to your service.

I would, therefore, that you would earnestly consider what a pure,

clear and unadulterated foundation of truth we have pointed out to you

and to all the world, concerning Christ. And, on the other hand, also,

how plainly and convincingly we have discovered and manifested unto you

and all reasonable readers the anti?christian foundation and doctrine

of our opponents. Whosoever has but half sight may see where the deceit

is hidden.

We now and at all times willingly offer, that if they can prove to us

by the unbroken and unadulterated Scriptures, that Adam had two kinds

of seed, of which one was pure and the other impure, or, that the

Scriptures any where call?that holy, pure, and heavenly which is

unholy, impure and earthly in itself, or, that two sons can be one Son,

or, that the Scriptures any where mention such a union, as our

opponents falsely pretend, or, that ever any one was the true son of

another without his being generated of his substance or seed, or, that

God is a God of falsehood, so that he would call the man Christ his

Son, without his actually being such, then we will gratefully and

diligently reconsider the matter, in all love. Behold, before God, it

is the truth that I write. And, in case they cannot do so (something

which they surely never can), then our opponents, if they be reasonable

men, should acknowledge that they have the impure, deceitful doctrine

of antichrist, and we the wholesome doctrine of Christ; notwithstanding

we must hear and suffer so exceedingly much.

Dear reader, if we consider the Scriptures of John the evangelist, we

clearly find that the spirit and doctrine of our opponents already

existed in his time. For, at that time they denied that Jesus Christ

was the Son of God, and that he was made flesh; something which these,

also, often did in their writings and verbal discussion which they had

with us. From which it is manifest that it is the roguery and deceit of

the old serpent.

I would, therefore, humbly beseech all the godly, pious hearts who

sincerely and diligently seek Christ and eternal life, for the Lord's

sake, first, to pray for all of our opponents, both of high and low

station in life, learned or unlearned, rich or poor, who ignorantly

err, and who are encouraged and consoled in their impenitent, reckless

life, by such false teachers and writers as are our opponents, that the

merciful, gracious Lord may give them eyes to see his glorious, exalted

origin, and rightly confess his truth, that that may not be lost with

which they are so dearly bought.

And secondly, pray that the Lord may grant me, and all our fellow

laborers of the house of God, together with the whole church, the

Spirit of his wisdom; grant that we, by his grace, may remain ~

wholesome in doctrine; steady in faith; ardent in love; quickened in

hope; unremittent in the work of the Lord; unblamable in life, and

patient in all oppression and tribulation; of which alas, we do not

experience a little by the infamous crying and writing of our

opponents; that we may set a living example to the world; that many may

see our new, christian walk in the truth and examine it, repent, and

thus be eternally saved.

I beseech you in the same manner not to leave these our writings idle

and hidden, but to send them east, west, north and south, into the

hands of all men, and to let many read them, that the bright sun of

righteousness which, alas, has been obscured for so many centuries by

the smoke of the bottomless pit of the anti?christian, false doctrine,

may shine forth with the power of truth, and that our glorious and holy

Savior, the first and only begotten, true Son of the Almighty, living

God, the ever blessed Jesus Christ, may be rightly confessed by many,

in his glory.To this only and eternal Savior, together with his

heavenly Father and Holy Ghost be the praise forever, Amen.

MENNO SIMON.

October 6.

A LETTER,.

From Menno Simon to Margaret, wife of Rein Eden.

CHOSEN beloved sister in Christ Jesus, Mercy, grace and peace be to

thee! Most beloved sister whom I sincerely love in Christ. From your

beloved husband's letter I understand, that during all the winter you

have been a sick and afflicted child, which I very much regret to hear.

But we pray daily: Father, thy will be done. By which we commit

ourselves to the Father to treat with us as is pleasing in his blessed

sight. Therefore bear with your affliction resignedly. For all this is

his paternal will for your own good; that you may put your trust in the

eternal living God alone, and not in any perishable things. Be consoled

in Christ Jesus; for after the cold of winter, comes summer; and after

death, comes life. O, sister I rejoice that you are a true daughter of

your beloved Father. Soon will the inheritance of his glorious promise

be due; a little while yet, says the word of the Lord, and he who is

coming shall come and his reward will be with him. May the Almighty,

merciful God and Lord, before whom you have bent your knees, to his

honor, and whom, according to your weakness you have sought, grant you

a strong and patient heart, a sufferable pain, a lovely refreshment, a

gracious cure or godly dissolution, through Christ Jesus whom we daily

expect with you, my be. loved sister and child in Christ Jesus.

Secondly, I understand that your conscience is troubled because you

have not and do not now walk in such perfection as the Scriptures

direct us; on which account I write the following to my faithful

sister, as a fraternal consolation, from the true word and eternal

truth of the Lord: The Scripture, says Paul, hath concluded all under

sin. There is no man on earth, says Solomon, who does righteously and

sinneth not, Eccl. 7. At another place," A just man falleth seven

times, and riseth up again," Prov. 24:16. Moses says, "The Lord, the

Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in

goodness and truth; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and

transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty," Ex.

34:6, 7. O, dear sister! Observe, he says, !!!None are guiltless before

God. Again, David says, "Lord, enter not into judgment with thy

servant; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified;" " If they

sin against thee (for there is no man who sinneth not);" "We are all as

an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags;"

Christ, also, says, "There is none good but one, that is, God;" 'I The

evil which I would not, that I do;" " In many things we offend all;"

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is

not in us," Ps. 143:2; 1 Kin. 8:48; Isa. 64:6; Matt. 19:17; Mark 10:18;

Rom. 7:19; 1 Jn. 1:8.

As it is plain from all these Scriptures that we must all acknowledge

ourselves to be sinners, as we, also, are in fact; and as no one has

perfectly fulfilled the righteousness required of God but Christ Jesus

alone; therefore none can approach God, obtain grace and be saved

except by the perfect righteousness, reconciliation and advocacy of

Jesus Christ; however godly, righteous, holy and unblamable he is. We

must all acknowledge, whosoever we are, that we are sinners in

thoughts, words and works. Yea, if we had not before us the righteous

Christ Jesus, no prophet nor apostle could be saved. Therefore, be of

good cheer and be consoled in the Lord. You can expect no greater

righteousness in yourself than all the chosen of God had in them from

the beginning. In and by yourself you are a poor sinner; and by the

eternal righteousness, banished, accursed and adjudged to eternal

death; but in and through Christ you are justified and pleasing unto

God, and accepted of him in eternal grace as a daughter and child. In

this all saints have consoled themselves, trusted in Christ, esteemed

their own righteousness as unclean, weak and imperfect, with contrite

hearts approached the throne of grace, in the name of Christ, and with

firm faith prayed the Father: O, Father, forgive us our trespasses as

we forgive those that trespass against us, Matt. 6; Luke 11.

It is a very precious word which Paul speaks, "When we were yet without

strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly;" yea, when we were

yet ungodly, and thereby he manifests his love toward us. "For if, when

we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son much

more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life, Rom. b:6, 10.

Behold, my chosen, beloved child and sister in the Lord, this I write

from the sure foundation of eternal truth. I herewith pray you, and

desire that you will wholly commend all your doings outward and inward

unto Christ Jesus and his merits; believing and confessing that his

precious blood, alone, is your cleansing; his righteousness your piety;

his death your life; and his resurrection your justification; for he is

the forgiveness of all your sins; his bloody wounds are your

reconciliation; and his invincible strength the staff and consolation

of your weakness, as we have, in former days, as cording to our small

gift, often shown you from the Scriptures. Yea, most beloved child and

sister, so long as you find and feel such a spirit in yourself which is

desirous of following that which is good, and abhorring that which is

evil, not withstanding the remnant of sin is not entirely dead in you,

as also all the saints complained of from the beginning, so long you

may rest assured that you are a child of God, and that you will inherit

the kingdom of grace in eternal joy, with all the saints. I Hereby know

we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his

Spirit," Jn. 4:13. I sincerely pray that you may, by faith, rightly

understand this ground to the refreshment, strengthening and

consolation of your conscience and soul, and remain firm unto the end.

I commend you, most beloved child and sister, to the faithful, merciful

and gracious God, in Christ Jesus, now and forever. Let him do with you

and with all of us according to his blessed will. Either in the flesh,

yet to remain a little while with your beloved husband and children; or

out of the flesh, to the honor of his name and to the salvation of your

soul. You before, and we after, or we before and you afterward.

Separation must once come. In the city of God, in the new Jerusalem

there we will wait on each other, before the throne of God and of the

Lamb; there sing hallelujah! and praise his name in perfect joy. Your

husband and children I commend to him who has given them to you, and he

will do with them justly. The saving power of the most holy blood of

Christ be with my most beloved child and sister, now and forever, Amen.

Your brother, who sincerely loves you in Christ.

MENNO SIMON.

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A

VERY SINCERE EPISTLE

TO

MARTIN MICRON

A NECESSARY REPLY TO HIS INDISCREET FALSEHOOD, ABUSE, AND FALSE ACCUSATIONS,

CONCERNING THE MAGISTRACY, SWEARING OF OATHS, &C., WHICH HE HAS PRESENTED

FOR THE PERUSAL OF THE WHOLE WORLD, TO THE DISGRACE OF THE HOLY, DIVINE

WORD AND OF HIS THE LORD'S) CHURCH; AS ALSO SERVING AS A MIRROR TO HIS

ERRING SOUL, THAT HE MAY LEARN TO KNOW HIMSELF, AND MAY KNOW, TO

GETHER WITH THE READERS OF BOTH OUR WRITINGS, HOW WICKEDLY

HE HAS ACTED AGAINST GOD AND MAN, THAT HE MAY MAKE CON

FESSION, REPENT, AND BE SAVED.

BY

MENNO SIMON.

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus

Christ," 1 Cor. 8:11.

ELKHART, INDIANA:

PUBLISHED BY JOHN P. FUNK AND BROTHER.

1871 THE pure, true knowledge of Jesus Christ, the Son of God in truth; a new,

regenerated, and understanding heart; a new, impartial, true hand and tongue;

a new, godly, nnblamable life in the fear and love of God; together with the

unadulterated, pure, and good disposition, nature, fruits and unction of the

Holy Ghost, I wish to Martin Micron from the inmost of my heart, to the

enlightenment of his soul, from him who is the Giver of every good and perfect

gift, through Jesus Christ, his beloved, chosen Son, our Lord and eternal

Savior, Amen.

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A VERY SINCERE

EPISTLE TO MARTIN MICRON.

ALL Scriptures teach and enjoin, honorable Martin, that we should love

the Lord, our God, with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with

all our strength, and our neighbors as ourselves. On these two

commandments, says Christ, hang all the law and the prophets, Matt.

22:37?40; Mark 12:29; Luke 10:27; Deut. 6:5.

All that Scripture teaches is love. "Every one that loveth," says John,

" is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God;

for God is love," And, " He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and

God in him," 1 Jn. 4:7, 8, 16. Without this love, it is all vain,

whatever we may know, judge, speak, do or write, 1 Cor. 13:1. The

property and fruit of love is meekness, kindness, not envious, not

crafty, not deceitful, not puffed up, nor selfish. In short, where love

is, there is a christian, also.

Since we are pointed to love by the Scriptures, and cannot be

christians without love, and as you do not only call yourself a common

layman, but also an exemplary teacher; therefore you have done quite

wrong not to have taken into consideration the commandment of love, in

the fear of God, before you published your false, infamous, ambitious,

anti?christian " Narration" and book.

Yon have manifested yourself before God and man in such a manner as

though you had, never in your life, felt and confessed the least

particle of the pure, unadulterated nature of love, as I shall show and

explain, by the grace of the Lord, in an impartial, sincere conscience,

by this my admonition, out of love of the divine honor and the holy

word; as also, out of love for your poor soul, that you (if there is

yet a spark of life and a faint light left in you, by such showing;

written for your own good, may be induced to see your ulcers and deadly

wounds, and yet be cured by the heavenly medicine of the Lord's Spirit

and word by sincere repentance, to the praise of the Lord and the

salvation of your soul. If there be yet any reason left in you, reflect

upon what I tell you.

First, it is manifest, and cannot be successfully denied by you nor by

any person else that you have by your writing made a liar of the

Almighty, great God, the God of heaven and of earth, the Father of our

Lord Jesus Christ, who can neither lie nor deceive; for he testifies of

Christ, and says, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased,"

Matt. 3:17; 17:5; Mark 1:11; 9:7; Luke 3:22; 9:35; 2 Pet. 1:16; and you

say that he is not; for you have verbally confessed to us, and you

write so yet at different places, that the man Christ (which you call

the human nature in Christ) had no Father.

Observe, whether you are not one of the spirits, of whom John says, "He

that believeth not God has made him a liar; because he believeth not

the record that God gave of his Son," 1 Jn. 5:10. Beloved Micron,

reflect, and see if I do not write the truth.

Secondly, it is manifest that you have also made a liar of Christ, who

is the eternal truth, by your writing; for he confesses more than sixty

or seventy times, in John, that he is the Son of God, and that God is

his Father; that he came from heaven, and that he was gone forth from

the Father; that he is the only begotten Son, &c, and you boldly

proclaim to the public, that he is not; that he had no father,

according to his humanity; that he is of the flesh and seed of Mary, of

earth, and the natural son or seed of Abraham and David.

Observe and see if you are not one of the false teachers and prophets

who forsake the Lord who bought them, 2 Pet. 2:1. Dear Micron, reflect

and see if it is not the truth that I write.

Thirdly, it is manifest that by your writing you make false witnesses

of the heavenly messenger, the angel of the Most High, Luke 1:31; of

the humble, plain Nathaniel in whom was no guile, Jn. 1:47; of John the

Baptist, the holiest born of woman, Matt. 11:17.; of Martha, the

hostess and servant of the Lord, Luke 10:38; of Peter the faithful

shepherd, Jn. 21: g; John the apostle whom Jesus loved, Jn.13:23;

21:20; and of Paul the chosen?vessel, Acts 9:15. For they all

unanimously testify, and that without any division whatever as to

humanity and divinity that Christ Jesus is the Son of God; and you

publicly proclaim that he is not according to his humanity.

Observe, and see whether you are not a servant of the abominable beast

which opened his month in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name

and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven, Rev. 13: ts. Dear

Micron reflect, and see if I do not write the truth.

Fourthly, it is manifest that you have made such witnesses of your own

brethren who were present at the discussion (and, who, alas, did not

know much about the matter), as those were who testified against

Christ, Stephen, and Naboth (that is, if your brethren agree with your

unjust, partial charges; which I hope they do not); for as those

testified, out of hatred of the truth, against the righteous, to please

Jezebel and the Scribes, thus these, out of hatred of the truth,

testify against me, to please you and those of your faith (I speak of

the guilty ones), to defame me thus, notwithstanding that they heard

your confession concerning the seed of woman, on which foundation your

whole doctrine is built; also, concerning the two Sons in Christ, that

the crucified one should have had no father; again, that you conld not

successfully maintain the purity of your Christ; that you could make no

reply to the Scriptures we have read; that you tried to shelter behind

an unscriptnral question, which we answered in such a manner, that all

your refuge was cut off, and that you had to turn from one thing to

another. One would reasonably suppose, if they were people of common

self?respect who sought the honor of God, and your salvation, as we

supposed them to be at first meeting them, that they must charge you

before all men that you have, out of mere hatred and envy, spoken

partial, devilish falsehoods, and not the impartial, godly truth, to

defame your neighbors, and that you have done so to your own eternal

shame. But it is an old proverb: "A is the shepherd goes, the sheep

follow." Christ truly says, "If the blind lead the blind, both shall

fall into the ditch," Matt. 15:14. Dear Micron reflect, and see if 3 do

not speak the truth.

Fifthly, it is. manifest that you lamentably deceive all your readers

and hearers who believe your writing, and that you kill their poor

souls. For it is known to the Lord, who has eyes as a flame of fire, to

yourself, and to us all who were present, that in fact your cause was

lost; yet you console them with devised lies, as is the way with all

false prophets, whereby you rob them, according to John, of both the

Father and the Son, 1 Jn. 2:23; keep them under the wrath and curse,

Jn. 3:38; whereby you keep them out of God, and God out of them, 1 Jn.

4:15, so that they do not overcome the world, 1 Jn. 5:4; for they do

not believe that Jesus is the Son of God.

Observe and see if you are not one of those who shut up the kingdom of

heaven against men, as the Lord says, Matt. 23:13. Dear Micron reflect,

and see whether it is not the truth I write.

Sixthly, it is manifest that you have, with your writing acted toward

some of us, and also toward myself personally, not as an honest,

virtuous, godly, pious christian, but rather as a dishonest, shameless,

indiscreet, and blood thirsty Corycceus, or informer. For it is a fact

that you have, without the truth, registered a poor, innocent man (whom

you well knew), as a teacher, who is no teacher, , nor apt ever to

become one, whereby you will, perhaps, deprive him of his poor children

of their whole welfare, nay, of thousands, if the Lord in ?his

providence does not prevent it. The Spirit of the Lord does not enjoin

you thus to act toward the innocent.

Dear Micron, if you would have had a single drop of pious blood in your

veins you would have had mercy on the poor, innocent, unworthy servant;

whom you thus, alas, repay before the whole world, for his faithful

services of love willingly shown you and yours with sincere, christian

intentions.

In the same manner you have acted toward the others who furnished you

with a dwelling place, victuals and drink, who solicitously led yours

into the city, furnished them situations, and showed them all manner of

kindness, in pure love. Let the Christian reflect and judge according

to the Lord's Spirit and word, whether this is the work of

unadulterated, christian love, which wishes harm to none, much less

does it.

Besides, you have also, nearly pointed out my place of abode which I

had enjoyed until that time (of which Herman, also, had to deprive a

poor child), while you are well aware that every where they try

innocently to take my life, out of mere hatred of the truth. By which

doings you surely can not teach unto righteousness, nor instruct the

ignorant. And the work in itself does not prove to be the

reasonableness and love of a regenerated christian, but it rather shows

an unmerciful, cruel, envious, hateful, ravenous, blood?thirsty heart,

and the bitter mind of an informer, as all the reading world must judge

and say.

Whether you have done this by the merciful, compassionate, faithful,

unadulterated . and pure Spirit of Christ, as a pious, virtuous man, or

by the unmerciful, tyrannical, faithless, false and unclean spirit of

anti?Christ, as an ungodly and shameless spy, to cause me, an old,

afflicted man, some trouble, I will leave to the consideration of your

own soul, as before God who tries the hearts and reins, in Christ

Jesus.

Observe and see if you are not one of those, who say in their hearts,

It is hard for us to see him; for his life does not conform to ours.

Dear Micron, reflect and see if it is not the truth I write.

Seventhly, it is also manifest that you encourage and strengthen the

rulers in their impenitent lives, not a little, by your writing, who

are, as a general thing, quite obdurate, proud, ambitious, puffed up,

selfconceited, pompous, selfish, earthly, carnal, and in part,

blood?thirsty. And, that you may the more gain their favor and praise,

I, miserable man, must be your blind and imprisoned Samson whom you

make to play and dance before the princes of the Philistine, as a

mockery and derision, although I never, in my life, spoke an indiscreet

word against the rulers, or against their office and service.

I have, from the beginning of my ministration, fraternally warned them

in my writings in faithful, unadulterated truth, from my soul, against

the corruption of their souls; admonished them to?a godly, penitent,

christian life; pointed them with the Scriptures to the unblamable

Spirit, word, commandments, prohibitions, ordinances and example of

Christ; and, when you proposed your Pharisaical, Herodian question

concerning the Magistracy, I said nothing more to you than that it

would hardly become a true, christian ruler to shed blood, for this

reason: If the transgressor should truly repent before his God, and be

born of him, he would then also be a chosen saint and child of God, a

fellow?partaker of grace, a spiritual ' member of the Lord's body,

sprinkled with his precious blood, and anointed with his Holy Ghost, a

living grain of the bread of Christ, and an heir to eternal life, and

for such an one to be hanged on the gallows, put on the wheel; placed

upon the funeral?pile, or in any manner be harmed by another Christian,

who is of one heart, spirit and soul with him, would look somewhat

strange and unbecoming, according to the compassionate, merciful, kind

nature, disposition, Spirit and example of Christ, the meek Lamb, which

example he has commanded all his chosen children to follow.

Again, If he remain impenitent, and his life be taken, one would do

nothing else but unmercifully rob him of the time of repentance, of

which, in case his life were spared, he might yet avail himself; do

nothing but tyrannically offer his poor soul, which was purchased with

such a precious treasure, unto the devil of hell, under the intolerable

judgment, punishment and wrath of God, so that he would forever have to

suffer and bear the tortures of the unquenchable burning, the consuming

fire, eternal pain, woe and death. Never taking into consideration that

the son of man, who says, " Learn of me," Matt. 11:28, I have given you

an example, Jn. 13:15, follow me, Matt. 16:24, is not come to corrupt

souls, but to save them, Matt. 18:11; Luke 19:10.

Behold, this was the foundation of my innocent words which I at that

time spoke to you in sincerity of heart, according to the style and

Spirit of the gospel of Christ, to which words you give this hateful

color, before all men, saying, " That I make many pious rulers,

murderers of men; that I protect and encourage the rogues in their

wickedness." I will leave it to your own judgment what kind of a spirit

prompted you thus enviously to write about my plain words. O, Micron,

you carry this thing too far. For what else do you do by your writing,

but upbraid and blaspheme Christ Jesus himself, whose example I follow

in this matter, for pointing to the adulterous woman, who was already

adjudged by the law of Moses, to repentance, and letting her go

unpunished, Lev. 20:10; Dent. 22:22; Jn. 8:11; as also, faithful Paul,

who did no further punish the Corinthian, who, according to the Mosaic

and human law, was deserving of death, than with separation, whereby he

won him unto God; something which he could not have done had he been

killed. Dear Micron, reflect, and see if I do not write correctly.

I do not doubt in the least but that all reasonable men who shall read

my writings, if they have any scriptural knowledge at all, will say

that I have not spoken unreasonably, but truly and christianly,

although I have to hear from you such a base greeting.

Profane history shows that the Lacedaemonians, who were gentiles, did

not practice capital punishment; but they imprisoned them and put them

at labor. There are instances that when some of them showed natural

piety and found then to be wise in counsel, honorable, and master of

their passions, were called to high offices. They were not urged by the

blood?thirsty spirit of murder, as is the case with some of the

preachers and writers who dare boast of the crucified Christ and his

office or service, who do not only imprison and take the life of those

who are guilty according to the justice of the world, such as thieves,

murderers, wizards, &c., but also the sincere, faithful children of God

who sincerely seek Christ Jesus and his holy truth, and walk unblamably

before the world, to deliver them without mercy into the hands of the

blood?stained beadle to be tortured, drowned, burned, or put to the

sword, out of mere hatred of the truth, because they shun their

deceiving doctrine and false religion, according to the word of God. O

Lord!

That I write the truth in regard to this matter, is shown to you and

all the world, not only by the Papist and Lutheran writers, but also by

the books of your highly esteemed predecessors and brethren, John

Calvin, Theodore Weselin Beza, and John A'Lasco, which were prepared to

be printed; but by the contradiction of some people, were again

recalled.

Beloved Micron, if you and they were born of God, and urged by the

Spirit of the Lord; if you had tasted the sweet word of God, and the

fruits of the future world, you would never have thus troubled the

pious, as you have done by your untrue, false writing; nor would you

encourage any body in their bloody doings; but point them to the meek

Lamb, and let the dead bury the dead. Ponder upon what I mean.

I cordially agree with you that the office of the magistrates is of

God, and that it is an ordinance of God; but I deny that one is, or,

can be a christian and not follow his Prince, Head, and Predecessor,

Christ, but ornaments and decks his unrighteousness, boldness, pomp,

splendor, avarice, robbery and tyranny with the name magistrate; for

whosoever would be a christian, must follow the Spirit, word, and

example of Christ, no matter whether he be emperor, king or anything

else, Matt. 22:21; Rom. 13:1; 1 Tim.' 2:1; Tit. 3:1. For these

following admonitions apply, to all alike: "Let this mind be in you,

which was also in Christ Jesus," Phil. 2:5. "He that saith he abideth

in him, oughtt himself also so to walk, even as he walked," 1 Jn. 2:6.

Behold, you show by actual facts that you speak and teach to tickle

their ears, and the lusts of their hearts, inasmuch as you again point

them to the vengeance of the Mosaic law, and not to the longsuffering

of Christ, and thus you encourage them in their vain; proud, pompous,

and unmerciful, carnal life which is so little in keeping with the life

of an innocent, contrite, humble, merciful, compassionate, pious and,

regenerated christian whose conversation is in heaven, Phil. 3:20. It

is manifest that you are a deadly enemy to their poor souls and do not

deal by them as becomes the service of a true messenger of God. For

they build the wall, and you daub it with untempered mortar, Ezek.

13:10. You cry peace, peace, while there is no peace, Jer. 8:11.

Beloved Micron, reflect if it is not the truth I write.

Your unscriptural adulations concerning the oath show that I write the

truth. For Christ says, "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them

of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto

the Lord thine oaths; But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by

heaven; for it is God's throne: Nor by the earth; for it is his

footstool, &c., Matt. 5:33?35. And you, Micron, say that nothing but

lightminded, false oaths are hereby prohibited, as if Moses allowed

Israel to swear lightmindedly and falsely; and that Christ, under the

New Testament only forbade it; notwithstanding that all intelligent

readers know that it was not merely allowed Israel to swear truly, but

also commanded them to do so, Lev. 19: lZ; Deut. 10:20.

If the Israelites, then had the same liberty in this matter that we

have, as you have it, and if it be such a glorious thing and honor to

God rightly to swear by the name of God, as you dare boldly lie against

your God, then tell me why the wisdom did not say, You have heard. that

it hath been said to them of old, thou shalt not forswear thyself, thus

I say, Thou shalt do likewise Z while he says, Moses commanded not to

forswear thyself, but I say unto you, Thou shalt not swear at all. O

God, what pity that such plain words of the Son of God are thus

lamentably adulterated and daubed over with the foul mortar of

serpentile flattery, merely to suit the rulers who are but of dust; as

Musculus and you have done! How little you have pondered upon the

Scriptures which say, "We ought to obey God rather than men," Acts

G:29.

Inasmuch as it is very plain that Christ Jesus, the teacher of

righteousness, forbids us the oath of Moses, which was also an oath of

truth, and sworn by the name of the Lord, which you use and highly

recommend to the reader, and commands us to the true, yea and nay; and

as I know to a certainty that his word is the truth, and his

commandment life eternal; therefore I am sincerely frank and bold thus

to teach it, truly believing that he will not deceive us by his

doctrine, Jn. 17:17; 12:50.

I cordially rejoice that such faithful children in truth are found, who

are prepared to seal the holy commandments and testimony of the Lord

with their possessions and blood, notwithstanding I have to hear so

much on that account, at your hands. Nor am I in the least doubtful but

that they, at the day of Christ, will have a part in my crown; for

they, for a?testimony against you and all the world, suffer for

reproving your deceiving, lying hearts and tongues, in faithful love,

that you may be brought to reflect; notwithstanding that they, alas,

are called such detestable people, by you.

If they were no more faithful to truth than Herman and you have shown

yourselves to be towards me, then they would not so valiantly adhere to

their true yea and nay, unto death. Of this we are convinced.

As it is manifest that they so faithfully adhere to their undeceiving

yea and nay, which Christ has commanded us, Matt. 5:37; Jas. 5:12, that

they would rather forsake their possessions and life than to transgress

this commandment; and their whole mind and life ever conform to this

yea and nay, always spoken truthfully, before God and man; and, as

these same people are now troubled on that account; therefore I will

herewith leave it to the consideration of all impartial, reasonable

readers as also to yourselves, whether I and our beloved brethren are

deserving of such innocent bloodshed because we lead them by the

assistance and power of the Lord, by virtue of the word in the Holy

Spirit, from falsehood unto truth from unrighteousness unto

righteousness, from darkness unto light and from the old, sinful life

of ungodliness unto the penitent, new life of godliness, to which Moses

and Christ, together with all the prophets, apostles, sacrifices,

commandments, prohibitions, ceremonies and sacraments unanimously

point; or, whether those are deserving of being called deceivers by

you, and your like, tickling, and blood?thirsty preachers and writers,

who teach the powerful doctrine as taught from the lips of the Lord;

and whether all such valiant witnesses and saints of Christ who would

rather die than willfully transgress the word of the Lord, or confirm

aught farther than by yea or nay, are deserving of such treatment,

whereby you open the doors wide, to the rapacious rulers to rob such

pious souls, and to the bloodthirsty, to murder them.

Dear Micron, if you were one of the true messengers and servants of

Christ, as alas, you boldly boast, you would reasonably be expected to

point the magistracy who have, as a general thing, high and proud minds

and are quite carnal in their life, to the true, sincere repentance

which avails before God; and to teach them the Spirit, mind, nature,

and word of the Lord; for then the unction itself would teach them,

without, even the counsel of man, how they should conduct themselves in

regard to the delicate matters of bloodshed, the oath and other

matters. But now, alas, things are inverted, that there may be

something invented wherewith to charge us before the blind world, and

cry that we are unfit to live. O, Martin, your scorpion's sting and

lion's teeth are too sharp and envious; for your venomous, deadly

stings and bites are, alas, too numerous I

Say, who is wronged because we can not conscientiously swear? because

the Lord has forbidden it, if we testify to the truth when required,

and make use of no deceit?

The oath is required for no other purpose but that we shall truthfully

testify. Can the truth not be told without being sworn p Do all testify

to the truth, even, when under oath a To the first question you must

answer in the affirmative, and to the last in the negative.

As the oath is not the truth itself to which one testifies, or as the

truth is not established by the one that takes the oath, why can not

the magistracy, then, accept the testimony confirmed by yea and nay, as

commanded of God, instead of that confirmed by that which is forbidden

? For they can punish those who are found false in their yea and nay,

as well as those who commit perjury by forswearing themselves.

I trust that no person is so confused but he knows that the ordinances

of God, which are of heaven, should not give way to the ordinances of

men, which are of earth, but that the earthly ordinances of men should

give way to God's ordinances, if they would be christians and do

according to the truth.

Therefore it would be well for you to observe, first, that you by your

writing concerning the oath make ignorant or false teachers of Christ,

the Son of God, and of his holy apostle James. For Christ's foundation

and doctrine is, that Moses had commanded not to forswear thyself; but

that under the New Testament one should not swear at all. James says,

That we should not swear "neither by heaven, neither by the, earth,

neither by any other oath," Jas. 5:12 (mark, he says, neither by any

other oath), and you gloze it, by the infatuation of the serpent, that

it is not so, but that we may swear to the truth, &c. And thus the

eternal Wisdom himself, and his holy witness James, alas, must be your

disciples and servants.

Secondly, that you condemn the innocent, and clear the ungodly, both of

which are an abomination in the sight of the Lord, Prov. 17:15, whereby

you strengthen the hands of the evil?doers, and daub the wall with

untempered mortar, Jer. 23:14; Ezek. 13:10, as was once said. Beloved,

reflect, and see if you are not one of those whose mouths speak great

swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of

advantage, Jude 16.

Thirdly, that you cause great tribulation to the pious hearts who are

born of the truth and faithfully walk and seal it with yea and nay,

with their possessions and blood, and thus load the innocent blood upon

yourselves, Rev. 17:3.

John saw the finely attired whore upon the scarlet colored beast, drunk

with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of

Jesus. And whether or not you, in your heart, have drank or do drink

such a draught of blood with her, I will leave to the omniscient Judge,

and to yourself. Dear Micron, reflect, and see if I do not rightly

point out your sores.

As you did not fear, but diligently exerted yourself, to adulterate,

obscure, and break the Lord's express word, for the purpose of pleasing

the magistracy; thus you, also have, alas, exerted yourself to garble

my words, as if I had cited the words of David (who does not delight in

false doctrine neither has sworn deceitfully, Ps. 24:4), in my article

concerning swearing, for the purpose of proving that under the New

Testament we should not swear; while I adduced these words for no other

purpose, as my words plainly imply, than to show that but little

attention was alas, given to the piety implied in the words of said

psalm, as is plainly shown by your false, defaming tongue and hand,

toward me, poor man, who, alas, has or finds but little consolation

from the children of men.

Besides, I had written a note in the margin of the page, in plain

words, that it was spoken by David in a spiritual sense; and that under

the New Testament we were to use yea and nay, instead. You have spared

nothing to make me ridiculous and obnoxious to the reader.

In the same manner, you have not avoided to call me inconsistent,

because I wrote that we should not swear at all in regard to temporal

matters, because Christ did not use the word verily, in worldly

matters, but merely in his doctrine, &c. I know of nothing that I wrote

which you did not wrongly explain and garble. I wish that you would

once consider, in the fear of God, what kind of a spirit it is that

thus taught you. My saying that one should not swear at all in worldly

dealings, was taught me, not by the flattery of the old serpent, but by

the word of the Lord, Matt. 6:37; Jas. 6:12.

But that I made an exception in regard to the doctrine, I did it to aid

the reader, for the purpose of showing that Paul and Christ did not

make use of the terms, Verily, and, God is my witness (which the

learned would construe into an oath for the purpose of making a

foundation for their doings), in treating of temporal matters, but in

their teachings only.

If this matter is to. be strictly weighed in the balance of the holy,

divine word, in such a manner as to keep unanimity between all the

Scriptures, then it should be observed that the oath and some

affirmations are not of the same form, in the Scriptures. For it is

manifest, that an oath was always sworn by God, or by something else,

and is so sworn yet, which is not the case with an affirmation, as Paul

and Christ used in their teaching. Abraham said unto his servant, "Put,

I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh; and I will make thee swear (marl)

by the Lord, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth," Glen. 24:2.

Again: "By the life of Pharaoh (mark) ye shall not go forth hence,

except your youngest brother come hither," Gen 42 ? 15

Again: "Thou shalt fear A Lord thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to

him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name"(mark), Dent. 10:20.

Again, Christ says, Neither by heaven, nor by earth, neither by

Jerusalem, neither by thy head, Matt 6:34, nor by the temple, nor by

the altar, Matt. 23:16,18. Read also Jas. 6:12. Again, neither with the

world, nor by God, nor by the gospel, nor by a cross, &c.

Behold, thus an oath is always sworn by something. But this is not the

case with an affirmation which is made without an oath.

An affirmation may be made without an oath; but an oath cannot be made

without an affirmation. And thus Christ and Paul often affirmed their

words with strong testimony, but did not swear to them. For nowhere did

they say, " This we swear or affirm by the truth," or; "By God," or, �t

By our soul, but solely, verily, or, God is my witness, and other like

affirming words.

As I thus humbly, plainly and strictly abide by the holy word,

commandments, and prohibitions of the Lord; and, as I point my

neighbors, who would. do things in the fear of God, honestly to yea,

and nay, as the mouth of Truth has commanded me and all true christians

to do; and, as I sincerely strive to instruct, according to my small

talent, the poor, blind world in the true, divine knowledge, through

Jesus Christ without any respect of person, and to point out the

falsehood of anti?cbrist and the old serpent, according to the truth,

thus to lead them to eternal peace, by his grace; and as the doctrine

shows its fruit in .many, as may be seen; therefore it is that they are

so enraged at me, that neither Turk nor Tartar, neither tyrant nor

fiend under the whole heavens, no matter how ungodly he be, is so hated

as I, persecuted man, am hated of the world through this defaming,

false, blood?thirsty writing and crying of the learned, who, for the

sake of their bellies, teach the broad, easy way, with all the false

prophets. He who created me knows what love I bear to you and all my

enemies and slanderers. If I could serve you with my life, unto

righteousness, I would at all times be willing and prepared to do so,

by the grace of God. This I write with a good conscience, as if before

God, in Christ Jesus.

Dear Micron, do consider how you, out of mere hatred of the truth,

treat me, old, infirm man, quite contrary to all truth, as also

contrary to the virtuous, pious nature of the divine, christian love

which would curtail nor harm none, to the dishonor of the Almighty,

great God. But what will it benefit? The innocent, defenseless Lamb

must be hated and murdered in his members.

I will let you teach and counsel (as you will not be convinced) your

church, the world, to fight and retaliate as did Moses and the

patriarchs, according to your manner; teach them to punish, scatter,

imprison and destroy their enemies; to adjudge the criminals, no matter

whether they repent or not, as you write. Teach them also to swear and

be sworn, after the manner that Moses commanded the Israelites. But I

shall and will, by the grace of God, faithfully teach and counsel all

truly regenerated children of God and followers of Christ, both rulers

and subjects, according to the sure word of the holy gospel, to use no

other sword than the one Christ Jesus and his holy apostles used, to be

merciful unto the penitent sinners, as Christ is merciful unto us;

mercifully to punish the impenitent, and to admonish them in love, as

Christ admonished us; and scrupulously to stand by their yea and nay,

as the true Teacher and Executor of the New Testament, the ever blessed

Christ Jesus himself, has distinctly commanded and taught us with his

guileless mouth; no matter what the consequences to my person may be.

Dear Micron, reflect and see, if I have not rightly pointed to the

Scriptures; and consider, also, by what Spirit you have slandered me.

True is the wise man's word: "� Who is able to stand before envy?"

Prov. 27:4.

Eighthly, it is manifest that throughout your book you have labored

with all your might to make the truth of Christ, taught by us to the

measure of our talent, obnoxious and hateful to the reader and hearer,

by my person, and to make the falsehood of anti?christ, taught by you,

pleasing and taking, by your own person. You have so presented the

matter, but alas, not with God's Spirit, that if I had been a tyro in

the church for three or four months, I would probably have done about

as I now did, according to your untrue, partial writing.

But thus the righteous Lord makes manifest unto the unsuspecting and

innocent, the impure Spirit, heart, bitterness, ambition, hatred, envy,

falsehood, and infamy, as also their false doctrine of all such people

who so cover up their ravenous heart with a sheepskin, as you do, that

they can scarcely perceive it. The venomous, deadly arrows and lies

directed against me; show to the whole world what kind of a spirit is

in you. Now it is Menno's inconstancy, anon, his ignorance, or

deceitful intellect, or artful roguery, Menno's lies, &c., and you also

say that I should have changed my doctrine. In short, I do not know

what ,you wrote that was not written to the dishonor of God, of the

saints, of the truth, of the church and of myself.

I thank my God, with joyful heart, that by his grace he kept me these

twenty one years in one doctrine and foundation of faith without any

change, notwithstanding that I was unworthily called to my hard

service, in such perilous, dark, erring times, as all those will admit

who have walked with me in Christ Jesus during the time of my

pilgrimage; who have from the beginning read my humble works and books,

and heard my admonitions.

It may be that I am an ignorant, coarse and unintelligent man, but I

have never in my life boasted of great intellectuality,, learning, arts

and science; but I do boast that I, in my weakness, seek the praise of

the Lord, and the salvation of my soul, and that I have learned so much

in the school of God, by his grace, that I know that the whole,

undivided Christ is God's first and only begotten, and true Son, and

that those who contradict this are the spirits of antichrist; that all

blasphemers against God, profaners against the saints, adulteraters of

the Scriptures, willful liars, public defamers, enviers of the pious,,

ambitious, blood?thirsty men are ungodly persons, and not christians.

Again, that all those who hear and follow Christ, and submissively,

obediently and conscientiously follow his word, ordinances and

unblamable example in faith, by virtue of the new birth, are the

children of God, and that they shall forever inherit the kingdom of

honor. I trust that I shall stand before the throne of High Majesty in

his grace, with this my gross ignorance, which is wisdom in the sight

of God, but hidden from the world, while all high minded and bold

hearted, who are so wise in their own sight, shall hear: "I never knew

you; Depart from me, ye that work iniquity, Matt. 7:22. My dear friend

Micron, take heed.

Again, I trust that I shall be found innocent before the Lord and his

judgment of the charge, artful roguery, which you prefer against me;

for I have dealt with you with no more artful and roguish heart than

those do who, daily for the sake of the testimony of Christ and of

their consciences, are, with a glad and joyous mind, martyrized;

notwithstanding this I have to hear from you this unkind, false charge

made before all the world. But the Lord will be our judge.

Again, as to the charge of falsehood, which you prefer against me, this

is my plain answer: I am also concluded in the word, "All men are

liars," Ps. 118:11; Rom. 3:4. I trust that I would submit to be killed

before I should willfully lie, be it slightly or grossly. I hate

falsehood. I hated falsehood, even before I knew of whose seed it was.

I shall also, in my old age, by the grace of the Lord, avoid it, so far

as possible, since I know its origin or father.

O, Micron, Micron, how pecisely do you treat me, as the false prophets

and stiffnecked Jews, out of mere hatred of the truth, treated the good

Jeremiah, saying, "Come, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah,"

and not pay attention to his words, Jer. 18:18. John the Baptist had to

hear from the Pharisees and Scribes that he was possessed of the devil;

and Christ Jesus was called by? them a wine?bibber and, glutton, Matt.

11:18, that he cast out devils in the name of Beelzebub, as they said,

Luke 11:16, that they might by these means lead the ignorant, reckless

people from the truth, and keep them in their leaven and vain, false

doctrine. Just so you treat me, infirm man, out of mere hatred of the

truth. For if you could but daub me with so much filthy falsehood, that

they would be affrighted at me, then you would think that the cause of

Christ was already lost. Thus blind is poor, foolish flesh which is not

overshadowed by the brightness of the Lord.

You may fulfill the measure of your fathers, so long as the hand of God

does not intercede, yet I am assured in my heart, by the grace of the

Lord, that as Jeremiah, John and Christ remained Jeremiah, John and

Christ however much they were belied by their enviers, and persecuted

by them, out of hatred against the truth, I also, by the merciful grace

and power of God, will remain the same Menno Simon in Christ which I

was, in my weakness, for more than twenty years, however infamously you

may belie me, and depict or portray me, out of hatred against the

truth; as also, that as the false prophets, scribes, and Pharisees were

inimical to truth, and were blood?thirsty men, and therefore died with.

out God, you also are without God and his grace, and that you, together

with all false hypocrites, will receive your reward, unless you

sincerely repent; something of which there is but a very faint hope,

because you so willfully suppress the truth in regard to our

discussion, tell so many falsehoods, so wittingly adulterate the

Scriptures, and act so deceitfully against your neighbor in his

absence; something which no regenerated christian will or can do. For

the word stands firm. Reflect, and see if I do not truly point out your

errors.

Ninthly, it is manifest that you have committed against yourself and

your soul which was purchased at such a precious price, the grossest

kind of shame and injury; for these reasons, first, because by your

writing you have made yourself an open accuser, reprover, nay, teacher

and instructor of God the Father, of Christ the Son, of Gabriel the

angel, and of all the apostles and saints of the New Testament. The

Father confesses Christ Jesus to be his beloved Son, without any

division; Christ confesses the Father to be his Father; and the angel

and the apostles together with all the other witnesses unanimously

testify the same, in regard to the visible, palpable, dying, and

resurrected Christ; and you boldly say and write, that he is not. I

will leave you to consider, in the fear of God, whether you are not

such an one as I have here written.

!!!Secondly, you prove yourself to be an open corrupter of the Holy

Scriptures. For you write, "That Christ is of David's seed, Rom. 1:8;

that he is of a woman." whilst all the unadulterated texts have it:

Born of the seed (that is, of the generation) of David. Born of a

woman, as may be seen by the Lutheran and Zurian translations.

Thirdly, you write, " That Christ has partaken of the flesh and blood

of the children," Heb. 2:14; and the text says nothing more than "flesh

and blood" without the addition of, "of the children;" if we accept of

the Scriptural meaning of the pronoun, eorundem, that is, of the same.

Fourthly, you write at different places, "That Christ has taken on him

Abraham's seed" (in prceterito, that is, in the past tense), while the

text says, He takes on him (in praesenti, that is, in the present

tense). Whosoever does not believe it may read the text, Heb. 2:16.

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Since it is manifest that you have premeditatedly adulterated the holy,

divine Scriptures and made yourself a translation and Scripture (as

Tatian made himself a gospel, as you write) of your own, that you may

the better maintain your anti?christian doctrine before the

unsuspicious and ignorant, therefore I will leave it to the judgment of

all the impartial, reasonable readers of all the world what kind of a

teacher and writer you are.

O, dear Micron, consider to what you have already come. It appears as

if you had nearly lost both the Scriptures and common sense by the

deadly disease of your ambitious and envious partiality. If you should

thus defame his imperial majesty, and his son Philip, as you have

defamed the heavenly Father and his blessed Son Christ, in your

writing, and should plainly say, No, king Philip is not the son of the

emperor; but he is the son of another person, and is only called the

son of the emperor; if you should, besides, adulterate their public

mandates, sentences, and commandments, as you have done the adduced

Scriptures, and the plain ordinances, word, and commandments of Christ

concerning baptism, and the oath.; and moreover, should deride,

upbraid, scorn, and belie their sworn courtiers, and faithful servants,

because they honored and respected the emperor as the true father of

Philip, and Philip as the true son of the emperor, and because they

faithfully respected and obeyed their mandates, sentences and policies,

O, Lord, what ado there would be made about you, and what blood?songs

there would be sung. But of what reward you are now deserving, and must

expect in due time from God the Lord, because you so lamentably

blaspheme the Emperor of all emperors; the God of heaven and of earth,

and his blessed Son Christ Jesus, because you adulterate and break

their heavenly mandates, ordinances, and explicit and plain

commandments, and because you so lamentably slander, upbraid, belie,

hate, and persecute their faithful servants by your indiscreet writing,

I will leave to Almighty God and his judgment. Dear friend, ponder upon

what is here said.

First, you have made yourself to be an open, perfidious falsifier;, for

you call on God as a witness (which in my opinion is the same as an

oath), that you have given a true narration of the discussion; and the

first thing you wrote in your book is an untruth. For you write: "A

true Narration." And how quite untrue it is, God knows, as also you

yourself, and we. We have also partly touched on this, above, in the

description of the discussion.

Secondly, you have quoted in your book my first words and very

brotherly admonition: "If you now hear more powerful truths and surer

foundation from us than you have heard hitherto, then you ought, not to

seek your own praise and honor; but you ought cordially to seek the

honor and praise of the Lord, &c.," and have coupled a gross falsehood

therewith, and rendered it as if I should have said, that you had

sought your own honor and praise by your writing, in England. Something

which, at that time, I had never thought about; for I knew no more

about you than I would have known had you never been in the world. Yet,

you garble my words to make it appear so. I will leave yourself to

judge whether it was the Spirit of 'truth and of godly, faithful love,

or the spirit of impure falsehood and faithless envy which inspired you

thus to write.

Thirdly, you write, "That Herman Backereel had already proved to me

that Mary was a daughter of David." It seems that you are not at all

ashamed to tell a falsehood, if it can but make your cause apparently

true. He who can prove to me, by virtue of the Scriptures that Mary was

a daughter of David, must have a Bible and Scripture different from

ours; for it can not be found in our Bibles and Scriptures. I asked no

proof of you nor of Herman, as it was irrelevant. And now you make it

falsely appear that I should have said that she was not, and that

Herman proved to me that she was. This is certainly a falsehood.

Fourthly, you write, "That you frequently confessed to us that the Son

of God died for us;" while I dare say and testify with a good

conscience that you never touched upon it during the whole discussion.

But when I asked you at the last discussion, whether you did not still

call the man Christ (who you said had no Father) the Son of God! you

answered, yes. When I asked again., why you called him so, what kind of

an answer I received to that question, was related above. Yet you dare

falsely write down, "That you frequently confessed it to us," as has

been heard.

Though you were not ashamed of telling gross falsehoods against us

before men, because you are aware that you can not sufficiently abuse

us, in the sight of the world, which is your church; yet one would

reasonably expect that you would be ashamed to do so before your God

who tries the hearts and reins; and that you would remember that it is

written, that "A thief is not so bad as a man accustomed to lies;" "fqr

he .can never attain to honor," Eccl. 20:27, 28; that the lying mouth

killeth the soul, Wis. 1:11; that God will destroy the liars, Ps. 5:6,

and that their part will be in the lake which burns with fire an(l

brimstone, Rev. 21:8.

Fifthly, you write, "That you maintained the purity of your Christ

against us;" while, before the Lord, before you, and before us all, it

did not occur otherwise than I related in the narration of the first

discussion, concerning the inconsistency that you had an impure Christ:

I was also surprised at the fact that there was not sufficient common

sense left in you to consider that you might have made it so by your

partial writing and gross falsehoods, that many of the readers, and

particularly of those present at the discussion, might suspect you of

writing falsehoods out of mere partiality, and might thereby leave your

church. But the spirit of wisdom, alas, has not kissed the dwelling.

place of your soul, nor greeted it with the friendly lips of its truth.

Fourthly, you have also made yourself a very unsteady, wavering and

inconstant person, whom one can not overtake on one foundation and

doctrine. For, at the time of the discussion you confessed, " That

Christ, from everlasting, was born of the Father; that he was, also,

from everlasting, seated, divided, and separated from the Father. Now

you have changed yourself, and you write, that he remained in the

Father. Mark your first change.

Secondly, you confessed two Sons in Christ; and now you say there is

but one; yet, in fact two, if we impartially consider your doctrine.

Thirdly, you confessed that the crucified Christ who died for us, was

not God's Son; and now you write that you frequently confessed that he

was. Mark your, second, and third changes; and yet you write that he

had no Father. Whether this is, Simplex veritates oratio, the word of

truth is plain, as you write, I will leave yourself to consider. It

must be admitted that if one can not see lightminded unsteadiness and

false duplicity in this, he must be quite unintelligent and blind.

Fourthly, you confessed, " That Christ should not be worshipped

according to his human nature;" and now you sap, "That he should be."

Mark your fourth change; yet you confess that he was an earthly man, of

earth, who was born of Adam's seed. If this be not idolatry we may

truly say that the Scriptures deceive us.

Whether so many confessions and recallings are consistent with a

sincere, pious, constant, and wellfounded teacher and writer (as you

want to be), who, out of ambition falsely denies it all, I will

herewith leave all impartial readers to judge.

Fifthly, you have made yourself, before all intelligent persons, a very

proud, selfconceited, bold and ambitious boaster, because you sing such

great triumphs and glory in your book, while it is manifest to God, to

yourself and to all who were present that you had already lost the

whole point in discussion. It would also be manifest to the whole

world, if you had but impartially told it as it happened; for you

confessed two Sons in Christ, and that the crucified one was not God's

Sop, as you, in fact, do yet; whereby you had &lready finished the

discussion. You could not answer a word to all the Scriptures I read,

whereby. I testified unto you, that the Son of man, the visible,

palpable, eating, drinking, suffering, dying, and arisen Christ, was

also God's own, true Son, nor could you reply a word to my

four?convincing answers, with which I overcame your unscriptural

question concerning the birth from everlasting, separation, &c., all of

which you have left out of your " Narration."

Neither did you say anything about the union of the two sons, which you

generally called two natures, in our discussion, which is now your

strongest Scripture, although, in fact, it is not found in the whole

Bible. For if you had made mention of it at the time of the discussion,

you would, by the assistance of the Lord, have received an answer. And,

besides, having told such abominable falsehoods, you have changed the

order of the discussion, garbled my words, misinterpreted them,

abbreviated or added to them, at pleasure, and changed your own,

whereby it is manifest before God and man that your discussion with us,

and particularly the account thereof, was not prompted by an humble,

converted, and contrite heart; not by the Spirit and love of Christ,

but by an ambitious, self conceited, proud, obdurate flesh and mind. I

will leave it to the all?knowing God, and to yourself (to whom are best

known your seeking) as also, to the pious reader, who walks in the

truth, whether this is not the truth. O, friend, teach yourself before

you undertake to teach others. Behold yourself,' inwardly and

outwardly, in the clear mirror of Christ and his holy word, that you

may realize what an ignorant teacher and unfit christian you are before

God:

Sixthly, you have also made of yourself a false prophet and teacher, a

deceiver of men, an apparent hypocrite and ravening wolf in sheep's

clothing. Do not take it amiss that I call you such, and tell the

truth. For how can you teach a more false doctrine than to teach that

God the Father, is not the true Father of the whole Christ; and that

the whole Christ is not the true Son of God; to make the angel of God,

John the Baptist and all the apostles of God, false witnesses; to make

Christ, the etr,rnal broth, a false teacher; for he says, that we shall

not swear at all, Matt. b:34, and you say that we are allowed to swear

to the truth; to make the baptism, which was commanded by Christ, and

taught and practiced by his holy apostles, a false baptism; and to want

to teach a different doctrine and practice, of which not a word is

found in all the Scriptures.

Dear Micron, if you would follow good counsel, you would at once quit

your writing. For make it as you will, it is certain that you by your

strongest arguments and best points do nothing, in fact, but supersede

and teach the eternal wisdom, Christ Jesus, the Son of God, and his

Holy Ghost, together with the apostles of Christ; nothing but change

their words, doctrine, commandments, institutions, ordinances and

practices, as if they in themselves were not essential and right, yea,

powerless, vain, and useless, and thereby show that you are their

teacher and master. Beloved Micron, take heed. The more you write the

more manifest you make your own shame and false doctrine, and the

greater you make the guilt of your deceit. My friend, let yourself be

warned.

You console the poor, blind people with falsehood, deprive them of both

Father and Son, 1 Jn. 2:22, lamentably adulterate the word of the Lord;

from which it is very plain, that you forsake the Lord who has

purchased us, 2 Pet. 2:1, that you are prompted by the Spirit of

anti?christ, 1 Jn. 4:3; that it is anathema, Gal. 1:8. You teach us a

gospel which was not taught us by the apostles of Christ. It shows that

you rob God of his honor, and are a murderer of souls, Jn. 10:1, which

Christ Jesus has purchased at such a great price, 1 Pet. 1:8, a

messenger of darkness who transforms himself into an angel of light, 2

Cor. 11:14.

Do not take it amiss, that I write the truth. I repeat, a ravening wolf

in sheep's clothing, Matt. 7:16, who devours the souls of men by a

false explanation of the Scripture, under a fictitious semblance of

truth, robs them of the truth, and thus offers and sacrifices them to

the prince of hell, for thesake of a woolen rag and a piece of bread.

Not to mention that you cause so much trouble to many a chosen saint of

God, deprive him of possession, and even of life, by your false

doctrine, because you falsely charge, slander, defame, and trample

under foot the doctrine, which is the clear, pure, unadulterated,

powerful, saving and regenerating doctrine of Christ, as being heresy

and deceit, and the faithful children which are thereby converted from

unrighteousness unto righteousness, and from the dumb idols unto the

living God, as being deceitful, sectarian people, before the erring,

blind, and carnal world of blasphemers, blood?preachers, messengers of

the devil, blood?thirsty tyrants and covetous robbers.

O, Micron, friend, how good it would be for your poor soul (if you do

not sincerely repent) if you had never been born. What have you,

miserable man, suffered your ambitious, proud, evil flesh to do, that

you, for the sake of a little breeze of vain honor, which you can enjoy

but a short time in this confused evil world, have committed such

abominable blasphemy against the Almighty, eternal, and great God; have

so lamentably defamed his holy apostles and faithful witnesses; so

grossly profaned the Lord's word; so deadly deceived the people; so

unmercifully caused trouble to the godly and pious, and that you have

heaped such great guilt and sin upon your own, poor soul, by your

writing. Surely your whole book is nothing but a plain declaration and

manifestation of your own shame and anti?christian doctrine, both for

the present and future world, which discovers, proclaims, and publishes

your abominably great. abuse and error unto all men who seek the Lord.

Friend Micron, reflect, and see if I do not rightly point out your very

dangerous wounds and deadly sores, according to the Scriptures.

Lastly, you have made yourself a shame and dishonor to all the rest of

the preachers, who are your fellows in doctrine and service, in the

sight of all the pious of the world. For, as you migrated from Flanders

to England; from England to Friesland, for the sake of the gospel, as

is said; and as you do much writing and disputing, lead a reasonable,

civil life before the world; are not particularly considered as an

adulterer, wine?bibber or coxcomb; in short, as you are finely clothed

in sheep's clothing, &c.; therefore you are probably looked upon and

considered as an exemplary person, head, light, or at least, as one of

the principal of them. And you are yet in truth found to be, before God

and all intelligent persons, such an one as we have partly shown you to

be in. this epistle, by your own writings, therefore we will let the

reader consider in the fear of God, what we should think of the others

who are not thus covered with sheep's clothing, but who grasp, eat,

drink, and lead a pompous, ostentatious, careless, easy and carnal

life, who fear neither God nor devil, who sell the souls of men for a

trifle, who gladly accept liens and easy times, and still are in the

same doctrine, vocation and service, with you. And what we should do in

regard to attending the preaching of both you and them (on which

account they would bite their own tongues for madness), I will let

every one judge who cordially seeks God, according to the word of the

Lord, Matt. 7:15; 16:13; 16:6; Jn. 10:1; Rom. 16:16; Gal. 6:8; 1 Tim.

6:3:2 Tim. 2:3; Tit. 3: fl; 2 Jn. 1:7; 2 Cor. 6:14; Rev. 18:4.

I am very much surprised that the other preachers, part of whom (though

they do not want to be upon the narrow path with Christ and his chosen

ones), are naturally intelligent, do not reprove you and stop your

slanderous writing, as it is a shame to them as well as to yourself;

for never was your anti?christian foundation and doctrine concerning

Christ, the Son of God, made so manifest, as it was by your bold

assertions and blindness, and by my necessary reply thereto. All those

that have eyes may see what fearful unbelief and abominable foundation

and doctrine you have. Still, you will remain good teachers in the

sight of the world; for it is such they seek and desire. John truly

says, " They are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and

the world heareth them," 1 Jn. 4:6.

Behold, dear Micron, I have placed the clear mirror of truth before the

eyes of your conscience, and properly dissected the invisible members

of your soul. Now open your eyes, and you shall see what kind of a man

you are, and how greatly you are spiritually diseased; from which,

spring all these obnoxious exhalations, such as upbraiding, lying,

defaming, false explanations, adulteration of the Scriptures and

flatterings. "For by the law, is the knowledge of sin," Rom. 3:20, thus

this epistle will discover unto you how deadly you are stung by the

serpent, and how he has corrupted you, before God, by the accursed

venom of his evil nature, and poisoned your whole life.

If the merciful Lord, by his loving kindness, should make you feel and

know your abominable shame which you have committed against God and man

by your slanderous writing, which, I fear, you have until now, by your

great blindness, hatred, ambition, and self?love, but little noticed,

then be not dilatory (if you would not die in your ungodliness) in

coming before the throne of grace, the ever blessed Christ Jesus, with

a broken, contrite, repentant spirit, in an adulterated faith, with a

changed, penitent, and new heart; for he is the spiritual, brazen

serpent, raised unto all of Adam's children (who are poisoned in Adam)

as a wholesome sign. He is the man who can cure you of sill the deep

wounds of your diseased soul. He is the Physician in Israel. With him

alone, is found the ointment and medicine of eternal life. And if you

would commit yourself to him and follow his advice, that you may find

help and health for your diseased soul, you must give yourself up to

him; obey his word, will, commandments and prohibitions; deny your

selfish, ambitious, false, partial, envious, vain, wrathful flesh which

leads you to this abominably false writing; become little in your own

sight; lay a better and christian foundation in your heart; quit your

flattering, adulteration of the Scriptures, idolatrous sacraments and

all hypocrisy; truly seek and fear the Lord and his holy word, with

sincerity of heart; reconcile your neighbors whom you have wronged

through pernicious falsehood, with tears, in sincere brotherly love,

and by other writings publish to the world that through mere hatred

against the truth, you have causelessly still more defamed their name,

which was already hated too much for truth's sake; something which, I

fear, you will hardly do unless you become a more godly, penitent and

pious Micron than you, alas, have been hitherto.

So long as you do not do as here pointed out, it is manifest that you

without cause hate your neighbor, and are inimical to him, out of

hatred of the truth; and are therefore separate from Christ, with the

murderers. O, friend, reflect and repent. Take heed, lest you forever

destroy your precious soul for the sake of a little temporary and vain

praise! But a short time, and Micron is no more! O, the sentence,

Depart from me, ye cursed, into the everlasting fire! Oh, oh, what a

sentence!

Friend Micron, in faithful love I warn you. Take heed, I pray you. I

have known several persons who were prompted by a like spirit of bitter

zeal against the Lamb and his chosen ones, who were adjudged and

punished by the Lord, who does justly, and properly rewards the unjust,

before the eyes of men.

It is about eighteen or nineteen years since that highly esteemed man,

who was much respected by the world (whose name and country I will not

mention), wickedly advised that they should destroy me together with

the pious. His words and ungodly thoughts were hardly finished until

the avenging hand of the Lord was laid upon him. He dropped at the

table; and thus in a moment his blood?thirsty, impenitent, ungodly life

was ended in a terrible way. O, fearful judgment!

About the same time it happened to another man, who thought that he

would so set his trap that I could not escape, that he at the same meal

he was eating while speaking these words, was suddenly struck by an

arrow from the Lord, stricken with a severe disease, and thus had to

give an account before the Lord. He was buried within eight days from

the time be spoke these words.

Another who was to become an officer to the emperor at a certain place,

thought that he would destroy this people, if there was any virtue in

the imperial army. He came to the place where he was to be situated and

serve in his capacity; and four or five days thereafter the bell was

tolled and the requiem sung over him. Behold, thus God, the Lord,

annihilates the designs of the ungodly who storm this holy mound, and

destroys those who hate his truth and are inimical thereto.

In the year 1564 three of our brethren were at Wisburg, in Gotland, for

the purpose of earning a livelihood. A preacher of the city, named

Lawrence, who was of the spirit of his father (the devil), cried after

them in the street, hooted at them, and said "That they should not

there practice their religion, if it were to cost him all that was

surrounded by his clothes," meaning, his body and soul. A few days

afterwards he conversed with. one of these brethren in the presence of

another preacher who was not unreasonably minded. He behaved

outrageously. The great Lord, in the presence of both of them, smote

him so that he, at once, lost his voice; and within twenty?four hours

he was a corpse. O, terrible punishment and judgment of God!

A case almost similar happened the same year at Wismer. They had

accepted a crier, named Doctor Smedesteet, who said, "That he would

rather have a hat full of our blood than a hat fall of our gold." He

persuaded the magistracy, who glady hear such makers of pillows, "To

proclaim, just before cold winter, to the poor children to clear the

place before St. Martin's day; or else they would be put where they

would not like to go." Smedesteet was very joyous that he had

accomplished the fulfillment of his heart's desire, but to his sorrow;

for the same day the Almighty, great Lord laid the hands of his wrath

upon him, and within seven days the Lord took him away by a severe

illness; yet the blind, obdurate world does not observe these things.

In the year 1555 in the same city there was a preacher named Vincent,

who lives there yet, who was never tired of upbraiding and slandering.

On the day they call the Lord's ascension?day, he read the Scripture,

"He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved," Mark 16:16. He

said, " He would upbraid and slander us so long as his mouth would

open." The same hour the strong Lord closed it, and bound his tongue.

He fell down in the pulpit, and was carried by some of those present as

a punished one into his house, a dumb man. Behold, thus he may punish

those who would touch the apple of his eye and harm it. If I were to

relate all the incidents which in my, time befell the enemies of the

saints, it would require a separate volume. Therefore I advise you in

sincerity of heart, no longer to oppose such a strong and avenging God

and Lord. I tell you in Christ that it will be too hard, yes, too hard

for you to kick against the pricks, Acts 9: C. For his name is

Sovereign Lord, Mighty Prince, Isa. 9:6. �` Who is like thee, glorious

in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders 8" Ex. ls:11. His arrows

never miss, and when he calls we must appear. None can escape from him,

and avoid his wrath. O, Micron, take heed.

Good friend, if your battle was against me, as you perhaps think it is,

you would already have won it. For the whole world, in this matter, is

on your side, nay, the serpent himself, and against me; for this

foundation is the only weapon, according to the doctrine of John, which

is to conquer his kingdom, the world. But the battle is not against me,

but against the truth itself,. against the Father and his blessed Son,

against the whole Scriptures, and against those who dwell in heaven.

Therefore take heed. For, although the reckless, rough world may say

amen to your cause, yet it will not be the case with the Most High,

whose glory, honor, truth and testimony I, according to my small

talent, uphold, by his grace and assistance.

And if you do even deprive me of my honor, reputation, body and life,

which I have already long deemed of little consequence, for Christ's

sake, in the sight of the world, which are not concluded under Christ's

prayer, Jn. 17:9, though, thank God, I have never harmed you, nor

wished you any harm. Still, God the Father will remain the true Father

of Christ, and Christ the true Son of God; and you will have to turn

from your impure, anti?christian doctrine to the unadulterated, pure

doctrine of Christ, or else you will be one of those of whom it is

written: "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath

not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God," Jn. 3:18.

Neither partizan. ism nor disputing will prevail against God and his

word. He is the one who will have the praise, and his word is the

doctrine which will remain the truth. If you do not believe that Jesus

Christ is the Son of God, that his testimony and word are true, and

that his ordinances are the true ordinances; if you be not born of God;

do not become of divine disposition and nature; are not urged by and

possessed of the Holy Ghost; do not sincerely repent; if you be not in

Christ, nor Christ in you, then, according to the doctrine of John, you

are one of those who have no God, 1 Jn. 2:22.

But if you have Christ, if you actually believe that he is the true Son

of God, then you have both the Father and the Son, 1 Jn. 2:24; and you

will walk as he walked, you will not willfully tell a falsehood; for

you are born of the truth; you will not hate; you will not defame: you

will not inform against your neighbors; and you will wrong no person.

You will seek the salvation of others, and not their corruption; you

will reprove their sins; you will rightly teach, and not deceive them,

for the spirit of love which does justly by God and man will dwell in

you and prompt you.

If you have Christ, in truth, you will walk in the light, Jn. 3:21.;

8:12; you will follow the true shepherd, and will enter in at the right

door, Jn. 10:2; you will walk upon the true road; remain in the truth,

in the right vineyard, Jn. 16:1; build upon the true rock, Eph. 2:20; 1

Pet. 2:5; you will not adulterate the word of God; for your spirit is

one with the Spirit of Christ; your faith will be one with his word,

and your life, though in weakness, one with his life.

You will seek the praise and honor of the Lord, and not your own; you

will confess Christ as your Savior, at the risk of life or death by all

the world; all your pleasure will be in the law of the Lord, and your

whole life in his fear; your thoughts will be pure, and all your words

well?seasoned; your daily combat will be against the world, the devil,

and your own evil flesh; and you will, by your honest, virtuous life,

set an example to all the world; the cross, taken upon yourself for the

sake of the Lord's word and testi?pony, you will patiently bear; and,

if you should thoughtlessly think, say or do any thing wrong, you will

sincerely lament it. In short, you will prove by all your actions that

you are a chosen. child of God, born of the heavenly seed of the holy

Word, and that you are become a live member of the body of the Lord.

Behold, dear Micron, such penitence and and reformation I sincerely

wish you; and I would like to see it, truly manifest in you, in power

and truth, and that I then, for the sake of the testimony of Jesus,

together with you, would have to make a sacrifice of my blood, to the

praise of the Lord, and to the edification of our neighbors. I repeat

it, repent; that the precious treasure, given for us, be not lost in

your case.

I would herewith commend you to Almighty God. He will bestow upon you

according to his great grace, as I would like to see you receive. No

more hereafter, however much you may cry and write, unless you be

converted into a better mind.', and I constrained and urged to do so by

the godfearing.

Nor shall I hereafter solicit a public discussion with any person, and

that for this reason, first: Because I have these many years, desired

it by numerous written and verbal requests, and have never been granted

it. From which it is manifest that they care but little about the glory

of God, and the souls of men.

Secondly, because your principal teachers and exemplary men, as John

A'Lasco, Calvin, and Theodore Beza, whom you confess to be your most

worthy and most beloved brethren, are men of blood. That this is the

case is testified to by their own books, as also by old Seructus of

Geneva, and Joris of Paris, who was burned in England.

Thirdly, because your brethren, the Welsh church, as they are called,

at Frankfort have, in their publications, sworn against us; which two

things we did not so positively know heretofore as we do now.

Inasmuch as I plainly see that there is but deceit, faithlessness,

blood?thirstiness and perverseness found among the children of men

wherever one may turn himself; and as nothing does, nor can avail on

earth but the praise of Christ and the salvation of souls; therefore I

will let Babylon, with. itsfalse preachers, impure doctrine, idolatrous

baptism and supper, together with its false religion, and impenitent,

vain, easy life, be Babylon, and will, with the holy prophet Habakkuk,

stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and thus clearly sound

the trumpet of the holy, divine word from the walls and gates of

Jerusalem, according to my small talent and faithfully awaken the

citizens of the eternal peace, joyfully to sing the lovely Hallelujah

through the streets, with grateful, joyous hearts, to the honor of God,

Heb. 2:1; to attire themselves, before God? and the world, in the

shining, white raiment of the saints, in sincerity of heart and purity

of doctrine. I will faithfully admonish them with careful, pious Esdras

and say, My people, hear my word, and prepare yourselves for the

battle, and evil things, &c., 4 Esdras 18:41. With holy Paul, " Take

unto you the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in

the evil day," Eph, 6:13. And with Christ himself: Watch and pray,

Matt. 24:42; Mark 13:33; Luke 21:36; 1 Pet. 4:7. For the prince of

darkness with his whole force and kingdom, besieges the city of God,

storms by night and day, uses many means, with flesh and blood, as

falsehood and false doctrine, lusts of the eye, imprisonment,

banishment, confiscation, bloodshed, tyranny and violence. Whosoever

does not constantly pray, and fear the Lord, can not stand.

I will let Babylon be Babylon. Those who are piously inclined will

leave off their ungodliness and wed themselves to Christ; for truth is

revealed, and the repast is prepared. Blessed is he who enters in with

sincerity of heart, and saves his wedding garment. I would sincerely

warn all the chosen children of God, the sincere faithful brethren and

sisters of Christ, with beloved John, our most beloved brother and

fellow in tribulation, in the kingdom and in the patience of Jesus

Christ, and say, children, 11 Love not the world, neither the things

that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the

Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the

flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the

Father, but is of the world; and the world passeth away, and the lust

thereof; but he that doeth the will of God, abideth forever," 2 Jn.

2:16??17. Friend Micron, again be warned; repent, pray to God for

grace, and earnestly reflect upon that which I have written. .And be

not angry because I have thus sharply reproved you. I have done so

truthfully, and to the honor of God, and to the benefit of the reader,

as I reprove the whole world, without respect of person, that you may

rightly learn the brightness of Christ, see and feel your foul sores,

be healed by the Lord's medicine, sincerely repent, and be eternally

saved. I herewith commend you to the gracious, merciful God and Father,

for the enlightenment of your blind soul, and the reformation of your

sinful life, by his blessed, first?born, and only true Son, Christ

Jesus, by the manifestation of his eternal Holy Ghost unto more

righteousness. "Open rebuke is better than secret love. Faithful are

the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful,"

Prov. 27:6, 6.

MENNO SIMON.

October 16th.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

A HUMBLE PRAYER TO THE READER.

IT is an old proverb, dear reader, that 9'Many men have many minds."

Every person, generally judges according to his own ideas, whereby many

an unjust and wicked sentence is rendered, especially where blind

partiality has its sway.

Since I find that our opponents, with their false doctrine cannot stand

before the power of the holy, divine word, and since they diligently

try so to defame and calumniate us, and so garble our words, that we,

with truth on our side, are rejected by the world, and they, with

falsehood on their side, are honored by the world; therefore I pray all

impartial readers not to be offended at their saying, " Menno has not

truthfully written this or that."

In accordance with the doctrine of Christ, I rejoice in being called a

liar by the liars. I trust that those who are born of the truth shall

not charge me with falsehood; for I have chosen truth for a mother,

more than twenty?one years, since. I ?also desire, in my weakness, to

walk in her ways as an obedient, faithful child, without looking back

and without offense, so long as I remain on earth. Of this my hand and

mouth, my humble life, together with my tribulation, poverty,

privation, misery, cross and death shall be witness against my enemies,

at the judgment of Christ. Take heed.

I deem it impossible literally to describe those parts of the

discussion which Micron has suppressed or misinterpreted, just as it

happened. Nor have the holy apostles and evangelists who described the

actions and doctrine of Christ, by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost,

done so. For the one describes the same occurrence this way, and the

other that way. It sufficed them to show the foundation of truth; so it

does me. I do not desire to wrangle about a word. I only care about

showing to the reader that the crucified Christ Jesus is God's

first?born and only begotten, true Son; and to show that Micron has

given quite an untrue account of the discussion, and that he has

deceived his readers by open falsehood.

Secondly, I pray them not to take it amiss that I also referred to John

A'Lasco. It was not done through hatred nor disfavor; but zeal for the

glory of God and of Christ his Son, and for the honor of eternal truth,

and for the sincerely desired salvation of your souls, have urged me to

do so; because Micron says, " That they are of one mind in doctrine,"

and I do not see that one could believe, teach, write, speak, hold, or

feel more abominably concerning the crucified Christ than he does in

his defense against me. Besides, I hear that he, also, is become a man

guilty of blood, notwithstanding he verbally confessed to me that none

should be harmed on account of the faith.

But now, as I hear, it is claimed that it was not on account of faith,

but on account of disobedience. As the foundation is quicksand so are

their assertions. Let the rulers command things in keeping with the

gospel of Christ and neighborly love; and if we refuse to obey them,

then we are culpable. I will leave it to the judgment of all reasonable

rulers, as before God in Christ, whether it is in accordance with, or

contrary to the Scriptures, to expatriate the poor souls because they

fear God; confess the crucified Christ to be God's Son; receive the

holy baptism according to the commandment of the Lord and the doctrine

of the apostles; affirm their testimony by yea or nay, in accordance

with Christ's command, and because they lead a penitent, pious life in

righteousness, &c.

I am aware that there are many unsuspecting hearts who look more to

John A'Lasco and to the learned than they do to Christ and his

apostles; therefore I have also referred to his errors in regard to

this matter that all godfearing readers may see what kind of writers

and teachers they are who are so highly esteemed and whose names are

considered so worthy.

Thirdly, I pray that none will accept my saying that I will no longer

solicit a public discussion, in such a sense as meaning that I have no

courage to do so. This is not the meaning I wish to impart. But I do

not desire, to discuss publicly nor privately with such people as those

to whom I referred in my epistle; nor with such as dishonestly

adulterate, change, break and misinterpret my words and testimony, and

slander us as did Micron from the beginning to the end of his writing.

For I generally find myself deceived by them on all hands, as it is the

nature which would lead an easy life and not take up the cross of the

Lord.

But if any rulers should be troubled at heart concerning the Scriptures

and be suspicious of their preachers and teachers, and would ask me to

a public discussion for the sake of finding out the truth, it would be

as glad a tiding to me as I could, hear on earth; nor would I, I trust,

be dissuaded nor prevented by the godfearing, to whose hands and

counsel I always willingly commend myself. For we are sure that we have

the Scriptures and truth on our side.

Fourthly, I pray them not to take it as upbraiding and slandering that

I sometimes handle Micron roughly, according to the truth. It was done

for no other purpose than that he and his followers may acknowledge

their deceiving, lying spirit, through such earnest admonitions which

are in keeping with the foundation of Scripture, that they may take a

dislike to their abominable doings, and thus renounce their evil ways;

as, also, that all the unsuspecting, good hearts which are bound by

their snares of unrighteousness, maybe delivered to the praise of the

Lord.

It was done in the same spirit which actuated the holy apostles and

prophets, which actuated Christ himself, in their several reproaches.

If any one now should reprove me of pithiness, they must first reprove

Christ and his messengers. For it is they who have, in the Holy

Scriptures, thus taught me and all teachers who follow and uphold the

right.

All those who have a scriptural understanding, know that where we find

mention made in the Scriptures of the despising of, and blasphemy

against God we also find added the sentence and sharp rebuke of the j

Holy Ghost.

Inasmuch as it is manifest that Micron is not ashamed to fasten one

falsehood upon another, to make a translation to suit himself; to deny

the testimony of God, the Father of Christ Jesus, his blessed Son, of

the angel Gabriel, together with that of all the other witnesses of the

New Testament; to flatter the rulers; to seek the favor of men, and to

deceive the poor souls for which the Lord's blood was shed; therefore

it surely is not wrong to call him by such names as are applied to him

in the Scriptures by the Holy Ghost. The truth must have its course,

and does not respect emperor nor king; much less a false prophet or

teacher, who advocates the cause of the serpent; perverts the testimony

of God into falsehood; and, for the sake of vain honor, and of his

lusts, strengthens the ungodly, and troubles the saints. Whosoever has

sound judgment and knows the way of the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures,

must say that I am right.

Fifthly, I pray that no person will think that I thus write to

retaliate Micron's writing. O, no. I leave wrath to him who is judge of

all the world. I have done so to the service of Micron and all the

erring, that they may be converted, and give becoming praise and honor

to Christ, the Son of God, Deut. 32:35; Heb. 10:39; 1 Pet. 2:3, 23;

3:9. The truth is presented to them, by the grace of God, in such power

and clearness that no man can disannul it by virtue of the Scriptures,

nor contradict it by virtue of intellect. Therefore it would be well if

our opponents would behold it more clearly, that they may, with all the

saints, flee from the future judgment, and that they may, in the day of

his appearance, stand before the throne of his Majesty in eternal joy.

If they do not, but refuse, remain obdurate and partial; if they repay

good with evil, and love with hatred; if they seek assistance from the

worldly powers, since they are too weak in the Scriptures, and thus

watch for the corruption and misfortune of the pious, by falsehood and

ornamented inventions, as has, alas, been the case hitherto, with many,

then we must leave them to the Lord, possess our souls in patience, and

remember the saying of Christ: " For so persecuted they the prophets

which were before you," Matt. 5:12.

Lastly, I would faithfully warn all my readers and hearers, both great

and small, rich and poor, favorable and unfavorable, as before God, and

sincerely pray them in Christ Jesus, to read impartially this our

incontrovertible, thorough answer and explanation; and rightly to weigh

it in the balance of the holy, divine word, and to compare it with the

fictitious foundation and doctrine of our opponents, that they,

enlightened by the truth, may find the true way to life.

Let none believe me; but believe the truth which I have, according to

my small talent, placed before you in invincible power and clearness,

according to the pure doctrine of the holy apostles, evangelists,

prophets, and of Christ himself. In Christ, be warned. Your poor souls

are lamentably deceived by the doctrine of our opponents; for it is the

smoke from the bottomless pit, Rev. 9:2, which obscures the bright Sun,

Christ Jesus, and the air of his holy word; it is the falsehood of the

old serpent; its egg and brood; he that eateth it dieth, and that which

is crushed breaketh out into a viper, Isa. 59:5; it is the spiritual

dung with which Ezekiel had to bake his bread, Ezek. 4:12. In short, it

is the horrible, abominable draught of the golden cup of the Babylonian

whore, drunken with the blood of the saints, with which she has made

drunk all who dwell in the earth, Rev. 17:4.

Their doctrine and confession stand clear and manifest, that the

crucified Christ Jesus, was not the true Son of God; for they say he

had no Father, and is only called so on account of their fictitious

union; they reject the baptism of Christ; they rage and blaspheme

against it, and institute a different baptism which is neither taught

nor commanded them by the Scriptures. The difference between the oath

of Christ and Moses they deny, and say, we are allowed to swear to the

truth, that it is a holy thing, &c., Matt. 5:34. Let him who is

intelligent, understand what vas have explained in both our book and

epistle.

John says, "� The Word was made flesh," Jn. 1:14. Paul says, " Great is

the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh, justified in

the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the gentiles, believed on in

the world, received up into glory," 1 Tim. 3:16. Because we sincerely

confess this testimony, as also all others which confess the visible,

palpable, crucified Christ to be the Son of God, to be true and just;

therefore we must, alas, be called by the world, sectarians and

heretics. It is time to beware. Kind reader take heed. God grant you

his grace, Amen. Read attentively and judge impartially, Amen.

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A PLAIN

AND

CONVINCING PROOF,

FROM THE SCRIPTURES,

THAT

JESUS CHRIST IS THE TRUE, PROMISED, SPIRITUAL DAVID, THE KING OF KINGS, THE

LORD OF

LORDS, AND THE TRUE, SPIRITUAL KING OF SPIRITUAL ISRAEL, THAT IS, OF HIS

CHURCH

WHICH HE HAS BEGOTTEN AND BOUGHT WITH HIS OWN BLOOD. FORMERLY WRITTEN

TO ALL THE TRUE BRETHREN AND FELLOW?CHRISTIANS, SCATTERED HITHER AND

THITHER, AGAINST THE ABOMINABLE AND TERRIBLE BLASPHEMY OF JOHN VAN LEY

DEN, WHO PASSED HIMSELF FOR THE JOYOUS KING OF ALL, AND AS HAVING BE

COME THE JOY OF THE MISERABLE; HE PLACED HIMSELF IN THE STEAD OF GOD.

BY

MENNO SIMON.

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus

Christ," 1 Cor. 8:11.

ELKHART, INDIANA:

PUBLISHED BY JOHN F. FUNK AND BROTHER.

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TESTIMONY AGAINST JOHN VAN LEYIDEN.

Grace, peace, and mercy, from God the Father, through Jesus Christ, be

with all true brethren and fellows scattered hither and thither.

THE eternal, merciful God, who has called us from darkness into his

marvelous light, nay, who has led us into the kingdom of his beloved

Son, Jesus Christ, must keep us upon the right way, that Satan by his

wiles does not deceive us, and that no root of bitterness spring up

among us to make confusion, and many be thereby made unclean, as is,

alas, now the case to, some extent. And thus it must be that sects will

arise amongst us that the tried may be made manifest, 1 Pet. 2:9; Col.

1:13; Heb.11:16; Dent. 29:18; 1 Cor. 1:18.

Let none be offended thereat. But let all give heed to the word of God,

and abide by it, that they may be delivered from the strange woman, as

Solomon says (by which woman we should understand all the false

teachers), "Even from the stranger which flattereth with her? words;

which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of

her God," Prov. 2:16; 4:6, 7. This is the true nature of all false

teachers.

First, they forget the pure doctrine of Christ, and choose a strange

doctrine. They enchant others so that they can not believe the truth,

and use smooth talk, as Paul says, "By good words and fair speeches

they deceive the hearts of the simple," Rom.16:18.

Secondly, they leave their Master, Christ, whom alone, they should

hear, as the Father testifies of him, saying, " This is my beloved Son

in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye him," Matt. 17: C; Mark 9:7; Luke

9:36. But this voice from the Father, all false teachers forget, and

they leave their only Master, Christ Jesus; for as they are not of his

sheep they hear not his voice, Matt. 23:9; Jn. 10:26.

Thirdly, the false teachers forget the covenant of God; and that to

which we should give most heed, they pay no attention, as Christ

reprovingly said unto the Pharisees, "Ye pay tithe of mint, and anise,

and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law,

judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to

leave the other undone. Ye blind guides ! which strain at a gnat and

swallow a camel," Matt. 23:23, 34; and as Paul said, "The end of the

commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience,

and of faith unfeigned; from which some having swerved, have turned

aside unto vain jangling; desiring to be teachers of the law;

understanding neither what they say nor whereof they affirm," 1 Tim.

1:6?.7. Thus all false teachers forget the covenant of God whereby they

are bound to him, as is, alas, the case with many at present, who have

forgotten all upon which they were baptized, namely, the cross, and

would recommend and make use of the sword. May the Almighty God save

all true christians from this, and may he give them wisdom and

intelligence to keep the covenant of God, and to be always mindful of

what kind of a spirit Christ wants his disciples to be, Luke 9:66.

Grant that they may be aware of this strange woman; for her house is

inclined to death, and her ways to corruption. All. those who enter in

unto her, will not come out again, nor do they get on the way of life.

And this strange woman now reigns extensively, and as she deceives

many, as did and yet does the prophetess Jezebel, and as the serpent

deceived Eve; therefore we will, by the grace of God, discover some

things, that those who are yet blind may become seeing, and that when

they acknowledge anti?Christ to be an abomination standing in the holy

place, they may see all deceit, Rev. 2:20; (den. 3:13; Matt. 24:16;

Mark 13:14; Luke 21:7; Dan. 9:17; Rev. 17:18. And that, as they will

not drink of the cup of the Babylonian whore, they may beware of the

venom of the serpent, and that if they be bitten by the serpent, they

may become aware of it and get rid of the venom ?by looking on the true

serpent, and be thus cured. All of which God must give us, Num. 21:6;

Jn. 3:14.

We should not have written, but it becomes necessary; partly because we

can not tolerate the shameful deceit and blasphemy against God, that a

man be placed in Christ's stead; partly, because we are not allowed a

verbal, scriptural defense against such deceit and abominable heresy

concerning the promised David, and other articles. But it is the nature

of all impostors and erring spirits to flee from the word of God, as

Christ says, "For everyone that doeth evil, hateth the light, neither

cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that

doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest

that they are wrought in God," Jn. 3:20, 21. Therefore, he that flees

from the light, that is, from the word of God, manifests that his deeds

are not wrought in God.

But if there are some who can not yet see this they need the eyesalve

which is spoken of in the revelation of John, Rev. 3:18. O, God, what

perilous times these are I How the prophet Baal conspires with the

Moabite king, against the Israel of God! Num. 24; 25.

The Egyptian sorcerers, how they stand against the true Moses I Ex. 6.

The lying Pashur, how he is heeded, because he prophecies prosperity,

of which nothing is realized! Jer. 20; 2 Tim. 3.

How the false Hananiah deceives the pious children of Israel, and makes

them trust in falsehood ! Jer. 28.

The Almighty God shall raise a Jeremiah to reprove the deceiver of the

people, who shall speak nothing but that which God commands him to

speak, and the Lord will place his word in the mouth of this Jeremiah,

as a fire, and all false teachers as stubble, that truth may prevail,

Jer. 1:17.

And if ever so many prophets of Baal be raised, yet the Lord will leave

behind a Micron who shall promulgate the true word of the Lord. But

sufficient of this. We shall commence the matter to the honor of God,

and to the edification of the church.

In the first place. It is incontrovertible that Almighty God has made

his Son, Christ Jesus our Lord, King of all the earth and of his

faithful church. That Christ is the King of all the earth is abundantly

testified to by the .Scriptures; particularly the prophet David, who

says, " The Lord most high is terrible; He is a great king over all the

earth," Ps. 47:2; and, "God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the

sound of a trumpet. Sing praises to God, sing praises, sing praises

unto our King, sing praises. For God is the King of all the earth: sing

ye praises with understanding. God reigneth over the heathen; God

sitteth upon the throne of his holiness," Ps. 47:2, 6??8.

Therefore, as true as Christ is God, so true he is King of all the

earth.

Paul testifies this to the Ephesians, saying, that God, the Father, "

raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the

heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might and

dominion, and ever? name that is named, rot only in this world, but

also in that which is to come. And he hath put all things under his

feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church," Eph.

1:20?22.

Christ testifies of himself that he is a mighty King, saying, "All

power is given unto me in heaven and in earth," Matt. 28:18. Paul says

that Christ is the express image of God, upholding all things by the

word of his power, Heb. 1:3.

Thus Christ is the king of all the earth notwithstanding the wicked may

deny it. Therefore the prophet says, "The Lord reigneth; let the people

tremble; he sitteth between the cherubim; let the earth be moved," Ps.

99:1. Still they can do nothing more than the Lord allows them to do,

Jn. 19:11; and none can withstand him. The mountains melt as wax before

the Lord, the ruler of all the earth, Pa. 97: G.

Further, that Christ is king of his believing church is clearly

testified to by the Scriptures. Thus speaks Isaiah, "Unto us a child is

born, unto us a Son is given, and .

the government shall be upon his shoulder and his name shall be called

Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The

Prince of peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there

shall be no end," Isa. 9:6.

The house of Jacob is the believing church as is generally understood.

Of this, Christ is king, as the angel clearly testified; and as

Jeremiah says concerning Christ, that he would be a king who should

reign and prosper, Jer. 23: S. Also Isaiah says, "Behold, a king shall

reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment," Is&. 32:1.

As Christ is king, both of all the earth and of his believing church,

as we have shown by the plain Scriptures, according to the grace

received of God, how can John Van Leyden, now, call himself a joyous

king of all, who is become the joy of the miserable i

If he would be our king, our Lord, then Paul and Isaiah must stand

back. Paul says, "For though there be that are called gods, whether in

heaven or in earth (as there be gods many, and lords many), but to us

there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in

him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him,"

1 Cor. 8: S. Isaiah says, " The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our

law?giver, the. Lord is our king," Isa. 33:22.

Behold, as true as Christ is our judge, and as sure as he is our

law?giver, so sure is he our king. Where, now, is John Van Leyden! O,

abominable blasphemy against God, that a man should call himself the

joyous king of all! while it is written, O Lord, Lord God, Creator of

all things, who art fearful, and strong, and righteous, and merciful,

and the only and gracious King," 2 Mac. 1:24; who alone art good, who

alone art a mighty king, who alone art righteous, omnipotent, and

eternal, who deliverest Israel of all evil. Paul says, "I give thee

charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before

Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession:

that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the

appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ; which in his time he shall show,

who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, And Lord of

lords," 1 Tim. 6:13?15. Again, it is the greatest blasphemy a man can

speak, that John Van Leyden asserts that he is become the joy of the

miserable.

Christ became our joy at his birth, according to the testimony of the

angel to the shepherds, saying, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of

great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day,

in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord," Luke 2:10,

11; with this the words of David accord, "Light is sown for the

righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart. Rejoice in the Lord,

ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness," Ps.

97:11, 12. " Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the

Lord with gladness; come before his presence with singing, know ye that

the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves:

we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture," Ps. 100:1?3. "

Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, rejoice," Phil. 4:4. Thus

all the Scriptures admonish us that we shall rejoice in Christ, our

Lord; for it is he of whom the patriarch Jacob prophesied that he would

be the expected one of the people, that is, the one for whom the people

of God should look with great desire, as Christ also testifies, "Your

father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad,"

Jn. 8:66.

Christ is the true Melchisedec, king of Salem, that is, the king of

peace; who has made peace between God, the Father and the human race,

Heb. 7:1. He is the pious Isaac who by his sacrifice has reconciled us

with his heavenly Father; and his sacrifice remains worthy forever,

Heb. 10:10; 9:12. He is the true David, who has slain the great

Goliath, and has taken away the blasphemer of Israel, 1 Sam. 17:49;

Eccl. 47:4. Yea he has caused great rejoicing, as it is written, " The

Spirit of the Lord God is upon me (says Christ), because the Lord hath

anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to

bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and

the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the

acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to

comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to

give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the

garment of praise for the Spirit of heaviness," Isa. 61:1?3; Luke

4:18,19. Behold, how clearly it is shown here that Christ is become the

joy of the miserable, in whom all pious christians rejoice, saying,

Rejoicing we will rejoice in the Lord; our souls shall be rejoiced in

the Lord; for he has clothed us in raiments of righteousness, and

surrounded us with the mantle of righteousness, as a bride ornamented

with bracelets. To this the prophet Zechariah admonishes us, saying,

"Rejoice greatly O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem;

behold, thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation;

lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass,"

Zech. 9:9; Matt. 21:2. And the king's prophet David, says, 11 Sing unto

the Lord a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints. Let

Israel rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful

in their king. Let them praise his name in the dance; let them sing

praises unto him with the timbrel. and harp," Ps. 149:1?3.

Thus did all the saints of God, as did David, who says, " Our soul

waiteth for the Lord; he is our help and our shield. For our heart

shall rejoice in him; because we have trusted in his holy name," Ps.

33:20, 21. And, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him; and he

will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad

and rejoice in his salvation," Isa. 25:9. By this we may see how all

the saints have rejoiced in God. And how can we rejoice in man, as it

is written, " Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in

whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his

earth; in that very day his thoughts perish. Happy is he that hath the

God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God," Ps.

146:3?5; who helps the miserable, and raises up the crushed. " He is

their mighty protection and strong stay, a defense from heat, and a

cover from the sun at noon, a preservation from stumbling and an help

from falling. He raiseth up the soul, and lighteneth the eyes, he

giveth health, life, and blessing," Eccl. 34:16, 17. As Christ is

become our joy, so every one may judge for himself what an abomination

it is in the sight of God, that a man would be that which our Savior,

Christ is. Is it not an abominination standing in the holy place? And

what is worse yet, this John Van Leyden is not satisfied with passing

himself for the joyous king of all, who is become the joy of the

miserable; but he also claims to be the promised David of whom all the

prophets testify; and does not admit that Christ is he who was

promised.

Of such a mind are ?all false prophets and anti?christs. That they have

on their heads names of blasphemy, and crowns like unto gold, by which

is meant pride, as may be seen by the Babylonian whore who was arrayed

in scarlet color, having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations

and filthiness of her fornication; for she saith in her heart, I sit a

queen, and shall see no sorrow, Rev. 17:4; 18:7. But the Lord can not

tolerate it, and says, "Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of

the chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom ?and

Gomorrah," Isa. 13:19. Therefore, shall her plagues come in one day,

Rev. 18:7. And not Babylon alone, but also all anti?christs, together

with their deceit and false writings, shall be destroyed, as Christ

says, "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be

rooted up," Matt. 15:13.

And greater anti?christ than he is who passes himself for the promised

David, can not make his appearance, which promised David is?.Christ, as

the Scriptures abundantly testify. He that hath ears to hear let him

hear.

First, the prophet Hosea says, "For the children of Israel shall abide

many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a

sacrifice, and without an image, and without and ephod, and without a

teraphim; afterward shall the children of Israel return and seek the

Lord their God, and David their king, and shall fear the Lord, and his

goodness in the latter days," Hosea 3:4, 5.

It is incontrovertible that this king David can be none other than

Christ Jesus, whom all must seek who want to be saved, as it is

written, Seek the Lord and ye shall live, Amos 5:4. Isaiah says, "Seek

ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near,"

Isa. 55:6. For this reason David says, "I sought the Lord and he heard

me, and delivered me from all my fears," Ps. 34:5. And Christ, the

wisdom .of God says, He that findeth me findeth the life, and shall

have the pleasure of the Lord. And what other king should the children

of Israel have than Christ Jesus, the true Melchisedec, king of Salem,

which is, King of peace? Heb. 7:1; of whom the whole number of

disciples have testified thus: "Blessed be the King that cometh in the

name of the Lord; peace in heaven, and glory in the highest," Luke

19:28; 2:14.

The Jews despised this King, Christ, and therefore they were blinded,

yet they shall return and come to Christ, their King David, as Paul

testifies, saying, "That blindness in part is happened to Israel, until

the fullness of the gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be

saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer,

and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant

unto them, when I shall take away their sins," Rom. 11:26; Isa. 59:20.

As Israel is yet to be converted unto Christ, it follows

incontrovertibly that the King David, whom Israel shall seek; can be no

other than Christ.

Therefore every righteous person will understand in what terrible error

those are who do not believe that by David, we should understand

Christ, but another man. And of such, Christ says, "I am come in my

Father's name, and ye receive me not; if another shall come in his own

name, him ye will receive," Jn. 5:43. But those who with Jerusalem,

will not receive Christ, will also be destroyed with it; and those who,

with the Pharisees, oppose Christ, and yet think that they are

enlightened, should also be blinded with the Pharisees. Let all pray to

God for wisdom, and they shall understand that Christ is the true

David, Luke 18:7: Isa. 6:10; Jn. 9:12.

Again, Jeremiah says, "It shall come to pass in that day, saith the

Lord of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will

burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him:

But they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their king, whom I

will raise up unto them," Jer. 30:8, 9.

Now the commandment of the Lord is, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy

God, and him only shalt thou serve," Matt. 4:10. Therefore this king

David is none but Christ, which the Father has raised unto us, saying,

Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. And the christian

church acknowledges no other king, no other Lord but Christ. Therefore

all the saints say, "The Lord is our defense; and the Holy One of

Israel is our King," Ps. 89:18. Now who is the Holy One but he of whom

Isaiah testifies, saying, " For thus saith the high and lofty One that

inhabiteth eternity, whose name Js Holy," Isa. 57:16. And "These things

saith he that is holy, . . . . ha that hath the key of David," Rev.

3:7. Thus speaks Jeremiah concerning Babylon, "Recompense her according

to her work; according to all that she hath done, do unto her; for she

hath been proud against the Lord, against the Holy One of Israel.,"

Jer. 50:29.

Thus the Holy One of Israel is none but the true Gbd and Lord, Christ

Jesus; therefore none can be the King of his believing church, but

Christ, as the Spirit of God testifies through the prophet Micah,

saying, "The Lord shall reign over them in mount Zion, from henceforth,

even forever," Micah 4:7; who else is this Shepherd but Christ, of whom

was prophesied, "Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and

his arm shall rule for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his

work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall

gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall

gently lead those that are with young," Isa. 40:10, 11.

Christ testifies of himself that he is this shepherd, for he says, " I

am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep,"

Jn. 10:11. Christ truly pastures his sheep; he is the door to the

sheep?fold; all who enter into the fold through him, shall be saved; he

shall go in and out, and find good pasture. Therefore David says, " The

Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in

green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters," Ps. 23:1, 2;

and the apostle Peter says, " For ye were as sheep going astray, but

are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls," 1 Pet.

2:25. Further, the Lord Clod says, My servant David shall be a Prince

among them. Let none be offended at Clod the Father, calling his Son

Christ, servant, saying, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect,

in whom my soul delighteth," Isa. 42:1; and at another place: "Behold

my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well

pleased," Matt. 12:18; at still another place, the Father speaks

concerning Christ, "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify

many," Isa. 53:11.

Therefore this servant David is Christ; and he is the Prince of the

christians. And who else should be a prince of the church of Christ,

but Christ, as Paul testifies that he alone is the Prince; and as the

prophet says, " Thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be not the least

among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto

me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of

old, from everlasting," Micah S:2.

The Lord farther speaks through the same prophet, "So shall they be my

people and I will be their Clod, and David my servant shall be King

over them; and they all shall have one Shepherd," Ezek. 37:24. We have

heretofore clearly proven by the Scriptures that Clod the Father has

placed no other king over Zion, than his Son Jesus Christ, and that he

gave him an eternal kingdom, therefore it is needless to go over this

again; and that Clod the Lord says, "David my servant shall be King

over them, and they all shall have one shepherd," is also understood to

be said in regard to Christ; for no man can be our only shepherd; and

although Clod gives " some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some,

evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers," Eph. 4:11; yet the only

Shepherd is Christ, and nobody else, as may be plainly understood from

the words of Christ, " Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold;

them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall

be one fold and one shepherd," Jn. 10:16.

All the believing are the sheep of Christ and there is but one fold, of

which Christ is the Shepherd. From this it must follow that Christ is

the only Shepherd, and that no one else can be the only Shepherd. For

this reason Peter calls Christ, the chief Shepherd; and Paul says, "Now

the Clod of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus,

that great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the everlasting

covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will," Heb.

13:20; 1 Pet. 5:4.

Thus Christ is the only Shepherd; for all the believing must hear his

voice and the voice of no other. From this it follows incontrovertibly,

that he is also the promised David, according to the words of the Lord,

"David my servant shall be King over them; and they all shall have one

Shepherd." Besides this Clod says, "My servant David shall be their

Prince forever." I trust that none are so ignorant (unless he be mad,

and accursed), as to understand these words as having reference to some

man, that a man shall be our eternal Prince. For it is written that

Clod alone is eternal, and alone immortal, and that he dwells in a

light to which none can come. No man can be our eternal Prince; but

Christ is our eternal Prince, and his kingdom is an eternal kingdom, as

it is written, " Thy throne, O Clod, is forever," Ps. 45:6; Heb. 1:8.

Paul and Peter say that Christ's kingdom is eternal; and the angel said

to Mary, "The Lord Clod shall give him the throne of his father David,

and he shall reign over the house of Jacob, forever,. and of his

kingdom there shall be no end," Luke 1:33. Again the prophet says, "His

seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me. It

shall be established forever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in

heaven," Ps. 89:36, 37. From this all must be convinced that our

eternal Prince is none but Christ, therefore our promised David is none

but Christ.

Fourthly, it reads thus in one of the Psalms, "Then thou spakest in

vision to thy Holy One, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is,

mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people. I have found David

my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him," Ps. 89:19,, 20. Who

is this mighty one on whom God laid help, but Christ Jesus who has all

power in heaven and on earth, to whom God has submitted all things and

to whom are committed all things pertaining to the church? Matt. 28:18;

Heb. 2:8; Eph. 1:22.

On this Christ, the Almighty God has laid help; for we are helped and

saved by him as Christ says, "If the Son therefore shall make you free,

ye shall be free indeed," Jn. 8:36; and Paul says, "For what the law

could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his

own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in

the flesh," Rom. 8:3.

Christ is the strong Samson who broke the jaw bones of the lion; he is

the pious David who slew the great Philistine with whom none of the

Israelites dared fight; he is the chosen one, whom the Father has

chosen as his own Son, saying, " Behold, my servant whom I have

chosen," Matt. 12:18. This chosen one?the Father has exalted from out

the people, inasmuch as he has placed him as King of his holy mount

Zion, as the Prince who shall rule his people; for this reason the

church acknowledges him to be their head, and to be the most exalted of

men on earth, saying, "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood,

so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great

delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste," Cant. 2:3. Further the

Lord says," I have found my servant David; with my holy oil have I

anointed him," Ps. 89:20.

This anointed David is Christ; for he is the truly anointed of the Lord

to whom God the Father speaks, " Thy throne, O God, is forever; a

sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom; thou hast loved

righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath

anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows;" Christ says,

" The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me."

Peter also says, "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy (host

and with power," Heb. 1:8, 9; Ps. 45:6, 7; Luke 4:18; Acts 10:38.

If any one should yet be in doubts (something which is impossible, in

view of such plain Scripture), then let him consider the following

words, "He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock

of my salvation. Also I will make him my first?born, higher than the

kings of the earth," Ps. 89:26, 27. Christ is the firstbegotten Son of

God, as Paul says, God the Father has predestinated us to be conformed

to the image of his Son, that he might be the first?born among many

brethren. And to the Hebrews, " When he bringeth in the first?begotten

into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him,"

Heb. 1:6; Rom. 8:29.

Therefore, as true as Christ is the firstbegotten Son of God, so true

he is the servant David whom the Father anointed with the holy oil,

that is, with his Holy Ghost.

Again, the Lord says concerning his servant David, "My mercy will I

keep for him forevermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him.

His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days

of heaven," Ps. 89:28, 29. This seed is the children; for it further

reads: If his children forsake my law. Now it is manifest that this

should not be understood as having reference to the carnal children of

the figurative David; for they committed themselves to idolatry, and

quite forsook the law of God. For this they were often punished, and,

at last, cut from the olive tree as unfruitful branches, Rom. 11:21.

Nor did the worldly kingdom of David remain unbroken; but it was

destroyed; as the holy patriarch Jacob, and other prophets prophesied.

And to understand it as having reference to the carnal children of

David, is contrary to the epistle of Paul to the Romans, as he there

says, " For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel. Neither,

because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, in

Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of

the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the

promise are counted for the seed," Rom. 9:6??5; therefore we should not

understand this seed as having reference to the carnal children, but to

the spiritual seed, of which it is written: When my servant shall have

given his life as a sacrifice then he shall have seed and live long.

This seed are all the true children of God, which are born again, "not

of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God," 1 Pet.

1:23.

Christ says, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me," Heb.

2:13; and these children of God abide in eternity, eternal joy and

peace shall be upon them: they shall always reign with Christ, and

Christ their King has an eternal kingdom, and his throne shall be as

the days of heaven. This psalm quite agrees with the words of the

prophet Nathan, which he spoke unto David promising him Solomon. As we

must not understand the words of the prophet Nathan as referring to

Solomon alone, but rather as referring to Christ (although the words in

a literal sense are spoken in reference to Solomon), thus we should not

understand the words of the psalm as referring to carnal David alone,

but rather to the true David, Christ Jesus. And this the following text

strongly implies, which speaks of the peace of Christ. This is our

confession of the promised David.

We might, by the grace of God, write a great deal more to show that

Christ is our promised David; but we presume that sufficient has been

written for the intelligent. We do not serca the contentious. Let them

cry. Let them/make unto themselves a different king, yet Christ will

remain the eternal King reigning in his believing church. He is the

Lord. He will not give his glory td another. He will have incense which

shall be sanctified unto him. And whosoever shall make such incense

unto himself, his soul shall be rooted out from Israel, Ex. 5.

None shall succeed in exalting himself to Christ and opposing truth.

They may make a disturbance, but Moses and Aaron will gain the victory.

Jannes and Jambres must give way and be shamed, 2 Tim. 3:8. Korah,

Dathan and Abiram may rise against Moses, but they shall perish with

their confederates, Num. 16:32.

A proud Uzziah may rise and appropriate the glory which is not due him,

but he will be smitten of God, 2 Chron. 26:16.

Hophni and Phinehas may for a time make the people transgress, and turn

them from the true religion, but they shall obtain their reward, 1

Sam.? 2:12; 4:11. Let every one take heed and remain in Christ.

Sufficient of this.

By the grace of God we will also write a little about warfare, that

christians are not allowed to fight with the sword, that we may

unanimously leave the armor of David. to the carnal Israelites; and the

sword of Zerubbahel to those who build the temple of Zerubbabel in

Jerusalem, which was a figure of them and a shadow of things coming.

For the body itself is in Christ as. Paul says, Col. 2:9.

Now we should not understand that the figure of the Old Testament is so

applied to the truth of the New Testament, that flesh is understood as

referring to flesh; but the figure must answer the truth; the image,

the being, and the letter, the Spirit.

If we take this view of it we shall easily understand with what kind

of. arms christians should fight, namely, with the word of God, which

is a two edged sword, of which we will, by the assistance of God, say a

few words, Heb. 4:12; Eph. 6:17.

Whereas the eternal God has raised his Son Christ, a Prophet unto us

whom we shall hear; and whereas Christ testifies of himself that he is

our only Master,, therefore it is incontrovertible that we dare not

accept any other doctrine but the doctrine of Christ. No strange

doctrine, which is contrary to the doctrine of Christ and that which

the apostles by the Holy Ghost have written and taught unto us, I say,

we dare accept, Deut. 18:16; Acts 3:22; 7:37; Matt. 23:9. For there may

be no strange fire offered unto God. Christ will not tolerate the

leaven of the Pharisees, Lev. 10:1; Matt. 16:8.

Moses had to make the cherubims of pure gold, Ex. 25:18. "The words of

the Lord are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace of earth,

purified seven times," Ps. 12:6.

The Lord does not suffer his doctrine to be adulterated; he punishes

all false doctrine, as he spoke about Jerusalem, "Thy silver is become

dross, thy wine mixed with water," "and I will turn my hand upon

thee?and purely purge away thy dross," Isa. 1:22, 25; thus God hates

all false doctrine; and therefore the apostles admonish us that we

shall abide in God's word alone, as John Bays, "Let that therefore

abide in you which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye

have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall

continue in the Son, and in the Father," 1. Jn. 2:24. Paul says that we

should beware of those who raise contentions and are offended at the

doctrine which he preached, that they should be separated. Yea, so

strongly does Paul urge his doctine that he says, "If any man preach

any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be

accursed," Gal. 1:8. Thus Paul teaches in all his epistles to beware of

a strange gospel, and to abide in the doctrine which is not his, but of

the Holy Ghost, according to the words of Christ, "For it is not ye

that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." Now

the Spirit of God speaks thus through Paul, "My brethren, be strong in

the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God,

that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we

wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities,

against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world,

against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you

the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil

day, and, having done all, to stand. Stand, therefore, having your

loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of

righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of

peace. Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be

able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked; and take the helmet

of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,"

Eph. 10:10?17; 1.Thess. 5:8. At another place: "For the weapons of our

warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of

strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that

exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and ?bringing into

captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. And having in a

readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is

fulfilled," 2 Cor. 10:4?6. He that is not blind will understand with

what weapons the christian is to fight, namely, with the word of God;

with this they should be well armored. For thus speaks the holy church:

"Behold, his bed. which is Solomon's; threescore valiant men are about

it, of the valiant of Israel; they all hold swords, being expert in

war; every man hath his sword upon his thigh because of fear in the

night," Cant. 3:7, 8; that is, each one is armed with the sword of the

Spirit against all the wiles of the devil, against all false doctrine.

Concerning Christ it is written, " Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O

most Mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride

prosperQusly, because of truth and meekness, and righteousness; and thy

right hand shall teach thee terrible things. Thine arrows are sharp in

the heart of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee,"

Ps. 45:3?5.

Here the Scriptures say that Christ shall have a sword. What sword now

shall Christ have? This he himself tells in' the " Revelation," in

these words," Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will

fight against them with the sword of my mouth;" Rev. 2:16.

If Christ fights his enemies with the sword of his mouth, if he smites

the earth with the rod of his mouth, and slay the wicked with the

breath of his lips; and if we are to be conformed unto his image, how

can we, then, fight our enemies with any other sword? Does not the

apostle Peter say, " For even hereunto were ye called, because Christ

also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his

steps: who did not sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when

he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered he threatened not;

but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously?" 1 Pet. 2:21?23;

Matt. 16:24. This accords with the words of John who says, That he that

abides in Christ, walks as Christ walked. Christ himself says,

"Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his

cross, and follow me," Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23. Again, ~'My sheep hear my

voice . . . . and they fellow me," Jn. 10 27. And this is the voice: of

Christ, " Ye have heard that it hath been said, "An eye for an eye; and

a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil: but

whosoever shall smite them on thy right cheek, turn to him the other

also."

Again, " Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shah love thy neighbor,

and hate thine enemy: But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them

that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which

despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of

your Father which is in heaven, for he maketh his sun to rise on the

evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

For if ye love them which love you what reward have ye? Do not even the

publicans the same I And if ye salute your brethren only, what do you

more than others? Do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore

perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," Matt.

5:39, 43?47; Rom. 12:20; 1 Pet. 3:9; Luke 6:34; 1 Pet. 1:15. Behold

this is the voice of Christ. All those now who are his sheep will hear

his voice. But those who are not his sheep will not hear his voice, as

Christ said unto the Pharisees, "Ye believe not because ye. are not of

my sheep." The Pharisees thought they had Moses and the prophets, they

also had a semblance of holiness; but they did not hear the voice of

Christ, therefore it was all in vain. Thus it is with all those who do

not submit themselves to the commandments of Christ.

It is not in the leaves of the tree, but in the fruit. And which is the

right kind of fruit, Paul clearly, testifies, saying,." The fruit of

the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness,

faith, meekness, temperance," (Gal. 5:22, 23. Here we are not taught to

take up the carnal sword, or to repay evil with evil. But rather \_as

Paul says at another place, " Recompense to no man evil for evil.

Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as

much as lieth in you, live peaceably with ?all men. Dearly beloved,

avenge not yourselves; but rather give place unto wrath: For it is

written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if

thine enemy hunger, feed. him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so

doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of

evil, but overcome evil with good," Rom. 12:17?21. And how can

christians fight with the implements of war? Paul plainly says, "Let

this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus," Phil. 2:5. Now,

Christ Jesus was minded to suffer; thus, all christians must be so

minded.

Christ did not suffer Peter to defend him with the sword; how can a

christian, then, defend himself with the sword? Christ would drink the

cup which the Father had given him; how then, can a christian refuse to

drink its Matt. 26:51; Luke .22:50; Mark 14:47; Jn. 18:11.

Or does any person expect to be saved by other means than those which

Christ has taught us? Is not Christ the way, the truth, and the life?

Is he not the door to the fold, so that none can enter into the fold

but by him 8 Jn. 10:9; 14:6.

Is he not the Shepherd of his sheep, whom the sheep should follow? Is

not he our Lord and Prince? And who is it that would be above his

Master but he that would not suffer, as he has suffered. Who is it that

would be above his master but he that is not satisfied with his

Master's doctrine? Let every one take heed. It is forbidden us to take

up arms, Matt. 10:24; Jn. 13:16; 15:20.

Paul says, " Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and

powers, to obey magistrates; to be ready to every. good work, to speak.

evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness

unto all men," Titus 3:1, 2. And the holy apostle James says, "Be

patient, therefore brethren unto the coming of the Lord. Behold the

husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long

patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also

patient: stablish your heart; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the?name of the

Lord, for? an example of suffering, affliction, and of patience.

Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience

of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very

pitiful, and of tender mercy," Jas. G:7?11. If we are to be

longsuffering until the coming of the Lord, then it is, surely,

forbidden to fight inasmuch as the Lord is not yet come.

And if we are to take the prophets as an example to bear with

persecution, then we must put on the apostolic armor, and the armor of

David must be left behind. How would it comport with the word of God,

that one who boasts of being a christian, should lay aside the

spiritual weapons and take up the carnal ones, for Paul says, " The

servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to

teach, patient; in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves;

if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of

the truth. And that they may recover themselves out of the snake of the

devil, who are taken captive by him at his will," 2 Tim. 2:24?26.

All of you who would fight with the sword of David, and be the servants

of the Lord, consider these words, which show how a servant should be

minded. If he is not to strive, how can he war! If he is to be gentle

to all men, how can he then hate them and do evil unto them? If he is

to be apt to teach, how can he lay aside the apostolic weapons 8 If he

is to teach he will need them. If he is to instruct in meekness those

that oppose, how can he destroy them?

If he is to instruct in meekness those that oppose truth, how can he

angrily punish those that do not yet acknowledge the truth? Paul says,

if God peradventure will give them repentance. But some will not wait

for that, and if they even do it with good intention, still they with

Uzzah lay their hands on the ark of God. Therefore I fear that it will

not be left unpunished. And if they with Saul, even saved the best

beasts of the Amalekites, for sacrifices unto God, yet it will not

please the Lord; for. it is contrary to his word. He has pleasure in

obedience and not in sacrifices.

But now some say, the Lord wants to punish Babylon, and that by his

christians; they must be his instruments. O, God! It would be well if

we would leave the Lord to do his works, and remember the words of

Ecclesiasticus: "Seek not out the things that are too hard for thee,

neither search the things that are above thy strength. But what is

commanded thee, think thereupon with reverence; for it is not needful

for thee to see with thine eyes the things that are in secret. Be not

curious in unnecessary matters," Eccl. 3:21?23.

For many things are shown men above their understanding, and

presumption has caused many to fall, and held their understanding in

vanity. It would also be well for those who ask, with the disciples of

the Lord, when the kingdom of Israel is to be restored, to observe the

answer of the Lord: "It is not for you to know the times or the

seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power," Acts 1:6. But

this they forget, and cry: God will shortly punish and destroy Babylon.

To do this the christians must be his instruments; and this they make

the simple believe; for which reason we will adduce some Scriptures. It

is true that God will punish Babylon, but not by his christians; for

thus speaks Jeremiah: "The Lord hath raised up the spirits of the kings

of the Medea; for his device is against Babylon to destroy it; because

it is the vengeance of the Lord, the vengeance of his temple." Again:

"Prepare against her the nations, with the kings of the Medea, the

captains thereof, and all the rulers thereof, and all the land of his

dominion. And the land shall tremble and sorrow: for every purpose of

the Lord shall be performed against Babylon, to make the land of

Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant," Jer. 51:11, 28, 29.

I am aware that this was fulfilled against Babylon, in the Chaldee

country, though the Roman Babylon shall not escape the same plague; but

I have adduced this for the service of the advocates of the sword who

want to prove by this Scripture of Jeremiah, that the christians shall

punish Babylon, while the prophet clearly testifies that God has done

this by heathen hands, and that it is his will that it shall be done by

such, as is shown by Rev. 17:16: " The ten horns which thou sawest upon

the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and

naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath

put in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree and give their

kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled."

Thus it may be plainly understood from these words that the Babylonian

whore shall be destroyed, not by christians; as also, that christians

should not destroy. A Theudas may rise up and cause a disturbance, but

he shall not succeed, Acts 5:36. There may rise up a Judas Galilee and

cause a riot, but he shall perish, and all his followers shall perish

and be scattered. Let every person beware and diligently observe the

Scriptures, and he shall see that the Lord himself will destroy, at his

coming again, and punish all his enemies who will not submit to him.

For Luke says, "It came to pass, that when he was returned, having

received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called

unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much

every man had gained by trading;" and when his servants had given an

account, he said, "But those mine enemies which would not that I should

reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me," Luke 19:15,

'~)7.

This Scripture clearly testifies that the Lord Christ, must first come

again, before all his enemies are punished. And how Christ will come

?again he himself testifies, saying, "For the son of man shall come in

the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then he shall reward

every man according to his works," Matt. 16:27. Again, " For as the

lightening cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; ?so

shall also the coming of the son of man be." "And then shall appear the

sign of the son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the

earth mourn, and they shall see the son of man coming in the clouds of

heaven, with power and great glory," Matt. 24:27, 30; Mark 13:26; Luke

17:24. The two angels also testified how Christ would come again,

saying, " Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven E This

same . Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in

like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven," Acts 1:11. From this

it is plain to everybody how Christ shall come; therefore, when ye

shall see Christ come in this manner then you may rest assured that all

the enemies?of God will be punished; and do not suppose that it shall

be so before his coming again, for you will find yourselves mistaken;

or else God's word must be false, which is impossible. Luke also says,

that the Lord had received the kingdom.

Of this Daniel says, "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like

the son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient

of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him

dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and

languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion,

which shall not pass away, and his kingdom, that which shall not be

destroyed," Dan. 7:13, 14. Here observe of whom Christ receives this

kingdom, that you may see what abominable deceit it is that some say

that John Van Leyden would take the kingdom, and that he who has taken

it will give it unto Christ, as David gave the kingdom unto Solomon.

Further, the evangelist says, That Christ will take account with his

servants, which will not be until the day of judgment; Paul says, "We

must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may

receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done,

whether it be good or bad," 2 Cor. G:10. Jesus says, " That every idle

word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day

of judgment," Matt. 12:36. Then the faithful servants shall enter into

the kingdom of their Lord; then shall the wicked be punished, and all

whose names are not found written in the book of life will be cast into

the lake of fire; for they would not confess Christ to be their king,

but worshipped the beast and his image, Rev. 20:15; 13:8.

This parable some adulterate, and say, "The enemies of God must be

destroyed before the coming of Christ, and therefore we will be the

instruments to do so."? But they must come to shame; " For thus saith

the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be

saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye

would not. But ye said, No; for we will flee upon horses; therefore

shall ye flee; and we will ride upon the swift; therefore shall they

that pursue you be swift," Isa. 30:15. O, that the advocates of the

sword would observe these words I Yea, those who would be angels to

root up the tares ! while Christ told the parable with a different

understanding, saying, " The good seed are the children of the kingdom;

but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed

them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers

are the angels," Matt. 13:38, 39. Inasmuch as the christians are the

good seed, how then can they be the angels or reapers; or if they be

the reapers, how can they be the seed? These two are quite different

things, the seed and the reapers; its plainness is incontrovertible.

It is true that the christians are sometimes called angels. But we

cannot always understand it, when reading of angels, as meaning the

believing. There are also other angels of which it is written: "Who

maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire," Ps. 104:4;

103:20; Heb. 1:7. With these angels Christ will come, as Paul says, "

The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in

flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey

not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ," 2 Thess. 1:7, 8. These angels

will be the reapers who, ?at the end of the world, that is, in the day

of judgment, will root up all tares and cast them into the lake of

fire. Until that time the tares will be left among the good seed; let

none think that we should root up the tares now, or that we should now

separate the goats from the sheep. " When the son of man shall come in

his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the

throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations; and

he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his

sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but

the goats on the left," Matt. 25 r31?33.

These words are as clear as the sun, yet some do not understand them,

so that we may well say unto them, " foolish Galations, who hath

bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes

Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you $ This

only would I learn of you." Whether you are baptized on the sword or on

the cross? "Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now

made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if

it be yet in vain," Gal. 3:1?4.

What avails it that you have left Egypt if you again look back to

Egypt, that is, to darkness, and leave the true light, yea, are

desirous after the flesh of Egypt, that is, human doctrine, and are not

satisfied with the bread from heaven? Ex. 14:11; Num. 14:2.

What does it avail that you are gone away from Pharaoh, if you are

slain by Amalek on account of your disobedience; that is, because you

fight against the will of the Lord? What does it profit that you have

gone through the Red Sea with the children of Israel, if you do not

enter with Joshua and Caleb, into the promised land, by firm faith in

God's word? And how we are to enter into the promised land, in the

eternal kingdom of God, is. testified to by Paul and Barnabas, who

taught the churches that they had to enter into the kingdom through

many tribulations.

Christ has not taken his kingdom with the sword, but he entered it

through much suffering. Yet they mean to take it by the sword 1 O,

blindness of man I But thus it must be, that those who will not confess

Christ to be their only Shepherd, that they may be pastured by him,

will have to eat of the pastures which are trampled upon; and that

those who will not draw the clear, crystal water from the fount of the

Savior, will have to drink the impure water which the false shepherds

have made impure with their feet. And that for the reason, because they

have done double evil to the children of Israel. ? They have forsaken

the Lord, the living fountain, and have made fountains of their own

which appear beautiful, but they afford no water. Therefore I admonish

all beloved brethren, yea, I pray you by the mercy of God our Lord

Jesus Christ, to?,give heed to the word of God, and do not forsake it;

for you have seen your Master Christ, with the eye of faith, and you

have heard his voice, saying, This is the true way, walk upon it, go

neither to the right hand nor to the left.

Let every one of you guard against all strange doctrine, of the sword,

of opposition and of other like things, which is nothing short of a

fine cover, under which lies hidden an evil serpent which has blown its

venom into many. Let every one beware of it I

Let every one behave himself in accordance with the example of the

divine word, which he has received from the apostles, by faith and

love. Let every one remember that Christ was taught to him in no other

way but through tribulation. Abide in it.For in Christ is an upright

being; he. is the light of the world; he who follows him shall not walk

in darkness, but have the light of life, Ps. 6'7:1. God, the Father of

our Lord Jesus Christ, be gracious unto us, and enlighten us that we on

earth may acknowledge his way, and his salvation among the Gentiles.

All you who have tasted the kindness of the Lord, love him. The Lord

upholds the upright. Be of good cheer, and doubt not; for the Lord will

strengthen your souls, who patiently wait for his coming. "The Lord

reigneth; let the people tremble; he sitteth between the cherubim; let

the earth be moved," Ps. 99:1. This King the Jews scorned, and they

became blind.

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AND

ADMONITION OR INSTRUCTION

FROM THE WORD OF GOD,

HOW A CHRISTIAN SHOULD BE DISPOSED; AND CONCERNING THE SHUN-

NING AND SEPARATION OF THE UNFAITHFUL BRETHREN AND

SISTERS, EITHER DECEIVED BY HERETICAL DOCTRINE, OR

LEADING A CARNAL, SHAMEFUL LIFE.

BY

MENNO SIMON.

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus

Christ," 1 Cor. 8:11.

ELKHART, INDIANA:

PUBLISHED BY JOHN F. FUNK AND BROTHER.

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A KIND ADMONITION.

Menno Simon wishes all true brethren and sisters in Jesus Christ the

grace and peace of God our heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ his

Son, our Lord, who loved us, and cleansed gas of our sins by his blood.

To him be glory, now and forever, Amen.

Hear, believe, and fulfill God's word, and you shall have everlasting

life. Do not judge until you have perused and well understood this.

SINCERLY beloved children in Christ Jesus, you are aware with what

diligence, nay, how sincerely I have of late admonished most of you,

according to the word of the Lord, by many Scriptures, flowing from a

loving, inclined and moved Spirit, as you yourselves have witnessed, I,

who seek nothing (of which God is my witness) but alone the salvation

of your souls; teaching nothing, desiring nothing, admonishing you to

nothing but alone that your most holy faith and works may be powerful

and fruitful before God; and that your life and walk may be found

before God, before his angels, and before all the world, holy, pure,

sober, chaste, temperate, humble, gentle, kind, mild, merciful,

righteous, unblamable, in conformity with, and obedient to the gospel

of Christ, a shining light, that in all your doings you may express

Christ Jesus whom you have put on, if you have rightly put him on, as I

trust; and thus show in your life his divine and heavenly image after

which you are created, Col. 3; Eph. 4.

You know that I do not desire your money, silver, and carnal gifts,

although I may be blamed of it by the infamous, lying world. I beseech

all of you, and would with much solicitation, anxiety, tribulation,

sighing, weeping, and pains, teach you such faith, love, spirit,

conscience and walk that you can stand before the righteous judgment of

God, and that in Christ Jesus.

I do not doubt, most beloved brethren, that you well know (if you be

born with Christ, of God the Father of the heavenly seed of the divine

word), that you must be conformed unto Christ in mind, spirit, courage

and will, both in doctrine and life, as Christ Jesus is conformed unto

the nature and image of his blessed, heavenly Father, to which he was

so conformed that he did nothing but that his Father did, Jn. 5; that

he taught nothing but the word of his Father. Jn. 7. In the same manner

with those who are begotten of the living, saving word of our beloved

Lord Jesus Christ; they are, by virtue of their new birth, so conformed

unto Christ, so like unto him, so really implanted into him, so

converted into his heavenly nature, that they do not teach nor believe

any doctrine but that which conforms unto the doctrine of Christ; do

not make use of any religious ceremonies but Christ's ceremonies, which

he has taught and commanded in his holy gospel; for how can the natural

branches bear fruit different from that of the vine itself of which

they budded forth H Jn. 15.

As there is nothing found in Christ Jesus but solely the holiness,

wisdom, brightness, righteousness, power, love, peace, mercy, and truth

of the Almighty Father, thus you have in the same manner partaken of

his being and goodness, because you with him are regenerated and

renewed of the same Father.

Behold, brethren, such regenerated and godly minded, live unblamably,

even according to the measure of the rule of the holy gospel of Jesus

Christ and his apostles. Therefore he kisses them as his beloved,

chosen ones, with the mouth of his peace, Cant. 1, and calls them his

church, his bride, flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone, of which

he begets, with inexpressible pleasure, by his powerful seed, his holy

word, the children of God, the children of the promise, the children of

righteousness, the children of truth, and the children of life eternal.

But of the Babylonian, Sodomitic, whoring, adulterous, idolatrous,

bloody, unbelieving, blind and unclean whore with which they have, for

centuries, lived in adultery by the use of wood, stone, gold, silver,

bread, wine, false doctrine, and of the very vain, ac cursed works of

their own hands, contrary to Jesus Christ and his holy word, he will

never beget them, Rev. 17; 18.

Therefore I admonish all our beloved brethren and sisters in the Lord,

so precious as is Christ Jesus to you, never to let it go out of your

mind, but ever to remember for what purpose you are called, taught, and

baptized. Remember the covenant of the most high God, that into which

you voluntarily entered; into which you have voluntarily desired and

accepted; being taught by the word of God, and operated upon by the

Holy Spirit; and remember that according to the doctrine of Paul, you

have voluntarily buried in baptism, all your avarice, uncleanness,

pride, hatred, envy, abuse of the sacramental signs, idolatry,

gluttony, drunkenness, sensuality, falsehood, deceit, &c., and that you

are arisen with Christ Jesus, into newness of life, Rom. 6, if you are

rightly arisen with him; which new life is nothing else but

righteousness, unblamableness, love, mercifulness, humility,

longsuffering, peace, truth, yea, the whole, gentle life which is

taught by the gospel, and was found in Christ Jesus.

O, brethren, how far are some of us, alas, yet distant from the

evangelical life which is of God! Notwithstanding that they stay out of

the other churches, and are outwardly baptized in water, they yet are

carnal and devilish minded in all things, thinking perhaps, that

christianity consists of outward baptism and the non?attendance of the

church. No, beloved, no! I tell you, as truly as the Lord lives, before

God avails no outward baptism, nor staying away from the churches, nor

supper, nor being persecuted, if we do not obey the commandments of

God, 1 Cor. 7; if our faith does not manifest itself in love, and the

new creature, as also Christ Jesus says, "Verily, verily, I say unto

you, except a inan be born again, he can not see the kingdom of God,"

Jn. 3:3. At another place he says, " Verily; I say unto you, Except ye

be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the

kingdom of heaven," Matt. 18:3. But the regenerated and converted, that

is the believing, are rightly baptized in accordance with God's word;

for they bury their sins in baptism, and arise with Christ into newness

of life, Rom. 6; they are spiritually circumcised with the circumcision

of Christ, Col. 2; they put on Christ Jesus; they show by the washing

of regeneration that they are born again; for it is a washing of the

new birth, Tit. 3.

These regenerated ones use the true Supper; for they proclaim the death

of Christ until his coming again, 1 Cor. 11; their pleasure is in the

church of the righteous, their works are nothing but brotherly love,

one heart, one soul, one spirit. Yea, one undivided body, fruitful,

serving, and common in Christ Jesus, which are symbolized by the

outward cup, and the outward bread, 1 Cor. 10.

These regenerated ones shun all false doctrine, all idolatry, all

improper usage of the sacramental signs in the church or out of the

church; they seek only the true teachers who are unblamable both in

doctrine and in life; the true religion, as taught and expressed in

Christ's word, namely, the dying unto the flesh, Rom. 12; Gal. 6; the

service of the afflicted, Matt. ls; the visiting of the widows and

orphans; as James says, They seek to keep themselves unblemished and

unspotted from the world, Jas. 1. These regenerated ones bear the cross

of Christ with gladness of heart, so established in Christ Jesus that

they can not be separated from the eternal truth and love of God, by

false doctrine, nor by horrible torments, ever remembering their Lord's

word, where he says, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men,

him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven," Matt.

10:32.

All their thoughts are chaste, gentle, peaceful, heavenly and of the

Holy Spirit; all their words are wisdom, truth, doctrine, admonition in

grace, well seasoned, the words of God and words spoken at the right

time. They are spirit, and they are life. In short, all their works are

love, mercifulness, righteousness, piety, and are done in the fear of

the Lord.

Behold, brethren, this is the true nature and mind of the children of

God, who are by grace converted in their hearts and with Christ born of

God the Father. Therefore I beseech you as my sincerely beloved

brethren, by the grace of God, nay I com mand you with holy Paul, by

the Lord Jesus Christ, who at his coming will judge the living and the

dead, diligently to observe each other unto salvation, in all becoming

ways teaching, instructing, admonishing, reproving, threatening and

consoling each other as occasion requires, not otherwise than in

accordance with the word of God, and in unfeigned love, that we may all

grow up in God, and become united in faith and in the knowledge of the

Son of God, into one perfect man, and according to the measure of the

gift of Jesus Christ, Eph. 4:7.

Therefore take heed. If you see your brother sin, then pass not by him,

as one that does not prize his soul; but if his fall be curable, from

that moment endeavor to raise him up by gentle admonition and brotherly

instruction, before you eat, drink, sleep or do any thing else, as one

who ardently desires his salvation, lest your poor, erring brother

harden and corrupt in his fall, and perish in his sin.

Do not act so unfaithfully as you have hitherto done, as not to make

the transgressions of your dying brother or sister known to those

within the church before those without; but rather exhort them, and

seek by prayer, by words, and by actions to convert him from the error

of his way, to save his soul and thus to stop the multiplying of his

transgressions, Jas. G. Take heed, brethren, take heed I that you allow

no defamer among you, as Moses taught, Lev. 19, no double, lying,

roguish, nor backbiting tongue; and do not consent, lest you fall into

the wrath of God. Let every one take heed, how, where, when and what he

speaks, lest his tongue blaspheme his God and his neighbor; but always

remember the words of Ecclesiasticus, "Honor and shame is in talk, and

the tongue of man is his fall," Eccl. 5:13.

But brethren, if those of years of understanding who were with us, by

the urging. of the Spirit, baptized in the most holy body of Jesus

Christ, which is the church, again withdraw themselves from the body or

church of Christ, actuated either by false doctrine or vain, carnal

life, no matter whether it be father or mother, sister or brother,

husband or wife, son or daughter, or any one else, for God's word

applies to all flesh, without respect of person, Acts 10:34; Rom. 2:11;

Gal. 2; Eph. 8; Col. 3, if he or she do not heed the admonitions of the

brethren, which is given with sorrow, tears and a compassionate spirit

of love, but continue in their Jewish doctrine, namely, of sword,

kingdom, polygamy or the like deceit; again, in the doctrine of the

infamous confession, of shamelessness in exposing their persons, and

the like unnatural, inhuman actions; again in the doctrine which is

opposed to the cross of Christ, such as that uncleanness is pure to the

pure, and thus having communion in fruitless works, as the hearing of

the preachers of the world, infant baptism, the worldly supper, and the

like abominations. Again, continue in drunkenness, avarice, adultery,

fornication, unbecoming words, &c., with such have nothing to do, nor

eat with them, as Paul has taught and commanded us in plain words, 1

Cor. 5.

But if he affectionately receive the admonitions of his faithful

brethren, if he confess his fall, if he be sorry, promise reformation,

show signs of penitence, and acknowledge his transgression, then, no

matter how he has transgressed, receive him as a returning, beloved

brother or sister, but beware, lest he mock his God; for the

acceptation of brethren does not avail if we be not accepted of God.

Beware, I say, lest his hearing the admonitions, his sorrow, his

promise of reformation, and his penitence be not sincere before God;

for he searches the hearts and reins, and he knows all inward

feignedness and thoughts of men, Jer. 17; Jn. 2; Rom. 8.

If his hearing the admonitions, his sorrow, promise and penitence are

not sincere and from his heart, but merely indifferent, feigned,

spiritless, hypocritical, just because he does not want to be outwardly

thrown out of the communion of the brethren, he is still cut off by

Christ, and is a hypocrite in the sight of God. Nor will he be looked

upon nor judged by God as being any thing else. For God the righteous

Judge does not judge according to the outward appearance, but solely

according to the inward intentions of the heart.

Say, beloved, inasmuch as this is the case, what does it avail to go by

the mere name of a christian brother if he have not the inward,

evangelical faith, love, and unblamable life of a true brother of Jesus

Christ

Or what does it avail to partake of the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus

Christ with the brethren if we have not the true symbolized fruits of

this Supper, namely, the love of the brethren, and the peaceable unity

of faith in Christ Jesus? Or does it avail anything outwardly to

converse in the communion of the brethren, if we are not inwardly in

the communion of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ?

Therefore, brethren, none is cut off by us, or ejected from the

communion of the brethren (judge rightly) but those who have already

ejected themselves either by false doctrine, or by a blamable life,

from Christ and his communion. For we do not wish to eject any, but to

accept them; not to cut them off, but to restore them; not to reject,

but to win them back; not to afflict, but to console them; not to

condemn, but to save them. For this is the true nature of a christian

brother. Whosoever renounces evil, be it false doctrine or; vain life,

and conforms himself to the gospel of Jesus Christ, unto which he is

baptized neither shall nor can be ejected or cut off by any of the

brethren.

But those whom we cannot raise up and admonish unto repentance by

tears, threatening, reproving, or. by any other christian services and

divine means, we should reluctantly separate from us, sincerely

deploring the fall and damnation of such erring brethren, lest we also

be deceived and led astray by such false doctrine which eats about

itself like a cancer, 2 Tim. 2; lest we corrupt our flesh which is

inclined to evil, by the contagion; and that we may thus obey the word

of God which commands us to do so; and that thus the separated brother

or sister, whom we can not convert by gentle services, may, by means of

the separation, be shamed unto repentance, 2 Thess. 2, and acknowledge

to what he has come and from what he is fallen. Thus .the ban is a

great work of love, notwithstanding it is looked upon by the

unintelligent as an act of hatred.

Brethren and sisters this separation or bait, so earnestly taught and

commanded in the Scriptures by Christ Jesus and his holy apostles was

instituted to be practiced for these causes and reasons, first: For

false doctrine, Matt. 7; 18; Rom. lE; 2 Tim. 2; 1 Tim. e; Tit. 3; Phil.

3; 2 Jn.1; again, for sinful, carnal life, Matt. 18; 1 Cor. G; 2 Thess.

3; 2 Tim. 3; again, that we should admonish them (understand, those

that will be admonished), Matt. ~18; Tit. 3. Therefore take heed, and

watch your own soul, lest you despise the word of God in this necessary

matter of separation, and transgress his ordinances; but that you in

every respect practice upon and uphold it with divine wisdom,

discretion, gentleness and prudence, in the case of those who have gone

aside from the evangelical doctrine or life; not with austerity, nor

with cruelty, but rather with gentleness, reluctance, and with sorrow

and pity for the diseased members who are not cured, in whose case

pains and labor avail nothing, who should be cut off with the knife of

the divine word, lest the others be corrupted, and lest the abominable

scurvy is imparted to the other sheep. Yea it should be done in such a

manner that the erring sister or brother may be made ashamed at heart,

and thus be won, as was said above. And in case there be any moving of

the Spirit, any spark of life; or any fear of God in such sister or

brother, their heart will surely quake and tremble; for by the

admonition of the word of God, and by the testimony of his own

conscience he will acknowledge that he has cut himself off from the

communion of Jesus Christ, by his vain, carnal life, and that he has

again entered into the communion of the devil; and that therefore his

lot and part shall not be with theblessed souls in heaven, but with the

damned in hell unto eternity, unless he convert himself.

May God, the merciful Father, save all his chosen children who have

entered into his holy covenant and communion, from such a fearful fall,

obduracy, and separation, Amen.

All the apostate sisters and brethren who are offended at and angry

with us on account of this open doctrine and practice of the Christian

ban or separation, will be offended more and more; for whosoever is

impure will be rendered still more impure, as the Holy Spirit of the

prophecies teaches, Rev. 22. For the word of God is unto the

reformation, righteousness, and life of the pious and godly; but unto

the lost it is unto offense, unrighteousness and death. Whatl be angry

with us because we obey Scripture in this respect? Let them rather be

angry with themselves; for they dare teach and live contrary to the

commandment of God. If they want to renounce their heresy, and reform

their ungodly life, the heavenly doctrine of our beloved Lord Jesus

Christ will not offend them nor make them worse, but rather urge,

affright and convert them.

If they, by their apostatic, refractory and carnal hatred, are so

deprived of grace and the knowledge of God, and become worse and worse,

so that they see death in the eternal life, and darkness in the

heavenly light of divine truth, then we can claim to be clear before

God and his holy angels, from their sins, obduracy, and eternal death

if we do toward them that which the Lord's word has commanded us in

regard to this matter. Therefore we desire not to have communion with

them, nor lot nor part, unto eternity, so long as they do not sincerely

renounce their false doctrine and reform their miserable, accursed,

earthly, carnal, and devilish life, to the praise of the Lord. But in

case true penitence is found in them, in good faith, as before God who

sees all things, then we say, welcome beloved brethren, welcome,

beloved sisters, and we sincerely rejoice at the sincere conversion of

such brethren and sisters. Yea, we rejoice as one is rejoiced at the

restoration of an only Son who was dangerously ill as at the

restoration of a lost sheep or penny; and as at the reappearance of a

son who was given up as lost, Matt. 18; Luke 15.

Behold, brethren, therefore I will leave every apostate brother to

consider why, and wherefore, with what kind of spirit, and with what

intention this separation or ban was so diligently practiced, first by

Christ Jesus and his apostles and afterward by us who are again placed

in their doctrine and practice of all christian doings, as may be

easily deduced from the alleged Scriptures.

Well, dear brethren in the Lord, you who are baptized by one Spirit

into one body, and have voluntarily entered into the communion of Jesus

Christ, and also you who are of a good mind, inasmuch as you must shun

the apostatic in accordance with the word of God, therefore, take heed,

that while you shun them as diseased, foul and useless members, unfit

fox the body of Christ, you yourselves may be found to be sound, fit,

and fruitful members in Christ Jesus; and that while you shun them as

children of darkness and of death, you yourselves may be children of

the light and of eternal life, that the righteous sentence of God may

not be pronounced against you; take heed, lest you who shun others on

account of their evil doing, secretly commit worse things in the sight

of God. Take heed, lest you adjudge others of what you yourselves are

guilty, Rom. 2. Behold, brethren, thus the ban or separation should be

practiced in the house of the Lord, that is, in God's church; nor have

they any other weapon unto eternity. Of this I would have written more

but defer it to some other time, if it please God.

Now, beloved brethren, take heed, take heed, brethren, this I advise

you that there may never be any thoughts in your hearts otherwise than

such as are pure, holy, chaste, heavenly, and of the Holy Spirit.

"Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God," Matt. G:8.

"The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom and his tongue talketh of

judgment," Ps. 37:3o. Let all thy words be as a sworn oath before God

and before the world, Matt. S; Jas. G. Let all your actions be wrought

of God by God, and in God, Jn. 3. Measure all your thoughts, words and

actions by the rule of the divine word, that the ungodly defamer who so

diligently watches all your words and actions may find nothing which he

can truly cast up to you, whereby he can accuse or blame you, as Paul

taught and requested the church, in some instances, Eph. 4; 1 Tim. 3;

Tit. 2.

It is also the nature of those who are in God, not to sin, as John

says, "Whosoever abideth in. him (God) sinneth not: whosoever sinneth

hath not seen him, neither known him. Little children, let no man

deceive you: he that doeth righteousness, is righteous, even as he is

righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil

sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was

manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is

born of God doth not commit sin: for his seed remaineth in him: and he

cannot sin, because he is of God, 1 Jn. 3:6?9. Therefore I implore and

pray you to consider well the nature of the new birth, and examine what

it is in reality, namely, the divine nature, and the divine image; of

whom it is, that it is of God; from whence it is?from heaven; and what

is obtained by it??life eternal. For without the new birth it is merely

the nature of earthly Adam, sin, evil, blindness, transgression, devil

and eternal death (I speak in regard to those of mature years),

whatever we do; but in whomsoever the new birth is, there is also

everything godly, wisdom, goodness, light, righteousness, truth, peace,

Spirit, Christ, God and life eternal. Therefore the eternal Truth,

Christ Jesus, says in plain words, that we must repent and be born

again, if we would enter into the kingdom of heaven, Matt. 18; Jn. 3.

For the first birth is of the earth, earthly, and inclined to the

earth; but the second birth is of heaven, and is heavenly, and inclined

to heaven, Jn. 3. that is to say, the birth of earth makes earthly

minded and the birth of heaven makes heavenly minded.

If this good and perfect gift of the new birth be given us of the

Father of light, by grace, then we become the chosen children of God,

Jn. 1; Eph. 1; then we are the true sisters and brethren of Christ,

Luke fir, then we are conformed unto Christ, Rom. 8; then we are

created after the image of God, Col. 3; Eph. 4; then we have the sign

Tau on our foreheads; then the kingdom of God is ours, Luke 18; then we

are the bride of Christ, Jn. 3, the church of Christ, Eph. 6, the body

of Christ, 1 Cor. 12; Eph. 1. Col. 1; then Christ dwells in our hearts,

Eph. 3; then we are led by the Holy Ghost, Rom. 8; we are the chosen

generation, the royal priesthood, the holy, begotten people, which is

God's own, 1 Pet. 2; then we are the temple of the Lord, 1 Cor. 3; 6; 2

Cor. e; the spiritual Mount Zion, and the new heavenly Jerusalem, Heb.

12; the spiritual Israel of God, Gal. 6; we are of divine mind and

nature; we are delivered from the sentence of the law, Isa. 9; Gal. S;

1 Tim. 3; yea from hell, sin, devil, and eternal death, Eph. 2; then we

have Christ Jesus forever blessed; his word, life, flesh, blood, cross,

suffering, bitter death, burial, resurrection, ascension, kingdom and

eternal joy, with him, received as a gift from God the Father, Rom. 8.

But in case we be not born again (understand, those of understanding

age), then we have not such promises.

Therefore, sincerely beloved brethren, partakers of the heavenly

calling through Christ Jesus; "Humble yourselves therefore under the

mighty hand of God," 1 Pet. I, 6:6, and sincerely deny yourselves. Fear

God in all your thoughts, words and works, love and serve God and your

neighbor; love God above all things created, and your neighbor as

yourselves, Matt. 22. Let all your meditations be in the. law of the

Lord, Ps. 1. Keep God's word; I repeat it, brethren, keep the word of

God which has been so often taught you in love, both verbally and in

writing.

Let your ardent prayer at all times go up to God, for all men; for

emperors, kings, lords, princes, judges, and for all those that are

placed in authority, that God may so direct their hearts that we, if it

be his blessed will, may lead a peaceable and godly life, 1 Tim. 2:2.

Be not envious in your hearts and not inconsiderate in your talking

about others, whether he be a slanderer, traitor, persecutor, priest or

monk, no matter who he be; for they shall receive their reward from

God. But ever remember the longsuffering of our beloved Lord Jesus

Christ, as also, that we were all foolish and unbelieving, erring,

serving divers lusts and desires; we were also naturally, children of

the wrath, the same as they are. Willingly obey all human ordinances if

they be not against the ordinances of God, l Pet. 2. Be liberal in

rendering assistance to all the children of God. Receive each other

without murmuring, 1 Pet. 4. Let each one work with his own hands, and

eat his own bread, if possible, 2 Thess. 3. Shun all manner of idleness

and worldly pomp. Take faithful care of each other by admonitions, Heb.

10, as I have verbally admonished you to do before, and now again in

this epistle.

Wash the feet of your beloved brethren and sisters who are come to you

from a distance, tired. Be not ashamed to do the work of the Lord, but

humble yourselves with Christ, before your brethren's feet, that all

humility, according to the divine nature, may be found in you, Jn. 13;

1 Tim. 5.

Above all pray for your poor humble servant, whose life is sought with

all diligence, that God, the gracious Father, may strengthen him with

his Holy Spirit, and save him from the hands of those who so unjustly

seek his life, if it be his fatherly will, and if it be not his will,

that he may then give him in all tribulation, torture, oppression and

death, such heart, mind, wisdom and strength, that he may steadily

fulfill the glorious work of God, which is begun in us, by the Holy

Ghost, to the praise of the Lord.

, beloved brethren, fulfill my desire, and finish, as obedient children

of God that which I have faithfully taught, admonished and written unto

you from the word of God, to your eternal salvation, that you may also

be partakers of the glorious crown, hope and joy, in the day of the

coming of Christ, 1 Thess. 2. "Not slothful in business; fervent in

spirit," Rom. 12:11. Bless God in all his works toward us, and pray him

to guide your way,. and let all your counsel be in him, Tob. 4. Walk

fearlessly in the commandments of the Lord. Go not in any manner beyond

the gospel of Christ, Gal. 1. Be firm in the way of the Lord. Overcome

the world, the flesh, and the devil by the most holy faith which is in

you, 1 Jn. 5. Joyfully serve each other, "In patience possess ye your

souls," Luke 21:13."Be patient in tribulation," Rom. 12:12. Prepare

your hearts for the cross of Christ, so that when it comes you may not

be terrified with the cowardly.

No more at present, but watch closely all the days of your lives, the

unexpected coming of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ, who has made us

such dear creatures, bought us with his precious blood, graciously

called, enlightened and regenerated us, and who will crown us with the

crown of glory, array us in the garment of unblamableness, and give us

the gift of eternal life. To him be eternal praise and glory, now and

forever, Amen.

Ponder, holy brethren, upon every word which I have written unto you;

read it attentively; reflect upon it diligently, understand it rightly,

judge spiritually, and live up to it divinely. , brethren, then my

admonition and writing, and your perusal and hearing shall be fruitful.

I pray you with holy Paul, by the grace of God, not to suppress this

admonition, nor to lay it away, but to read it to all faithful brethren

and sisters in the Lord; as also to all the apostates who are not

entirely given up, that they may be won back. Yea, not alone to these,

but to all men in or out of the church, who may desire to hear it. The

grace of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ be with all true brethren and

sisters, Amen.

Again, pray for me and far all your servants in the Lord.

Beware of all doctrine and works which are not conformable to the

gospel of Christ. Beware.

May grace and peace remain with all the true children of God, and

fellow?laborers of the promise, in the kingdom of Christ.

MENNO SIMON.

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A LETTER.

MOST beloved in Christ Jesus. Grace and peace. Dear, faithful sister in

the Lord. My inmost soul is grieved in your behalf. More so than I can

write; for I understand from our beloved brethren, that you can hardly

acquiesce in the desire and prayer of the afflicted and pastorless

church in regard to your beloved husband. I cannot severely reprove you

for your action if I look at it in a carnal, and not in a spiritual

light. I also understand from the words of Lenart and Helmicht, that

you hoped that Lenart would be excused from serving, by me. Most

beloved sister in Christ Jesus, I trust that I, by the grace of God,

sincerely love you with divine love in God; and that I am prepared to

serve you and all pious people, even, with my blood if so required.

But, beloved sister, who am I that I should resist the Holy Spirit? You

are aware that not I, but the church, has called him to this service,

unknown to me. As the church so imploringly desires him; and as he

perhaps can not conscientiously deny them, how could I then oppose it?

as I can find nothing in Lenart for which I could scripturally oppose

his being called. Dear sister, I am sorry that I can not aid you in

this matter; for the sorrow and fear of your flesh pierces my heart as

often as I think of it; but above all, we must act in love to God and

our brethren. You are called of the Lord, and by the operation of your

faith you have committed yourself to the service of Jesus Christ and of

your brethren as long as you live; and I trust that you will willingly

fulfill it even at the risk of money, possessions and life. You

certainly comprehend how needful it is. Therefore, be mindful of the

days of your enlightenment, and obediently and resignedly fulfill that

which, willingly and without constraint, you have promised the Most

High.

O, beloved sister, look at the abandonment and misery of your beloved

brethren. The spiritual fathers are become betrayers of souls; the

watchmen, blind leaders,?and the shepherds, wolves. The walls of

Jerusalem are laid waste; the stones of the sanctuary are trampled upon

at the corners of every street. Great is the plague of Israel. With

Jeremiah and Ezra we may well bitterly sigh and weep, and let our tears

flow over our cheeks, nay, our inmost soul must be grieved at the need

of our beloved brethren, when we take to heart the very great hungering

and thirsting of many pious hearts, the accursed deceiving of evil

spirits, and dissensions, sects and all like evils. Inasmuch, then, as

the merciful Lord has gifted our beloved brother with his divine

knowledge, has enlightened him with his Holy Spirit and gifted him with

speech and wisdom, so that the brethren are pleased with him, sincerely

love him and desire his talent; and if you, for the sake of your flesh

and blood should oppose this and not acquiesce therein, would seem to

me as being nothing else than that if you should see your brethren in

imminent danger of life, should see them in fire or water, suffering,

want and misery, you would not assist them at your own peril. Dear

sister, love your brethren as Christ Jesus has loved us. If, for the

sake of your brethren, you should be deprived of your property,

remember that Christ has, for a time, left the glory of his Almighty

Father and the company of angels, that we might obtain an eternal

inheritance in heaven. So long as we live we shall have enough of the

necessaries of life, if we fear God, depart from evil and do

righteously.

Yea, sister, be of good cheer. The eternal Truth has promised us

salvation if we seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness. The

necessaries of life will be provided for us. If then you are solicitous

for your husband's flesh, remember and believe that our life is

measured by spans; that life and death are in the hands of the Lord;

that not a hair falls from our heads without the will of our Father. He

protects us as the apple of his eye.

Elias, David, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, Peter and Paul,

have all evaded the hands of the tyrant, and none could injure a single

hair of their heads so long as the appointed day and hour was not come.

For so long as the Lord has more pleasure in our life than in our

death, they cannot injure us; but when our death is more pleasing to

the Lord than our life, we can not escape from their hands. O, beloved

sister, if our beloved brother should not serve our brethren, yet he

has years ago, already committed himself to danger of death,

tribulation, misery, scorn, persecution, anxiety, robbery, water, fire

and sword; and if he had not committed, himself to the cross by

baptism, nay, if he could pass through all cities, countries, and

nations unmolested, you know not at what moment he would have to put

off the tabernacle of clay and appear before his God. Therefore,

beloved, faithful sister, be strong in the Lord; be of good cheer;

commend yourself to the Most high God, who holds heaven and earth in

his hand; who has given you and your husband body and soul; who has

called you in the word of his grace; who has purchased and delivered

you with the blood of his blessed Son; who has washed, sanctified and

cleansed you with his Holy Spirit. His mercy is above all his works; he

knows your going. out and coming in; your setting down and rising up.

Yea, you were before him before you were formed in your mother's womb;

he it is who searches the hearts and reins; he knows what our brethren

seek. Beloved sister strengthen your husband, and do not weaken him;

for it is required of us that if we love God we should also love our

brethren. In short, prove yourself to be to your neighbor what Christ

has proven to be to you; for by this only, sure and immutable rule must

all christian actions lie measured and judged. Behold, worthy, faithful

sister, as the church calls our beloved brother to, the office and

service, I cannot conscientiously interfere; or else I should love

flesh, your flesh, more than Christ Jesus my Lord and Savior, and my

sincerely beloved brethren.

May the Almighty, merciful Father act in this measure according to his

divine pleasure, and guide the heart of my beloved sister so as to be

resigned to his holy will. I sincerely thank my beloved sister for the

gift of your love you have sent me. The Lord repay you the heavenly

riches of eternal glory. My consort greets you with the peace of the

Lord. The Lord Jesus Christ be forever witb my?most beloved friend and

sister, .Amen.

Your brother in the Lord,

MENNO SIMON.

A. D. 1553.

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PROVIDENTIAL DELIVERANCES OF MENNO SIMON.

The following is an extract from Book 16 of the OndeMangh der Tyrannen,

en Taerlycksche Geschiedenisse (Downfall of the Tyrants, and Annual

Events) by Peter Jansz Twisck, Pages 1074 and 1075, in which it is

shown how wonderfully the Lord preserved Menno Simon, from the cunning

artifices of his opponents, as in his divine zeal for the truth, he

exhorted all men to true repentance and regeneration.

The daughter of Menno Simon, a praiseworthy woman, in our presence

related the following incident: A certain traitor had agreed, without

fail for a certain sum of money, to deliver the person of Menno or his

head into the hands of his enemies, expecting to apprehend him in one

of their meetings; but it so happened that he was not able to

accomplish his object, for whenever he arrived at the place where he

sought to spy him out, Menno in a providential manner escaped.

At another time this same traitor, in company with an officer or

police, an they were in search of Menno, unexpectedly met him as he was

going along on the canal, in a small boat. The traitor kept silent

until Menno had passed them some distance, and had leaped ashore in

order to escape with less peril. Then the traitor cried out, "Behold,

the bird has escaped!" The officer chastized him?called him a villian,

and demanded why he did not tell of it in time; to which the traitor

replied, " I could not speak; for my tongue was bound." The lords were

so. displeased at this that the traitor, according to his promise, had

to forfeit his own head. It is worthy of consideration, how wonderfully

God, in this and in other like instances preserves his people, and

especially how fearfully he punishes the tyrants.

Menno had to suffer so many dangers, perils and so much misery, that in

the memory of the oldest persons it is almost indescribable, and

afterwards died a natural death; notwithstanding he often with great

zeal and resolution preached, conversed, disputed with, and reproved

the priests of Baal, and opposed his opponents openly in their

presence, so that a number of his fellow?laborers did not remain

faithful under these severe persecutions.

Among other incidents it happened (which I have received as

creditable), that Menno came into the priest's church in Eenigenburgh,

a village in the north of Holland, after the pastor had performed his

services, and conversed with him in Latin about different papistic

superstitions, with great boldness, fluency and profoundness, upon

which the priest or pastor was greatly surprised, and after he was

through with his papal services, he had a long conversation with Menno.

Menno often conversed with the priests, and at one time with no little

boldness, unknown, entered a cloister, conversed with the Superior,

pointed him to repentance, showed him his great folly, and such like

things.

Although his name, and a description of his clothing, person, &c., was

nailed to the church doors, with the certain promise of a hundred, or

several hundred guilders to any one who should discover to or deliver

him into the hands of his enemies, yet God preserved him from all the

designs and cunning devices of his enemies, so that it truly is as he

wrote in a letter to the wife of Leonard Bouwensz in which he says, "If

you regard the life of your husband, think and believe, that our lives

are but as a hand breadth; that both life and death are in the hands of

the Lord; that not a hair shall fall from our heads without our

heavenly Father's notice; he preserves us as the apple of his eye.

Elias, Eliaha, David, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, Peter

and Paul, all escaped the hands of the tyrants, and no one could injure

a hair of them, as long as their day and hour had not come, for as long

as the merciful Lord has more pleasure in our lives than in our death

they shall not be permitted to injure us, but when the Lord shall be

more pleased to remove us, then we will not escape their hands."

NOTE 1.?It is due to the reader, at the conclusion of this work, to say

that in the translation of the writings of Menno Simon upon the

"Incarnation of Christ," the publishers have taken the liberty to

condense and abridge some parts thereof and also, here and there, to

leave out such parts as they considered of no importance in the

illustration and explanation of the subject, anal which were not

edifying to. the reader. But in no case have they perverted the meaning

or purpose of the author. Throughout the entire work they have labored,

with the translator and reviewer, conscientiously to give the true

sentiments of the writer, that they might be able to present to the

reader, as true and faithful a translation as possible, and they hope

that the blessing of God may rest upon their efforts, and that

agenerous public will throw the mantle of charity upon any errors that

in any way may have crept into the wrok.

THE: PUBLISHERS.

NOTE 2.?I have carefully read and compared with the original Holland,

the entire works of Menno Simon, herewith presented to the public, and

do hereby bear testimony that this is a true and faithful translation

of the same.

JOSEPH SUMMERS. INDEX, TO PART II.

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435. file://localhost/ccel/s/simon/works2/cache/works2.html3#xvii.i-Page\_435

436. file://localhost/ccel/s/simon/works2/cache/works2.html3#xvii.i-Page\_436

437. file://localhost/ccel/s/simon/works2/cache/works2.html3#xvii.i-Page\_437

438. file://localhost/ccel/s/simon/works2/cache/works2.html3#xvii.i-Page\_438

439. file://localhost/ccel/s/simon/works2/cache/works2.html3#xvii.i-Page\_439

440. file://localhost/ccel/s/simon/works2/cache/works2.html3#xvii.i-Page\_440

441. file://localhost/ccel/s/simon/works2/cache/works2.html3#xviii-Page\_441

442. file://localhost/ccel/s/simon/works2/cache/works2.html3#xviii-Page\_442

443. file://localhost/ccel/s/simon/works2/cache/works2.html3#xviii.i-Page\_443

444. file://localhost/ccel/s/simon/works2/cache/works2.html3#xviii.i-Page\_444

445. file://localhost/ccel/s/simon/works2/cache/works2.html3#xviii.i-Page\_445

446. file://localhost/ccel/s/simon/works2/cache/works2.html3#xviii.i-Page\_446

447. file://localhost/ccel/s/simon/works2/cache/works2.html3#xviii.i-Page\_447

448. file://localhost/ccel/s/simon/works2/cache/works2.html3#xviii.i-Page\_448

449. file://localhost/ccel/s/simon/works2/cache/works2.html3#xviii.ii-Page\_449

450. file://localhost/ccel/s/simon/works2/cache/works2.html3#xviii.ii-Page\_450

451. file://localhost/ccel/s/simon/works2/cache/works2.html3#xviii.iii-Page\_451

452. file://localhost/ccel/s/simon/works2/cache/works2.html3#xviii.iii-Page\_452

453. file://localhost/ccel/s/simon/works2/cache/works2.html3#xix-Page\_453

454. file://localhost/ccel/s/simon/works2/cache/works2.html3#xix-Page\_454

455. file://localhost/ccel/s/simon/works2/cache/works2.html3#xix-Page\_455