

Argument 10

Infant Baptisers Argue from the Invented Concept of the Sacraments

This is another way in which infant baptisers develop their system. And yet it is not just ‘another way’. It is, as I have said, the root of the trouble. They use the concept of the ‘sacraments’, a word that has come up from time to time throughout this book. What is more, as I have shown, sacramentalism is on the increase, and in its wake, a growing number are adopting a full-blooded sacramental infant baptism, where words mean what they say. This has consequences.¹ A sacrament? A sacrament is said to be a religious rite which is supposed to be a means of grace.² It is not a scriptural term – so where did it come from? Bannerman conceded that ‘the term... is of Church origin’,³ by which he meant, dreamed up by the Fathers,⁴ who got it from the pagans.⁵ Pagan! Let that sink in, reader! Nothing new under the sun (Eccles. 1:9)! Ahaz, you will recall, so much liked the pagan altar he saw at Damascus, he sent the plans back home, had one made – ‘the great new altar’ – and used it to offer sacrifices to God (2 Kings 16:10-16). Augustine tried to wrap the notion in theologese – by which he certainly confused me, if nobody else. He argued:

The sacrament of a reality takes the name of that reality, so that the sacrament of faith comes to be known as faith... A child is made a believer... by the sacrament of that faith... They are called believers, not by mentally assenting to faith itself, but by receiving the sacrament of it.⁶

¹ See end note on p200 for excursus: ‘Sacramentalism leads to Rome’.

² See end note on p206 for excursus: ‘Means of grace’.

³ Bannerman p4. See Calvin: *Institutes* Vol.2 pp491-511.

⁴ How much the Fathers have to answer for – and those who go to the Fathers and not the apostles.

⁵ See end note on p208 for excursus: ‘Lloyd-Jones on “sacrament”’.

⁶ Wright: *What...?* p51. As Wright said: ‘This was hardly Augustine at his most impressive, but... scholars and theologians of the [second Frankish dynasty founded about the 9th century] relied heavily on extensive quotations

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Have you got it, reader? If so, would you kindly write and explain it to me? Peter Lombard in the twelfth century sharpened Augustine, clearing away much of the fog:

Something can properly be called a sacrament if it is a sign of the grace of God and a form of invisible grace, so that it bears its image and *exists as its cause*. Sacraments were therefore instituted for the sake of sanctifying, as well as of signifying.⁷

Well, that's clear enough. Baptise a baby and you make it a Christian!

So much for the Medieval view of a sacrament. What about the Reformed view? The Westminster Catechisms defined the notion by saying: 'A sacrament is an holy ordinance instituted by Christ; wherein, by sensible signs, Christ, and the benefits of the new covenant, are represented, sealed, and applied to believers'... 'those that are within the covenant of grace... to strengthen and increase their faith, and all other graces'. There are, it is claimed, two parts to a sacrament, 'the one an outward and sensible sign... the other an inward and spiritual grace'. 'The sacraments become effectual means of salvation... only by the blessing of Christ, and the working of his Spirit in them that by faith receive them'.⁸

from the Fathers of the early centuries' (Wright: *What...?* p51). Augustine was replying to Boniface who wanted to know whether or not the infant, through its sponsors, could undeniably assert faith, and the sponsors could be sure of it (see Newton pp101-106). See below for Cranmer's use of Augustine's reply.

⁷ McGrath: *Christianity* p160, emphasis mine. Note Lombard's 'sanctifying'. He contrasted 'sanctifying' with 'signifying'. In other words, the sacrament causes, effects what it signifies. Baptism saves! Peter J.Leithart: 'If... we begin thinking about baptism by picturing baptism as a "sign", then our main question will be: "What does it signify?" and we may neglect to notice that baptism *accomplishes* something. If we begin with the root picture of "ritual", our questions will be more about what baptism *does*' (Leithart p204, emphasis his). See Appendix 2 for extensive extracts from Augustine.

⁸ Westminster pp254-255,313. Horton Davies: 'Does [the Westminster Directory] have a high [that is, sacramental] or a low [that is, symbolic] doctrine of the Lord's supper?' Davies argued the case and concluded: 'On all these grounds, it must be adjudged a consistently high doctrine of the real spiritual presence of Christ in the action mediated by the Holy Spirit, and a true means of grace'. I agree. Westminster: 'The word, sacraments and prayer... are made effectual to the elect for their salvation' (Westminster p246). Ames was quite clear; sacraments *represent* and *present* what is

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And as for an up-to-date statement, of the many I have already cited, let me repeat Lusk:

The infant-baptism question hangs, at least in part, on the question of baptismal efficacy... Without a robust sense of understanding of what *God* does in baptism, the grounds on which infant baptism rested became very tenuous... The logic of infant baptism is tied to its efficacy... A sacrament, by definition, includes the bestowal of the thing signified.⁹

In short, allowing for all their usual caveats – of which I have repeatedly spoken – the Reformed sacramental view, it is fair to say, is that baptism and the Lord's supper are not only signs; they are seals, effective means of grace.¹⁰ In particular, according to this, baptism seals the removal of guilt and pollution and so on, actually conveys or confers grace, assuring those who are baptised that they are heirs of the promised blessings.¹¹

signified: 'A sacrament of the new covenant... is a divine institution in which the blessings of the new covenant are represented, presented and applied through signs perceptible to the senses'. For more on Ames and the Puritan view in general of sacraments and the covenant, see Davies Vol.2 pp309-323. On the Lord's supper, the Westminster Confession stated: 'Worthy receivers... do... inwardly by faith, *really and indeed*, yet not carnally and corporally, but spiritually, receive... Christ crucified... the body and blood of Christ being... not corporally or carnally, in, with, or under the bread and wine; yet, *as really*, but spiritually, present to the faith of believers in that ordinance, as the elements themselves are to their outward senses' (Westminster p119, emphasis mine).

⁹ Lusk: 'Paedobaptism' pp96-100, emphasis his.

¹⁰ See end note on p210 for excursus: 'The Reformed, sacraments and preaching'.

¹¹ See Lloyd-Jones: *Romans 6* pp30-32 on sacramentalists. 'They claim that it is the act of baptising that, in and of itself, unites the person baptised with the Lord Jesus Christ. It is certainly a clear-cut view, but is it [right]? We need not spend much time on it. One over-riding reason for dismissing it at once is this, that according to the New Testament teaching, it clearly... puts the cart before the horse. The teaching of the New Testament is that the people who are to be baptised are those who have already given evidence that they are regenerate'. By 'sacramentalists', Lloyd-Jones meant Roman Catholics, but, as I have shown, many Reformed are such.

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Let me not pussy-foot around the issue. The idea of a sacrament, which is not a biblical term, is obnoxious.¹² As I say, the idea of a sacrament was invented by the Fathers, following which the Papists developed a sacramental theology out of seven sacraments which are supposed to convey grace to those who submit to the rituals. The Reformers reduced the sacraments to two – baptism and the Lord’s supper – but trying to qualify their teaching on the two by saying that they are only effective when received by faith.¹³ Some Reformers were – quite properly – unhappy about the word ‘sacrament’ with its horrific associations, and struggled very hard to safeguard against the Papist notions it involved.¹⁴ Even so, at times they were, at best, loose in their statements, as the many quotations I have already supplied have shown. Frankly, some of their statements on the sacraments not only tended towards baptismal regeneration; they actually taught it; they still do.¹⁵

Let me illustrate the point, by reference to the discussions which took place when the Anglicans and Presbyterians met in the Savoy Conference in 1661. The Presbyterians produced a book of *Exceptions against the Book of Common Prayer*, it being a rehash of the old Puritan complaints, plus some new material, mainly the work of Richard Baxter. One objection the Presbyterians raised concerned the ‘sacraments’; the Prayer Book was not sufficiently explicit for the Presbyterians; it did not go far enough. The fact is, the Westminster *Directory*, when dealing with baptism, speaks of the ‘sanctifying [of] the water to this spiritual use’ by the minister’s prayer ‘joined with the word of institution’. Similarly, in the supper, it speaks of ‘the elements being now sanctified by the word and prayer’, after which the minister is directed to take and break the bread, and so on.¹⁶ The point is, the

¹² See end note on p211 for excursus: ‘But what of Mark (1:4); 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16’?

¹³ Faith. In baptism, whose faith are sacramentalists talking about? The baby’s faith, the parent’s, the sponsor’s, or...? And when are those benefits conveyed and sealed by faith – at the baptism? or 20 years later?

¹⁴ See end note on p212 for excursus: ‘Sacramentalism leads to sacerdotalism’.

¹⁵ This claim, which I have made repeatedly – with evidence – is vigorously disputed by some Reformed teachers. See end note on p215 for excursus: ‘Andrew J. Webb’s response to the charge of baptismal regeneration’.

¹⁶ Westminster pp383,385.

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Presbyterians at the Savoy Conference objected in part to the Prayer Book because it contained no such consecration. *Reader, please let that sink in.* The Presbyterians' demands, and their own *Directory*, make it clear that 'the Prayer Book petition reflects a sacramental doctrine less "high" than the Presbyterian'. Think of that! The Presbyterians demanded a more sacramental view of the ordinances than the Anglicans, who had to go back to the Prayer Book of 1549 to find any such sacramental reference in their rubrics.¹⁷

On the question of consecration, I realise that I might be referred to 1 Timothy 4:5. Yes, prayer and the word of God do sanctify¹⁸ our food, but this has nothing to do with the ordinances of Christ. Calvin was playing with fire when he wrote that 'we must attend to the distinction between the blessing of the sacramental table and the blessing of a common table... we consecrate, in a more solemn manner, the bread and wine in the Lord's supper'.¹⁹ Regrettably, he was not alone in making such a dangerous statement.²⁰ Calvin has much to answer for in this matter, even today.²¹

Reformed infant-baptisers, I admit, often stoutly try to avoid the idea that a sacrament conveys grace to the participant simply because of the observance of the ritual;²² they declare that faith is essential. This is supposed to be a safeguard against Papist notions. Well, in that case how does – how can – an infant benefit from the sacrament of infant baptism? It cannot exercise faith – so how does it benefit from the sacrament? This is most important. In many ways it is the crux of the matter. Great care ought to be taken over the answer by the advocates of the sacrament of infant baptism; precision is essential. What is the status of a baptised infant? How exactly does an infant

¹⁷ Nuttall and Chadwick pp116-117. See Davies Vol.1 pp33-34; Vol.2 pp320-322,426-434.

¹⁸ ἁγιαζω – the same word as in 1 Cor. 7:14; see above. This is significant.

¹⁹ Calvin: *Commentaries* Vol.21 Part 3 p106.

²⁰ See end note on p218 for excursus: 'Dangerous views on "consecration", and their consequences'.

²¹ See end note on p220 for excursus: 'Calvin's sacramental view of the Lord's supper'.

²² See end note on p226 for excursus: 'How the Reformed regard their baptised infants'.

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benefit from its baptism, since it cannot believe?²³ One would expect infant baptisers to be very clear. What do they say? Are they precise and lucid? Are their statements free of ambiguity, plain and definite? Far from it!

Luther puzzled over it, changed his mind, and ended up by saying he just did not know. He never rid himself of Papist views on the subject. Indeed, he thought the water itself was holy.²⁴ The truth is, Luther was completely muddled over the whole matter. He simply did not know how the infant benefited. He said it did, but he did not know

²³ Augustine's statement, that 'the sacrament received is judged according to the faith of the recipients', was included by Leidrad in his 'explanation' of how infants benefit from baptism even though they cannot possibly be aware of what it all means. (Does anybody?) As Wright pointed out, Augustine's statement actually destroys the infant baptiser's claim that infants do benefit: It 'is not only beside the point, but even detrimental to it', calling it a 'useless punch line' (Wright: *What?...* pp52-53). Quite! If faith is required in the baby, how can the baby benefit? By the way, in the same statement, Augustine expressly ruled out the faith of the parents, priest or minister, making up the difference: 'The sacrament received is judged according to the faith of the recipients, *and not according to the faith of the giver*' (emphasis mine). Do today's sacramentalists agree?

²⁴ Following Luther, so do modern-day Lutherans. Luther first of all: 'Baptism is not just plain water, but it is the water included in God's command and combined with God's word'. Now for modern-day Lutherans: 'What's so special about a handful of simple water? Nothing, until God connects his word to it! In baptism, that is exactly what God is doing. He combines his life-creating and life-giving word with the waters of holy baptism, and thereby we are born again of water and spirit (John 3:5)' (taken from the website of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod: 'What about Holy Baptism?', an article written by the President, A.L.Barry, quoting Luther's *Small Catechism*).

And not just Lutherans. See the complete note, right at the start of my book, of the 2008 article in the *Banner of Truth*, where we read that 'the water of baptism is more than mere water... for the water is so bound to the promise of God that the physical cleansing becomes, if not the instrument, at least the occasion for the spiritual cleansing... As the outer self is washed with water by the minister, the inner self is washed with the blood of the Christ by the Holy Spirit... The two events do coincide and are bound together in the relationship between promise and sign'. I remain amazed that such material can be published in such a magazine.

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how.²⁵ As we have seen, Calvin made dangerous and loose statements; he baptised babies either because they were regenerate already, or because they would be regenerated in the sacrament. Others invented something they called ‘presumptive regeneration’; they *presumed* that the infant who is baptised is regenerated and sanctified in Christ. These views still prevail; some Reformed infant-baptisers assume the infant is regenerated at baptism. Berkhof, for instance, quoting the Synod of Utrecht on presumptive regeneration, and quoting it with approval:

Synod declares that, according to the confession of our churches, the seed of the covenant must, in virtue of the promise of God, be presumed to be regenerated and sanctified in Christ, until, as they grow up, the contrary appears from their life or doctrine.²⁶

That is *one* of the stances taken by Reformed infant-baptisers when they try to explain the essence of the sacrament of infant baptism. But only one of several. There is strong disagreement among the Reformed about what is going on when they baptise an infant.²⁷ Listen to Cunningham who, in his defence of the so-called sacrament, fired a broadside at his colleagues. He was prepared to write:

The condition and fate of infants, and the principles by which they are determined, have always been subjects on which men, not unnaturally, have been prone to speculate, but on which Scripture has given us little explicit information... The great difficulty of the whole subject lies in settling, as far as we can, what modifications our conceptions of baptism

²⁵ Berkhof p627. The Lutheran Church has been in this dangerous muddle ever since. But, even though it is muddled about all the ins-and-outs of infant baptism, there is no such muddle about its ultimate resting place; it teaches baptismal regeneration: ‘Although we do not claim to understand how this happens, or how it is possible, we believe... that when an infant is baptised, God creates faith in the heart of that infant’ (taken from the website of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod answers to question under ‘Baptism and Its Purpose’). A few moments ago, I noted Calvin’s confession that though he claimed Christ’s flesh is in the supper, he did not know how.

²⁶ Berkhof p640.

²⁷ See end note on p228 for excursus: ‘Reformed disagreements about the effect of infant baptism’.

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should undergo in the case of infants, as distinguished from that of adults.²⁸

Here we have it. To resolve ‘the great difficulty of the whole subject’, infant baptisers have to go outside Scripture to speculate about ‘modifications’ and differences between adults and infants in baptism. This one reason alone is sufficient to call a halt to the business! Go outside the Scriptures? True enough that is the only place to find it. The early church was never bothered about ‘the great difficulty’ of infant baptism – they lost no sleep over it. They had never heard of the nonsensical practice. Where, in the New Testament, is there any example of anyone worrying about these ‘modifications’? There were no modifications in the New Testament; they did not baptise infants, therefore they had no need to modify their view of the ordinance. In any case, to ‘modify’ an ordinance of Christ is sinful disobedience, is it not?²⁹ Surely the very suggestion proves the wrongness of the practice, does it not?

Cunningham referred to the baptism of believers, describing the scriptural nature of such a baptism. Then he said: ‘We’ – meaning infant baptisers – ‘we are unable to put any such clear and explicit alternative in the case of the baptism of infants, or give any very definite account of the way and manner in which it bears upon or effects them individually... The Scripture really affords no adequate

²⁸ Cunningham p148.

²⁹ Scores of scriptures tell us of the need strictly to obey God in his word, and of the evil of adding to, or taking away from, any of his commands. See, for instance, Deut. 4:2; 12:32; Prov. 30:6; Isa. 8:20; Rev. 22:18. Christ: ‘Laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men... You reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition’ (Mark 7:8-9). Young: ‘More than anything else today, there is need that all our thinking be based upon, and in conformity with, the... Scriptures’ (Young p320). *All* of it. And not only our thinking; all our *practice* too must ‘be based upon, and in conformity with, the... Scriptures’. Calvin: ‘Hence we learn that everything which is added to the word must be condemned and rejected. It is the will of the Lord that we shall depend wholly on his word, and that our knowledge shall be confined within its limits... Everything that is introduced by men on their own authority will be nothing else than a corruption of the word; and consequently, if we wish to obey God, we must reject all other instructors’ (Calvin: *Commentaries* Vol.7 Part 1 p290).

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materials for doing this'.³⁰ At least this is honest. But why do infant baptisers persist with a practice when they admit they have no scriptural explanation of what they do? John Hooper's words ring down the centuries:

The Scriptures are the law of God; none may set aside their commands or add to their injunctions... The Scripture and the apostles' churches are solely to be followed, and no man's authority... There is nothing to be done in the church but is commanded... by the word of God.

Reader, if only...

To go on: A.A.Hodge put it this way: 'The children of all such persons as... are received as members of the visible church are to be baptised as members of the visible church, because, presumptively, heirs of the blessings of the covenant of grace. The divinely appointed and guaranteed presumption is, if the parents, then the children'. This is ridiculous. What is a 'guaranteed presumption'?³¹ The two words are mutually contradictory, are they not?

The question remains: How do infants – who cannot believe – benefit from baptism since faith is essential? We have a right to expect a clear, unequivocal answer. Papists maintain that the baptism produces the faith; some Reformed infant-baptisers hold that it strengthens faith. But as Berkhof put it: 'This gives rise to a rather difficult question in connection with infant baptism'.³² It certainly does! But only one question? How can baptism be a means of grace to an infant who cannot exercise saving faith? How, exactly? Does it produce faith? If not, does it strengthen faith? How can it strengthen a faith which is not there? The Papists say it can, by reason of the power of the sacrament. What do Reformed infant-baptisers say about it?³³

³⁰ Cunningham p150.

³¹ A.A.Hodge p329.

³² Berkhof p641.

³³ Cross: 'There is no single theology or practice of infant baptism'. Paul K.Jewett: 'The thinking of the infant baptisers themselves, from the very beginning of the Reformation, is... split by a difference of opinion... [which] involves the whole theology of the sacrament of initiation' (Cross: 'The Evangelical sacrament' p196). See also Fowler pp211-219. 'Although many infant baptisers utilise both the "priority of grace" argument and the "seal of the covenant" argument, it appears that these two arguments are in fact contradictory. The former logically leads to baptising everyone in the world,

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Luther struggled over the problem. Frankly, he was stumped. Eventually the best he could come up with was to refer ‘the problem to the doctors of the Church’!³⁴ Cunningham gave an honest reply to the question: ‘There is a difficulty felt – a difficulty which Scripture does not afford us materials for altogether removing – in laying down any very distinct and definite doctrine as to the precise bearing and efficacy of baptism in the case of infants’. As I say, this is honest, but that is all that can be said for it! It is a frank admission that the whole system is a muddled charade. As he put it: ‘There are undoubtedly some difficulties in the way of applying fully to the baptism of infants the definition usually given of a sacrament’.³⁵

The question will not go away. It demands an answer, an answer which is definite and understandable.³⁶ The Reformed really ought to get their defence of infant baptism sorted out! After all, parents who are not expert in Reformed metaphysics and the ins-and-outs of covenant theology beget children; they ought to understand what is going on when a minister sprinkles their child, shouldn’t they? How does infant baptism benefit the infant, since faith is essential and yet the infant cannot believe? Reformed theologians admit the problem and try to cut the knot in three ways. They say that they do not understand how it happens, but it does ‘in some mystical way’; that

as an offer of the gospel to all for whom Christ died, while the latter leads to the restriction of baptism to those who are called out from the mass of humanity as the holy, covenant people. In terms of infants, the former would imply the baptism of all infants whose parents would allow it, while the second would restrict baptism to the infant children of professed believers. It is possible that one of these arguments might be [logically] valid, but not both simultaneously’ (Fowler p218). It could be put more simply, more directly, and more accurately. The first argument demands the baptism of *every* infant; the second, the baptism of *elect* infants. But if the latter, who is going to tell us who these elect infants are? See below for William Perkins, John Preston, infant baptism and the gospel offer.

³⁴ Berkhof p641.

³⁵ Cunningham pp126,145.

³⁶ See end note on p229 for excursus: ‘Reformed explanations of infant baptism are incomprehensible’.

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there is a delay between the sacrament and the grace which is conferred; and that the means of grace is for the parents.³⁷

Really! If it were not so serious the whole thing would be laughable.³⁸ The truth is, as Berkhof made very clear, Reformed infant-baptisers are divided over the reason why infants are baptised at all. Why do they baptise infants? For some, it is because of presumptive regeneration; for others, it is because of the covenant; for others, it is a combination of the two. Some baptise babies because they believe they are regenerate; others, in order to regenerate them.³⁹ But the New Testament knows of only one reason for baptism. It is obedience to Christ. And it knows of only one basis for baptism. It is

³⁷ Berkhof pp641-642. Riggs: ‘The... near-mystical character to baptism was most observable in Calvin, the Reformed Confessions, and especially Schleiermacher’ (Riggs p122).

³⁸ Perry Miller pointed out the irony: ‘Cotton... came as near to sentimentality as a Puritan could come: children of the covenant are capable of gracious acts “sooner than we discern”, and even in their cradles, “something they have in their hearts which pleases them, though they know not what it is”, which they express “in their silent thoughts”’. As Miller went on: ‘What thoughts the children of non-members [see below for an explanation of this point] have, Cotton did not enquire, but let himself be persuaded that these particular ones were “professors of the faith parentally, as well as personally”’ (Perry Miller pp87-88).

³⁹ Listen to the testimony of Professor Frank James: ‘If I may hazard a generality (a generality, however, based on years of training pastors for Presbyterian ministry), I am quite convinced most Presbyterians, whether in the pulpit or the pew, do not understand clearly why they baptise their infants. If asked to explain why Presbyterians baptise infants... I would expect that many Presbyterians would stumble and blunder the explanation’ (Shawn D.Wright p207). Wilkins: ‘To many in the [Presbyterian] Church, the covenant is a meaningless, indefinable concept which merely allows infants to be baptised (for some unknown reason)’ (Wilkins: ‘Introduction’ p11). Such devastating testimonies from such sources cannot be ignored – must not be ignored. Beasley-Murray: ‘It is not too much to say that there is no argument for infant baptism that is acceptable to all who practice it, even as there is none that is not explicitly rejected by some proponents of infant baptism. It is all very perplexing for the Baptist, who finds himself under the necessity of fighting on a number of fronts at one time; when he discusses the issues separately, he knows quite well that he will be boring at least some of his hearers (or readers) for whom the argument under review has no interest at all’ (Beasley-Murray: *Baptism Today and Tomorrow* pp109-112).

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faith: ‘He who believes and is baptised’ (Mark 16:16). ‘What hinders me from being baptised?’ ‘If you believe with all your heart you may’ (Acts 8:36-38).⁴⁰ No infant can exercise saving faith – so no infant should be baptised.⁴¹

There is only one thing to do with all this Papist and Reformed mumbo-jumbo of sacraments,⁴² for that is what it is. Throw it out. Get away from the Fathers, and get back to the New Testament. Baptism and the Lord’s supper are not sacraments. They are not rituals. Christians do not partake of sacraments – they observe Christ’s ordinances. There should be no more talk of sacraments. They are an abomination. Grievously, many who should know better, persist in using the wretched word. It ought to stop at once.

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This brings us to the end of our brief glance at the arguments infant baptisers use. Before we leave the subject, however, we must turn to the practical effects of infant baptism.

⁴⁰ I am not excluding repentance, of course. And while the texts cited above may be contested from a manuscript point of view, nobody, as far as I am aware, contests the doctrine, which is consonant with the rest of the New Testament. In any case, if the words are a gloss, they tell us what the transcriber (and others, presumably) thought about baptism – it is only for those who truly believe.

⁴¹ See end note on p232 for excursus: ‘Why, then, did Sibbes, for instance, still want to baptise infants?’

⁴² A phrase more apt might be ‘hocus-pocus’, which almost certainly came from *hoc est corpus meum* (this is my body). In Medieval times, this phrase largely became an incantation gabbled in dog-Latin by a priest who often did not understand it, half-heard by congregations who definitely did not understand it. As for the theology behind it...! Hence *hocus-pocus*. So much for Rome. But sauce for Rome is sauce for Geneva and Westminster.