

## CONFESSION OF FAITH.

### CHAPTER 10.-Of Effectual Calling.

III. Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated, and saved by Christ, through the Spirit<sup>1</sup>, who worketh when, and where, and how he pleaseth<sup>2</sup>: So also, are all other elect persons who are incapable of being outwardly called by the Ministry of the Word<sup>3</sup>.

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Question 1.—*Are elect infants, dying in infancy, regenerated and saved by Christ, through the Spirit, who worketh when and where he pleaseth?*

*Answer.*—Yes. Luke 18:15,16; Acts 2:38,39; John 3:5; 1 John 5:12. Which we maintain against the Anabaptists and others who maintain that no infants are regenerated. 1.) Because John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb, Luke 1:15. 2.) Because the prophet Jeremiah was sanctified from his mother's womb, Jer. 1:5. 3.) Because the promise is made to believing parents, and to their children, conjunctly, Acts 2:39. The children of believers, whether it be one or both parents, are to be baptized, for the infants of believers are in the covenant, Gen. 17:7. If the covenant, which is the greater thing, belongs to them, much more the seal, which is the less, Rom. 4:11; Col. 2:11, 12. 4.) Because of such, says Christ, is the kingdom of heaven, Matt. 19:14. 5.) Because the apostle calls children, which are descended but of one parent, in covenant with God, holy, 1 Cor. 7:14. 6.) Because God has promised in the second commandment, that he will shew mercy unto thousands, that are descended of believing parents, Ex. 20:6.

Question 2.—*Is the salvation of infants dependent upon absolute personal election?*

*Answer.*—Yes. Rom. 9:11. The grace promised in baptism is conferred by the Holy Ghost only upon those unto whom that grace belongs by reason of the election of God, Rom. 11:7. It cannot be doubted, that the souls of elect infants dying in infancy, are inserted by the Spirit of God, into Christ, Rom. 8:9; and that either before baptism or at least in their baptism, Acts 2:38, 39. Christ has not made satisfaction for any sin which he has not taken on himself, 2 Cor. 5:21. He has taken no sins on himself except those of the elect, Matt. 20:28. The remission of original sin, on account of which infants also die, Rom. 5:12; is only by the blood of Christ, Rev. 1:5; and has obtained efficacy for none except for him who is elect, Matt. 1:21.

Question 3.—*Are all infants departing in infancy elect, or are some to be accounted reprobate?*

*Answer.*—Although such is the covenant of grace, which God has established with his elect, that their children are contemplated in it, Ps. 115:14, 15; Jer. 32:39, 40; yet, this covenant does not speak peace to those who are turned aside in their own way, Ezek. 13:10, 16. Thus, for believing parents, who exercise saving faith, there is reason and hope held forth in the covenant of grace, to expect a happy reunion, to believe that their

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<sup>1</sup>Luke 18:15,16 & Acts 2:38,39 & John 3:3,5 & 1 John 5:12 & Rom. 8:9, *compared together.*

<sup>2</sup>John 3:8.

<sup>3</sup>1 John 5:12; Acts 4:12

departed infant is elect, 2 Sam. 12:23. However, this reason and hope is not founded in a denial of the condemnatory power of original sin or some fabled belief in the innocence of infants, Ps. 51:5. It rests wholly and solely in the steady faith of the covenant of grace made with Christ and his atoning blood, Rom. 3:25.

That there is reprobation as well as an election of infants, no less than adults, cannot be denied in the face of God who loves and hates even unborn children, Rom. 9:11; Mal. 1:2, 3. This is confirmed by several considerations: 1.) At the time of the flood, the earth was populated with many people, Gen. 6:1; yet, it is affirmed that only eight persons who were then living were saved, 1 Pet. 3:20. 2.) Likewise, in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah, it pleased God only to save Lot and his family, Gen. 19:12-14; though it is unlikely that in such a great city there were not also many infants, Jon. 4:11.

Question 4.—*Does the Spirit work when and where he pleaseth in the regeneration of men?*

*Answer.*—Yes. The outward call of God's Word, 2 Thess. 2:13, and all the "means of grace" provided in the present dispensation, of course presuppose intelligence upon the part of those who receive them, Acts 13:48. The will of God, also, is revealed only as far as it concerns those capable of understanding and profiting by the revelation, John 17:17. His purposes with respect to either persons or classes not thus addressed are not explicitly revealed. However, Scripture assures us that the Spirit worketh when and where it pleaseth him, John 3:8.

Question 5.—*Are all other elect persons who are incapable of being outwardly called by the Ministry of the Word thus regenerated and saved?*

*Answer.*—Yes. 1 John 5:12; Acts 4:12. If infants and others not capable of being called by the gospel are to be saved, they must be regenerated and sanctified, Rom. 8:9, immediately by God without the use of means. If God could create Adam holy without means, Eccl. 7:29, and if he can newly create believers in righteousness and true holiness by the use of means which a large part of men use without profit, Acts 10:44; 16:14; he can certainly make infants and others regenerate without means. Indeed, the natural depravity of infants lies before moral action, in the judicial deprivation of the Holy Ghost. The evil is rectified at that stage, therefore, by the gracious restoration of the soul to its moral relation to the Spirit of God. The salvation of each infant, precisely as the salvation of every adult, must have its absolute ground in the *sovereign election of God*. The Holy Ghost usually works by means; and the Word, read or preached, is the ordinary means (*cf.* WCF XIV.1) which he renders effectual to the salvation of sinners, 1 Cor. 1:21; 1 Sam. 3:6. But he has immediate access to the hearts of men, and can produce a saving change in them without the use of ordinary means, John 3:8.