

EPILOGUE

At the beginning of this dissertation, we set out to establish from infallible Holy Writ and from fallible church history that the babies of believers are themselves to be deemed saints -- even before their infant baptism. Rereading the summary at the end of each of the above chapters, and also the immediately preceding conclusion, would indicate that our task is now finished.

Together with the Holy Scriptures, we must insist that the tiny infants of covenanters are themselves to be regarded as tiny believers. Second Samuel 12:14-23; Matthew 18:1-14; Romans 11:16; First Corinthians 7:14; Hebrews 11:6. As believers, such infants are therefore themselves to be baptized. Genesis 17:7-14; Colossians 1:2; 2:11f; 3:20f; Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15f; Luke 18:15f; Acts 2:38f.

Against the Romanists, we must insist that neither infant baptism nor adult baptism has ever washed away a single sin. Acts 8:9-23; Romans 2:25-29; First Corinthians 1:13-17 & First Peter 3:20-21. Against the Anabaptists, we must insist that all rebaptism is both sinful and impossible. Romans 6:3-23; Ephesians 4:4-6; Colossians 2:6-16; Hebrews 6:1-8. Against the Baptists, we must insist that it is a serious sin for believers to leave their infants unbaptized. Genesis 17:7-14; Exodus 4:24-26; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38f.

669. Baptism in the Westminster Standards

The *Westminster Directory for Publick Worship* states:¹ "Baptism, as it is not unnecessarily to be delayed -- so it is not to be administered in any case by any private person but by a Minister of Christ called to be the Steward of the mysteries of God. Nor is it to be administered in private places, or privately, but in the place of publick worship and in the face of the congregation where the people may most conveniently see and hear.....

"The child to be baptized...is to be presented by the father.... The promise is made to believers and their seed.... The seed and posterity of the faithful..., born within the church..., by baptism are solemnly received into the bosom of the Visible Church.... They are **Christians** and federally **holy before baptism** and **therefore** are they **baptized!**"

The *Westminster Larger Catechism* declares:² "The sacraments become effectual means [not of justification but] of salvation [alias preservation] -- not by any power in themselves...but only by the working of the Holy Ghost.... A sacrament is an holy ordinance instituted by Christ in His Church to signify, seal and exhibit unto those that are within the covenant of grace the benefits of His mediation; to strengthen and increase their faith....

"Baptism is a sacrament...wherein Christ hath ordained the washing with water...to be a sign and seal of ingrafting into Himself, of...regeneration by His Spirit.... Baptism is not to be administered to any that are out[side] of the Visible Church....

"The needful but much neglected duty of improving our baptism is to be performed by us all our life long." This is to be done "by serious and thankful consideration of the nature of it, and of the...benefits conferred and sealed thereby."

This is also to be done by constant reflection on "our solemn vow made therein" and "by growing up to assurance of pardon of sin and of all other blessings sealed to us in that sacrament." For the baptized, are "those that have therein given up their names to Christ" -- having been "baptized by the same Spirit into one body.... The sacrament...of baptism...is...to be a sign and seal of our regeneration and ingrafting into Christ, and that even to infants."

All the above is beautifully summarized in the Calvinistic *Westminster Confession of Faith*. That, after and under the Bible, is the Subordinate Standard of all Presbyterian Churches everywhere.

Declares the *Westminster Confession*:³ "Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ.... All those that are justified, God vouchsafeth...to make partakers of the grace of adoption.... They are taken into...the children of God; have His Name put upon them...; are pitied...and...sealed to the day of redemption...."

"Not only those that do actually profess faith in and obedience unto Christ, but also the infants of one or both believing parents are to be baptized.... It be a great sin to contemn or neglect this ordinance.

"Yet grace and salvation are not so inseparably annexed unto it, as that no person can be regenerated or saved without it, or that all that are baptized are undoubtedly regenerated.... The sacrament of baptism is but once to be administered to any person."

In the famous words of the Calvinistic *Westminster Shorter Catechism*:⁴ "A sacrament is an holy ordinance instituted by Christ." Therein, "by sensible signs -- Christ and the benefits of the New Covenant are represented, sealed and applied: to believers...."

"The sacraments of the New Testament are baptism and the Lord's supper.... Baptism is a sacrament wherein the washing with water in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost doth signify and seal our ingrafting into Christ and partaking of the benefits of the covenant of grace and our engagement to be the Lord's...."

"Baptism is not to be administered to any that are out[side] of the Visible Church, till they profess their faith in Christ and obedience to Him. But the infants of such as are members of the Visible Church, are to be baptized. Acts 2:38-39; Genesis 17:10; Colossians 2:11-12; First Corinthians 7:14."

670. The sin of believing that the unbaptized are *ipso facto* lost

Against the 'magic' of Romanism, we must continue to insist that neither unbaptized infants nor unbaptized adults are lost. That is the case, because they are not 'transubstantiated' from degenerates into regenerates by baptism.

The Bible teaches quite emphatically that some sinners are saved -- by grace, through faith in Christ, without baptism. They are therefore saved also before baptism.

At Calvary, baptism replaced circumcision. Colossians 2:11*f*. Commenting on Genesis 17:14, Calvin insists against Rome: "God threatens punishment only to despisers.... The uncircumcision of children would do them no harm, if they died before the eighth day. For the bare promise of God was effectual to their salvation...."

"Although circumcision was added as a confirmation, it nevertheless did not deprive the Word of its force and efficacy.... To consign to destruction those infants whom a sudden death has not allowed to be presented for baptism, before any neglect of parents could intervene -- is a cruelty originating in superstition."⁵

On Acts 2:38, Calvin comments⁶ that "baptism...is nothing else but a sealing of the blessings which we have through Christ.... The Papists...confess that sins are freely forgiven in baptism.... The Papists are in great error in this matter, for...baptism is a help for confirming and increasing our faith" alias the trust in Christ we already had before being baptized.

This is why Calvin reminded Clauburger:⁷ "Baptism is not conferred on children in order that they may become sons and heirs of God. But, because they are already considered by God as occupying that place and rank -- the grace of adoption is sealed in their flesh by the rite of baptism. Otherwise, the Anabaptists are in the right -- in excluding them from Baptism. For unless the thing signified by the external sign can be predicated of them -- it will be a mere profanation to call them to a participation of the sign itself.

"But if anyone were inclined to refuse them baptism -- we have a ready answer. They are already of the flock of Christ, of the family of God -- since the covenant of salvation which God enters into with believers, is common also to their children.... Unless we choose to overturn all the principles of religion -- we shall be obliged to confess that the salvation of an infant does not depend on, but is only sealed by, its baptism. Whence it follows -- that it is not rigorously nor absolutely necessary."

Consequently Calvin sarcastically said to the heretic Castellio: "Then spit forth your gall against a god who would rip innocent children from their mothers' breasts and who would hurl them into everlasting death! Anyone who does not abominate such a blasphemy, may indeed curse me to his heart's content!"⁸

Also the *Westminster Standards* reject baptismal regenerationism -- also while strongly asserting the faith of early-dying elect infants. Claims the *Confession*:⁹ "Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, Who worketh when and where and how He pleaseth. Luke 18:15f & Acts 2:38f...."

"The grace which is exhibited in or by the sacraments rightly used, is not conferred by any power in them. Romans 2:28f & First Peter 3:21.... Baptism is a sacrament...and seal of the covenant of grace. Romans 4:11 & Colossians 2:11f."

To this the *Westminster Larger Catechism* adds:¹⁰ "A sacrament is an holy ordinance instituted by Christ in His Church -- to signify, seal and exhibit unto those that are within the covenant of grace, the benefits of His mediation; to strengthen and increase their faith and all other graces; to oblige them to obedience; to testify and cherish their love and communion one with another; and to distinguish them from those that are without. Romans 4:11; Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 2:11f; Genesis 34:14."

Indeed, the *Westminster Directory for the Publick Worship of God* further adds¹¹ that "baptism...is not to be administered...in the places where fonts in the time of Popery were unfitly and superstitiously placed.... It is a seal of the covenant of grace.... Baptizing or sprinkling and washing with water, signifieth the cleansing from sin by the blood and for the merit of Christ...."

"The promise is made to believers and their seed.... The seed and posterity of the faithful, born within the Church, have by their birth interest in the covenant and right to the seal of it.... They are Christians and federally holy before baptism, and therefore are they baptized."

671. The sin of adult rebaptism

According to both Holy Scripture and the *Westminster Standards*, rebaptism is a sin. It is a transgression of the Law of God. For the Decalogue commands that God be worshipped only in the authorized way -- and not be worshipped through any 'graven images' (such as rebaptism) contrary to His revealed will.

In Old Testament times, bodily circumcision is unrepeatable -- and recircumcision was and is impossible. Deuteronomy 10:16 & 30:6 and Jeremiah 4:4 & 9:25-26. Because circumcision has now been replaced by baptism, the latter too is unrepeatable -- and rebaptism impossible. Romans 4:11-25 & 6:1-5; Galatians 3:6-29; Colossians 2:11-13.

Only Unitarians and heretics practised 'rebaptism' in the apostolic age. Mark 7:3-8; Acts 19:1-3; First Corinthians 11:18f & 15:29. To the True Visible Church of the Triune God, there was only one baptism -- trinitarian, life-long, and unrepeatable. Matthew 28:19f; Mark 16:15f; Romans 6:3-23; Ephesians 4:4-6; Colossians 2:6-16.

Hebrews 6:1-6 implies that those who get themselves rebaptized, recrucify Christ. For it commands: "Do not again lay down...the doctrine of baptisms!" Indeed, such who do so, thereby "crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh!" See Francis Nigel Lee: *Rebaptism Impossible*.

Calvin approved of the antirebaptism taught by the Romish Council of Trent. He opposed Rome's ritualistic additions to baptism, and her *ex opere operato* theory. Yet he asserted the validity of all triune baptisms, even when administered by heretics (such as Anabaptists and Romanists). For he insisted that Rome, impure and dilapidated indeed, was still part of the Christian Church Visible -- even in spite of her being oppressed for many centuries by the papal antichrist. Hence, Calvin decisively rejected the Catabaptists' rebaptizing of all converted Ex-Romanists previously "baptized in the papacy."¹²

There is, insisted Calvin,¹³ in "Rome, a remnant of the Church... Baptism there is still valid." Consequently, "we deny not to the Papists those vestiges of a Church which the Lord has allowed to remain among them... Having deposited His covenant in Gaul, Italy, Germany, Spain and England -- when these countries were oppressed by the tyranny of antichrist -- He, in order that His covenant might remain inviolable, first preserved baptism there, as an evidence of the covenant: baptism which, consecrated by His lips, retains its power, in spite of human depravity."¹⁴

Calvin also confuted¹⁵ "the error of the Donatists.... Such in the present day are our Catabaptists, who deny that we are duly baptized -- because we were baptized in the papacy by wicked men and idolaters. Hence they furiously insist on anabaptism....

Against these absurdities, we shall be fortified sufficiently if we reflect that by baptism we were initiated not into the name of any man, but into the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and therefore that baptism is not of man but of God -- by whomsoever it may have been administered....

"It did not harm the Jews that they were circumcised by impure and apostate priests.... Circumcision was anciently vitiated by many superstitions, and yet ceased not to be regarded as a symbol of grace. Nor did Josiah and Hezekiah, when they assembled out of all Israel those who had revolted from God, call them to be circumcised anew."

The *Westminster Confession of Faith* likewise declares¹⁶ that "the sacrament of baptism is but once to be administered to any person. Titus 3:5."

The *Westminster Larger Catechism*¹⁷ rightly insists that the Second Commandment requires the proper "receiving of the sacraments. Matthew 28:19." Indeed, the Third Commandment requires that the "sacraments...be holily and reverently used...by an holy profession."

Consequently, the *Westminster Larger Catechism*¹⁸ also requires "that baptism is to be administered but once, **with** water -- to be a sign and seal of our regeneration and ingrafting into Christ. Matthew 3:11 & Galatians 3:27."

672. From Abraham to Calvary -- not circumcising infant boys was sin

According to both Holy Scripture and the *Westminster Standards*, between Abraham and Calvary -- being circumcisable but yet being uncircumcised, was a sin. At Calvary, baptism replaced circumcision. Colossians 2:11f. Consequently, now also omitting to have one's baby baptized, is sinfully to break the Law of God.

God solemnly warns us not to neglect getting the sacrament of initiation administered to our own babies. See Francis Nigel Lee: *Have You Been Neglecting Your Baby? On the Serious Consequences of Withholding Baptism from the Infants of Christians*.¹⁹

In Genesis 17:10-14, God demands that all such covenant babies "must needs" receive the sign of the covenant. If they did not, those babies were "cut off" from God's people.

This then occurred because of the "breach" of the covenant. Namely, through their wayward parents' sinful omission of getting the sacrament affixed to their infants.

Commented Calvin:²⁰ "As God adopts the infant son in the person of his father, so when the father repudiates such a benefit -- the infant is said to [be] cut...off from the Church.... God indeed will not acknowledge those as among His people who...[do] not bear the mark and token of adoption.... God will take vengeance on every one who despises to impress the symbol of the covenant on his child (Genesis 17) -- such contempt being a rejection and as it were abjuration of the offered grace."

In Exodus 4:24-26, God sought to kill Moses -- for neglecting to give the sign of the covenant to his infant child. Significantly, God then threatened with death not the infant -- but his wayward father Moses. For "the Lord met him, and sought to kill him."

So, to prevent the death of her husband, Moses' unordained wife Zipporah herself then circumcised their son, and threw his foreskin at Moses' feet. "Then she said: 'You are surely a husband-of-blood to me!' Then He [God] let him [Moses] go. "Thus she said: 'You are a husband-of-blood!' -- because of the circumcising."

To put this in church-historical terms, we may say that Moses had temporarily lapsed from strict obedience to God -- by becoming a *de facto* antipaedocircumcisional or 'antipaedobaptistic' Baptist. For he had neglected himself to circumcise his infant son. His presbyterianized wife, however -- though overenthusiastically herself administering the sacrament -- had commendably remained a loyal paedocircumcisional or paedobaptist Presbyterian.

Commented Calvin:²¹ "Why should Zipporah have taken a sharp stone or knife, and circumcised her son -- had she not known that God was offended at his uncircumcision?... Moses had provoked God's vengeance.... He was terrified by the approach of certain destruction.... The cause of His affliction was shewn him.... It would otherwise never have occurred to himself or his wife to circumcise the child to appease God's wrath.... Let us then learn from hence, to use

reverently the sacraments which are the seals of God's grace -- lest He should severely avenge our despisal of them!"

In Exodus 12:24-43f, God debar from the second sacrament all adults whose infants still lack the first sacrament. Commented Calvin:²² "They should also teach their children..., for doctrine may justly be called the life of sacraments.... The Paschal Lamb corresponds to the Holy Supper.... None but the initiated were admitted.... From the analogy between the Holy Supper and the Passover, this Law remains in force now."

In Joshua 5:2-8, at God's command, Moses' successor Joshua circumcised the people of Israel. For they had lapsed into uncircumcision while on their way through the wilderness.

Because of that widespread delinquency, Joshua soon thereafter told the Israelites: 'As for me and my household -- we will serve the Lord!' Joshua 24:15. For he would not only preach paedocircumcision, but -- by his personal example and that of his family -- also practise it, 'puritanically' and precisely.

Indeed, he would do so especially by then and thereafter training his covenant children to serve the Lord lifelong. For thus they were to 'improve' the sacrament they had received in infancy.

As Calvin explained of the backsliding and anabaptizing antipaedocircumcisional Israelites:²³ "They did not desist from circumcising their children the very first day after their departure [from Egypt], but only after they had been obliged to retrace their steps through their own perverseness.... None were circumcised on the way, after they had set out.... For it is said that their sons...were circumcised by Joshua....

"The real object of Joshua was...to renew and confirm the covenant which had already been made with God.... To impress them [the antipaedocircumcisionalized or apostate and 'Anabaptized' people] with a feeling of shame -- he declares that he and his house will persevere in the worship of God."

Let us put the above in church-historical terms. After the exodus, the previously Presbyterian people of God had lapsed into an 'Anabaptistic' antipaedocircumcisionism or 'antipaedobaptism' -- and had thus become *de facto* Baptists. But the faithful and paedocircumcisional or 'paedobaptistic' Joshua now repesbyterianized them.

Indeed, he did so not by impossibly attempting to recircumcise the circumcised -- but by circumcising all of those of them and of their infants who had grown up uncircumcised. He also did so -- by declaring that, whatever the people themselves would thenceforth do, at least he and his household would paedocircumcisionally and presbyterianly serve the Lord.

In Ezekiel 44:7 -- a foreshadowing of the New Testament Church -- God rebukes those who have received the sacrament of initiation for bringing those who have not, to worship in His presence. Declares God: "You have brought into My sanctuary strangers, uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in My sanctuary to pollute it.... They have broken My covenant!"

Does this not apply also to baptized Baptists who regard their own babies as strangers to God but yet bring them to worship Him?

673. Since Calvary it is a sin for believers to keep their infants unbaptized

In Luke 7:29^f, God declares that "the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized." Commented Calvin re the godly:²⁴ "It was already an evidence of their piety, that they presented themselves to be baptized.... The scribes, in despising the baptism of John, shut against themselves, through their pride, the gate of faith.... Let us first guard against despising the very least of God's invitations, and be prepared in humility to commence with small and elementary instructions!"

In the Great Commission, Jesus commands his Ministers, until the very end of world history, to keep on going forth into all the world -- preaching and baptizing all who submit (together with their households). In Matthew 28:19, He enjoins: "Keep on turning all nations into Disciples, baptizing them!" Because nations cannot exist without their infants, Christ's command clearly implies that not just eager adults but also infants too are to be baptized and then more and more to become Christ's Disciples.

Indeed, Mark 16:15^f adds: "Preach the Gospel to every creature" -- alias to all human creatures (including human infants). This preaching is fundamentally first to be done prenatally and paedobaptistically, as well as during all the later periods of human life. "He who believes [including infants] and is baptized [including infants], shall be saved. But he who does not believe [including infants], shall be damned [including infants]."

In Luke 24:47, Christ again insists "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name among all nations." Indeed, in Acts 2:38^f, God through Luke again commands the penitent: "Be baptized every one of you..., for the promise is unto you and to your children!"

Here Calvin comments:²⁵ "This passage therefore sufficiently refutes the Anabaptists, who deny baptism to the children of the faithful while they are still infants, as though they were not members of the Church.... This gross presumption is of no profit to them."

In Acts 11:16^f, Peter saw his baptizing of the entire family of Cornelius as a fulfilment of Christ's prediction that people would be baptized with the Holy Spirit at and after His outpouring. Peter added "What was I, that I could withstand God?" Commented Calvin:²⁶ "Those who are opposing infant baptism, are waging war against God."

According to the *Westminster Larger Catechism*,²⁷ the Fifth Commandment requires fathers and mothers not to commit "sins" by "the neglect of the duties required of them" -- such as that of bringing their children to be baptized. " Second Kings 5:13; Ephesians 6:4; Deuteronomy 6:6^f; Ezekiel 34:2-4."

Indeed, the *Westminster Larger Catechism*²⁸ requires that "infants descending from parents either both or but one of them professing faith in Christ...are...to be baptized. Genesis 17:7f; Galatians 3:9f; Colossians 2:11f; Acts 2:38f; Romans 4:11f; First Corinthians 7:14; Matthew 28:19; Luke 18:15f; Romans 11:16."

Rightly does the *Westminster Confession*²⁹ therefore conclude that "also the infants of one or both believing parents are to be baptized.... It be a great sin to contemn or neglect this ordinance. Luke 7:30 & Exodus 4:24-26."

674. Calvin's confidence in the executability of the Great Commission

Precisely in this regard, Calvin's comments³⁰ on the Christ's Great Commission in Matthew 28:16f and Mark 16:15f are most encouraging. "The nature of the apostolic function is clear from the command, 'Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature!' Mark 16:15[f]. No fixed limits are given them, but the whole world is assigned to be reduced under the obedience of Christ -- that by spreading the Gospel as widely as they could, they might everywhere erect His Kingdom....

"The 'eleven' disciples were appointed to the apostolic office.... When Christ appeared to the disciples, He...commissioned them to be Apostles -- to convey into every part of the world the message of eternal life.... He expressly calls Himself the Lord and King of 'heaven and earth' -- because, by constraining men to obey Him in the preaching of the Gospel, He establishes His throne on the earth....

"The meaning amounts to this, that by proclaiming the Gospel everywhere, they should bring 'all nations' to the obedience of the faith -- and next, that they should seal and ratify their doctrine by the sign of the Gospel [*viz.* baptism]....

"It is said in Mark, 'he that shall believe and be baptized -- shall be saved'.... Christ enjoins them [His ministers] to 'teach' before 'baptizing' -- and desires that none but believers shall be admitted to baptism. It would appear that baptism is not properly [*alias regula*-rly] administered, unless when it is preceded by faith....

"On what condition does God adopt as children, those who formerly were aliens? It cannot indeed be denied that, when He has once received them [the penitent aliens] into His favour, He continues to bestow it -- on their children and their children's children.... It is not rash to administer baptism to infants -- to which [baptism] God invites them [the infants of believers], when He promises that He will be their God." Genesis 17:7f *cf.* Colossians 2:11f.

"Salvation is promised to believers. For, by believing in the only begotten Son of God, not only are they reckoned among the children of God.... They possess what constitutes eternal life. Baptism is joined [or ap-pended] to the faith of the Gospel.... "They who shall believe and be

baptized, shall be saved.' Yet, at the same time, we must hold that it is not required as absolutely necessary to salvation so that all who have not obtained it must perish....

"But 'he who shall not believe, shall be condemned.' By this second clause, in which Christ condemns those who shall not believe, He means that rebels -- when they reject the salvation offered to them -- draw down upon themselves severer punishment....

"Christ gave to the Apostles a commission which they were unable to discharge by reliance on merely human power.... This was not spoken to the Apostles alone. For the Lord promises His assistance not for a single age only, but 'even to the end of the world'.... Though the Ministers of the Gospel be weak and suffer the want of all things, He will be their guardian -- so that they will rise victorious over all the opposition of the world.... His Ministers may confidently expect to be victorious -- over the whole world!"

675. The godly methods of eliminating Anabaptist and Romish influences

Firstly, there needs to be the powerful preaching of the Gospel. States the *Westminster Larger Catechism*: "The Spirit of God maketh the reading but especially the preaching of the Word an effectual means of enlightening, convincing and humbling sinners...and drawing them unto Christ...; of strengthening them against temptations and corruptions...and establishing their hearts in holiness. Nehemiah 8:8; Acts 2:37-41; 8:27-38; 26:18; Psalm 19:8; Matthew 4:4-10; Ephesians 6:16f..... They that are called to labour in the Ministry of the Word, are to preach sound doctrine...in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. Titus 2:1-8 & First Corinthians 2:4."³¹

Secondly, Christians are to 'improve' their own baptism. States the *Westminster Larger Catechism*:³² "The needful but much neglected duty of improving our baptism is to be performed by us all our life long..., by serious and thankful consideration of the nature of it and...the privileges and benefits conferred and sealed thereby and our solemn vow made therein; by...growing up to assurance of pardon of sin and of all other blessings sealed to us in that sacrament; by drawing strength from the death and resurrection of Christ into Whom we are baptized...; and by endeavouring to live by faith...in holiness and righteousness. Colossians 2:11f; Romans 6:4-11; Galatians 3:26f; Romans 6:22."

Thirdly -- and proceeding from the foregoing -- there is to be a spiritual outworking of the Word of God in our lives. States the *Westminster Confession of Faith*:³³ "They who are effectually called and regenerated, having a new heart and a new spirit created in them, are farther sanctified really and personally through the virtue of Christ's death and resurrection, by His Word and Spirit dwelling in them. John 17:17; Second Thessalonians 2:13.... Their ability to do good works is not at all of themselves, but wholly from the Spirit of Christ. John 15:4f; Ezekiel 36:26f....

"There is required an actual influence of the same Holy Spirit to work in them to will and to do of His good pleasure. Philippians 2:12f & 4:13; Second Corinthians 3:5. Yet are they not

hereupon to grow negligent, as if they were not bound to perform any duty unless upon a special motion of the Spirit. But they ought to be diligent in stirring up the grace of God that is in them..., the Spirit of Christ subduing and enabling the will of man to do that freely and cheerfully which the will of God revealed in the Law requireth to be done. Hebrews 6:11f; Second Peter 1:3-11; Isaiah 64:7; Second Timothy 1:6; Acts 26:6f; Jude 20f; Ezekiel 36:27; Hebrews 8:10; Jeremiah 31:33."

Fourthly, the State's as God's minister is to punish all criminals. Of course, we do not mean that it should ever be a crime to be a Baptist or a Romanist. But it should indeed be a crime to prevent the baptism of the babies of believers -- or to permit this within only one denomination.

It should also be a crime to advocate the social and political views of the Classic Anabaptists -- such as their communism, their polygamy, and their revolutionism. Explains the *Westminster Confession of Faith*:³⁴ "They who, upon pretence of Christian liberty, shall oppose any lawful power or the lawful exercise of it...resist the ordinance of God. Matthew 12:35; First Peter 2:13-16; Romans 13:1-8....

"For their publishing of such opinions or maintaining of such practices as are contrary to the light of nature or to the known principles of Christianity..., they may lawfully be called to account and proceeded against...by the power of the civil magistrate. Romans 1:32; Deuteronomy 13:6-12; Ezra 7:23-28; Nehemiah 13:5-30; Second Kings 23:5-21; Second Chronicles 34:33 & 15:12-16; Daniel 3:29; First Timothy 2:2; Isaiah 49:23; Zechariah 12:2f.... God the supreme Lord and King of all the world hath ordained civil magistrates to be under Him over the people...for the defence and encouragement of them that are good and for the punishment of evil-doers. Romans 13:1-4; First Peter 2:13f....

"Saints by profession are bound to maintain an holy fellowship and communion... This communion which the saints have with Christ, doth not make them in any way partakers of the substance of His Godhead or to be equal with Christ in any respect -- either of which to affirm, is impious and blasphemous. Nor doth their communion one with another as saints take away or infringe the title or property which each man hath in his [own] goods and possessions. Isaiah 48:8; Psalm 45:7; Hebrews 1:8f; Exodus 20:15; Ephesians 4:28; Acts 5:4."

So do we approach the future 'millennial' blessings. States the *Westminster Larger Catechism*:³⁵ "Christ was exalted in His ascension..., triumphing over enemies. Ephesians 4:8." He "visibly went up into the highest heavens, there to receive gifts for men. Acts 1:9-11; Ephesians 4:10; Psalm 68:18.... As God-man, He is advanced to the highest favour with God the Father...and power over all things in heaven and earth; and doth gather and defend His Church and subdue their enemies. Philippians 2:9; Ephesians 1:22; First Peter 3:22; Romans 8:34."

676. The inevitable conversion of the children of Romanists and Anabaptists

It is quite inevitable that all our planet's nations (obviously including their babies) will yet be brought into baptismal subjection to the Triune God. For Jesus urges and promises this, in the

"Lord's prayer" for His Disciples. There, we are enjoined to pray each day: "Thy Kingdom come!" Matthew 6:10 & Luke 11:2.

Here, explains the *Westminster Larger Catechism*,³⁶ "we pray: that the kingdom of sin and Satan may be destroyed; the Gospel propagated throughout the world; the Jews called; the fulness of the Gentiles brought in." This is a prayer that "the Church [be] furnished with all gospel-offices and ordinances" -- such as infant baptism. It is an earnest petition that the Church be "purged from corruption" such as Anabaptism, and be "countenanced and maintained by the civil magistrate" against all ungodliness -- so "that the ordinances of Christ may be purely dispensed." This is a petition that baptism no longer be limited by some to adults alone -- nor repeated in adulthood to those already baptized in infancy.

The Westminster Assembly's *Directory for the Publick Worship of God* rightly understands the above petition to be a promise of the Reformed Church's ultimate calvinization of all the world. That includes also the de-brainwashing of heretics, and redirecting them toward the untruncated Word of God.

For in the 'Publick Prayer before the Sermon'³⁷ the Reformed Minister is "to pray for the propagation of the Gospel and Kingdom of Christ to all nations -- for the conversion of the Jews; the fulness of the Gentiles; the fall of Antichrist." He is also to pray: "for the deliverance of the distressed churches abroad from the tyranny of the antichristian faction and from the cruel oppressions and blasphemies of the Turks [or the Moslems]; for the blessing of God upon the Reformed Churches"; and for God to "establish...the purity of all His ordinances and...remove heresy."

This is to be effected even in "the **universities** and all **schools** and **religious seminaries** of **church** and **commonwealth**, [so] that they may flourish more and more in learning and piety." For we are to pray "that God would pour out a blessing upon the Ministry of the Word, Sacraments and Discipline; upon the **civil government**; and all the several families and persons therein." This is to be done "with confidence of His mercy to His whole Church" -- thus giving "evidence and demonstration of the Spirit and power."

The above *Westminster Directory for the Publick Worship of God* was intended to provide a uniform international religion for the united kingdom of England and Wales, the kingdom of Ireland, and the kingdom of Scotland. In the latter, in 1645 it was put into execution by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland.³⁸ Its relevant Act declared:

"Whereas an happy unity and uniformity in religion amongst the kirks of Christ in these three kingdoms...having been long and earnestly wished for by the godly and well-affected amongst us..., these kingdoms...are now by the blessing of God brought to a nearer uniformity than any other Reformed Kirk." This is for us "the return of our prayers, and a lightening of our eyes, and reviving of our hearts..., and an opening unto us a door of hope...in the expectation and confidence whereof we do rejoice."

Thus we are confidently "beseeching the Lord to preserve these kingdoms from heresies..., and to continue with us and the generations following these His pure and purged ordinances, together with an increase of the power and life thereof -- to the glory of His great Name, the enlargement of the Kingdom of His Son, and the...unity and comfort of all His people."

Similarly, on 31st May 1851, the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland declared³⁹ that "it pleased Almighty God in His great and undeserved mercy to reform this Church from Popery -- by Presbyters.... Nations and their rulers are bound to own the truth of God, and to advance the Kingdom of His Son.... How signally God opened for her...a door of utterance and a door of entrance not only in this but in other countries also..., this Church cannot but most devoutly acknowledge....

"In the holy boldness of faith unfeigned, she would still seek...to prosecute the ends contemplated from the beginning in all the acts and deeds of her reforming fathers -- until the errors which they renounced shall have disappeared from the land, and the true system which they upheld shall be so universally received -- that the whole people, rightly instructed in the faith, shall unite to glorify God the Father in the full acknowledgment of the Kingdom of His Son our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to Whose Name be praise for ever and ever!"

677. (Ana)Baptists and Romanists of all countries -- repent!

The now almost universally disgraced Karl Marx, himself a stepchild of the communistic Anabaptists (and therefore also a great-grandstepchild of the mediaeval Romanists), loved to enjoin: "Workers of the world -- unite!"⁴⁰ But, standing upon Scripture, Christian Calvinists now say to all such stepchildren and great-grandstepchildren: "Anabaptists and Romanists of all countries -- repent!"

We therefore call upon all of the various stepchildren of the Anabaptists and the Romanists -- including the saved Baptists, the apostate "Jehovah witnesses" and the heretical Seventh-day Adventists -- to repent of their great sin of antipaedobaptism (and all their other sins). We also call upon all unreformed Catholics to repent of their identification of baptism with regeneration; to put their confidence in Christ alone to whom their baptism points; and vigorously to 'improve' their baptism.

Standing upon Scripture -- Matthew 28:18*f* and Revelation 7:2*f* & 9:4 & 12:17 & 14:1 & 21:2,24 & 22:3*f* -- we now call upon them all to repent of their antipaedobaptism. We call upon them all to bring their unbaptized babies and their other children to that great King of men and Leader of angels, the mighty Archangel Jesus -- and to get them all baptized on their foreheads with the seal of the Triune God.

To His Ministers of the Word and Sacraments, "Jesus came and spake...saying, 'All power in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore, go and make all nations into [My] Disciples, baptizing them into the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, continuing to teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded!'"

"I saw an...Angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And He cried out with a loud voice...saying, 'Do not hurt the land nor the sea nor the trees -- till We [the Three Persons of the Triune God] have sealed the servants of our God upon their foreheads!' And I heard the number of them which were sealed -- sealed, a hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.... I beheld. Then look, a great multitude which no man could number -- of all nations and kindreds...stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes.... They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

"Do not hurt the grass of the earth nor any green thing nor any tree; but only those men who do not have the seal of God upon their foreheads!... But the dragon was angry with the woman, and went to make war against the rest of her seed -- who keep the Commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

"I looked, and behold -- a Lamb stood upon Mount Zion [the Christian Church]. And those with Him have His Father's Name written upon their foreheads.... I John saw the holy city New Jerusalem coming down from God.... The nations of those who are saved shall walk in the light of it.... There shall be no more curse. But the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. Then they shall see His face; and His Name shall be upon their foreheads."

Endnotes

- 1) *Westminster Directory for the Publick Worship of God* ('Of the Administration of the Sacraments').
- 2) *W.L.C.* 161-167 & 177. 3) *W.C.F.* 10:3 & 12:1 & 14:1 & 28:4-7. 4) *W.S.C.* 92x-95d.
- 5) Calvin's *Comm. on Gen.* 17:14, I pp. 457f. 6) Calvin's *Comm. on Acts* 2:38, I pp. 79f.
- 7) Calvin's *Sel. Works: Tracts & Let.*, VI Pt. 3, pp. 278f.
- 8) Cited in C. Vander Waal's *Decrees of Dordt Do Not Dry Up*, p. 52. 9) *W.C.F.* 10:3; 27:3; 28:1.
- 10) *W.L.C.* 162. 11) *W.D.P.W.G.*, section on the *Admin. of Sac.* (Baptism), in *Sub. Stds.* pp. 293f.
- 12) See F.N. Lee's *Rebap. Imposs.* II p. 468.
- 13) Calvin to Socinus, in *Corp. Ref.* XIII:308 & 486, and Calvin's *Letter* 6th Sept. 1554. 14) *Inst.* IV:2:11.
- 15) *Inst.* IV:15:16. 16) *W.C.F.* 28:7. 17) *West. Larg. Cat.* 108 & 112. 18) *Ib.* 177.
- 19) Jesus Lives, 3 Kenya St., Wavell Heights, Australia, 1981.
- 20) J. Calvin: *Commentaries on the First Book of Moses called Genesis* (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1948), I pp. 458f; and Calvin's *Inst.* IV:16:9.
- 21) J. Calvin: *Commentaries on the Four Last Books of Moses arranged in the Form of a Harmony.* Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1948, I p. 106.
- 22) *Ib.* pp. 465-67.
- 23) J. Calvin's *Commentaries on the Book of Joshua* (5:2-8 & 24:15), Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1948, pp. 80f & 276f.
- 24) J. Calvin: *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists.* Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1965, II p. 19.
- 25) J. Calvin: *The Acts of the Apostles*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1965, I pp. 19f. 26) *Ib.* p. 325.
- 27) *West. Larg. Cat.* 124-130. 28) *Ib.* 166. 29) *West. Conf.* 28:4f.
- 30) *Inst.* IV:3:4 and *Harm. Gosp.* III pp. 380f. 31) *West. Larg. Cat.* 155 & 159. 32) *Ib.* 167.
- 33) *West. Conf.* 13:1; 16:3; 19:7. 34) *Ib.* 20:4 & 23:1 & 26:2-3. 35) *West. Larg. Cat.* 53-54.
- 36) *West. Larg. Cat.* 191. 37) *The Subordinate Standards*, pp. 290f. 38) *Ib.* pp. 286f.
- 39) *Ib.* pp. v,vi,xiv,xv. Cf. too the *West. Conf.* 8:8; and the *West. Larg. Cat.* 45, 52, 53, & 54.
- 40) Cf. the last words in any edition of K. Marx & F. Engels: *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (1848).