

T H E 
NATURE and NECESSITY
O F
R E G E N E R A T I O N,

Considered in a
S E R M O N

F R O M
J O H N I I I . 3 .

Preached at *Newark*, in *New Jersey*, *Jan. 15*,
1742, 3. at the Meeting of the *Presbytery*
there.

To which is added,

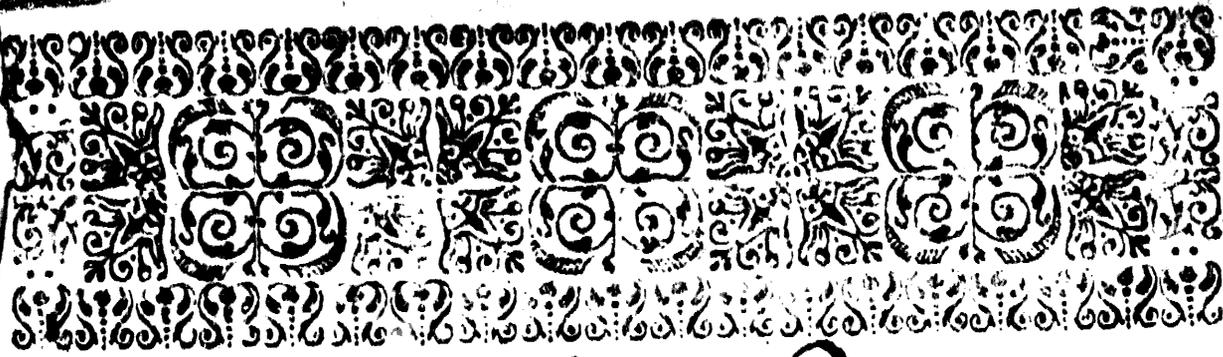
Some REMARKS on a Discourse of Dr.
Waterland's, entituled, *Regeneration stated and explain'd,*
according to Scripture and Antiquity.

By JONATHAN DICKINSON, A. M. Minister
of the Gospel at *Elizabeth-Town, New-Jersey.*

Rev. i. 2. *Behold I come quickly, and my reward with me: that which thou hast,
thou no Man take thy Crown.*

N E W - Y O R K :

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Tim^o Pickering's

To the READER,

Oct 29th 1747.

*T*H E R E needs no Apology for the Publication of the following Sermons ; the vast Importance of the Subject, renders a Discourse of this Kind always seasonable ; tho' perhaps it may be thought by some, that no Apology can be sufficient, for the ensuing Remarks upon an Author of so great Name and Character, as Dr. Waterland. But as I have endeavour'd to approve myself unto God, in that Undertaking ; I can patiently bear any of those Invectives that may be expected, from the Gentlemen of contrary Sentiments.—I am as fully persuaded, that the Cause I am defending is the Cause of God, as I am that the Scriptures are the Word of God. If I believe the one, I must believe the other, if it be possible to understand the Meaning of the most plain, familiar, and express Words that can be spoken,—The Souls of Men are therefore nearly concern'd in this Matter ; and the Ministers of the Gospel loudly called upon, vigorously to exert themselves, that they may prevent, if possible, the Defection that is already begun in several Parts of the Land, upon Account of this great Article of Christianity. If this be not a sufficient Reason for this Undertaking, I have none to give.

I don't intend by these Remarks, merely a Refutation of Dr. Waterland's Book, but of his Principles, also by whomsoever espoused. I have therefore been larger upon some Points, than would have been necessary in Answer to that Discourse ; and either wholly passed over, or but briefly touched upon, some other very erroneous Principles, that do not so immediately enter into the Merits of the Cause.—What I aim at, is, to furnish the Reader with Armour from the Word of God, not only against the dangerous Doctrines contain'd in that Discourse ; but also again^t any other

Attack

Attack of the like Kind, from any other Quarter. And I hope he may be sufficiently secured, by duly attending to what is said, in the following Sermon and Remarks.

I have thought myself called, to make these Animadversions upon Dr. Waterland's Discourse in particular, partly because it is industriously bandied about in several Parts of the Country, to make Profelites; and partly because the Subject is the most concisely and plausibly bandied in that Discourse, of any that I have met with.

I expect to be censured, for expressing so much Confidence and Assurance in the Case before us, in Opposition to Men of so great Name, on the other Side of the Question; as if I was arrogating Infallibility to myself: But I have this to say in my Defence, Tho' I am far from supposing myself infallible; yet I don't think it a just Reason to run into Sceptiscism; and to doubt of the Certainty of some of the plainest and most important Truths in the Word of God; because I am fallible and liable to mistake.—I am not willing to make a Compliment of such an essential Article of practical Godliness, upon which our Eternity immediately depends, to any Persons of what Name or Character soever; or to appear wavering or uncertain about it, that I may avoid this Censure; and bespeak the Character of a modest Writer.

Besides, I must either entertain this Confidence and Assurance, or suppose at least a Possibility of Truth, in some of the greatest Absuraities in the World.—I must either be confident that I am right, or else suppose a Possibility.—

1. That all the Texts of Scripture which I have cited, both from the old and new Testament, with others of the like Kind, which speak of being sprinkled, washed, or cleansed with Water, do all immediately refer to Water Baptism; or else,—

2. I must suppose, that these Words in Joh. iii. 5; and Tit. iii. 5. must be understood of Water Baptism; tho' no other Scriptures exactly parallel to them are so to be understood; and tho' I can't imagine any Reason from the Words themselves; or from the Nature of Things, why it should be so.

3. I must suppose it possible, that every baptized Person, has all the Properties and Characters ascribed to the New Birth, in Scriptures, or else.—

The P R E F A C E V

4. I must suppose, that some Persons are ~~truly~~ regenerate in their Baptism; and will never want any other Regeneration, who have not the Characters given of the New Birth in Scripture; nor ever will have without a Reformation and Revivification. This I think is plainly taught by Dr. Waterland (p. 35.) And this if I mistake not, is plainly to teach, that a Man may be regenerate and not regenerate at the same Time.

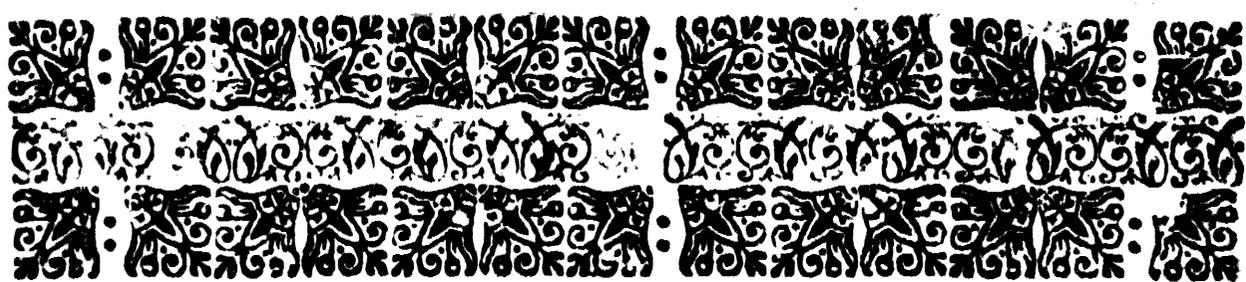
These Things I must suppose; or else

5. I must suppose, that the Scriptures speak of two different Kinds of Regeneration, as Qualifications for the Kingdom of God; the one baptismal, which may be without Holiness; the other a Change of Heart, necessarily productive of a holy Life. That is in other Words, that Holiness of Heart and Life is the necessary Fruit of Regeneration; and yet is not necessarily found in all that are truly Regenerate.

These and other such like Absurdities, mention'd in the following Discourse, I must suppose; or else I must retain my Confidence, that I am not liable to mistake in the present Case.—There is no other Choice before me.—I have therefore chosen the safest and surest Side of the Question, which I hope through the Grace of God to stand to; and according to my poor Ability to defend, as long as I can hold a Pen in my Hand.

The Subject has naturally led me to use the same Manner of Reasoning, more than once, upon different Occasions, in the ensuing Remarks; and I had rather be censured for using needless Repetition; than to fail of giving my Reader Conviction, of the dreadful Danger of the Doctrine which I oppose.

I have no Favour to ask of the Reader, on Account of any Unaccuracies in the Manner of Performance, or the Stile.—If this Attempt be blessed of God, to convince poor unregenerate Sinners, of the infinite Mischief that will follow a Mistake in this great Concern; and to put them upon proper Solitude, to lay such a Foundation of Hope; that they may finally enter into the Kingdom of God; my End is obtained.—And whether they will bear, or whether they will forbear, I hope for Acceptance from Him, whose Interest I have consulted; and endeavoured to promote.



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JOH. III. 3.

*Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, Verily
I say unto thee, except a Man be born again,
he cannot see the Kingdom of God.*

TH E S E Words were occasion'd by
a Visit made to our blessed Saviour,
by *Nicodemus* a Ruler among the
Jews, who being convinc'd by the
miraculous Works which Christ had
wrought, that he was divinely inspired, was
probably now enquiring of him the Way of Sal-
vation. This Answer seems therefore to be
given, to obviate all his false Apprehensions and
vain Hopes of Acceptance with God, by any
outward Privileges or Performances; and to
shew him, that there must be a great Change
wrought in the Heart of every one, that would
be a Partaker of the future Glory. Such a Change
as is of the Nature of a *new Creation*; and may
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be aptly compared to being *born again*. Our Lord assures him by a repeated Affelevation, (thereby to awaken his most serious Attention) that this Change is so absolutely necessary, that without it, no Man shall ever *see the Kingdom of God*.---This Doctrine was taught *Nicodemus*, not as a Concern peculiar to himself, but as what equally referred to all Men, without Distinction. It therefore as much affects us as it did him, and is of the greatest Importance to us all, since no less than our eternal Welfare depends upon it. Let us then consider

1. What we are to understand by *the Kingdom of God*, which no unregenerate Man can ever see.

2. What we are to understand by being *born again*, without which we cannot see the Kingdom of God.

3. Whence this Change which our Saviour here speaks of, is called a *new Birth*. And

4. Whence it is so, that the unregenerate *cannot see the Kingdom of God*.

1. I am first then to consider, what we are to understand by the Kingdom of God, which an unregenerate Man cannot see.

I must here observe, that there is a twofold Interpretation of these Words, (*the Kingdom of God*) according to the different Sense, in which they are elsewhere used in Scripture.

1. Some understand them to signify *the Kingdom of Grace*; or that spiritual Kingdom, which our Lord was erecting here in the World. In that Sense, we are to consider them as being of
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the same Tendency, as if our blessed Saviour had said to *Nicodemus*, You come to me as to a *Teacher sent from God*; and seem willing to become one of my Disciples and Followers; and to be a Member of my spiritual Kingdom. But I assure you this cannot be, while you remain in your present State. None can be acknowledged as real Members of that spiritual and heavenly Kingdom which God is now setting up, who have not experienced so great a Change of Heart, as may be aptly called a *new Birth*.

The Words being thus understood, plainly shew, that we cannot be Christians indeed, we cannot be vital Members of Christ's mystical Body; nor Partakers of the saving Benefits of his Redemption, whilst unregenerate. But,

2. I chuse to understand the Words of *the Kingdom of Glory*. And in that View, they are to be consider'd, as if our blessed Lord had said to *Nicodemus*, You seem desirous to know how you may secure a Title to the heavenly Glory; and it is therefore necessary immediately to inform you, that it is not your high Birth nor external Privileges, it is not your Conformity to the ceremonial Law; nor your acknowledging me to be a *Teacher sent from God*, that will entitle you to that Glory and Happiness: But I would have you receive it as a most certain and important Truth, that no Man can ever be Partaker of that glorious Inheritance, except he first experience so great a Change of Heart and Life, as will be like coming into a new World; and

may be fitly compar'd to his being *born again*. In this Sense the following Scriptures are necessarily to be understood. Mark ix. 47. *It is better for thee to enter into the Kingdom of God with one Eye, than having two Eyes, to be cast into Hell Fire.* Luk. xiii. 28. *There shall be Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of God; and you yourselves thrust out.* So likewise verse 29. with Acts xiv. 20. and many other Places.

This Interpretation of these Words appears most agreeable, because *Nicodemus* (how ignorant soever of the *new Birth*) seems to have understood what our Lord meant by the *Kingdom of God*; and to be affected with the Danger of coming short of it. Whereas, if our blessed Saviour had spoken to him of his spiritual Kingdom in this World, he could not have understood him; but would have been at as great a Loss to have found out his Meaning in this, as in the other Part of his Discourse. In this Sense therefore *Nicodemus* did understand the Words; and in this Sense, our blessed Lord design'd that he should understand 'em. For in the other Sense, he could have known Nothing at all of their Meaning. --- Besides, it was probably his Concern for an Interest in *the Kingdom of Glory*, (and not of *the Kingdom of Grace*, which he knew so little about) that prompted *Nicodemus* to this Conference with our blessed Saviour. To this Concern, if not to some previous Question about the Way of Salvation, our Lord accommodates
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his Answer ; and shews him the necessary Qualification for that eternal Salvation, he was solicitous about.

But the Consequence is the same, whether we fix upon the one, or the other of these Interpretations. For they who cannot be Members of *the Kingdom of Grace*, can never be Partakers of *the Kingdom of Glory*. We must be qualified for that State ; or utterly unqualified for this.— This awakening Lesson is therefore taught us by both these Explications, that without *Regeneration* there can be no Salvation: We must become new Creatures, or perish eternally: An awful Thought ! O that it were duly consider'd and laid to Heart, by a stupid Generation of Men, who live at Ease and Security in a State of Nature, and consequently in a State of Wrath and Perdition ! This is a Thought that must have its Influence upon them, either now while they have a Day of Grace, or hereafter, when they experience the Truth of these Words, by their Exclusion from *the Kingdom of God*. I proceed to consider

II. What we are to understand by being BORN AGAIN, without which we cannot see the Kingdom of God.

To illustrate this Point, I shall first give a general Description of this important Change, and then particularly consider the several Branches of that Description.

Regeneration is a new spiritual and supernatural Principle, wrought by the Spirit of God in all the

Faculties of the Soul, enclining and enabling unto the Exercise of a Life of Faith in Christ; and new Obedience to God. To be more particular.

1. I consider *Regeneration* as being a new *Principle*. And thus the Scripture considers it. It is accordingly called *the Seed of God*, (1 Joh. iii. 9) *the new Man* (Col. iii. 10) *the divine Nature*; (2 Pet. i. 4) and *the incorruptible Seed* (1 Pet. i. 23) All which Expressions plainly signify a new *Principle* of Action.—Our original Apostacy, has brought such an universal Depravation upon all the Faculties of the Soul, that the *whole Head is sick; and the whole Heart faint*, the whole Nature Guilt and Defilement, all the Affections and Passions alienated from the Life of God; and *the carnal Mind Enmity unto him*. What therefore but corrupt Streams, can flow from such a poison'd Fountain? How can they that are in the Flesh, ever please God? How can they that are dead in Trepasses and Sins, perform any vital Actions? *Can the Fig-tree, my Brethren, bear Olive Berries, or the Vine Figs? So can no Fountain yield both salt Water and fresh. Either make the Tree good; that the Fruit may be good; or the Tree will be corrupt, and his Fruit corrupt.* There is a natural Necessity, that all the Actions of an unregenerate Person, should partake of the Quality of those carnal sinful Dispositions and Affections, from whence they flow. And there is the same Necessity, that we be renewed in the Spirit of our Minds; and obtain a new Source and Spring of Action; or as our
Lord

expresseth it, *a new Treasure of the Heart*, in Order to our living acceptably to God here, or enjoying him hereafter.—There can be no Kind or Degree of moral Behaviour, no external Acts of Obedience, no Appearances of Piety and Devotion accepted of God, while our Hearts are estranged from him. *The Lord looketh on the Heart.* And what is the Heart of an unregenerate Man? The Scriptures tell us it is *deceitful above all Things; and desperately wicked.* Jer. xvii. 1. Whence its of last Necessity, that *a new Heart be given us; and a new Spirit put within us*, in order to our *walking in GOD'S Statutes; and keeping his Judgments to do them* (Ezek: xxxvi. 26, 27) Its of Necessity, that we are *created anew in Christ Jesus unto Good Works*, if we would *walk in them* (Eph. ii. 10) It is of Necessity, that God *puts his Law in our Minds; and writes them in our Hearts*, in Order to his being *our GOD; and we his People* (Heb: viii. 10)—*Let no Man my Brethren, deceive you with vain Words.* You must not only have a new external Conversation; but a new vital *Principle*, if you would be the Children of God indeed. You must be *quicken'd, who are dead in Trespasses and Sins.* You must *hear the Voice of the Son of GOD and live; and partake of that Life, which is the Light of Men.* You must *put off the old Man; and put on the new Man, which after GOD, is created in Knowledge and true Holiness;* or else you are never like to see the Kingdom of GOD.

2. I describe *Regeneration* to be a spiritual and supernatural Principle. And thus likewise doth the Scripture describe it. *That which is born of the Spirit is Spirit* (Joh. iii. 6) *Of his own Will begat he us* (Jam. i. 18) This Change is wrought by *the exceeding Greatness of his Power*; and according to *the Working of his mighty Power* (Eph. i. 19)—I know that there are some, that call themselves Christians, who pretend that this Change is the Effect of moral Suasion only: And that it is only thro' the Prevalence of outward Means upon their Minds, that Men are excited to become new Creatnres, by the Improvement of their natural Abilities, in the Exercise of moral Virtues; and religious Duties. That (according to them) the whole Work of *Regeneration* and progressive Sanctification, is but the Improvement of those Powers, which are given in common to all, that enjoy the Ordinances of the Gospel. Tho' they will in Words acknowledge our Want of divine Assistance, in Order to this Change, they seem to allow no more of the peculiar and immediate Influences of the blessed Spirit, in this great Concern, than in the common and ordinary Occasions of Life, How loath are poor proud Worms, to give God the Glory, of his glorious free Grace and divine Operations! How willing to think well of themselves; and therefore to slight and reproach all those Experiences of the divine Power upon the Soul, which they themselves are unacquainted with!--- But how doth the Scriptures,
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how doth most clear and evident Experience represent this Case to us ?---Are we not by Nature spiritually *dead* ? (Eph. ii. 1) Can a dead Man by the Force of any Persuasion, be prevailed upon, to reassume his Life and vital Actions ? Are we not naturally *without Strength* ? (Rom. v. 6) And can the Force of Persuasion prevail with an enfeebled Cripple, or an enervated Paralitick, to arise and walk ? Are we not naturally *blind* ? (2 Cor. iv. 4) And can the Power of Persuasion, enable a blind Man to open his Eyes and see ? Are not our Minds naturally, not only Enemies ; but *Enmity* itself unto God ? (Rom. viii. 7) And can mere Persuasion change all the Powers, Faculties, and Dispositions of the Mind from Enmity to Friendship, from Hatred to Love ; and from an habitual Opposition to Godliness, unto a Delight in the Ways of God ? Are we not naturally polluted and guilty Creatures ? (Rom. iii. 12) And can any Methods of mere Persuasion, bring a clean Thing out of an unclean ; or bring a guilty Rebel into an Estate of Innocence, or into Peace and Favour with God ? How vain are such Pretences ! How inconsistent and absurd must they appear to any Man, who believes the Doctrine of original Sin, as it is taught us by the Scriptures and our own Experience !-- By this View of the Case, we may plainly see, that there must be a supernatural and divine Energy exerted, in this *new Creation*. We must be *made willing in the Day of Christ's Power* (Psal. cx. 3) *God must work*

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in us both to will and to do, of his own good Pleasure, (Phil. ii. 13) It is a great and wonderful Change, that *Regeneration* makes, too great for all the Men upon Earth, or Angels in Heaven to effect; and is therefore ascribed to the same *mighty Power, which was wrought in Christ, when he was raised from the Dead* (Eph. i. 20)—This Truth is not only confirmed to us by the Word of God; but by our continued Observation and Experience. Don't we daily see the Unsuccessfulness of all Attempts to persuade Men to turn and live? Don't we daily see what becomes of all the good Purposes and Resolutions, which Men take up in their own Strength; and wear off again as soon as the Din of Conscience is out of their Ears? And don't we see how effectual the Work proves, when God himself undertakes it? How sudden and unexpected it often is in its Beginning; and how permanent in its blessed Effects and Fruits? How then doth it concern us all, to maintain a deep Impression of our own Impotence, to lye at the Foot of God's sovereign Grace, to ascribe the whole Glory of this great Work to his mere good Pleasure and almighty Power; and to experience this supernatural Change in our own Hearts: For it will certainly be found in the Conclusion, that none but those who are *born again*, by the special Influences of supernatural omnipotent Grace, shall ever see the Kingdom of God.

3. I have consider'd this *new Birth*, to be a Principle wrought in us, by the immediate Influences

fluences of God's *holy Spirit*. . And thus likewise it is consider'd by the Word of God. *That which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. So is every one that is born of the Spirit. Except a Man be born of Water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God* (Joh. iii. 5, 6, 8) *It is the Spirit that giveth Life* (2 Cor. iii. 6) *We are changed into the divine Image, by the Spirit of the LORD* (2 Cor. iii. 18)—It is true, this Work is sometimes ascribed unto the Father. *No Man can come unto me, except it (the Power) were given unto him of my Father* (Joh. vi. 6 5) And it is sometimes ascribed unto the Son. *Thy People shall be willing in the Day of thy Power* (Psal. cx: 3) And it is necessarily true, that each Person in the God head, is the Author of every Work of God; because each Person is the same divine Nature; and therefore the same undivided Principle of Operation. But the Order of Operation among the distinct Persons of the Trinity, follows the Order of their Subsistence. The Foundation or Fountain of all Grace to Mankind, is the Love of God the Father: The meritorious or procuring Cause of all Grace, is Jesus Christ our Saviour; and the Application of all special Grace to our Souls, is by the Holy Ghost.— So that when this Work of *Regeneration* is ascribed to the Father, we must remember that *he quickneth us by his Spirit*. (Rom. viii. 7) When it is ascribed unto the Son, we must also consider, that he works this glorious Change, by *sending the Comforter to convince of Sin, of Righteousness, and of*

Judgment (Joh. xvi. 7, 8) And that the whole Work of our Sanctification, whether initial in our *Regeneration*, or progressive in the Consequences and Fruits of it, is by the *Holy Ghost*. *Being sanctified by the Holy Ghost* (Rom. xv. 16)

If it be enquired, in what Manner the Holy Spirit operates, in procuring this Change? I answer, The Manner of his Operations, are like his glorious Nature, infinitely above us. These *Things of God knoweth no Man; but the Spirit of God*. But if this be consider'd, with Respect to the Influence that his Operations have upon our Minds, the Change is wrought by Illumination: *He shines into our Hearts, to give the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God, in the Face of Jesus Christ*. 2 Cor. iv. 6. *The new Man is renewed in Knowledge, after the Image of him that created him*. Col. iii. 10. *It is with open Face, beholding as in a Glass the Glory of the LORD: that we are changed into the same Image*. 2 Cor. iii. 18.—The Spirit of God dissipates the Darkness and Stupidity of the Mind, and gives such a lively realizing and sensible View of divine Things, as proves a Principle of spiritual Life and Operation; and actuates all the Powers and Faculties of the Soul, unto a Conformity to God; as I have more particularly considered elsewhere. The Operations therefore of the *blessed Spirit*, in our new Creation, are in their Effects upon our Souls, always sensible and discernible; and always felt by all that have them; tho' it be with many, the greatest Difficulty to distinguish their Quality;

Quality ; and to know whether they are, or are not of a saving Efficacy.

This then is of vast Concernment to every one of us, that we do experience the Operations of the *blessed Spirit* upon our Hearts : That we have such a feeling Impression of our Guilt, Misery and Impotence, as makes us reject all Confidence in the Flesh : That we have such a sensible View of the Excellency and Sufficiency of Jesus Christ, as inclines us to receive him upon his own Terms ; such a View of the glorious Perfections of the divine Nature, as prompts us to love God above all ; and to trust our Souls in his merciful Hands ; such a Discovery of the Beauty of Holiness, as inclines us to be Holy in all Manner of Conversation and Godliness ; and such a lively Apprehension of the eternal World, as makes us *look not to the Things which are seen and temporal ; but to the Things which are unseen and eternal.*—However Men may deceive themselves with their Reformatations and moral Attainments, *if they have not the Spirit of Christ, they are none of his.*—But of this more particularly under the next Head.

4. I have described *Regeneration*, as being a new Principle, in all the Powers and Faculties of the Soul. Thus also is the *new Creature* described in the Scriptures. *Old Things are passed away ; behold all Things are become new.* (2 Cor. v. 17)—If this were consider'd with Respect to each of the intellectual Powers, it will be found that they are all become new, when this Change is wrought in the Soul. C 2 Thus

Thus with Respect to the *Understanding*, it is not only enlarged by *Regeneration*; but renewed. Whence we read 1 Joh. v. 20. *The Son of God is come; and hath given us an Understanding, that we may know him.* Implying, that we had no *Understanding* whereby we could know him before. So likewise we are told, that *the Eyes of our Understanding are enlightened, that we may know what is the Hope of his Calling* (Eph. i. 18) Without this Illumination, *the natural Man cannot receive the Things of the Spirit of God; for they are Foolishness unto him, neither can he know them; because they are spiritually discern'd* (1 Cor. ii. 14) There is therefore a new and divine Light shining into the Soul, in *Regeneration*, enabling us to see Things in another Manner, than we ever did or could do before; and giving us a more sensible Apprehension of God, of Jesus Christ, and of the Concerns of the eternal World, than we could before attain to. As I have already observed.

In Consequence of this, the *Will* is also renewed. And the Person that before *saw no Form nor Comeliness in Christ, that he should desire him; and therefore would not come to him that he might have Life*, has by *Regeneration*, such a Discovery of his own Necessities and Christ's Excellencies, as bows his *Will* to the Obedience of Christ, to a hearty Compliance with the Gospel Offer.— The Person who before was obstinately bent upon the Gratification of his Lusts and Idols, who *loved Strangers; and after them would go*, has by
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his *new Birth*, such a Discovery of the Evil of Sin, as makes him renounce his Lusts and Idols with Abhorrence; and groan after Deliverance from their remaining Power and Tyranny. The Person who before, would venture Soul and Body, Time and Eternity, rather than maintain a Life of Religion, and a close Walk with God; has by this wonderful Change, such a Discovery of the Pleasantness and Peace, that are to be found in the Ways of Wisdom, that he prefers a Life of Piety and Communion with God, to all the Profits of the World; and Pleasures of Sense. Thus are we *made willing in the Day of Christ's Power*.

I must add, the *Affections* also are renewed, when this Change is wrought in the Soul. They who are *risen with Christ*, have their *Affections set upon the Things that are above, where Christ Jesus sits at the right Hand of God* (Col. iii. 1, 2)

They have *new Desires*. Tho' they were before for *fulfilling the Desires of the Flesh*, they are now above all Things desirous of the Favour of God, of an Interest in his Son, the Graces of his Spirit; and a continued Progress in Faith and Holiness, until made meet for the final Gratification of all their *Desires*, in the Enjoyment of God for ever. It is the Language of a regenerate Soul in Psal. lxxiii. 25. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee; and there is none upon Earth, that I desire besides thee.*

They have *new Delights*. Tho' they before delighted in their Lusts and Pleasures, Mirth

and Vanity, they now *delight in the Law of the Lord, after the inward Man* (Rom. vii. 22)

They have *new Joys*. Their temporal Acquisitions are no more the principal Matter of their Rejoicing ; but they *rejoice in God's Salvation ; and in the Hope of his Glory*. This is the Subject of their chiefest Joy, when they find themselves in a truly joyful Frame. They *rejoice in Christ Jesus, without Confidence in the Flesh* (Phil. iii. 3)

They have *new Hopes*. They have renounced their former vain Confidences ; and can no longer build their Hopes upon the sandy Foundation of their own Righteousness, religious Attainments, Purposes or Promises ; but they now *hope*, not from what they do or suffer for Christ ; but from what he has done and suffered for them, not from their Promises to him ; but from his Promises to them. *Christ Jesus is their Hope*, (1 Tim. i. 1) *Christ in them is their Hope of Glory* (Col. i. 27)

Their Appetites are renewed, that the covetous Miser is no longer like the Horse-leach, *crying, Give, Give*, no longer eagerly seeking great Things for himself ; but labouring to content himself with the Disposals of Providence, he is *seeking those Things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right Hand of God* (Col. iii. 1) And thus the Epicure is brought to refrain his inordinate Pursuit of sensual Pleasure, the Drunkard to abhor his Cups ; and the unclean Person his lascivious Lusts. *For they that are Christ's, have crucified the Flesh, with its Affections and Lusts*, Gal. v. 24: Their

Their *Passions* are likewise renewed. That they no longer indulge *the Fruits of the Flesh, which are Hatred, Variance, Emulations, Wrath and Strife*; but live in the Exercise of *the Fruits of the Spirit, which are Love, Joy, Peace, Long-Suffering, Goodness and Meekness* (Gal. v. 20. 21)

The Bent and Biass of their Thoughts, and their habitual Course of *Meditation*, is changed and become *new*. They are no longer *carnally minded, which is Death*; but *spiritually minded, which is Life and Peace* (Rom. viii: 6)—So great a Change does *Regeneration* always make, in the whole Soul! These blessed Fruits of this new vital Principle, are all of them experienced, in a greater or lesser Degree, by every one that is born of God. Let no Man therefore delude his Soul with airy Dreams of a safe State, until he has had some Experience of this Change, in every particular Instance.—What a Pity it is, that any of you should *feed upon Ashes*, entertain a deluded Hope; and at last *be found with a Lye in your right Hands*!—What a Pity, that you who have now such glorious Advantages in your Hands, should at last be shut out of the Kingdom of Heaven.

5. I have described *Regeneration*, as a new Principle, inclining and enabling the Soul to the Exercise of Faith in Christ. And thus likewise do the Scriptures consider it. *Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God. He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the Witness in himself* (1 Joh. v. 1. 10) *But as many as received*

received him, to them gave he Power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe in his Name, which were born not of Blood, nor of the Will of the Flesh, nor of the Will of Man; but of God (Joh. i. 12, 13)—Faith in Christ is the first Motion, or vital Act of the *new Creature*, the first Grace which is exercised in the renewed Soul, Tho' *Regeneration* be consider'd, as being in order of Nature previous to Faith; yet in order of Time, they are always together. The same Time that the Eyes of the Soul are opened, they look to Jesus, as the Author of our eternal Salvation. The same Time that this *new Creature* is form'd, it lives; and acts Faith in the Son of God. Whence we are said to be *created in Christ* (Eph. ii. 10) i. e. to be immediately united to him by Faith, at our *new Creation*. Upon this Account, the *new Birth* and *Faith* in Christ are spoken of in Scripture, as mutually implying each other.—The divine Light which shines into the Soul in *Regeneration*, not only gives a feeling Apprehension of our own lost and perishing Condition: But such a View of Christ's Readiness to save; and his abundant Fulness to supply all our Wants, as constrains us to consent to the Gospel Offer; and encourages us to trust all our Interests in his Hands. This Discovery, brings the Soul to a hearty Assent to the Truth of the Gospel, a chearful Consent to the Terms of the Gospel; and a steady Reliance upon Christ, as the only Foundation of our Hope.—It brings the Soul to receive him in all his Offices, as our
 Prophet

Prophet to teach and guide us by his Council, as our Priest to atone for our Offences; and to be our Righteousness before God, as our King to sanctify our Souls; and to rule and reign in our Hearts. — It brings the Soul to receive him, notwithstanding any Difficulties that may attend the christian Life; and to submit, not only to wear his Yoak; but to take up his Cross and follow him. — This receiving of Christ unites us to him, as the Branch is united to the Vine. Whence by a vital Union to this Stock, we receive future Supplies of Life and Nourishment from him; and are enabled to live in the Exercise of all the Graces of the Spirit of God; and to glorify our heavenly Father, by bringing forth much Fruit. By these new Supplies received from Christ, the Believer walks by Faith; and not by Sight (2 Cor. v. 7) *And the Life which he now lives in the Flesh, is by the Faith of the Son of God* (Gal. ii. 20.)

Thus it appears to be of last Consequence to every one, to have this Witness in himself, that he is born of God. For *without Faith it is impossible to please God.* (Heb. xi. 5) *He that believes not shall be damned* (Mark xvi. 16) — With what solemn Care and Sollicitude should we then see to it, that we build our eternal Hope upon no other Foundation than the Lord Jesus Christ, that we fly for Refuge to this Hope set before us, that we heartily comply with the Offer he makes of himself and his saving Benefits; and are found in him, not having on our own

Righteousness which is of the Law ; but that which is thro' the Faith of Christ, the Righteousness which is of GOD by Faith. It will be amazing beyond all Apprehension, to be found among Unbelievers in the Day of Christ ; and with them to be shut out of the Kingdom of God.

6. I consider *Regeneration* as a Principle of *new Obedience* to God. And thus likewise doth the Scriptures consider it. *He that hath this Hope in him, purifieth himself as he is pure (1 Joh. iii. 3) 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 (verse 9) —* It is a false and groundless Calumny, to represent this Doctrine under Consideration, or the Professors of it, as opening a Door to Licentiousness, or *encouraging Men to Sin, that Grace may abound.* The Case is quite otherwise. And this Principle of which I speak, is a continued Source of vital Piety, a living Fountain of Holiness both in Heart and Life. He that is *born of GOD*, hates every false Way, maintains a strict Watch over his Affections, Appetites, Passions, Words and Actions, cuts off his right Hand and Foot ; and plucks out his right Eye, when they offend him, maintains no Reserve of secret and darling Lusts ; but abhors and rejects them all, and groans under the Burthen of his remaining Corruptions, with such Language as that (Rom. vii. 24) *O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from the Body of this Death.*

He that is truly regenerate, watches at Christ's Gates; and waits at the Posts of his Doors. He conscientiously endeavours to be found in a sincere and acceptable Performance of every known Duty; and to walk in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord blameless. For he has inclined his Heart to keep God's Statutes always, even unto the End (Psal. cxix. 112)

He that is born of God, is of a kind, charitable, forgiving and beneficial Spirit towards his Neighbour; and has a peculiar Love of Complacency to all of whatever Denomination, that appear to be the Children of God. By this we know, that we are passed from Death to Life, because we love the Brethren. He that loveth not his Brother, abideth in Death (1 Joh. iii. 14)

He that is born again, is a Man of strictest Justice and Honesty, in all his Dealings, and will by no Temptation, be led into the Practice of Violence, or known Fraud and Deceit towards his Neighbour; knowing that God is the Avenger of all such (1 Theff. iv. 6)

He that is born a ain, endeavours to fill up every Relation, with Duty; and to demean himself in each Station he sustains, whether sacred, civil, or domestic; and in each Circumstance of Life, whether superior, inferior, or equal, as becomes the excellent Religion he professes; and the Vocation by which he is called — In a Word, he herein exercises himself, to have always a Conscience void of Offence towards God; and towards Man (Acts xxiv. 16) — It is true, there

will a great deal of sinful Imperfection accompany his highest Attainments ; but this is his Grief and Burthen. This is what he neither does, nor can approve and indulge.

These my Brethren, are the Characters of every Child of God ; and they who have them not, whatever Pretences they may make to Religion, whatever Progress they may make in Shews of Devotion, whatever internal Experiences they may pretend to, are yet in a State of Death ; and Heirs of eternal Destruction and Misery. For *whosoever doth not Righteousness, is not of GOD ; nor he that loveth not his Brother* 1 Joh. iii. 10.—From whence it appears with the strongest Evidence, that without these Marks of the regenerate State, *you cannot see the Kingdom of GOD.*

I now proceed to consider,

III. Whence it is, that the Change under Consideration is called a *new Birth* ; or a being *born again*. To illustrate this, I shall briefly take Notice of a few Particulars wherein the Propriety of this Mode of speaking will evidently appear.

1. It may be called a *new Birth*, because it brings a Person into a new State of Existence. As the Birth of an Infant brings it into a new World ; and into a State in every Respect altogether new. So in the Case before us, *Regeneration* is the Renewal of the whole Soul ; and therefore brings a Man in all spiritual Respects, into a new Kind or State of Being. On this Account, it is called in Scripture the *new Creature* ; or the *new Man*.

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Not that we are to suppose, there is hereby given us any other Powers or Faculties of the Soul, than we had before ; but that those Powers which we had before, are made spiritually new. It is not a natural ; but a moral and spiritual new Birth. He that was before in a State of Guilt, has now by *Regeneration, his Heart sprinkled from an evil Conscience.* He that was before under the damning Sentence of the Law, shall now no more enter into *Condemnation.* He that was before a Child of Wrath, is now *at Peace with God ; and made nigh by the Blood of Christ.* He that was before altogether Pollution and Defilement, is now *washed and sanctified, in the Name of our Lord Jesus ; and by the Spirit of our God.* And in Fine. He that before was of his Father the Devil, is now a Child of God ; and belongs to his Household and Family. O blessed Change ! Blessed are they of the Lord, who are the Subjects of it ! This is coming into a new World indeed ; and may well be called being *born again.*

2. It may be called a *new Birth*, as it brings a Person into a new Capacity for spiritual Action. As the Birth of a Child gives it the Power to exercise the proper Functions of Life ; and enables it to breathe, to cry, to eat and drink, to move ; and successively in their Time and Order, to perform the several Operations for which it was made : So this *new Birth* (as I have already observed) gives us a Capacity to exercise the several Graces ; and to perform in a spiritual

Manner, the several Duties of the christian Life: Whilst unrenewed, we are no more capable of the Exercise of Grace, than the Child unborn is of natural Operations. *Without me* (says Christ) *ye can do nothing* (Joh. xv. 5) But when regenerate and united to Christ, we can act from a new Principle, from new Motives, in a new Manner; and to a new End; and are enabled *to walk in Newness of Life* (Rom. vi. 4) Whence we are said to be *created in Christ Jesus unto good Works* (Eph. ii. 10) Our Works before could not please God (*Heb. xi. 6*) But now they are *accepted in the Beloved* (Eph. i. 6) Thus then we are born again, as we are brought thro' *Sanctification of the Spirit, unto Obedience* (as 1 Pet. i. 2)

3. It is called a *new Birth*, as it makes us Heirs of an eternal Inheritance: As the King's eldest Son, is born an Heir to his Crown. So as soon as we are *Children, we are Heirs: Heirs of God; and joint Heirs with Christ* (Rom. viii. 17) Thus are we said to be *begotten* (or as it is in the Original, *to be born*) again, *to an Inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away* (1 Pet. i. 3)--O how great is the Dignity, how glorious the Privilege and Hope, of all that have experienced this Change! *Beloved now we are the Sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is* (1 Joh. iii. 2)

4. This Change may be called a *new Birth*, with Respect to its instantaneous Production: As it is true in every Moment of Time, that a Child

Child either is, or is not born. So it is equally true, in every Moment of a Man's Life, that he is either in a regenerate ; or in an unregenerate State. Whatever Opposition this may meet with in the World, there can be no Demonstration in *Euclid* more evident, than this Truth. It is impossible but that every Man in the World, must always, every Moment of his Life, be either converted or unconverted, a Believer or an Unbeliever, a Child of God, or a Child of the Devil. There is no Medium. And one of these is certainly at this Instant, the State and Condition of every one of my Hearers. *Ye are not in the Flesh ; but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. But if ye have not the Spirit of Christ, ye are none of his* (Rom. viii. 9)

5. It may be called the *new Birth*, with Respect to our being altogether passive in its Production. As the Infant has no Hand at all, no Manner of Agency or Efficiency, in his own Birth. So in the present Case, tho' we have a great deal to do, that we may be found in the Way, in which we may hope to have this Change wrought in us : Yet the Change itself is God's own immediate Efficiency, the Display of his almighty Power, in which we can have no active Concurrence. As in the Creation of the World, the Creature could have no Hand in giving Being to itself. So in *Regeneration*, we can have no Hand in making ourselves *new Creatures*. This demands our most serious Attention ; and should have such an Influence upon our Minds, as will bring

bring us to the Foot of God's Sovereign Grace. For let poor Potsherds of the Earth, contend as much as they will with their Maker, they will yet find it true, that *it is not in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth ; but in God that sheweth Mercy* (Rom. ix. 16)

I am now

IV. To give the Reasons why it is so, that the *Unregenerate cannot see the Kingdom of God*. And I shall briefly observe, that it is so in an especial Manner, for these two Reasons following.

I. Because these can have no Righteousness to justify them in the Sight of God. They have no Faith in Christ ; and are therefore *condemn'd already* (Joh. iii. 18) And how can they atone for their innumerable Sins ; and expiate the mountainous Load of Guilt that lies upon their Souls ? How can they procure the Favour of God ; and get into an Estate of Reconciliation and Friendship with him ? How can they purchase a Title to the eternal Inheritance ? There is Sin enough cleaves to their best Duties, to encrease their Debt to divine Justice ; and to widen the Breach between God and them. All they can do, is therefore very far from Purchasing the Favour of God ; or giving them a Claim to his Salvation. There is Nothing can answer the Demands of Justice, but the perfect Righteousness of Jesus Christ ; and this they have no Interest in. They have not received the Lord Jesus Christ by Faith ; and therefore can have no Power

to become the Sons of God. They consequently remain (and while unregenerate they must remain) in a State of Enmity to God. And will God admit his Enemies into his Kingdom? No! such as these are to expect that terrible Sentence, from the Mouth of their Judge (Luk. xix: 27) *Those mine Enemies, that would not I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.*

2. Because they are utterly unqualified for that glorious Kingdom. That's a Kingdom, where *no unclean Thing shall enter.* What has a Swine from a miry Sty, to do in a Prince's Palace, or a more filthy and polluted Soul in the Palace of the King of Kings?—God is a holy God, Heaven is a holy Place, the Saints and Angels forever exercised there in the most holy Employments. There is therefore no Room for unrenewed and un sanctified Souls.—Besides, the Unregenerate are altogether incapable of the Blessedness of the heavenly World. There is Nothing there to gratify their carnal Desires: Nothing, but what is so contrary to the Dispositions of their Souls, that it would render 'em miserable if it were attainable. We must therefore all of us be renewed, and become holy in Heart and Life, if we would ever be admitted to the Perfection of Holiness, in the Kingdom of God. For the Decree will quickly bring forth. *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still, and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still* (Rev. xxii. 11)

I now proceed to make some practical Reflections, upon what has been said. And

1. This administers Matter of Conviction and of most awakening Concern, to much the greatest Part of the professing World, in that it is visibly and undoubtedly true, that there are but few of the numerous Professors of Christianity, that have ever entred into this straight Gate which leads to the Kingdom of God. There are but few among those who enjoy the greatest Privileges, and entertain enlarged Hopes of Salvation, that have been *born again*, and thereby *made meet for an Inheritance with the Saints in Light*. As this is true of the gospelized World in general, so may it be presumed to be also true, with Respect to those who are now here before the Lord. And can such of you my Brethren, enjoy Peace and Security, who are yet in such a State and Condition, as to be under the Guilt of Sin. the Wrath of God, the Tyranny of Satan, and the Empire of Death and Hell!— I have shewn you the Nature and Necessity of the *new Birth*. I have prov'd the Whole to you from that Standard of all Truth *the Word of God*. I have not been pleading for a Sect or Party. *I have not handled the Word of God deceitfully*; but have endeavour'd *the Manifestation of the Truth to every Man's Conscience, in the Sight of God*. And now I can with Confidence testify to you, that the *new Birth* which I have described, is *the true Grace of God, in which you must stand*— The Doctrine I know is exceeding repugnant to
 Man's

Men's carnal Minds ; and therefore meets with greatest Opposition. But it is the Doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ, a Doctrine which he will vindicate, when you and I must stand before his Tribunal. Well then dear Souls ! Consider what Prospect you have of the heavenly Inheritance. You hope to be saved. But have you experienced the *new Birth*, as it has been described to you ? I summon your Consciences in the Name and Fear of God, to give an impartial Answer to this Demand. You have heard the several Properties and Characters of this saving Change. Now then look into your own Hearts, and see if you can find them there. If not, how dreadful is your State, how exceeding great is the Danger of your being shut out of the Kingdom of Heaven forever ! And can you still *sleep upon the Top of the Mast of a Ship* ! Can you still *cry Peace Peace, when sudden Destruction is ready to come upon you, as Travail upon a Woman with Child, whence you cannot escape ! Be astonished O ye Heavens*, at the Security and Stupidity of such a Generation as this ! *What meanest thou O Sleeper, arise call upon the Lord, if so be that God will think upon thee, that thou perish not ! Awake thou that sleepest ; and arise from the Dead, that Christ may give thee Light.* (Eph. v: 14)

2. This shews us the dreadful Mischief of being misguided by a deceitful Ministry ; and thereby obtaining Hopes of Heaven, without this saving Change, which is (by the Verdict of our Lord himself) of last Necessity to all, that

would ever attain to that blessed Inheritance. The last *perillous Times* are come, wherein *many false Prophets are gone out into the World.*—What Opposition does the faithful Preaching of this most important Doctrine meet with, even from those who by the most sacred Bonds, are set for the Defence of it. What Danger appears before us from our formal *Laodiceans*, who would quiet Men's Consciences with a mere Form of Godliness, without the Power. And some of these would even put poor sleepy Sinners into a vain Dream of their having already received a *baptismal Regeneration*; and thence encourage their Hopes of a safe State, merely from their Morality, or (as it is expressed by a late Author) from their being upon the improving Hand, in gaining Ground of their Vices and Passions: And thus, the Necessity of the converting and the renewing Influences of the blessed Spirit; and of a vital Union to Christ by Faith, begins to be left out of our Creed; and Sinners are flattered with an Imagination of Safety, without experiencing either the one or the other. But with Respect to such Teachers as these, I must warn you in the Apostle's Language (2 Tim. iii. 5) *From such turn away.*

Beware of any Preachers or Books, that ascribe any Sufficiency to yourselves; or that would lessen your Apprehensions of your lost, undone, guilty, perishing, impotent, and helpless State by Nature. — For you are *by Nature Children of Wrath* (Eph. ii. 3) You are *all under Sin* (Rom. iii. 9) and

and all *without Strength* (Rom. v. 6) And you must *humble yourselves* under a deep Sense of this, *if you would be exalted* (Luk. xviii. 14)

Beware of any Teachers that would lessen your Apprehensions of the Freeness and Sovereignty of the divine Grace. For God is absolutely Sovereign, in the Donation of his own Favours; And if he bestows special Grace upon any, it is *even because it so seemed good in his Sight* (Mat. xi. 26) And you must come to a feeling Sense that you lye at Mercy, before you have this great Change wrought in you.

Beware of those Teachers, that speak against, and especially those that ridicule and banter experimental Religion. For the Change I am treating of, is a sensible Change (as I have observ'd before) and the Operations of the Spirit of God are sensible Operations. And you must therefore never content yourselves (lest you delude your Souls with a vain Hope) until you have sensible Discoveries of Christ's Sufficiency; and of your hearty Compliance with the Gospel Offer, until you experience the Fruits of the blessed Spirit in your Heart and Life; and until your *Experience begetteth Hope* (Rom. v. 4) and you *thereby know that he abideth in you, by the Spirit which he hath given you* (1 Joh. iii. 24)—It is from Compassion to your precious Souls, that I give you Warning of these Things; and testify to you, that (let Men say what they will) your eternal Interests are immediately concern'd. And this you must be convinc'd of first or last.

You may perhaps object, that you are prejudiced against these Doctrines, by some Pretenders to 'em, who seem to place their Religion in certain Degrees of Heat and Flame, in imaginary Impulses, Raptures, and Extasies, who seem to *think highly of themselves ; and so despise others ;* and who are in the Practice of such a censorious Judging of others, as is directly repugnant to the Rules of the Gospel.

I wish there were no Grounds for this Complaint. It must be acknowledged and lamented, that there has been too much of this Kind among us, that has given an Occasion to the Adversaries of special Grace to triumph. It seems very much owing to this, that instead of the joyful Tidings which we have lately had, of many *enquiring the Way to Zion, with their Faces thitherwards ; our Souls are now exceedingly filled with the Scorning of those that are at Ease ; and with the Contempt of the Proud.* — But is this a reasonable Objection against the Doctrines you have heard ? Will you reject the Doctrines, because Men have abused them ? Because some influenced by a warm Imagination, have run into one Extream, will you run into the other, to your eternal Perdition ? — *I beseech you Brethren, that you ben't soon shaken in Mind or troubled, by any Attempts of the little Foxes that spoil the Vines. Let no Man beguile you of your Reward, neither by frustrating the Grace of GOD, as if Righteousness came by the Law ; and so Christ is dead in vain : Nor by intruding into those Things which they have*

not

not seen, being vainly puff'd up in their fleshly Mind.

3. Here is Matter of Comfort and Encouragement to those, who have experienced this great Change; and have by the Power of divine Grace, been *renewed in the Spirit of their Minds*. These are the Persons who shall *see the Kingdom of God*. What Reason have they therefore, to *live to the Praise of the Glory of his Grace, whereby they are accepted in the Beloved*. You know my dear Brethren, that there has a great Change passed upon your Souls; and you can't but acknowledge, that you have had some Experience of all those Characters of a regenerate State, which you have heard the Description of; tho' perhaps you may yet meet with Difficulties in your Way, that make you doubt your State, and walk in Darkness.

You may be surprized with a Review, of the Greatness and Aggravations of your past Sins. But have you not sincerely mourned for 'em all; and renounced them without Reserve? Can't you truly say, that they are the Matter of your greatest Abhorrence; and that you would not commit them again for all the World? Don't you long and groan after a Deliverance from Sin?—Do then that Honour to the Redeemer's Blood, as to depend upon it for Cleansing from all your Sins. Do that Honour to God's infinite Grace, as to depend upon it, that *where your Sins have abounded, his Grace shall abound much more* (1 Joh. i. 7) Rom. v. 20)

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You may be afraid, whether you have saving Interest in Christ. But have you not felt your lost perishing Condition? Have you not earnestly desired an Interest in Christ? Have you not seen, that there is Safety in him and no where else? Have you not rejected every other Confidence; and endeavour'd to commit your Souls to him? Trust then with Chearfulness and Courage, to his gracious Promise, that he *will in no Wise cast you out*. Clear up your Doubts, by a present Consent to the Gospel Offer; and a steady Dependance upon him for Salvation. For *his Grace is sufficient for you* 2 Cor. xii. 9)

You may be surprized with your remaining disallowed Corruptions and Imperfections. But are not these your greatest Burthen, what you watch, strive and pray against? Let them then humble, but not discourage you: For you have *an Advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the Righteous* (1 Joh. ii. 1)

You may be greatly discouraged with the Deadness, Formality and Detraction, that you sometimes find in your Duties. But don't you also sometimes find the Comforts of Communion with God, earnestly desire and endeavour it, when you can't obtain it; and groan under the Burthen of your Formality and Hypocrisy, when you cannot help them: Remember then, that your Duties as well as your Souls, are washed in precious Blood; and being offered upon the *golden Altar*, they will *come up as Incense before God* (Rev. viii. 3, 4)

Be animated by all your Difficulties, to greater Diligence, in making your Calling and Election sure. Give Glory to God for the Graces of his Spirit, which you have experienced. Let your Experience keep up your Hope; and consider it as the Pledge and Earnest of your future Inheritance.

4. I conclude with a Word of Exhortation to every one, to make it their great Care and Business, not to *fail of the Grace of God*, lest to their unspeakable Confusion, they at last fall short of his Kingdom and Glory.—What Arguments can I use to press this momentous Concern upon you? You have heard that you must experience this Change, or inevitably perish. And can you be fearless and careless under such a dreadful Prospect? Can you be contented to be shut out of the Kingdom of Heaven at last? Can you be contented to have all the Means of Grace you enjoy; and all your Opportunities to make your Peace with God, prove an Addition to your Guilt and future Misery? Can you be contented to see your Neighbours and Acquaintance, who have liv'd under the same Advantages and Means of Grace with you, *sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of God*; and you yourselves *shut out*? Can you be contented to have the nearest and dearest godly Friends you have in the World, glorify God's Justice in your eternal Ruin, while you are weltring in the unquenchable Flames; Can you be contented to lose the blessed Society of the glorious God, of

the Lord Jesus Christ, of the holy Angels ; and of glorified Saints, for the execrable Company of the Devil and his Angels ? — *Consider these Things, ye, that forget God, lest he tear you in Pieces, when there will be none to deliver.* — Well ! my poor unregenerate Friends, what Conclusion will you come to ? Must I after all I can say, find you at the left Hand of Christ at last ? — I would fain hope, that I may prevail with some of you to come to a present Resolution, to *fly for Refuge to the Hope set before you.*

Let me then entreat you, to realize your Misery and Danger. Set apart some Time every Day to meditate upon the vast Number and Aggravations of your Sins, the dreadful Weight of your Guilt, the terrible Wrath of an angry God, which hangs over your Heads ; and the amazing Eternity which you are hastning into. Meditate these Things, till they excite in you a serious, earnest, and lasting Enquiry after an Escape from the Wrath to come: For indeed poor Souls, *it is a fearful Thing to fall into the Hands of the living God* (Heb. x. 31)

Let me entreat you to give up your false *Hope*: You *hope* to be saved ; but how many are there that either know no Reason of their *Hope*, or else build their Expectations upon the sandy Foundation of their own Righteousness. But why will you hold fast that *Hope*, which must end in eternal Despair, if it be a little longer entertained: — There is no *Hope* will stand by you, but what is built upon the Merits of Jesus Christ ;

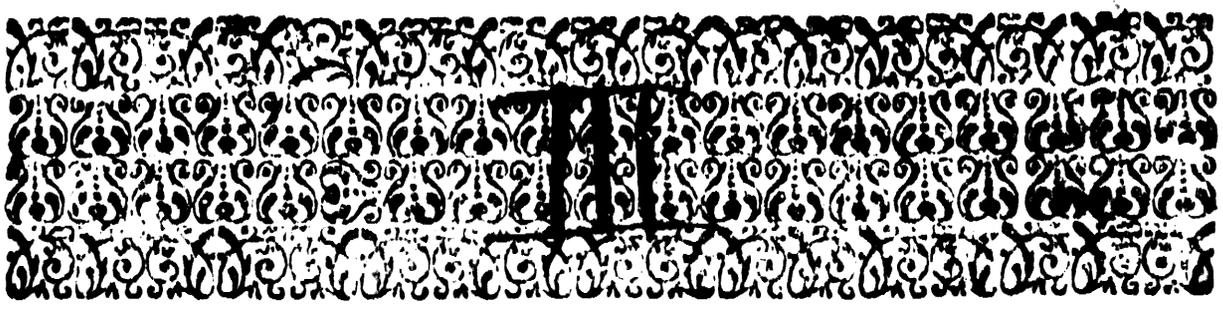
Christ ; and the infinite Riches of God's free Grace and Love. And you have no Claim to this *Hope*, without an Interest in Christ by Faith, and Access to the Grace of God thro' him. For it is *Christ in you, that is your Hope of Glory*. Col: i: 27. *And you must thro' the Spirit, wait for the Hope of Righteousness by Faith*. Gal. v. 5.

Let me nevertheless entreat you to strive in earnest, in the Use of all Means ; and not to give Way to desponding and despairing Apprehensions of your Case. There is yet Hope in *Israel* concerning this Thing. I am not advising you to give up all *Hope* of Salvation, when directing you to renounce your false *Hope* ; but only to quit your Expectations of Salvation in your present State ; and from your own Attainments. Despair would be the greatest Dishonour to God ; and Ruin to your own Souls, that you can be chargeable with. Take Encouragement therefore, to exercise the most earnest, active and vigorous Application to the Throne of Grace, in all the appointed Means of Life. For *he that ploweth, may plow in Hope*. You have as much Encouragement to hope for Mercy, in such a Way of Duty, as any unconverted Man in the World ever had. None of these ever had any other Refuge to fly to, but the free Grace of God in Christ ; and that Door stands open for you also. *Strive therefore to enter in*. For God hath not said to the Seed of Jacob, *seek ye me in vain* (Isa. xlv. 19)

Let me entreat you, to be earnest with God, for the special Influences of his blessed Spirit. Cry earnestly and constantly to God, that he would fulfil the good Pleasure of his Goodness in your Souls. You can't procure a saving Change in yourselves ; and it is in vain to attempt it in your own Strength. Be therefore importunate with God, that he will *quicken you by his Spirit dwelling in you* (as Rom. viii. 11)

To conclude. Look to it, that you don't take up your Rest, short of a sensible Experience of the divine Life in your Souls. Don't content yourselves, till you feel the Actings of Faith in Jesus Christ, a hatred of Sin, a Love to God and Godliness, a Life of spiritual Mindedness ; and the Comforts of Communion and Fellowship with God: Don't rest till you have lively Views of the eternal World ; and an active Engagement of Soul in the Pursuit of it. Don't rest until you get more and more Victory over your Corruptions ; and more and more Delight and Enlargement in your spiritual Course. Thus *laying aside every Weight, and the Sin which doth so easily beset you, run with Patience the Race that is set before you, looking unto Jesus, the Author and finisher of your Faith. — To him be Glory and Dominion for ever. Amen.*





REMARKS

On a Discourse of Dr. *Waterland's*,
entitled, *Regeneration stated and explain'd,*
according to Scripture and Antiquity.

HAVING in the preceding Sermon, someth'g distinctly consider'd the Nature and Necessity of Regeneration, there will be no Occasion to take particular Notice of all that's exceptionable in Dr. *Waterland's* Discourse upon that Subject. I shall therefore endeavour no more, than briefly to shew in the General, that the Foundation upon which he builds his Hypothesis is false and deceitful; that his Doctrines are erroneous and dangerous, and his Arguments weak and inconclusive. For this is sufficient to rescue those from the perillous Delusion, who have a just Value for their immortal Souls, without making any special Remarks, upon many particular Errors, strongly asserted, without any other Evidence, than the great Name and Character of the Author.

The Discourse I am considering, is the Substance of two Sermons, preached from Tit. iii. 5. *Not by Works of Righteousnes, which we have done; but according to his Mercy he saved us, by the Washing of Regeneration, and the Renewing of the Holy Ghost.*

The Dr. interprets *the Washing (or Laver) of Regeneration in this Text, of Water Baptism, as (he tells us) the Antients abus'd;* and the Rules of true Criticism require (pag. 2) and understands this latter Part of the Text, to be nearly parallel

to those Words of our Lord, except a Man be born of Water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. (p. 4)

In considering this Case, I shall first give my Reasons, why I can't understand either of these Texts of a baptismal Regeneration, and then proceed to shew, that if they are to be understood as referring to Water Baptism, they will prove no Foundation for the Doctrines, Dr. *Waterland* pretends to build upon them.

To begin with that in Tit. iii. 5. Why may not the *Washing of Regeneration*, be here understood of the first Conversion of a Sinner, whereby he is (as it were in a Laver) cleansed from the former Pollution and Defilement of his Sins; and the *Renewing of the Holy Ghost*, be understood of a progressive Sanctification; or else the latter Clause be consider'd as exegetical of the former, shewing us, that *the Washing of Regeneration*, is by the *Renewing of the Holy Ghost*? The Dr. tells us that *the Rules of true Criticism require*, that it should be otherwise understood. But certain it is, that the Rules of true Criticism do not require that numerous Places of Scripture, both in the old Testament and the New, parallel to the Words before us, should be understood in the Sense he pleads for: But on the Contrary make it necessary, that they must be understood in the View which I now propose. To exemplify this. That Text in Ezek. xxxvii. 25, 26, 27. must necessarily be understood, according to my Interpretation of the Words under Consideration; and cannot by any rational and modest Construction, be forc'd into the Dr's Scheme. *Then will I sprinkle clean Water upon you; and make you clean from all your Filthiness; and from all your Idols will I cleanse you. A new Heart also will I give you; and a new Spirit will I put within you. And I will take away the stony Heart out of your Flesh; and I will give you an Heart of Flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you; and cause you to walk in my Statutes; and keep my Judgments and do them.*—In these Words it is plainly visible, that by *sprinkling with clean Water*, must be understood the first Change made by Conversion and Regeneration; that Change by which *a new Heart is given*, and a *new Spirit put within* the happy Recipients of it; and *the stony Heart taken out of their Flesh; and a Heart of Flesh given them.* This then, is *the Washing of Regeneration.* And

is not God's putting his Spirit within them; and causing them to walk in his Statutes, and keep his Judgments and do them, a progressive Work of Sanctification; or the Renewing of the Holy Ghost?—I can't see any Appearance of Reason, why those Words in Tit. iii. 5. mayn't be interpreted, as these so apparently parallel to 'em, must be interpreted.—If indeed this were the only Place in Scripture, were *Washing* with Water; and the *Renewing of the Holy Ghost*, were to be understood in the Sense I plead for, the Case were more disputable; but a distinct View of this Matter will plainly shew us, that the like Phraseology has this constant and invariable Meaning, throughout the Bible. Thus for Instance in Isa. xlv. 3. *I will pour Water upon him that is thirsty, and Floods upon the dry Ground. I will pour my Spirit upon thy Seed, and my Blessing upon thine Offspring.* Isa. lii. 15. *So shall he sprinkle many Nations.* Psal. li. 7. 10. *Wash me, and I shall be whiter than the Snow. Create in me a clean Heart O God, and renew a right Spirit within me.* Joh. xiii. 8. *If I wash thee not, thou hast no Part with me.* 1 Cor. vi. 11. *But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.* Heb. x. 22. *Having our Hearts sprinkled from an evil Conscience, and our Bodies washed with pure Water.* Many other Texts to the same Purpose, might be cited; but it is needless to enlarge.

If it be enquired, why this Metaphor of sprinkling or washing with Water is so constantly used, to represent our *Regeneration*, or that new Principle, whereby we are brought to the Exercise of Faith in Christ, and to a Life of Holiness. I answer, there is such a lively Resemblance, between the Washing away of external Defilement with Water, and the Purifying our Hearts from internal Pollution, by Faith in the Blood of Christ, as renders this Way of speaking most pertinent, plain and familiar. And accordingly, the Apostle in the ninth Chapter to the Hebrews, particularly shews us, that all the legal Purifications among the Jews, were Types and Prefigurations of the Blood of Christ, by which (when received by Faith) *our Consciences are purged from dead Works to serve the living God.*

Another Reason why I cannot understand the Dr's Text, in the Sense which he pleads for, is because *Regeneration*, or the

new Birth, is so very often spoken of in Scripture, without any Reference to Water-Baptism; and consequently ought in like Manner to be understood, in the Words before us. Thus Joh. i. 13. *Which were born, not of Blood, nor of the Will of the Flesh, nor of the Will of Man, but of God.* Gal. iv. 29. *But as then, he that was born after the Flesh, persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.* 1 Pet. i. 23. *Being born again, not of corruptible Seed; but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.* 1 Joh. iii. 9. *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 Joh. v. 4, 18. *For whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the World. — We know that whosoever is born of God, sinneth not.* In all which Texts, where the *new Birth* is expressly mention'd; there is not the least Appearance of any Reference to Water Baptism. And this will further appear to be the Case, if we take Notice of several Passages of Scripture, where the same Thing is spoken of in different Terms. For Instance, to be *begotten of God*, gives us the very same Idea with *Regeneration*, or the *new Birth*; and is not only used in the very same Sense, but is the very same Word in the Original, wherever it occurs. 1 Joh. v. 18. *We know, that whosoever is born of God, sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God, keepeth himself, and that wicked One toucheth him not.* 1 Pet. i. 3. *Hath begotten us again, to a lively Hope.* Jam. i. 18. *Of his own Will begat he us, with the Word of Truth.* 1 Joh. v. 1. *Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God: And every one that loveth that begat, loveth him that is begotten of him.* — It must also be allow'd, that those Texts of Scripture which speak of our being *created anew*, or becoming *new Creatures*, or *new Men*, must signify, the very same Thing, with being *born again*, or *born of God*, since both the one and the other, are Metaphors used to the same Purpose, with a Design to represent our being brought into a new State, as then (in a spiritual Sense) beginning to exist, or to have Life. And if all such Passages of Scripture are distinctly consider'd, not one of them will be found to have the least Reference to *Baptism*. To exemplify this. We read 1 Cor. v. 17. *If any Man be in Christ he is a new Creature; old Things are passed away, behold all Things are become*

become new. Gal. vi. 15, *For in Christ Jesus, neither Circumcision availeth any Thing; nor Uncircumcision: but the new Creature.* Eph. i. 10. *For we are his Workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, unto good Works.* Col. iii. 10. *And have put on the new-Man, which is renewed in Knowledge, after the Image of him that created him.*

Now upon this View of the Case, what Manner of Reason can be assigned, why the *Washing of Regeneration*, must signify *Baptism*? Must it be so, because the Word *Washing* or *Laver*, must be literally understood and necessarily carries the Idea of *Water* in it? We find, by many Instances of the like Use of the same Way of Speaking in Scripture, that this Conclusion can by no Means be justified. This Expression therefore, must not be taken in a literal, but in a metaphorical and spiritual Sense.—Must it be so, because the Nature of the Thing does suppose and require this Interpretation? This Supposal also, appears to have no Foundation, as has been fully and clearly exemplified.—If therefore it be a good Rule, to interpret Scripture by Scripture; if we are ordinarily to find out the Meaning of a particular Text of Scripture, by the constant and invariable Use of the same Manner of Diction, in other Parts of the Bible; this Notion of a *baptismal Regeneration*, has no Foundation at all in the Word of God.

If we should proceed to compare the Characters of the *new Birth*, in those Scripture Passages which I have cited, with Dr. *Waterland's* Account of it, we shall find still further Evidence, of his Misinterpretation of the Text in Question. For Instance.

To be *born of God*, in the Scripture Account of it, implies that vital Principle, whereby we are enabled to believe in Jesus Christ. *Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.* 1 Joh. v. 1. but in Dr. *Waterland's* Account of it. A Man may be regenerated, *who receives Baptism (like Simon Magus suppose) in Hypocrisy or Impenitency; when Pardon and Grace, and all Gospel Privileges, are conditionally made-over to them, tho' not actually applied, by Reason of their Disqualifications.* (from p. 27 to p. 30)—That is in plain Terms, he may be regenerated, without any actual Application of any of the saving Graces of the Spirit of God. And on the other

Hand. Faith in Jesus Christ, is (according to him) so far from being an Evidence of Regeneration, that a Man may have Faith in Christ, before he is born of God. *Preventing Grace* (says he) *must go before, to work in the Man Faith and Repentance, which are Qualifications previous to Baptism.* These he calls *the first and lowest Degrees of Renovation.* (p. 13) He again tells us, that an Adult, coming to Baptism fitly prepar'd by Faith and Repentance; and afterwards persevering to the End, ---He is not yet (before Baptism) buried with Christ into Death, nor planted in the Likeness of his Resurrection; nor indeed clothed with the baptismal Garment; and therefore in strictness, he is not a Member of Christ, nor a Child of God. (p. 20. 22)

In the scripture Account of Regeneration, *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. He keepeth himself, and that wicked One toucheth him not.* 1 Joh. iii. 9, 18. But in the Dr's Account, a Man that is regenerated, may be so far from having the Seed of God R E M A I N in him, and from keeping himself that the wicked One shall not touch him, that he may Revolt from God, either for a Time, or for ever (p. 12.)

In the scripture Account of Regeneration, it is wrought in the Soul by the Word of God, as the ordinary Means, by which we are brought into the new Life. *Of his own Will begat he us, by the Word of Truth.* Jam 1. 18. *Being born again, not of corruptible Seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God.* 1 Pet. i. 23. But in the Dr's Account of it, *the Holy Spirit, in and by the Use of Water Baptism, causes the new Birth* (p. 3)

Moreover from the scripture Account of this Change, the happy Partaker of it, lives a Life of Holiness and new Obedience. *He sinneth not, He overcometh the World. He lives in the Love of God and his Brethren. Old Things are passed away, and all Things are become new. He is created in Christ Jesus unto good Works, which God hath before ordained, that he should walk in them,* as appears from the Texts before cited. But on the Contrary, the Dr. supposeth, that *the Regenerate may finally fall from Grace* (p. 18. in the Margin) And that such as have been savingly regenerated may fall away by Desertion and Disobedience; and that a Person once savingly regenerated,

regenerated, may afterwards lose all the salutary Use of it (p. 26)
 And that those may be regenerated *who receive Baptism (like Simon Magus suppose) in Hypocrisy and Impenitency* (p. 27)

The Reader is now to judge, which of these two Representations of the Case is right, and to chuse which of them he will believe. Whether the Scripture Account, which declares all Believers in Christ to be *born of God*, or the Dr's Account of this Matter. who supposeth a Man may be *born of God* without Faith in Christ; and that a Man may have Faith and Repentance, before he is *born again*; the Scripture Account, which represents *Regeneration* as an abiding Principle, or the Dr's, which supposes the regenerate may revolt from God, either for a Time, or for ever. He may chuse, whether he will believe the Scripture Representation, that the Word of God is the ordinary Means of *Regeneration*, or the Dr's Supposal, that this is wrought by *Baptism* only: the Scripture Representation, that the Regenerate are a holy People, or the Dr's Supposal, that they may be Apostates, Hypocrites, and Impenitent. He must judge whether this be not sufficient Evidence, that the Dr. *knew not what he said, nor whereof he affirmed*, that he has laid his Foundation upon the Sand, and that his Superstructure must necessarily sink with it.

Upon the Whole then, we may safely conclude, that the *Walking of Regeneration* in the Dr's Text, does not, cannot signify *Baptism*; because wherever the like Methods of speaking are found in Scripture, they necessarily have a quite different Meaning, because *Regeneration* is so often mention'd in Scripture, without the least Reference to *Water Baptism*; and because the Characters which the Scripture gives; and those which the Dr. gives of the *new Birth*, are directly opposite and inconsistent.

Since I wrote this, I happen'd occasionally to meet with Dr. *Doddridge's* excellent Sermons on *Regeneration*, and finding there a Paragraph most opposite to the present Purpose, I could not forbear transcribing it. "Now I have shewn you (says he) from a Variety of Scriptures, under the former Heads, that every one whom the sacred Oracles represent as *born of God*, receiveth Christ, overcometh the World, and sinneth not. But it is too plain, that these Characters do not agree to every

“ one that is *baptized*, and consequently it evidently follows, that
 “ every one that is *baptized* is not of Course *born of God* or rege-
 “ nerate; and therefore that *Baptism* is not *Scripture Regeneration*.
 “ I think no mathematical Demonstration plainer or more cer-
 “ tain, than this Conclusion. And therefore, whatever great and
 “ ancient Names may be urged, on the other Side of the Ques-
 “ tion. I shall rest the Matter here, without leading you into
 “ the Niceties of a Controversy, so easily decided.”

I now proceed to consider, whether our blessed Lord speaks
 of a *baptismal Regeneration*, in Joh. 3. 5.—And here it must
 be premised, that all the Reasons already assigned, why the
 other Text cannot be understood in this Sense, are equally con-
 clusive in the present Case. All the Scriptures which I have
 cited, do as directly serve to illustrate the Meaning of this, as
 of the other Text. And all the Scripture Characters of the
new Birth, are as applicable here, as they be there. To be
born of Water, and of the Spirit, is the same Thing, with the
Washing of Regeneration, and Renewing of the Holy Ghost; and
 as I have made it appear, that the latter does not signify a
baptismal Regeneration; it thence also appears, that the former
 can have no such Signification. I shall however consider some
 further Reasons, why *being born of Water and the Spirit*, can-
 not be understood in the Sense the Dr. contends for.

1. If being born with Water in this Text signifies Baptism,
 then there are none in any Case whatsoever, who dye unbap-
 tized, that shall ever obtain Salvation. The Exclusion of all
 who are not *born of Water, and of the Spirit*, is peremptory,
 and without any Limitation. Our Lord strongly asserts, that
these cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. And now will
 any of the Dr's Admirers venture to teach, that all Infants who
 dye in the Womb, at the Birth, or at any Time before there be
 Opportunity to obtain the Ordinance of Baptism for them, will
 be eternally shut out of the Kingdom of Heaven? Will they
 venture to teach that such Adults, as are truly penitent for their
 Sins, and true Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, shall eternally
 perish, for being providentially deprived of the Opportunity of
 being baptized? Will they venture to teach, that every unbap-
 tized Person whatsoever, under whatever Disadvantages of
 Education, in whatever Place of Abode Providence has fixed his
 Habitation, how impossible soever it may be for him to obtain
 this

this Ordinance, shall not, notwithstanding the Sincerity of his Repentance towards God, and Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; and notwithstanding his holy and heavenly Conversation, and hearty desire of Baptism, be eternally shut out of the Presence of God — And yet this cruel and uncharitable Doctrine, is the necessary Consequence of their Interpretation of this Text. But blessed be God, these are not the Doctrines of our Lord Jesus Christ. He teaches us indeed, that *he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved.* Mark xvi. 16. But the negative Part of that Proposition is limited to the Unbeliever only. *He that believes not, shall be damned.* Tho' he makes no Promise of Salvation to the Despiser, or wilful Neglecter of this Ordinance, yet he does not denounce Damnation, to all who are necessarily deprived of this precious Privilege. — And accordingly the Apostle Peter instructs us, that it is *not the putting away the Filth of the Flesh, by the Water of Baptism that saveth,* 1 Pet. iii. 21. It cannot therefore be the Want of this, without Contempt or Neglect, that will damn us. — From these Considerations, we may then safely and certainly conclude, that the Text does not speak of a *baptismal Regeneration*; the Consequence of such an Interpretation being too frightful and unmerciful, to be allowed or supposed.

2. Another Reason against assigning this Meaning to the Words before us, is our Saviour's upbraiding *Nicodemus* for his Ignorance of these Things. *Art thou a Master in Israel, and knowest not these Things?* (verse 10) — What Things does our Saviour Mean. — Does he upbraid him for not knowing the Necessity of his Compliance with the Gospel Ordinance of *Baptism*; and his being regenerated by the Spirit, in the Use of that Ordinance? How should a *Master in Israel* know these Things, which he had never read or heard of before? — This therefore cannot be our Lord's Meaning. But if we allow the Construction of these Words, which I am pleading for, the Reproof will appear most natural and reasonable. It was indeed a Shame, for a *Master in Israel*, to be ignorant of that Birth of Water and of the Spirit, which is so often spoken of by the *Prophets*. It was a Shame for *Nicodemus* to be ignorant of the Necessity of being *sprinkled with clean Water, and made clean, of having God's Spirit put within him, that he might walk in God's Statutes; and keep his Judgments and do them.* Dr.

Dr. *Waterland*, seems to have been apprehensive of this Objection, and in Order to obviate it, tells us, that *the Name or the Notion, probably was not altogether new in our Lord's Time. For the Jews had be'n us'd to admit Converts from Heathenism into the Jewish Church, by a Baptism of their own; and they called Admission or Reception of such Converts, by the Name of Regeneration or New-Birth, as it was something like bringing them into a new World.* P. 5.

He does not indeed tell us what it is, that he founds this Conjecture of his upon, that we also might judge, whether the Name or the Notion was *probably* not altogether new in our Lord's Time. But admit that this was not only probably but certainly Fact, what is it to the Purpose? For how could a *Master in Israel know*, that because *Heathens* were washed with Water, when admitted as Converts from Heathenism into the Jewish Church. that therefore a *Jew* must be baptized, in order to his entering into the Kingdom of Heaven? How could he know that our blessed Lord would *improve the Notion* (as Dr. *Waterland* says he did) *by the Addition of the Spirit; and enlarge the Use of the Rite, by ordering, that every one, every Convert to Christianity, every Candidate for Heaven, should be baptized?* (p. 7) It is plain, that his being a *Master in Israel*, would acquaint him with none of these Things; and therefore that this could not be our Lord's Meaning, if we allow any *Propriety* in this his Reproof of *Nicodemus*.

3. Another Reason why this Text cannot be understood, as signifying a *baptismal Regeneration*, is our Lord's Interpretation of his Meaning, in the sixth Verse of this Context. *That which is born of the Flesh is Flesh, that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit.* Whereby he plainly shews us, that it was a spiritual Birth he spake of; and they were spiritual Persons who had obtained it. Now could Dr. *Waterland* pretend, that all who were *baptized*, and so (according to his Construction of the debated Text) were *born of Water and of the Spirit*, were truly spiritual Persons? No! he could not but acknowledge, that there are some of these, (like *Simon Magus*) in a State of *Hypocrisy and Impenitency*. And it is visibly and lamentably true, that the far greatest Part of the *Baptized*, who (according to him) are all *born of Water and of the Spirit*, have no Claim at all to the Character of spiritual Persons.

These

These Things put together, make it appear to me equal to Demonstration, that our Lord Jesus Christ had no Reference to *Baptism*, in these Words under Consideration. We may not suppose, that he positively pronounced all such incapable of the Kingdom of God, who are by his holy Providence, denied the Opportunity of enjoying *Baptism*.—We are certain, that he would not upbraid *Nicodemus*, for his Ignorance of what it is impossible he should have been acquainted with.—We are certain, that all baptized Persons are not truly Spiritual; and yet our Lord assures us, that the *Birth* he speaks of, has that transforming Efficacy upon those that experience it, as to make 'em all such.—These Texts are therefore safe in our Hands, notwithstanding all Endeavours to wrest them from us. And these two which I have now consider'd, are the only Texts in the Bible, which can with any Appearance of Plausibility, be urged in Favour of the Dr.'s Hypothesis. How many there be, that do in the strongest Terms contradict this Scheme has been already consider'd.

But after all, should we allow, that both these Texts have a Reference to *Baptism*. Should we allow, that being *born of Water* and the *Washing of Regeneration* are to be understood of *Baptism*. These Texts will prove no Foundation for the Doctrines which Dr *Waterland* and the episcopal Clergy among us (who seem generally to be of his Way of thinking) pretend to build upon them.

Be it then supposed, that the Ordinance of *Baptism* is here referred to, in both these Texts, it can in neither of 'em imply any more, than the Pledge, Sign, Seal, or Token of our *Regeneration*. It cannot imply, that *Regeneration* itself always accompanies this Ordinance; and that all who are *baptized*, are *born again*. If we allow this Sense of the Words, we thereby suppose, that to be *born of Water*, is to receive *Baptism* as a Pledge or Sign of our being cleansed from our Pollution, by the divine Influences of the Spirit of God, and of our thereby becoming new Creatures, and as it were born a-new. And thus *Baptism* may be called the *Laver of Regeneration*, as it is a Pledge and Sign of our being cleansed by *Regeneration*, as it were in a *Laver*. In both Cases, the Sign must be (by this Interpretation of the Words) put for the Thing signified, as being a lively Emblem and Representation thereof.—This is a Way of speaking commonly, and frequently used

used in Scripture, 'Thus we read of *the Covenant of Circumcision*. Acts vii. 8. i. e. that Covenant, whereof Circumcision was a Sign and Seal. Thus likewise we read of Christ our Passover. 1 Cor. v. 7. i. e. Christ the Substance and Antitype, signified and represented by the *Passover*. Thus we also read of the *Circumcision of the Heart in the Spirit*. i. e. that Renovation of Heart by the Spirit, whereof Circumcision was the Sign and Seal. In like Manner our Lord Jesus Christ is called *the Lamb of God, our Sacrifice, &c.* to shew us, that all the legal Oblations referred to, and terminated in him. And if the Texts before us have any Relation at all to Baptism, they must be understood in this Sense and no other, for the following Reasons,

1. Because there is no necessary Connection between *Baptism*, and our being *born of the Spirit*.—Simon Magus was rightly and duly baptized, and yet had *no Part or Lot in that Matter*; but was *in the Gall of Bitterness, and Bonds of Iniquity*. Acts viii. 21. 23. I have already shewn, that the Characters of the *new Birth*, belong to but very few of the *baptized World*. All Discourse therefore of a spiritual Birth, with Relation to these who live and dye in a carnal State, is but a Medley of Inconsistency and Contradiction.—Should we suppose with Dr. *Waterland* (p. 28, 22) that *the Holy Spirit has some Way or other a Hand in every true and valid Baptism*; that *the Holy Spirit is in some Sort offered to all that receive Christian Baptism*; that *the holy Spirit consecrates and sanctifies the Waters of Baptism, giving them an outward and relative Holiness*; and that *the Unworthy are by their Baptism put into an external christian State*. What is all this to their being born of the Spirit? What is this to those Characters of the *new Birth*, that have been particularly recited from the sacred Oracles. *Baptism* cannot therefore be the *new Birth*; because it is a Fact too notorious to be disputed, that the most of those who are *baptized*, were never *born of the Spirit* at all, never had any of the Characters of a regenerate State; and consequently this Ordinance can be no more, than the Sign, Pledge, or Seal of *Regeneration*.

2. *Regeneration* is an Act of God's Sovereign Grace: the Product of his mere good Pleasure and Almighty Power.

Whatever

Whatever Means he is pleased to make Use of, in bringing about this blessed Change ; yet the Change itself, is by his own immediate Agency, without the Help of any other concurring Cause in its Production. *The Wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the Sound thereof ; but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit.* Joh. iii. 8. We are born, not of the Will of Man, but of God. Joh. i. 13. *Of his own Will begat he us.* Jam. i. 18. We are God's Workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good Works. Eph. ii. 10. No Man then can have more Agency in the new Birth, than in the Generation of the Wind, the Execution of the divine Will, or the Creation of a new World. This Dr. Waterland acknowledgess. *No Man (says he) regenerates himself at all, that is, he has no Part in the regenerating Act (which is intirely God's) whatever he may have in the Receptive. And if in this Sense only it be said, that he be purely passive, it is good and sound Doctrine.* (p. 17) I therefore insist upon it, that this good and sound Doctrine, does utterly subvert his whole Scheme. If Man can have no Hand in the regenerating Act, but that is intirely God's; and Man can have a Hand in *Baptism*, it is then certain, that *Baptism* is not the regenerating Act, nor can in any Sense be called *Regeneration* ; but as it is an outward Sign, Seal, or Token of it. I see no possibility of an Answer to this, but either by retracting the Dr's Concession now cited, and endeavouring to prove directly contrary to the above cited Scriptures, that *Regeneration* is not an Act of God's Prerogative and Sovereignty ; and that Man may concur and have a Hand in it, Or else by endeavouring to prove, that Man does not concur, and has no Hand at all in the Administration of *Baptism* ; but this also is God's peculiar Prerogative, and a Work of his immediate Power. Here then the Matter must rest.

It won't at all help the Case, to say with Dr. Waterland, that *the Unworthy are by their Baptism, put into a christian State, otherwise they would be mere Pagans still* (p. 29) If this be granted, what follows ? What necessary Connection is there between a visible and external christian State, and *Regeneration* ? None at all, as I have particularly shewn before. And I now enquire, how they are brought into the christian State ? Are

they God's Workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good Works? Are they born, not of the Will of Man but of God? No! they are yet unrenewed. They are yet in Hypocrisy and Impenitency. They have had no more than a Change of their external Relation. A Change that depends upon the Will of Man, and how then can they be properly said to be born again. How can their *Baptism* be any more than an external Sign, or Seal of that spiritual Change, which they have had no Experience of.

What is the regenerating Act, according to the Dr. with respect to God Almighty, but *Admission or Adoption into Sonship or spiritual Citizenship?* (p. 11) And what is this Adoption or Sonship with respect to a great Part of those that partake of it; but the *Consecration of the Waters of Baptism, to an outward and relative Holiness, and a Consecration of the Persons also, in an outward and relative Sense, whether good or bad, by a sacred Dedication of them to the Worship and Service of the whole Trinity;* by which they are brought into an external Christian State (p. 28, 29) This is all the Regeneration that the Dr. himself supposes, with respect to a great Part of the baptized World. And all this does (upon his Scheme) depend upon the Will of Man. For it's what always accompanies every true and valid Baptism, tho' administered to the Hypocrite, impenitent and unworthy, as appears from his 28, 29, and 30 Pages. And consequently, this regenerating Act, is always as much at the Choice of every Man good or bad, as it is at his Choice, whether he will, or will not be baptized.

In a Word, the regenerating Act (upon this Hypothesis) is nothing but *Baptism* itself. For it enters into the Definition of *Baptism*, that the *Water have an outward relative Holiness;* and that the baptized Person be brought into an external Christian State. The outward Consecration of the Water, and the Administration of the Ordinance in the Name of the sacred Trinity, necessarily imply both these Things. The whole Question therefore is, whether Man do, or do not concur in the Ordinance of Baptism.--The *holy Spirit* (he tells us) *has a Hand in every valid Baptism.* What Hand? None at all in the Case before us, but to make the Ordinance valid. There is no real Change wrought in such an impenitent Hypocrite:

No

No relative Change, but what he may chuse or refuse at Pleasure.

I can't forbear taking Notice upon this Occasion, of a manifest Blunder and Contradiction in the Dr's Scheme. *Regeneration* (he tells us) *is the Work of the Spirit in the Use of Water, that is the Work of the Spirit singly ; for Water does nothing, is no Agent at all* (p. 16) It is a Change from the State natural, into the State spiritual, a Translation from the Curse of Adam, into the Grace of Christ (p. 11) And again, *the Holy Spirit translates them (Infants) out of a State of Nature to which a Curse belongs, into a State of Grace, Favour and Blessing. this is their Regeneration* (p. 24) And yet those Adults may be regenerated, who have never had any Work of the Spirit upon their Hearts, never been translated into the Grace of Christ ; but *are yet in Hypocrisy and Impenitency* (p. 27) And those *Infants may be regenerated, where Renovation has no Place at all for the Time being* (p. 13) and consequently, they are not translated at all into a State of Grace, Favour and Blessing.— He again tells us, that *in the Case of Adults, Regeneration and Renovation must go together, otherwise, the Regeneration is not a salutary nor a compleat Regeneration.* (p. 19) And yet (as I have so often observ'd) he allows, and endeavours to prove, that such Adults as have been baptized, are *born of Water and of the Spirit*, tho' they have no Renovation at all, but *are in a State of Hypocrisy and Impenitency.*—His Admirers would have done well to have reconciled these Contradictions, before they had been so active in propagating his dangerous Doctrines.

3. I will add this further Evidence to the Point before us, that the Apostle assures us, that *neither Circumcision availeth any Thing, nor Uncircumcision ; but the new Creature.* Gal. vi. 15. By which it appears, that notwithstanding the Enjoyment of any Ordinances, the *new Creature* or the *new Birth* may by wanting, and our Privileges, avail us nothing at all. The same Thing is confirm'd by the Apostle Peter, with Respect to *Baptism* in particular, 1 Pet. iii. 21. *The like Figure whereunto, even Baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away the Filth of the Flesh, but the Answer of a good Conscience towards God) by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.*

That is, as one of the greatest Divines that our Nation has

ever bred, * has paraphras'd these Words. "The outward Administration of this Ordinance consider'd materially, reacheth no further but to the Washing away the Filth of the Flesh, but more is signified thereby. There is denoted in it, the Restipulation of a good Conscience toward God, by the Resurrection of Christ from the Dead; or a Conscience purged from dead Works, to serve the living God. Heb. ix. 14. And quickned by Vertue of his Resurrection, to holy Obedience, see Rom. vi. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7." By these Texts it is evident, that *Baptism* is not the *new Creature*; and that it saves us, only as it is a Pledge and Sign of a renewed Conscience, and of our being quickned by Vertue of Christ's Resurrection, unto Newness of Life. Or in other Words, it is not properly in any Respect *Regeneration* itself, but the outward Sign, Pledge, or Token of it. Which was the Thing to be proved.

By what has been said, I think it is clearly manifest, that if these Texts under Consideration, are even allow'd to have a Reference unto *Baptism*, this cannot be supposed in any other Sense, than as *Baptism* is an outward Sign, Seal, Pledge or Token of *Regeneration*; and not properly in any Respect the *new Birth* itself. For how can that strictly speaking be the *new Birth*, or any Part of it, which is enjoy'd by Multitudes, who have no one scripture Character of the regenerate State? How can a Person be said to be born not of the Will of Man but of God, to be God's Workmanship, created anew in Christ Jesus; and to be born of God's mere good Will and Pleasure by this Ordinance which depends upon the Will and Pleasure of Man? How can *Baptism* in Strictness and Propriety of Speech, be the *new Creature*, when we may enjoy all Ordinances without being *new Creatures*? How can *Baptism* in itself avail to our *Regeneration*, when no Ordinance will avail any Thing without *Regeneration* or the *new Creature*? How can the Washing away the Filth of the Flesh, be *Regeneration*, without what is signified thereby, a renewed Conscience, and a Conformity to the Resurrection of Christ, in a Revivification of our Lives? !

* Dr. Owen Pneumatologia. p. 180.

must needs say, they are bold enough, who dare venture their Eternity upon the Dr's Scheme, after such Evidence as this against it.

Thus I have given my Reasons against the Dr's Interpretation of these Scriptures; and must now attend to what he has to say in Favour of it.

His principal Argument for this Construction of the Words, is this, *One Thing is certain, that the Ancients took in Baptism into their Notion of Regeneration. A learned Writer has prov'd at large, that both the Greek and Latin Fathers, not only used that Word for Baptism; but so appropriated it also to Baptism, as to exclude any other Conversion or Repentance not consider'd with Baptism, from being signified by that Name* (p. 8)

To which I answer, that tho' I don't pretend to vie with the Dr. in the Knowledge of Antiquity; yet I can't but presume, from what little Acquaintance I have with the Doctrines of the Ancients, that they generally understood these Texts to signify *Regeneration*, in no other Sense than I have now last explain'd them. And what strengthens my Presumption is, that some of his own Quotations plainly carry this Sense with them, and particularly that from St. *Augustine*, whom he has cited in Confirmation of his Doctrine, * expressly shews us his Sense of this Matter, that *the Water* (of Baptism) *externally shews forth the Sacrament of Grace; and the Spirit internally operates the Benefit of it.*—The Fathers some of them did indeed (as was their usual Method of speaking) use very strong and hyperbolical Expressions upon this Subject, which would almost lead one into the Apprehension, that they held even the Popish Opinion of the Necessity of the Sacraments, and of their conferring Grace *ex Opere operato*, by their own proper Virtue. But then when we find them on set Purpose, declaring their Sentiments of this Matter, denying the absolute Necessity of Baptism to Salvation; and calling Baptism *Obfig-*

* *Aqua igitur, exhibens forinsecus Sacramentum Gratiae, et Spiritus operans intrinsecus Beneficium Gratiae, solvens Vinculum Culpaë, reconcilians Bonum Naturæ, regenerant Hominem in uno Christo, ex uno Adamo generatum.*

natio Fidei, and *Sigillum Fidei*, the Sign and Seal of Faith, one would hope to have found a Key to these rhetorical Flourishes. †

But it signifies but very little, what was the Opinion of the Fathers in this Case. We have the Bible as well as they, and as good Advantages to understand the Meaning of it, as they had. And it is as well known by all that are any Thing acquainted with Antiquity, that they held many such ridiculous Opinions, as would now expose a Man to the Contempt and Scorn of the World, if he should make a Profession of them. To exemplify this, in an Instance something parallel to the Case before us. Some of them explain'd that Text Joh. vi. 53. *Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his Blood, ye have no Life in you.* to be understood of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and thence argued the Necessity of Infants partaking of that Ordinance, in Order to their Salvation; and they accordingly fed them with the consecrated Elements. *Sine Christi Carne et Sanguine*, (saith St. Augustin *) *nec parvuli vitam habere possunt, in semetipsis. Without the Flesh and Blood of Christ, neither can Infants have Life in themselves.* And thence it was the Custom of those Times, to give that Sacrament unto Infants, as the same Father tells us. *Parvulis adhuc et infirmis, stillantur quædam de Sacramentis.* † Some Part of the Sacrament is instilled or dropt into the Mouths of young and tender Children — I would now ask the Dr's Admirers, whether this Argument from the Fathers is good and conclusive? If not, why is it urged? If it be, why don't they administer the Lord's Supper to Infants? Why are the Fathers press'd into their Service, when they think they will serve their Turn; and rejected when they differ in Sentiments from them?

Another Argument the Dr. uses to support his Interpretation of these Scriptures, is this, That *there is no Instance, no Example in Scripture, of any Exhortation made to Christians, to be born anew, but to be reform'd only, or renewed in the inward Man* (p, 32)

† Vide Willot's *Synopsis Baptismi*. Fron. p. 556 forward.

* See *Cont. 2 Epist. Prolog. Lib. 4.* † c. 4. in *Psal. 64.*

To this I answer. That one good Reason why there is no more Exhortations found in the New Testament unto professed Christians, to obtain a regenerate State, or to be born again, is because they to whom the Books in the New Testament were immediately directed, were consider'd by the inspired Writers as being generally Christians indeed, who had already experienced, and therefore could not now want a first Conversion unto God. And its observable, that the Apostles in their Epistles to the Churches, address'd them as being truly Regenerate ; and accordingly, they directed their Epistles *to the beloved of God, called to be Saints.* Rom. i. 7. *To them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be Saints.* 1 Cor. i. 2. *To all the Saints which are in all Achaia.* 2 Cor. i. 1. *To the Saints which are at Ephesus.* Eph. i. 1. *To the Saints in Christ Jesus, which are at Phillippi.* Phil. i. 1. *To the Saints and faithful Brethren in Christ, which are at Colosse.* Col. i. 2. *To the Church of the Thessalonians, which is in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ.* 1 Thes. i. 1. *To the Elect, according to the Foreknowledge of God.* 1 Pet. i. 2. *To them that have obtained the like precious Faith with us.* 1 Pet. i. 1. &c. It is remarkable, that the Apostle Paul in his Introduction to every one of his Epistles to particular Churches, salutes them as Saints, his Epistle to the Galatians only excepted. Of these Galatians, he was *was afraid, lest he had bestowed upon 'em Labour in vain.* Gal. iv. 11. *He stood in Doubt of them, verse 20.* For these therefore he *travail'd in Birth again, till Christ were form'd in them.* Verse 19. or until they were *born again*, which is the Fruit of *travailing in Birth*, and the plain Meaning of *having Christ formed in them.* Here then is a clear Instance of the Necessity of *Regeneration* in professed Christians. whatever Dr. *Waterland* alleges to the Contrary. I grant indeed with him, that *this is not favourable to the Notion of a second Regeneration.* (p. 33) But it is favourable to the Notion of the Necessity of a first *Regeneration*, even in nominal Christians ; and shews the Apostles Concern for such, that they might now be *born again*, since he was afraid his former *Travail in Birth* for them, had prov'd in vain.

And I must further observe, that tho' the Apostles in their Epistles to the Churches, consider'd them as Christians, yet they frequently put them in Mind of the Importance of their being so indeed, as well as in Profession; and to that End, represented to 'em the Necessity of the *new Birth*, either in express Terms, or in Words that fully imply'd it. Thus Eph. iv. 24. *Put on the new Man, which after God, is created in Righteousness and true Holiness.* Eph. v. 14. *Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the Dead.* 2 Cor. v. 17. *If any Man be in Christ he is a new Creature.* Gal. vi. 15. *In Christ Jesus, neither Circumcision availeth any Thing, nor Uncircumcision; but the new Creature.* In all which Texts, the *new Man*, a *Resurrection from the Dead*, or the *new Creature* (expressions every Way synonymous to the *new Birth* as I have shewn above) are propos'd, as necessary to our eternal Safety. And the same Necessity of the *new Birth*, to professed Christians, is apparent from sundry Texts of Scripture before cited. For it is by this, that such get a Victory over their Sins. 1 Joh. iii. 9. By this, that they are brought to believe in Jesus Christ, 1 Joh. v. 1. to live in the Love of God and their Neighbour, 1 Joh. iv. 7. to overcome the World, 1 Joh. v. 4. To conquer the Temptations of Satan, 1 Joh. v. 18. and in a Word, by this they have a lively Hope of future Glory, 1 Pet. i. 3. By all which we may see, that the Dr's Observation is founded upon a manifest Mistake, is false in Fact, and would have been impertinent, if never so true.—To conclude this Head. Does not our blessed Lord himself, in as strong Terms as can be spoken assure us, that *except a Man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God?* Joh. iii. 3. But he spoke this to *Nicodemus*, and *Nicodemus was a Jew*, (p. 14) What then? Was it spoken to *Nicodemus* only? Are not the Words an indefinite and unlimited Proposition, which equally respects the whole Race of Mankind, without any Restriction, Exception, or Limitation? Certainly there is none will find himself exempted, when it comes to the great decisive Trial, by whatever Imaginations he may at present delude himself.

It may be expected, that I should say something to the Distinctions the Dr. makes between *Regeneration* and *Renovation*. But its sufficient in general to observe, that if the

Notion

Notion of a *baptismal Regeneration*, be a mere Figment, without any scripture Foundation at all. (as I think I have clearly proved) Then all the Distinctions which he makes, with Relation to a *baptismal Regeneration*, are but Distinctions about a non-Entity; and therefore merely fictitious Impertinencies.

To this I shall only add, that tho' it were right to suppose that the *Renovation* in his Text, implies a progressive Work of Sanctification, as well as to suppose this to be different from the new Birth, or first saving Change, it will no Ways follow, that *Regeneration* is not also a saving *Renovation*; but even this Supposal makes it necessarily appear to be so. We are renewed by being born again; and from this new Principle, (put into Exercise by the Spirit of God) flows a continual *Renovation* or *Sanctification*. *The new Man is after God, created in Righteousness and true Holiness.* Eph. iv. 24. And thence it is, that *he that is born of God sinneth not, and cannot sin; but purifieth himself as God is pure; because this Seed of God remaineth in him.*

I shall pass over the many exceptionable Passages in this Discourse, leaving the Reader to determine the Fate of the Superstructure, by the Foundation upon which it is built, which I hope he has by this Time, a pretty full and clear View of. And so I shall proceed to some brief Remarks upon some Part of the Improvement he makes of the Doctrine, which has been consider'd.

He begins with this Reflection, that 'tis very improper Language at least, to call upon those that have been once regenerated in their Infancy, who have had their new Birth already at the Font, to be now regenerated, or to bid them expect a new Birth. (p. 31, 32) But is it so very improper Language, to call upon those to be now regenerated, who have neither been regenerated in their Infancy, nor in any succeeding Part of their Lives, who have indeed enjoy'd the Sign and Seal of *Regeneration* at their *Baptism*, but are Strangers to the Thing signified; and are yet dead in Trespasses and Sins?—That this is the sad Case of much the greatest Part of professing Christians, is but too visible, from the whole Tenour of their Lives and Conversations. And must we leave them to go on securely in the Paths of Destruction and Death? Must we not call upon 'em to
I awake

awake out of their Sleep, and arise from the Dead, that Christ may give them Light? Must we in a scornful Manner be told, that such Application might properly be directed to Jews, Turks, or Pagans, or such nominal Christians as have cast off their Water Baptism (p. 31) How much does it concern the Ministers of the Gospel, the more earnestly and constantly to use *Line upon Line, and Precept upon Precept*, to inculcate this most important Point upon their People, when such Attempts are made to lull them asleep, in a dangerous and fatal Security. And how much does it concern our People in general, to hold fast the faithful Word, as they have been taught; and to be no more Children tossed to and fro, with every Wind of Doctrine, to the Loss of their precious and immortal Souls

The Dr. proceeds in the next Place to observe, how very mischievous it is many Ways (to call upon professed Christians to be regenerated) and therefore that it cannot be look'd upon as a mere verbal Business, or an innocent Misnomer. To which it is sufficient Answer, that this is the Doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ and his Apostles, as I think I have fully prov'd; and therefore whatever mischievous Consequences Men may pretend to draw from it, the Mischief does not flow from the Doctrine itself, but from the Abuse of it.

Among some other Instances of the mischievous Consequences, which he imagines from this Doctrine, he mentions and chiefly insists upon this, *that many---may be apt to go in Quest of what they call Impulses or inward Feelings of the Spirit, which commonly are nothing more than warm Fancies, towering Imaginations, and self-flattering Presumptions.* (p. 36)

It by *Feelings of the Spirit*, he means, feeling or sensibly discerning the Operations of our Minds, excited by the Influences of the Spirit, this is so far from being a warm Fancy, or towering Imagination, that it is necessarily experienced by every true Christian. It is impossible from the Nature of Things to be otherwise. Can a Man possibly be under Conviction of Sin, under the Exercise of Repentance for Sin, of Faith in Christ, of Love to God, or of spiritual Mindedness, and not be sensible of these Operations of his own Mind? And does not the Scripture expressly ascribe all these gracious Exercises of the Mind, to the Influences of the Spirit of God? So that all the

Graces of the Spirit of God, wrought in the Heart of an Adult Person, are always sensibly felt, tho' the Quality of 'em are not always distinctly known. And I must add, that no one that has a true Love, either to his God or his own Soul, will be banter'd out of the Necessity of experimental Piety, by opprobrious Invectives and reproachful Characters; but will *beware that no Man spoil him, thro' Philosophy and vain Deceit, after the Tradition of Men, after the Rudiments of the World, and not after Christ.*

But if by Impulses and Feelings of the Spirit, be intended, Raptures, Extasies, Visions, and enthusiastick Inspirations. I leave all Pretenders to these Things, to the Dr's Discipline, and only add a Paragraph or two out of Dr. Owen, upon this Head, * "The Work of the Holy Spirit (says he) in *Regeneration*, doth not consist in enthusiastick Raptures, Extasies, Voices, or any Thing of the like Kind. It may be some such Things have been by some deluded Persons, apprehended, or pretended to; but the Countenancing any such Imaginations, is falsely and industriously charg'd on them, who maintain the powerful and effectual Work of the Holy Spirit, in our *Regeneration.*" And again, "Such Apprehensions for the most Part, are either Conceptions of distemper'd Minds and discomposed Fancies, or delusions of Satan, transforming himself into an Angel of Light, which the Doctrine of *Regeneration* ought not to be accountable for.

That Dr. *Waterland* may do his Business effectually, he next proceeds to enter a Caveat against *the Marks and Tokens of Regeneration.* Those (says he) that first began to talk in this Way (and who have long been dead) might be pious and well-meaning Men, but they were not very happy in the Use of their Terms, or in the Choice of their Marks (p. 42) These Marks he tells us, may be prudently thrown aside, as human Invention.—But who were these pious well-meaning Men, whose Ignorance the Dr. complains of, but the most Eminent of the reformed Clergy, in the early and purest Times of the Reformation? Happy had it been for the Church of England, if all her succeeding Clergy had as well understood, and as faithfully taught, the Marks of a regenerate State, as many of those excellent Meⁿ

* *Pneumatologia.* p. 186, 188.

did, which he thus complains of.—Into what a sad and languishing State is practical Godliness reduced in that Church, where such Doctrines as this pass current, and the Marks of Conversion are consider'd, as *having a Tendency to perplex some, and to deceive others; and therefore prudently to be thrown aside, as Things of human Invention.* (p. 43)—What! are these of human Invention? How then does the Dr. bring in our blessed Lord and the Apostle Paul, as giving the Marks of a converted State. *p. 43, 44.* And why does the Dr. himself run into the Practice of these Things of human Invention, by giving Marks of a renewed Heart and Mind? *What Marks (saith he) should a Man pitch upon to satisfy himself in that Case, but a good Conscience? Or what Marks to satisfy others, but a good Life?* And again, *if we sincerely endeavour to do the best we can, and are daily gaining Ground of our Vices and our Passions, and finding ourselves after the strictest Examination, to be upon the improving Hand, then may we comfortably believe, that our Regeneration abides salutary and entire, and that we are in a State of Salvation* (p. 44)—Why (I say) did the Dr. practice these Things of human Invention? The Reason probably was, that he thought himself secure, from *perplexing some, or deceiving others*, by such Marks as these. And indeed there is no Reason to fear his giving any Perplexity to the Consciences of secure Sinners, by such an Opiate. But oh that there was as little Reason to fear his deceiving Multitudes of poor unregenerate Creatures, to their eternal Ruin!—Here is a Mark, by which a Man may conclude himself in a State of Salvation, without having ever been *weary and heavy laden* with his Sins; tho' it is such whom Christ invites to *come to him for Rest.* Mat. xi. 28. without feeling himself sick, tho' it is such to whom Christ is the Physician. Mat. ix. 12. without any Repentance for his Sins, tho' they *who do not repent shall surely perish.* Luk. xiii. 3. without any true Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, tho' *he that believes not shall be damned,* Mark. xvi. 16. without any Humility, or Sense of their Unworthiness and Impotence, tho' *God resisteth the Proud, and giveth Grace to the Humble.* Jam. iv. 6. without any *spiritual Mindedness*, tho' that be necessary to *Life and Peace.* Rom. viii. 6. without a Victory over the World, tho' *they that love the World and the Things of*

*the World, cannot have the Love of the Father in them, 1 Joh. ii 15. without any Love to the Brethren, or the Children of God, tho' by this we are to know that we are pass'd from Death to Life. 1 Joh. iii. 14. without a careful Attendance upon the Duties and Ordinances of Religion, tho' we are directed thus to seek, if we would find, and knock if we would have the Door opened. Mat. vii. 7, 8. without having old Things pass away and every Thing become new, tho' all that are in Christ Jesus, are thus new Creatures. 2 Cor. v. 17. And in a Word, without having Christ in him, which every one must have, except he be a Reprobate. 2 Cor. xiii. 5. All that is propos'd, is to be daily gaining Ground of our Vices and of our Passions, and in this to be upon the improving Hand.— If this be a sufficient Mark of Safety, why may not all the moral Heathen be in a State of Salvation, as well as such Pretenders to Christianity? They have in this the Better of them, that they are unbaptized, whereas these by their empty Profession, daily break thro' all the Bonds of their baptismal Covenant, and thereby greatly aggravate their Guilt and Misery.—It infinitely concerns all the Professors of Christianity to see to it, that they have better Evidences of a saving Conversion to God than this comes to, otherwise however they are daub'd with untemper'd Mortar at present; they won't stand the Trial of the Great Day: It will in that Day be found what they have got by it, who are deserting our Communion, thro' Prejudices conceiv'd against the Doctrines of special Grace, and the Necessity of *Regeneration*, in Order to their future Safety; and have join'd themselves to another, where they seem to hope, they shall find a wider Gate, and a broader Way to eternal Life. Pity it is, that such as these, can't foresee the Consequence of their dangerous Mistake, before its too late. In Order to this, let them seriously reflect upon the following *Corollaries* from what has been said.*

Coroll. 1. It appears from the foregoing Discourse, that the *Regeneration* described in Scripture, and the *Regeneration* described by some of our episcopal Clergy, are two distinct Things, which differ specifically, and are directly repugnant in their Nature and Properties.—This is not a distant and far fetcht Consequence, but what naturally and necessarily flows

from the Premises, and may be received with as full Assurance as we can have in any Case whatsoever. I know Men may wrangle perpetually, and by the Power of Words, make the most desperate Case look something plausible. But I know also, that as Contradictions can never be reconciled, so it is impossible in the present Case, to make the *Regeneration* described by some of our episcopal Clergy, to be the same with that described in Scripture, without making it appear on both Parts true, that all who are born of God, are true Believers; and some that are born of God, may *neither have Faith nor Repentance*; that all who are born of God, do not sin, and cannot sin; and some who are born of God may be in *Impenitency and Hypocrisy*; that all who are born of God, may have his Seed remaining in them that they cannot sin; and some that are born of God, may not have his Seed remain in them, but *may finally fall from Grace*, with sundry more Inconsistencies, before consider'd particularly. This then is no longer a Matter of Speculation, but of utmost Certainty, that they mean one Thing and the Scripture another, by *Regeneration*; and that these are as much two Things, and as truly distinct and different, as any two Things in the World.

Coroll. 2. From hence it further appears, that we *cannot see the Kingdom of God*, in Consequence of these Principles, espoused by some of our episcopal Clergy. How harsh soever the Consequence may be supposed, it is nevertheless infallibly certain.

Our Lord assures us, that without *Regeneration*, we *cannot see the Kingdom of God*.

What these Gentlemen call *Regeneration*, is not the *new Birth* which our blessed Saviour means, and which the Scripture describes: And therefore not the new Birth, by which we must be prepar'd for the Kingdom of God, and without which we can never enter into it. As I have fully prov'd.

Their Principles teach, that there is no other *Regeneration* necessary, than what they describe as above.

The Scripture teaches us, that the Properties and Characters of that *Regeneration*, which is absolutely necessary, in Order to our entering into the Kingdom of God, are essentially distinct and different from the Properties and Characters of that

Regeneration

Regeneration which they describe ; whence it necessarily follows, that we cannot enter into the Kingdom of God in Consequence of their Principles.

By this it appears of what Consequence it is, to be set right in this Matter. — I would not be here misunderstood, as though I determine all such uncapable of the Kingdom of God, who hold the Doctrine which I oppose. No ! I doubt not, but some of these may have experienced in their Hearts, what they oppose in their Heads ; and be practically acquainted, with what they are in Speculation prejudiced against. But these must get to Heaven, in a Way very distant from their Principles ; under the dreadful Disadvantage of a powerful Bias to incline them the wrong Way.

Coroll. 3. It thence also further appears, how much safer it is for our People, to hold fast the Form of sound Words which they have heard, in this important Point, than to venture upon a Change, to these Schemes of our episcopal Clergy — It must be observ'd, that I am not now speaking of the Discipline or Ceremonies of the *Church of England*, whatever Objections may lye against them ; but of this great Article of our Faith and Hope, which is thus subverted by some of their Clergy. — Were it possible they should be in the Right, our Profession is nevertheless safe. We are baptized in Obedience to our Lord's Command, as well as they, and have therefore as fair a Claim to *baptismal Regeneration* as they can have ; and are besides seeking for *Regeneration* distinct from *Baptism*, to qualify us for the Kingdom of God, Here then can be no Danger, if we act up to our Principles ; and experience what we judge necessary to our Salvation. But then, if our Sentiments are right, (which I hope by this Time I have a Claim to suppose) what will become of them, who have no other, and who seek no other than a *baptismal Regeneration*, to qualify them for the Kingdom of God.

Thus I have made some brief Remarks, upon what I esteem'd of the most dangerous Tendency, in Dr. *Waterland's* Discourse of *Regeneration*, hoping that by the divine Blessing, it may be of some Usefulness, for reclaiming some,
who

The Doctrine of Repentance

who have been too soon led away from their Stedfastness ; for establishing others, in the Faith once delivered to the Saints ; and for impressing upon the Minds of our People in general, the last Necessity of their experiencing a greater Change, than the most of them have yet experienced, if they would ever enter into the Kingdom of God.

T H E E N D .

