

# A REPLY

TO THE REVEREND

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Mr. *George Beckwith's* ANSWER,

To Mr. *Green's* SERMON,

ENTITLED,

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

In a LETTER to a FRIEND.

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By *JACOB GREEN*, A. M.

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## A R E P L Y, &c.

S I R,

I HAVE lately read, the Rev. Mr. George Beckwith's book, which he is pleased to call an answer to my sermon on Christian baptism. As this book contains so little, that is properly against me, I did not think there was any need of a reply; especially as I had long before it came out, published my *Inquiry into the constitution and discipline of the Jewish church*; which if attended to, would have shewn the insufficiency of his arguments, taken from the Jewish church, and the covenant with Abraham. I had therefore no design to reply to Mr. Beckwith, till I was informed by yours, that although there is in it so little really to the point in dispute, yet it tends to lead some less thinking people astray, or at least to keep them in ignorance and error.

I have a great reluctance to writing in a manner that is suited to the less thinking sort of mankind, who are generally carried away with positive assertions and specious harangues; and I am sure a few pages will be sufficient to convince all intelligent men that my sentiments, and arguments, stand as they did, notwithstanding what Mr. Beckwith has advanced.

Our author seems not to understand the scheme against which he proposes to write. This he in effect confesses; p. 59. 96. 97. And I think that it is manifest to all who have carefully read his book, that he has no consistent scheme of his

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own. The writers on the opposite side of the question, will communicate no ideas, as long as they but just touch upon points of the most importance, which they should state most clearly, and establish most firmly. They speak of an *external covenant*, profession of religion, visible saints, and moral sincerity, in a manner which conveys no distinct ideas. In my view, the whole controversy, in a great measure turns upon the nature of the covenant, of which the sacraments are seals. They ought therefore to be very particular and clear in stating, and proving their notions of the covenant, especially of *their* external covenant.

I shall endeavour briefly to state the case, and then it will appear what Mr. Beckwith has said to the purpose, and what not.

1. The dispute is not whether we can infallibly know the hearts of others, or be certain who have true grace, and who not. I hold not this.

2. The dispute is not whether there are any fruits, visible signs or evidences by which we may come to an hopeful conclusion, and satisfactory persuasion that persons are truly gracious, so as to look on them, and treat them as really belonging to God, and heartily subject to Jesus Christ. I have conversed with none who deny such evidence. I conclude Mr. Beckwith does not; for he says, p. 12. "The visible saint is to us the *real* saint, and to be treated by us accordingly."

3. The dispute is not, whether God or Christ, as Head of the visible church has, and whether ministers may, and ought to admit unregenerate persons into the church and to sacraments, when they

they appear to be real saints. Unregenerate men have a right in the sight of the church, whenever they exhibit credible evidence of a supreme regard to God, and hearty subjection to him. All with whom I am acquainted, on my side of the question, hold this. See this matter considered in my inquiry, chap. 2.

But positively the dispute is,

1. Whether persons of doctrinal knowledge, and regular in their lives, who yet may have full evidence, and be fully persuaded that they are unregenerate, ought to renew, or enter into covenant with God, and to come to the sacraments while they are unregenerate.

2. Whether the church may receive persons considered as unregenerate, while they exhibit not credible evidence that they are real saints; and without their making to appearance understandingly such a profession of religion, as directly implies a supreme regard to God, and an hearty subjection to Jesus Christ. §

3. Whether God has appointed the sacraments, especially the Lord's-supper as means for some unregenerate men, knowing themselves to be such, to use, in order to their conversion. And whether

§ I suspect that some of my opposers may except to the latter part of this 2d particular, because their covenant or profession implies saving grace, as Mr. Beckwith's does. But it is absurd to make unregenerate men profess that which they know is not true. All my opposers will not except to this, because some of them see the inconsistency of leading unregenerate men to make such a profession; and therefore will not have in their profession, or covenant any thing that at the time of covenanting directly implies saving grace.

ther churches and church officers are to encourage and admit unregenerate men for this purpose.

If I have in any respect mistaken the case, or not stated it properly, I shall be glad to stand corrected.

I view the matter as follows. God requires true believers, or gracious persons, to do something publicly in the character of true believers, or considered as truly gracious persons which the unregenerate cannot properly do. Christ requires gracious persons, as such, to confess him before men, & to do something that is an implicit acknowledgement that they are not of this world, but are on the Lord's side, and have come out from the kingdom of Satan; something to this purpose, or that implies this. -- That unregenerate persons who do this, do that which God does not require them to do, while remaining unregenerate; and which therefore he cannot approve of, it being only for true believers; and being done by unregenerate, is a falsehood. --- I suppose that a proper public profession of religion, and the use of the sacraments, is something which God requires of believers as such. Churches and church officers not being able to discern grace in the hearts of others, but judging by credible evidence, if any unregenerate, (which is often the case) shall put on the appearance of true religion, make the profession, and exhibit the evidence required of true believers, they will, and ought to be admitted by said churches, and church officers. It is the will of God that churches should admit, and treat them according to their credible appearance

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*visible saints are real saints.* And if by their ignorance of others hearts, they admit some unregenerate, yet the rule by which they act, is to admit them as true believers, or *real saints*. It appears to me that these things are intelligible to persons of tolerable capacities, and not uncommonly blinded with preconceived notions. And from this representation, it appears that persons may have a right to the sacraments in the sight of the church when they have not in the sight of God, who judges the hearts, and *seeth not as man seeth*. Hence is that common phrase more than once mentioned by Mr. Beckwith, of having a right *in foro ecclesiae*: i. e. in the view of the church: which has always been supposed may be different from having a right *in foro Dei*; or in view of God.

In my sermon I had expressed myself thus, p. 17. "For tho' I maintain that nothing but the truth and reality of grace, gives right in the sight of God; yet 'tis the credible evidence and outward appearance of it, and nothing else that ministers or the church have any concern with, as to other persons." Would not any one then be tempted to think a man tried hard to be ignorant, and was determined by misquotation, and misrepresentation to fasten an inconsistency and absurdity upon another, to write as Mr. Beckwith does, p. 59, 60. Marginal note. His words are, "Our reverend author [Mr. Green] has a salvo in this case that I can't understand, or reconcile to common sense, viz. *It is (says he) the credible evidence and outward appearance of it, and nothing else, that ministers or churches have*

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“ any concern with as to other persons. Well, if so,  
 “ it is not internal holiness only, as he else where  
 “ says it is, but the opinion or judgment that  
 “ ministers or churches, or both make on persons  
 “ sanctity, gives them a right to come, and let  
 “ them be never so much mistaken in the judg-  
 “ ment they make, yet this mistaken judgment  
 “ gives them a right to come. In the very next  
 “ line above, he had said, *That nothing but the*  
 “ *truth and reality of grace give right in the sight of*  
 “ *God.* And if so, suppose the church are mis-  
 “ taken three or more times, to their judging  
 “ right once. Have all these persons an equal  
 “ right to come, and enjoy ordinances? Don’t  
 “ it imply a flat contradiction, to say, that tis  
 “ internal holiness only that gives a lawful right  
 “ in the sight of God, to come to ordinances;  
 “ and yet at the same time to say that the mini-  
 “ ster or church, or both, judging them to have  
 “ internal holiness, gives them right in the  
 “ sight of God; tho’ indeed they have it not;  
 “ and yet that ’tis his will that none be admitted  
 “ but such as have really internal holiness?  
 “ Don’t this imply that ’tis the will of God that  
 “ the churches admit some contrary to his will.  
 “ But how absurd is this?”

Is it not very abusive, to represent me as say-  
 ing, *that the minister or church, or both judging them*  
*to have internal holiness, gives them a right in the sight*  
*of God?* When there are no such words in my  
 sermon, nor any that imply such a sense: But I  
 had sufficiently distinguished, between that which  
 gives a right in the sight of God, and that which

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does it in the sight of the church. Allow a man  
 to forge words and meaning for another, and any  
 body may be made to appear inconsistent and ab-  
 surd.

I shall not pretend to reply to all that Mr. B.  
 has wrote, for there are nine tenths of his book,  
 that are not against my sermon, and I can spend  
 time much better than to make observations upon  
 what he has predicated. He might have wrote a  
 body of divinity, or a dissertation upon twenty  
 different subjects, and have called it an answer to  
 my sermon, if he had tho’t proper thus to preach  
 to the world. His six premises, which he oddly  
 calls a *clue-line*, contain more than an answer to my  
 sermon need to contain if properly written. In  
 these, which take up near thirty pages, I have  
 very little controversy with him. Indeed he does  
 not propose to differ much with me in most of  
 these; yet in his sixth and last he thinks, he, and  
 I, are considerably opposite. But this particular  
 I esteem the best part of his book. Here he tells  
 us, what he means by a profession, or the cove-  
 nant *which* persons enter into in order to come to  
 ordinances. p. 26, 27. He says, “ When a per-  
 “ son appears before the church to make a pro-  
 “ fession of his faith, and to give up himself to  
 “ God in covenant; this is not to declare what  
 “ he has done, but what he now engages for, &  
 “ most solemnly promises to perform thro’ the  
 “ help of God’s grace, **EVEN** to observe and obey  
 “ *all* the precepts and commands of the covenant,  
 “ or enjoined in the covenant, *all his life after*;  
 “ and that as a means of his growth in know-

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ledge and sanctification to God's heavenly kingdom; and hereupon he receives the seal, as a pledge, and confirmation of such his engagements to be the Lord's, and to keep the covenant. What the duties are which we engage in the covenant to fulfil, he tells us, p. 29. Says he, "In a word, repentance, faith and holy obedience are made the condition on our part, to be performed by us, in order to our being entitled to the salvation promised in the covenant; and our receiving the seal, confirms our promise and engagement to obey and fulfil on our part." § And more to that purpose. According to him, in this covenant and profession, a person engages now, and all his life after to perform the duties of repentance, faith, and holy obedience. This is as much as I desire persons should profess or covenant; and it is what I am sure no unregenerate person can do in conscience, with truth.

This covenanting, according to him, goes before the sacrament, for says he, "He receives the seal as a pledge and confirmation of such his engagement to be the Lord's, and keep the covenant." So that when he receives the seal, it being after he has covenanted, he is certainly a true believer, unless he dealt deceitfully, & mocked God in his covenanting, and did not in heart engage

§ I doubt not some readers will think he speaks in a legal strain, and may suspect that it favours of Arminianism, especially if this was supposed to be the engagement of an unregenerate man. But let them remember Mr. B. has given us his word, that he has a zeal for Calvinism, p. 6. "Tis easy, (says he) to discern our author's zeal for Calvinism, and in this I heartily join with him."

engage what he declared he did, to be thus for God, then and all his life after. And if he did not in heart engage as he declared, then his using the sacrament is not a seal of his real engagement, but rather of a falsehood. No unregenerate person can in words engage, what Mr. B. says professors do, without uttering a falsehood (I say do not wilful) and that in a very momentous case. Every man who is conscious of his being unregenerate, and is calvinistic in his principles, (which Mr. B. who has such zeal for calvinism, surely supposes his professors to be) knows that he has no heart, or disposition to what is contained in Mr. B.'s covenant. No doubt a man of Mr. B.'s orthodoxy, will agree to the most noted calvinistic formulas. If we believe with them, we must believe that, "By original corruption, we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil." † It therefore certainly supposes a renewed gracious heart, to engage in truth, as Mr. B. says professors must. And he is certainly right in requiring such a profession, and engagement, for nothing less than this will be sufficient to render persons visible saints, which he all along insists they must be, in order to come to sacraments: Such visible saints as are to us real saints.

If he has said any thing elsewhere, which is inconsistent with this, it is because his scheme is inconsistent. And what he says inconsistent with this, is against himself, as much as against me. For

† West. Conf. Faith, ch. 6. And New-England Confession, Chap. 6. Mather's Magnalia, Book 5. p. 8.

For he has no scheme at all, if he does not suppose persons must be visible saints, in order to enjoying sacraments.

I have no controversy with Mr. B in what he writes to shew that we cannot know the hearts of others. I have often said the same thing. Nor have I any controversy with him in all that he writes to shew, that the church does not admit persons as knowing the internal state of their souls. I never tho't it did. I dispute not with him in the many pages which he writes to shew, that the church of old had a right to the sacraments as visible saints. I have shewn the same thing in my inquiry. \* Nor do I oppose him in what he writes to shew that the gospel church is in the same covenant essentially with the covenant of Abraham. Now when all these, and some other things, of a similar nature, are set aside, there remains but little in his book; and therefore certainly not much that can be against me. Yet he seems to aim at opposing me; and we must believe there is something against me, if we could but find it.

I had in my sermon, said something against some person's notions of an external covenant. Mr. B. seems, with approbation, to speak of an external covenant, and of persons being in the external covenant, without conveying any ideas, or letting us know what he means by it. If he or any one else,

\* If there is any meaning at all, in what is said of an external covenant, and having a standing in the external covenant, and being visible saints, it must mean that persons are visibly, apparently, and as far as we can see and judge, in the invisible covenant, and in the invisible church, and real saints. *The visible saint is to us the real saint.*

He, would state, and explain this matter, and give a distinct and intelligible view of the external covenant, I would return him my hearty thanks. This is the great *desideratum* in this controversy.

If he has with any clearness stated and proved any thing contrary to my sentiments, it is beyond me to find it. He harangues away upon Abraham's covenant, and the Jews being God's visible church; and often says it plainly appears, that unregenerate men may be in the visible church, and come to the sacraments: And I know not of any body that ever denied this, unless some hot-headed separatists. But if he would hereby intimate that it is agreeable to God's appointment, & revealed will, that unregenerate persons, should come into the church, considered as unregenerate, and not considered as real saints, and truly gracious persons; he must say something more than he has, to prove it. I have (not long since) published a piece on purpose, to undermine, and cut off, all their pretended arguments from the Jewish church, and the covenant with Abraham; and until that is answered, it would be an imposition on the public, for me to repeat what I have there advanced. If I could find in Mr. B.'s answer, any thing to invalidate the little † I have

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said

† *The little I have said.* I designedly express myself thus, because when I preached that sermon, I did not propose to handle that matter fully. I had other things in view respecting the people of my particular charge. In my inquiry into the constitution and discipline of the Jewish church. I have offered but few arguments for my side of the question, for it was not so much my design in that tract, to offer our arguments

said in my sermon to prove that the sacraments belong only to the regenerate, I would not fail to give him credit for it, and take a proper notice of it. He has loosely scattered, here and there, a great deal of the same kind of argumentation, with that which is more briefly summed up, in p. 52, thus, "if 'tis the mind of God that none come to special ordinances but those only who have sanctifying grace, how strange, and unaccountable is it that God should so positively command all to come who had a standing in the external covenant?" I answer, it is no way strange; because they stood there, as visible saints, appearing to be real saints, appearing to have a supreme regard to Jehovah; & he as head of the visible church, considered them as such, & required duties of them accordingly. ¶ What Mr. B. has said, p. 71, 72. of God's entering into covenant with unregenerate men, leads me to observe, that there ought to have been a word or two added in a sentence in my sermon, p. 14. When I there speak against the notion of God's entering into covenant with unregenerate men, it should be added, *as such; or considered as unregenerate.*

ments, as to cut off and preclude, the arguments of the opposite side. I have never yet offered the arguments in support of my side of the question, in any thing which I have published. If I publish what is mentioned in the postscript, they will there appear.

¶ I have ventured thus to answer his interrogation, altho' I confess, I do not know what he means by persons having a *standing in the external covenant.* I answer on supposition it means, persons appearing to be in the internal covenant of grace, and real saints. Mr. B. sometimes uses the phrase *internal covenant of grace:* And mentions persons *being in the internal covenant of grace.*

*rate.* If these words were not in the copy that went to the printer, they ought to have been; for I have been careful to distinguish in that manner, before that sermon was printed, as well as since. Now God's entering into covenant with unregenerate men, if they are not considered as unregenerate, is nothing against my argument. See my Inquiry, p. 9, 10. On reviewing my sermon, I have noticed another defect, tho' not pointed out by Mr. B. When I say, (p. 17.) "Nothing but the truth and reality of grace gives right in the sight of God:" Instead of *but* should be *without.* Nothing without the truth and reality of grace, &c.

Mr. B. several times makes some sort of attempt, to say something against my refusing baptism to some children whose parents are not in full communion. But I can find nothing, that he has advanced that can be formed into an argument, against such refusal. ¶ I had observed that I never yet received from any body, a tolerable answer to this question, *What makes you think 'tis your duty to have your children baptised when you are not fit for the Lord's-table.* Mr. B. attempts to furnish people with an answer, and fills near eight pages to do it. Now let the substance of that question be form'd into a plain proposition thus, *'Tis our duty to have our children baptised, when we are not fit for the Lord's supper.* And I defy all the logicians on earth, to collect out of his whole answer

¶ He opposes to me the opinion of the Synod met at Boston, Anno 1662. But no human authority is to determine this matter.

swer in eight pages, any propositions, which being put together in the form of a syllogism, or syllogisms, will prove, that before-mentioned proposition. To what purpose is it then, to reply to such a writer? If I have to do with an antagonist, I want to have arguments, to feel my opponent, to know where he is, and not to have him empty and fleeting as a shadow. † Mr. B. has several times misquoted my words, and misrepresented my sentiments. It is proper I should take notice of one more instance of this sort of abuse; and give the reader a proper view of the case, p. 75, 76. He represents me as saying, that parents have not a right to have their children baptised, till they actually come to the Lord's-table. His words are, "In p. 18, Mr. Green lays down, what he calls the last qualification for baptism, which, he says, is that persons come into full communion, and partake of the Lord's-supper. Here I beg leave to ask him, which it is that gives the right to baptism, or to parents to have their children baptised; whether it be a person's being really in covenant with God, and a member of the visible church, or his coming to the Lord's-table?" Again, "How can one ordinance or seal (and that not the initiating seal, that lets into the church) give the right to the other, i. e. baptism? I should have tho't, that baptism rather gave the right, or opened the way to the Lord's-supper. If all baptised persons are in the church, and that

† I shall consider and discuss this point of refusing half-members, if I publish the piece mentioned in the postscript.

it is their making a profession, and thereupon receiving baptism, that give them a full or real standing in the church; then certainly it cannot be their coming to the Lord's-supper, that gives the right to baptism, for us or for our children. But on the other hand, 'tis this profession, and baptism, that gives the right to the Lord's-supper. How preposterous it then, to make coming to the Lord's-table, a term or qualification for baptism? "They must have baptism first as a qualification for coming to the Lord's-supper." Again, p. 78, says he, "I cannot agree with him in this, viz. That coming to the Lord's-table, is the *only thing* that gives right to baptism." The world would judge by these words of his, and more to the same purpose, that if he represented things right, I had maintained that parents must actually come to the Lord's table, before they had a right to have their children baptised. Whereas I have never said any such thing, nor ever tho't of maintaining it: Nor are there any words, in my sermon that would lead any one to think so. My Words are, p. 18. "Fifth and last qualification for baptism, which is, that persons come into full communion *with a design* to partake of the sacrament of the Lord's-supper." Mr. B. says, Mr. Green lays down as a qualification, that persons come into full communion *and* partake of the Lord's-supper. But my words are, *with a design* to partake, &c. There is a difference between having a design, and actually partaking. It is well known that my design, and the

the tenor of that discourse was to prevent persons coming, as half way members (as some call them) who obtain baptism, without considering themselves as being in full communion in the church, & without a design to come to the Lord's-table on the first opportunity. But the whole tenor of his arguing is, as, if I required them actually to come to the Lord's-table, in order to have a right to have their children baptized. A man must have a great fondness for writing, and finding fault with others, who can raise such matter for discourse, and expatiate upon it, as he does.

After having done the like several times before, he again, in p. 96, 97, tells us, of things unintelligible, and beyond him to reconcile. I shall only change a few words, putting some of his qualifications in the room of some of mine, and exhibit his own argumentation, and see if he can understand himself. I take it for granted, that Mr. B. supposes, some internal qualifications are so necessary to external covenanting, and coming to sacraments, that without them, persons have not a right in the sight of God to come. I suppose he would grant that a speculative belief of the scripture, that Jesus of Nazareth was the true Messiah, and moral sincerity are necessary; all which are out of the sight of man as much as sanctifying grace. For brevity we will say moral sincerity, and belief that Jesus is the Christ. ¶

Now

¶ Mr. B. speaking of those on his side of the question says, p. 44.—“We have a sure foundation to go upon, in determining who have a right to the seals, & who not, viz. Such as are of sound principles in the christian faith, and morally sincere in their covenanting; this gives a right to the seals.”

Now let me proceed and expostulate (not to say reason) with him, according to his own language thus, *Mr. Beckwith says in one place, that nothing without moral sincerity, and belief that Jesus is the Christ, gives right in the sight of God, to come to the sacraments; and yet in another place he says it is the credible evidence and appearance of these qualifications, and nothing else that ministers and churches have concern with, as to other persons. And again, ministers and churches are not to pretend to discern the heart, or determine who are internally morally sincere, or believe that Jesus is the Christ: Ministers can only judge of what is external, and apparent; they cannot know the heart of others, or have internal evidence of moral sincerity and belief that Jesus is the Christ. How can Mr. Beckwith reconcile himself to, and believe such inconsistent things? That it is the mind of God that none should come to the seals, unless they have moral sincerity and believe that Jesus is the Christ; and at the same time hold, that those who are to admit them, can have no internal evidence, by which to make a positive judgment, whether they that are to be admitted, have moral sincerity, or believe that Jesus is the Christ, and of consequence, whether they have a right, and ought to come, or not. How can these things be reconciled? It should in good earnest write thus, and appeared to be unable to distinguish, as is easy to do, in this case, would not others justly think that before I took upon me to pronounce very positively concerning things unintelligible and irreconcilable. I ought to have been sent to school to learn some distinctions; not to say metaphysics; for this word is a most dreadful scare-crow,*

crow, with some of our moderns who love to deal in darkness and confusion.

As to the opinion of the protestant churches in general, (of which he speaks p. 99, 100) whether their sentiments have been most agreeable to his opinion, or to mine, is a matter so plain, and apparent to all, that understand church history, that I am willing to leave it as it is, without saying any thing more upon it.

His favourite author, Mr. Blake, so largely quoted in his postscript, has so often been refuted, within a century past, that it would be mispending time, for any one to do it again.

These, sir, are all the remarks upon Mr. Beckwith's book, which I think the nature of the case at this time requires.

I am, Sir, &c.

JULY 10, 1760.

POSTSCRIPT.

## POSTSCRIPT.

**A** REPLY to Mr. Beckwith's book, did not require that the controversy concerning the sacraments should be largely handled; and there are various reasons, why I should not in this reply, enter very particularly into the dispute. Yet I suspect the state of the churches in this land requires this matter to be distinctly and clearly stated, and the arguments set in a proper light.

I have prepared some few materials for a larger treatise on this subject; not by way of answer to any particular author or authors (for this is tedious and unprofitable,) but if possible to give a proper view of the subject: believing, that if it were set in a proper light, impartial considerate persons would see which side they ought to fall in with. Especially might it be useful to candidates for the gospel ministry, who are persons of great importance to the church of Christ. If it should be tho't proper to proceed in this work, and to publish it, I shall endeavour to state the case, so, as if possible, it shall appear to all, what the dispute is not, and what it really is.

I shall endeavour to make use of opponents, men of my acquaintance, on the other side of the question, men of candor and ingenuity. They shall have opportunity (before it is printed) to see whether their sentiments are properly represented

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or not, and to set me right if I should mistake in that matter. From them also I shall hope for assistance, in representing my side of the question; that there may be nothing unfair in that. So that, if possible, neither party shall complain of mistake or misrepresentation. All I desire is, that truth may appear in its proper light. I cannot but think, rational, candid men might get nearer together in this controversy, if they would keep to the point, and attend to the reason and nature of things.

In this tract, I shall consider the arguments, and objections advanced by Mess. *Matber, Beckwith, Devotion*, and other late writers on the subject. And shall especially attend to the consideration of the covenant state of infants, and the consequences of this covenant state, with respect to these same infants when grown up in the church, and come to adult age; as something of this kind, seems to be the most powerful argument on their side, and is supposed to be the most specious objection against mine.

I shall add an appendix concerning the discipline of baptised children, or youth; in which will be humbly proposed the design, method and importance of disciplining them. And this matter will be earnestly pressed upon the churches from the beneficent design of infant baptism, and with a view to stop the mouths of Anabaptists, or others, who say infant baptism is of no advantage.

I shall proceed with this treatise or not, according as I understand from others, that it is tho't  
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the state of the church requires it or not. If it is published, the whole will contain about an hundred pages, common octavo, and the price not much, if any thing exceed, a quarter of a dollar.

I have a friendly, Christian affection, for many of those, on the other side of the question. I hope we are all seeking light. If any of them should write again, I cannot but hope, and humbly request, that they will state the case very distinctly; and especially that they will shew what they mean by the external covenant, and prove that there is such a covenant. They must consider, theirs is the positive side of the point; they assert the thing, it is theirs to prove it, not properly ours to prove that there is not such a covenant; here we are properly opponents.----We want to know the nature of that covenant, the terms of it, the design of it and in what manner unregenerate men, as such, can engage in it.

It is also desired that they would clearly shew, what they mean by the visible church. Also, how persons can be visible saints, when there is nothing in their character, not so much as in their profession, that makes them appear, out of the character of the unregenerate. Or thus, whether persons can be, and in what sense they can be, visible saints, and visibly unregenerate, at the same time.

**T H E E N D.**