

AN EPISTLE TO MR. ALBERTUS PIETERS

CONCERNING THE HOW AND WHY OF WATER BAPTISM

Chicago, December 1, 1931.

Mr. Albertus Pieters, Holland, Mich.

Dear Mr. Pieters

“Blessed are the peace makers.” Some of our mutual acquaintances who reside in your State are not attempting to secure this promised blessing; but on the contrary are apparently desirous of prolonging the controversy which seems to exist between you and myself on account of our difference of opinion as to what the Bible teaches concerning Water Baptism. When you wrote your first letter relating to the article which appeared in your church paper concerning my speaking engagements at the Bethany Reformed Church, Chicago, I was very much hurt because of your very unkind and untruthful statements. But after much prayer in which the Lord enabled me to forgive you, knowing that I was outside of your ecclesiastical jurisdiction and responsible to my Saviour and Lord, I destroyed the letter in which I rebuked you for what I thought to be a deliberate falsehood on your part. Another reason why I dropped the matter was because of a very friendly and satisfactory conversation which I had with the Pastor of the Bethany Reformed Church, in which we stated our mutual regrets that you should attempt to create any breach between us because of your feeling against certain “Undenominational” preachers in Michigan. When we closed our conversation the Pastor of the Bethany Reformed Church assured me that he would be happy to welcome me to his pulpit. The statements made in that article which you wrote were absolutely untrue, and my judgment is that you should be very slow about denouncing a fellow-saint who may happen to disagree with you, especially before you first confess your deliberate misrepresentation of facts to carry your point with the members of the Reformed Church, who might feel inclined to be friendly with one whom you seem to hate with an unholy hatred.

I have just received a copy of “The Leader” in which you continue your abuse, and I now feel it my duty to reply to same for the sake of the Truth of God. My candid opinion is that you want to include me in your malicious enmity against Pastor M. R. DeHaan because of my fellowship with him. So far as your disagreement with me concerning Water Baptism, you must know by this time that I am battle-scarred, for I have been abused, boycotted, misrepresented and ostracized by other servants of the Lord who have delivered me unto judgment because I would not accept their interpretation of the why and how of Water Baptism. I should say “interpretations,” because they disagree among themselves, most of them believing that your meaning and mode of Water Baptism is rank heresy. And thus the battle rages. Now, what are we going to do about it? From your viewpoint, the matter is very simple: Mr. O’Hair must confess that he is the heretic, or begin to practice some kind of baptism. So herein, I propose to explain to you just why I am unwilling to make this confession or to baptize with water just now. Your charge that I am immoral because I am a friend of Dr. DeHaan is so utterly unkind and unreasonable that my only remark is a suggestion that you avail yourself of the Throne of Grace and get forgiveness and rid yourself of that root of bitterness lest you be consumed.

You and Dr. DeHaan and I should be united with our Spiritual weapons against the great Adversary, our common foe, instead of giving sinners and backsliders occasion to stumble over the folly of those whom the Risen Lord has trusted with at least some place of leadership. Shall we not remember the best gift? "Though I have prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge: and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing." Your injustice has forced me to this method of defense; only for the Truth's sake.

I have carefully read the two booklets which you sent me, the one containing the message entitled, "Jonah, The Whale and Dr. M. R. DeHaan," and the other with the message "Why We Baptize Infants." In the first of these two messages, on page 10, you admit that among many members of the Reformed Church there is growing up a distinct hostility to the "Premillenarians'" interpretation of the Bible. You further state in the same paragraph that Mr. Bultema, Mr. Bennink and Dr. DeHaan have made premillennialism as interpreted in the Scofield Bible, a stench in the nostrils of honest Christian men. I do not doubt that this blessed doctrine is a stench in your nostrils, and it is my honest opinion that your relentless hatred for this Blessed Truth is the chief cause for your continuous attacks upon Dr. DeHaan and other brethren, including myself. Moreover I know hundreds of "Honest Christian Men" in your State who are constantly praising God for raising up true servants like Mr. Bultema, Mr. Bennink and Dr. DeHaan to deliver them from the folly and delusion of "Postmillennialism," for the support of which there is not a verse of Scripture in the Bible.

In my honest opinion; Dr. C. I. Scofield was God's greatest human gift to the Church in this generation. You well know that his interpretation of the Premillennial Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is the view generally held by Premillenarians. Then why should you seek to discredit this man of God with your people when on the same page you write these words: "It is emphatically no discredit to a man, in the Reformed Church in America, to be a premillenarian?"

On page 14 of your book on Infant Baptism you state: "I do not know how infant baptism could be defended upon such principles." The "such principles" to which you refer is the common view held by Pre-millenarians, whether they be associated with the Baptist, or Congregational, or Presbyterian, or Methodist, or Episcopal, or Lutheran, or Reformed or Christian Reformed Church; that is, that the Old Testament Law Dispensation was, and this present Dispensation of Grace or Church Age is, a temporary and parenthetical age; and therefore there has not been an unbroken continuity in the Abrahamic Covenant, so far as Church truth is concerned. You therefore admit that no Pre-millenarian can conscientiously defend Infant Baptism. Would you have a Christian man be insincere or dishonest by continuing to practice Infant Baptism after the Lord has opened his eyes to the Premillennial truth? According to your own admission, Premillennialism and Infant Baptism are irreconcilable. You would lead one to believe in your booklet that you held nothing against Dr. DeHaan because he was converted to the Premillennial interpretation of the Coming of the Lord, that had he continued preaching this truth there would have been no opposition on your part had he not ceased the practice of Infant Baptism; and yet you have admitted a Pre-millenarian could not defend it. Would not a Premillenarian who would continue to defend it for the sake of holding his pastorate or keeping peace in the denomination be a hypocrite? I cannot believe that you are sincere in your statements, but if sincere, you are inconsistent. I believe that every Christian should be honest, sincere and consistent. Because of this, I would not preach Infant Baptism in a Baptist denomination any more than I would preach Immersion in a Presbyterian Church. Now the first point of importance is, that you have admitted that a Christian cannot believe in Dr. Scofield's Dispensational divisions of the Bible and believe in Infant Baptism. I believe with all my heart in

these divisions and my testimony is, that this more satisfactory knowledge of the Bible has not in any way diminished my love for the Lord Jesus Christ. I love Him with all my heart and I am so glad that He is the Judge to whom I am responsible instead of some self-appointed or man-made ecclesiastical “boss.” Now for

THE WHY AND HOW OF WATER BAPTISM

Of course, you are already aware of the fact that Dr. DeHaan and I do not fully agree as to the “why and how of water baptism.” But there is such a vast difference between your “why and how” and his “why and how,” that if one is scriptural, the other is altogether unscriptural: they have nothing in common. Moreover, you and Dr. DeHaan and I represent only the triangle of the matter, which has so many sides that it is an unnamable polygon. The chief Fundamental Baptist Overseer in Michigan disagrees with all three of us. He insists on Baptist Church baptism. I disagree with him, therefore he wrote in his church paper that I was a traitor to the Lord. Like yourself, he got quite hot-headed in his denunciation. But as you know, the Baptists have their differences within their own denomination, as some of them insist that their church was founded by John the Baptist. Others of them say that John the Baptist was an Old Testament prophet, that their church began on the Day of Pentecost; and yet even these say that they would not preach to an unsaved Gentile Peter’s Pentecostal message to the House of Israel, “Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins.” I preached for several weeks in a Baptist Church where more than one hundred people were saved, including some of their members, and when Communion day came I was excluded from the table because my immersion had not been at the hands of a Baptist. They called it “close baptism.” Perhaps, you know something of the religious feud that has gone on for years between the Baptists and the Campbellites in the South, because the Baptists teach that a person should be baptized with water because he is saved, and the Campbellites teach he must be baptized with water in order to be saved. And then the non-Progressive Campbellites will not accept members from the Progressive Campbellites without re-baptizing them. One of the leading Fundamental Baptist preachers of New York received into the membership of his church several Baptists who had been baptized by a very spiritual Baptist preacher in the Name of the Lord Jesus and he required them to be re-baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

A short time ago the pastor of the Christian Church in this neighborhood called on me to ask me where I got my strange ideas about Water Baptism. He declared I had never been born of water, because I had not been baptized in water for the remission of sins. He didn’t know that I had been christened with holy water when a little babe. This water was sprinkled on me to take away my original sin and make me a Christian. I asked him if he believed the “well of water springing up” and the “living water flowing from within” in the fourth and seventh chapters of John respectively were literal or figurative. He was sure they were figurative but the water in the third of John was literal. He believes one must be buried and born at the same time in water. I attended a Lutheran Church a short time ago. The preacher’s sermon was “How to Become a Christian.” He said many became Christians by accident, that is, by Infant Baptism.

I was teaching the Book of Acts at a Bible Conference in Western Pennsylvania. The Word stirred up some of the religious people there. You could tell they were religious by the religious clothing they wore. There was a division among them because of baptism. Some taught that unless the believer was put under the water three separate times and practiced the washing of other disciples’ feet, he would not go to heaven, and should not be permitted to partake of the

Lord's supper. Now you can imagine that I was in as bad with them as I am with you. But they did not close my mouth any more than you will.

One of our leading Fundamental warriors residing in New York edits a magazine in which he earnestly contends for the faith. He is silent on the question of baptism. He has expressed himself confidentially to friends, but prefers that his position be kept from the public. He believes in putting babies under the water, although he doesn't seem to practice what he preaches. Because I disagree with him, he declares that I am tinged with Bullingerism. Up to the present moment I have never read one single line written by Mr. Bullinger on the question of water baptism. Aside from water baptism, I do not think I would agree with the teachings of Mr. Bullinger to any further extent than would this New York Fundamentalist. But as he spends much of his time judging other servants of God, I could not expect to escape.

Those who know me know that if I believed in sprinkling or immersing infants I would not be afraid to preach my convictions. This outstanding New York preacher disagrees with one of our outstanding champions of the faith who resides in Chicago, who does not believe in Household baptism. This Chicago preacher declares that water baptism is a witness to the world, although he hasn't a verse of Scripture to support this statement. He teaches that the "One Baptism" in the Fourth Chapter of Ephesians is water baptism, which to my mind is very unsound exegesis. To support this he teaches that there has been no Holy Spirit Baptism since the experience of Cornelius about the middle of the first century. The Fourth chapter of Ephesians speaks of UNITY. There is One Body. One Faith. One Baptism. Nothing has destroyed the Unity among God's children as has the more than twenty varieties of water baptism and the Holy Spirit foreknew this condition when He dictated to Paul. This Chicago preacher is a man of God, but he would not agree with you for one moment in the matter of Water Baptism. He teaches that there is water in the sixth chapter of Romans as well as in Colossians 2:12 and Galatians 3:27; that Water Baptism is believer's baptism, a burial in water. I love the Lord and His Word, but I do not believe this for one moment. I am positive that the moment a believer receives Christ and believes the Gospel of Grace, he is sealed with the Holy Spirit, which is the evidence of His acceptance with God, and the assurance that he is crucified with Christ, dead with Christ, raised with Christ and seated with Christ in the heavenlies. And as he cannot be dead and raised with Christ without being buried, I believe that every believer is buried with Christ by baptism the very moment he is saved, and to read water into the sixth of Romans or the other Scriptures mentioned is to teach water baptismal regeneration. I would like to agree with some of these dear brethren for the sake of unity, but to me their teaching is as unscriptural as is yours.

I can easily understand why denominations and sects that confuse law and grace, Israel and the Church, must have some kind of water baptism. But here is my difficulty; I cannot understand why men who know the truth concerning the Body of Christ in this age cling to water and yet do not include in their program miracles, healings, oil, tongues, casting out demons, supernatural visions and demonstrations. Remember, my attitude is one of earnestly, honestly seeking light on this subject.

The disciples of Chas. T. Russell and Judge Rutherford practice water immersion. So do the Mormons. So do the Seventh Day Adventists. So do the Pentecostals. All of these call the Church, "Israel," and mix up the Jewish religion with its law in their creeds. And if I am not mistaken, the Reformed Church is to some extent guilty of this same blunder. What scriptural rights have you to force on the Church of Christ a part of Israel's program and utterly disregard

other parts? Is it not true that he that is circumcised is debtor to the whole law? Then how much or how little of Israel's law and program can be mixed in with the Grace of Christ?

Must I teach and preach concerning Water Baptism that which I do not believe for the sake of your approval? Must I keep silent for fear of arousing to wrath those who may disagree with me? I know many preachers who are doing this very thing. Believe me, when I say I would not willingly and knowingly teach error for all the world, and I am earnestly seeking for the truth concerning Water Baptism. I respect the gift of other Christian teachers, but I will not be sheep-like and follow such teaching on this subject as is contained in your "Why We Baptize Infants?"

I refresh your mind as to the language you used in The Leader in condemning me: "Such a man could not stand in the pulpit of any self-respecting denomination." Now, before I proceed to examine your message on Baptism in the light of the Scriptures, will you kindly name one of the "Self-respecting Denominations" mentioned in the Bible? There is no mention in the Bible of a Reformed Church, or a Baptist Church, or a Methodist Church. I grant you that there are many of the true saints of God in these different denominations, but the Bible Church of Christ is not a denominational or an interdenominational institution.

I am positively sure that the Holy Spirit definitely directed me in leading the people whom I pastor to the Undenominational position. I am absolutely certain that this is the true scriptural position, while at the same time I am well aware that certain Undenominational groups may drift into heresy or fanaticism. We ever welcome to our pulpit Christian men of sound faith as to the great fundamentals, regardless of their Water Baptism views or Denominational or Anti-denominational position.

Now to the Why and How of Water Baptism as set forth in your booklet. I desire to examine in the light of the Scriptures just four of the points covered in your message:

1. HISTORIC CHRISTIANITY
2. THE CONTINUITY OF THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT
3. THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AND THE BODY OF CHRIST ARE IDENTICAL
4. WATER BAPTISM IS TO THE NEW COVENANT WHAT CIRCUMCISION WAS TO THE OLD

HISTORIC CHRISTIANITY

You state on page 8: "The Bible is entirely silent about Infant Baptism, either pro or con. We admit it. We do not profess to get Infant Baptism from its pages." "He would not find Infant Baptism in the Bible, because it is not there, and cannot be gotten out of the Bible."

After you have made this admission you add, "We do profess to justify Infant Baptism from its pages. That is a very different thing." (Page 9.) May I state to you that I have employed this very same principle in reaching the conclusion that Tongues, Sign Healings, Angelic Deliverances, Raising the Dead, Supernatural and Heavenly Visions, Discerning of Spirits, Casting Out Demons, Pronouncing Divine Judgments and other Miracles, which had their God-given place in the program of the Apostolic Church, waned and passed out with the passing of the Apostles. Inasmuch as you give no place to these Divers Miracles in the creed and practices of the Reformed Church, I take it for granted that you have employed some method of Bible study in explanation of the difference between the program of the Apostolic Church and your Denomination in this respect. Perhaps the outstanding difference in your method and mine is the fact that I do not seek to prove anything by a mixture of the Word of God with Historic Christianity, but by the Bible alone, whereas much of your argument is Church History. What

cannot the Seventh Day Adventists and Catholics and Church of England and others prove by Church History? You well know that the early Church fathers did not agree on many Christian doctrines and practices; that by these fathers both the Presbyterians and the Baptists prove and disprove Infant Baptism. The Catholic would say that there is no definite statement in Scripture concerning their doctrine of Purgatory, but they can justify it from Scripture and Historic Christianity. I prefer to support a Bible doctrine by the Bible. I hope I will not be considered egotistical in making the statement that I believe I have made a much stronger case in justifying my position on Water Baptism than you have in support of your Why and How, and have done so without the strong appeal to Historic Christianity that you have made.

It would be of interest to me to hear your explanation of the Why and When of the cessation of Tongues and other Miracles. Is it not a fact that there is not the Bible record of the baptism of any believer after the Nineteenth of Acts, and that the people then baptized received the Holy Spirit by the imposition of Apostolic hands after which they spoke with Tongues? If the last recorded case of Water Baptism was accompanied by Tongues, why should baptized believers today not speak with Tongues? Bear in mind, that I do not say they should, even if I err in believing that Water Baptism ceased when Tongues ceased. I want it perfectly clear to you, that I may be mistaken, and I would like to be set right by the Scriptures and not by Church History or a Denominational Creed.

Here is a concrete example of what I am submitting. One of the most splendid Bible teachers with whom I am acquainted is the pastor of a Baptist Church in New York. One Wednesday evening he gave an exposition on these verses: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. But he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark 16:15 and 16. And he closed the book. It would have been very interesting if he had incorporated in his exposition the next two verses: "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out demons; they shall speak with new tongues. They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." This dear old warrior, to whom I owe so much, not only feeds his sheep but he can handle the wolves as well as any servant of the Lord I have met, and I know that any one found in his congregation, trying to practice any part of the seventeenth or eighteenth verses above quoted, would be handled with little mercy. And we would not allow it in our services, and I do not believe you would. Why would the three of us oppose that which was commanded by the Lord Jesus Christ after His death and resurrection? When this preacher preached on: "HE THAT BELIEVETH AND IS BAPTIZED SHALL BE SAVED", he certainly dealt harshly with preachers who believe what you believe and what I believe, and you know how some Immersionists do handle their opponents. I have been roughly handled. In his remarks he said, "what God hath joined together (faith and baptism) let no man put asunder." Now that sounds well, but I think I could show that preacher that he has put asunder several of the things that God joined together during the period of the early Church covered by the Book of Acts. That preacher seemed to be unconscious of the order of his text, "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," for he taught a different order in his message, "he that believeth and is saved shall be baptized." All Baptists teach this order, which certainly should be the order, if Water Baptism is for this age. But what right has any man to change God's order, as in this verse, where baptism preceded salvation? Within several years after this Wednesday evening sermon a sensational Healing preacher reached New York and in certain religious circles he created some sensations. Many testified of miraculous healings. Perhaps the preacher was sincere, but if insincere, he had results sufficient to establish the fact with the

people whom he deceived that Mark 16:17 and 18 is the program of the Church for today. He not only demonstrated his claim, but incorporated all four of the verses in the sixteenth chapter of Mark to prove that miracles and water baptism are linked together in the commission of the Lord and in the experience of His apostles in the Acts. Did that Baptist preacher denounce him as a heretical religious fraud? I should say he did. He did a good job of it, but he violated his own principle, putting asunder what God had joined together and did not successfully prove by the Scriptures when and why signs and miracles ceased. The Gentiles were made obedient, by word and deed, "Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God." Romans 15:18 and 19. Why not these signs and wonder today? Answer that question, not from Historic Christianity, for that is altogether unsatisfying to the mind of the child of God, but do so from the Holy Scriptures; and if you can successfully divorce signs and wonders from anointing with oil, discerning of spirits, and water baptism, you can do something that I am unable to do, after a careful and thorough study for many years. I believe that all Apostolic physical contacts used by the Lord for the impartation of Divine blessings ceased when the Church of Christ was led out of the Kingdom aspect of truth into the full sunlight of the Grace of Christ. I believe there was a transition period in the early church, that while the Jew's temple remained in Jerusalem where the Apostles to the Circumcision made their headquarters, God's order was "to the Jew first," and that during that period there were religious ceremonies practiced by "the Jews which believed" that were forbidden "the Gentiles which believed;" and that, included in the program of both believing Jews and Gentiles there were Divine visitations, gifts and ceremonies which ceased to have any part with either of these two groups of believers after Paul reached Rome as a prisoner. Surely you must know of the agreement recorded in Galatians 2:7 and 9; that the Twelve apostles were to be ministers to the Jews, and Paul, to the Gentiles. Surely you must know that aside from Cornelius, there is no record in the Book of Acts that Peter preached to a Gentile; and that none of the other eleven apostles preached to a single Gentile, and not one of them preached out of the Land of the Jews during the period of the Book of Acts. I am talking about the Book of Acts and not about Historic Christianity. If you will carefully compare Philippians 3:4 to 9, one of Paul's prison epistles, in which he deems as absolutely worthless his former religious zeal in Judaism, with Paul's two statements in Acts 23:5 and 6, you will at least be led to wonder a bit that in the presence of Ananias, the Jewish high-priest who was a persecuting enemy of Jesus Christ, Paul should quote in making his apology Israel's Old Testament law which was done away with at Calvary, "for it is written that, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people." Were these unbelieving Jews, who were guilty of the murder of their Messiah, still the people of God? Why did Paul thus apologize twenty-seven years after Christ put an end to Judaism on the cross? Why did Paul say in the next verse, "I am a Pharisee." He did not say I was, but I am. Are there any faithful and obedient members of the Church of Christ today who are Pharisees? During the period covered by the Book of Acts, Paul was in the perfect will of God every time he became a Jew to the Jews, because God had not severed His relation with that people as a nation. But a most revolutionary change took place at the close of that period. By the urging of James the Lord's brother, Paul sat in the temple of the Jews at Jerusalem in the year 60 A.D., for seven days he was under a Jewish vow, becoming a Jew to the Jews. But by common consent of the Apostles to the circumcision and Paul, the Lord's chosen vessel to the Gentiles, this order had been issued and diligently defended by Paul, "As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing." Acts 21:25 and 15:18. I cannot accept the teaching of any man who states that Paul in circumcising Timothy and observing other Jewish rites and ceremonies was out of the will of

God. Think of his inconsistency, if such were the case, when he blamed and severely criticized Peter (Galatians 2:12 to 16), and said at the close of his ministry, "I have fought a good fight." Note his "always" in II Corinthians 2:14.

THE CONTINUITY OF THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

One of your most important Scriptural appeals for your justification of Infant Baptism is your belief in the unbroken continuity of the Abrahamic Covenant. I must say that I have spent many, many hours tracing this Covenant through from the twelfth chapter of Genesis to the last of the Revelation, and have found it a very deep study. In referring to this Covenant in the eleventh chapter of Romans, the Apostle Paul, under the Holy Spirit, stated that which I believe with all my heart, "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." (Romans 11:29). We most assuredly know that Israel was delivered from Egypt, because of God's covenant with Abraham. Exodus 2:24. We most assuredly know that they were preserved in their journey from Egypt to Canaan and reached that promised land, because of that oath-supported covenant. Exodus 32:13— Exodus 33:1—Leviticus 26:42—Deuteronomy 34:4—Joshua 24:3—II Kings 13:23—"He hath remembered His covenant for ever, Which covenant He made with Abraham—and confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant; Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan." Psalm 105:7 to 12.

I am such a firm believer in the continuity of the Abrahamic Covenant that I know that the Jews are yet going to occupy the Land which God has guaranteed to them; that God is going to fulfil the prophecy of Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, recorded in Luke 1:67 to 79. Not only is there in this prophecy the pledge of the remission of sins as mentioned in Luke 1:77, but the national deliverance for His earthly people Israel, mentioned in Luke 1:74.

I think that one great difference between us concerning the Abrahamic Covenant is, that you believe that only that part which refers to Abraham's spiritual seed or children is now being fulfilled, or will in the future be fulfilled; whereas I believe that there will be a literal fulfillment of this Covenant in the re-establishment of the Jewish Commonwealth in Canaan, at which time the Abrahamic Covenant, the Davidic Covenant of II Samuel 7:12 to 17 and the New Covenant of Jeremiah 31:31 to 34 will all head up in Israel's national restoration. I am sure that it will be after this fulfillment that the Gentile nations will be saved, because God's promise and oath to Abraham was, "In thy seed shall all families of the earth be blessed."

By a pastor of a Christian Reformed Church I was asked several very interesting questions concerning Abraham's relation to the Body of Christ. His first question was this, "do you believe Romans 4:16, that Abraham is the father of us all?" "Yes," I replied, "but not in the same sense that he was the father of the nation Israel under the Old Covenant." Then he asked this question, "if you believe that Abraham is the father of the members of the Body of Christ, do you believe that the father and his children are going to be in different groups in eternity?" That was a thought-provoking question, even provoking, me to write my booklet entitled, "Unscriptural Cathedrals or "Are We Children of the Covenant?" It is in that message that we refute the argument of those who say that Abraham cannot be included in the New Testament Church, because he was an Old Testament character. Abraham was not an Old Testament character. Neither Abraham, Isaac, Jacob nor any of the twelve sons of Israel spent one day under the Old Testament or Covenant. They died before God took the children of Israel out of Egypt and entered into the Old Covenant with them, about 1490 B.C. Jeremiah 31:32 and 33—Hebrews 8:7 to 13. When Abram believed God and was declared righteous he was an

uncircumcised Gentile. The only religion he ever had was his heathen religion before he believed God, and after that he had righteousness, yea, the righteousness of God; but he had no religion. It was 430 years after he was declared righteous without the deeds of the law, that God entered into the Old Covenant with Israel, through Moses, and added the Law and the Religion of the Jews.

“The Law was added till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made.” Galatians 3:19. The Seed came and abolished the Law and put an end to the Old Covenant and established the New. II Corinthians 3:11. Hebrews 8:13 and Hebrews 10:9. Therefore, the Law Dispensation was only a temporary and parenthetical dispensation, added to the promise which God gave to Abraham; that is, to the gospel by which he was saved, till Christ came and blotted out the handwriting of ordinances at Calvary. When the Law was added to the Gospel of Grace preached before to Abraham there was also added carnal ordinances, divers washings or baptisms, meats and drinks, which constituted the Religion of the Jews. When the veil in the temple was rent from top to bottom, the time of the reformation was at hand, and Judaism was dealt a death blow. But for some reason in the plan of the Lord there was an overlapping period during which for some years after the coining of the Holy Spirit some of the ceremonies and rites of Judaism were carried over into the New Testament Age, and it was not until the year 62 A.D. that the Lord chose through Paul in the second chapter of Ephesians and the second chapter of Colossians to declare the full truth concerning the relation of the death of Christ to the Middle Wall of Partition between Jew and Gentile erected at Sinai.

“The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before (the Law) the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, “In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.” Galatians 3:8 and 9. “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” Galatians 3:29. If the Twelve apostles preached to the Jews the same message that Paul preached to the Gentiles, why must Paul call attention to the fact that Scripture foresaw, when God justified Abraham by faith, that the heathen in this Dispensation would be justified by faith, why must he single out the heathen, if heathen were included in the message of Peter and the eleven on the Day of Pentecost? They were not. Neither did Paul work under Peter’s keys. The message which Paul preached to the heathen he received directly from Christ in heaven, the Grace of Christ. Galatians 1:6, Galatians 1:11 and 12. This message of Grace was sent to the heathen to provoke the Jews to jealousy. Romans 11:11. This message was not the message of Matthew, Mark and Luke, when Jesus Christ was a minister to the circumcision. Romans 15:8.

On page 14, you state the belief of the Premillenarian in these words: “They believe that the continuous development of this covenant people is for a time suspended, because of unbelief, that in the “parenthesis” in history thus produced the church has its day; but that sooner or later, with the conversion of the Jews, this parenthesis will come to an end, and the interrupted development of the covenant people will be resumed.”

This leads us to the consideration of the third point”

“ARE THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IDENTICAL?”

First I quote from your “Infant Baptism” booklet, page 16—“The prophet Jeremiah, in a noble passage (Jeremiah 31:31), says the days are coming when there shall be a new covenant with the house of Israel. He says specifically with the house of Israel, but the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews expounds this as the foretelling of the new dispensation. To him the house of Israel is identical with the Christian Church.” “We are the covenant people.”

You have used the word “dispensation” so I shall use the same word. You have spoken of the “new” dispensation; so I take it for granted that you believe in the dispensational divisions of the Bible. I do too. But I presume you agree with other post-millenarians who say there are only two dispensations, the Old Covenant and the New Covenant; that the Old Covenant began with the creation of Adam and the New Covenant began with the birth of Christ.

I am sure that the Old Covenant was not established until 2,500 years after Adam’s transgression in the Garden and that there were several dispensations before Jehovah and Israel made their contract at Sinai.

I am equally sure that the new dispensation or Covenant did not begin with the birth of Jesus Christ at Bethlehem; for I read in God’s word that when God’s Son was made of a woman, He was made under the Law or Old Covenant. Jesus Christ was not born as King of the Church which is His body; but as King of the Jews. In no Jewish message in the Old Testament is there a prophecy that God’s Son is coming from heaven to be the Head of the Church. He that should come was born as Israel’s Messiah and King. This Messiah spent His first thirty years in a Jewish home, worshipping as a Jew under the Old Testament. He was circumcised when eight days old and baptized when thirty years old. According to your belief, circumcision belonged to the Old Covenant which God made with the House of Israel and baptism introduced the New Covenant which God made with the House of Israel. It would seem according to such reasoning, that Christ spent His first thirty years under the Old Covenant and His last four under the New Covenant. But this is wholly contrary to the plain teaching of the Word of God, for until Christ died on the cross the Holy Spirit was not given, John 7:39. Until He was raised from the dead and ascended into heaven the Holy Spirit did not come. And the Holy Spirit is the witness of the New Covenant mentioned in the third chapter of II Corinthians, established on the blood of the New Covenant; also mentioned in these verses found in Hebrews 10:14 to 17: “For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, whereof the Holy Spirit is a witness to us; for after that He had said before. This is the Covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them. And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.”

The benefits of this Covenant herein mentioned were derived through the one offering. The Holy Spirit did not come until the once-for-all offering of the Saviour on the Cross took place, therefore, there was no fulfillment of the New Covenant while Christ lived on earth.

There was a kingdom proclamation connecting the Old Covenant and the New Covenant; that is the kingdom was proclaimed while Christ and His twelve apostles were under the Law and overlapped into the first years of that New Dispensation to which you referred.

It was in connection with the proclamation of the Kingdom of Heavens, in the Old Testament, that we are introduced to a new meaning of Water Baptism. Baptisms were nothing new for Israel, Hebrews 9:10. But with the arrival of John the Baptist there is the introduction of Water Baptism for a specific purpose. This baptism was not for Gentiles; for Israel only. Acts 13:24. This Baptism was introduced by an Old Testament prophet—for such was John who never lived a day under the New Dispensation, who was not a member of the Body of Christ.

I have searched diligently in the Scriptures to find that Water Baptism is a seal of the believer’s righteousness or his witness to the world that he has become a Christian or that he has been buried with Christ and I cannot find it.

Here is what I do find recorded as the words of John the Baptist.

“I indeed baptize you with or in water unto repentance.” Matthew 3:11. I know that the Apostle Paul is our apostle and that he never preached such a message or endorsed Water

Baptism unto repentance for a single Gentile. This message and Baptism was for Jews only, and even Jews who accepted this message of John after the Holy Spirit ushered in the New Dispensation were re-baptized. Acts 19:2 to 8.

Certainly John the Baptist knew the why and how of his baptism and here are his own words:

“And I knew Him not; but that He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore I am come baptizing with water.” John 1:31.

Here is the introduction and explanation of Water Baptism; to present Christ to Israel, Israel is not the Body of Christ—Gentiles are not Israel.

Among those baptized in connection with the proclamation of the kingdom were the twelve Apostles. Two years after they received Water Baptism, they knew not what the rising from the dead meant and therefore there are two things we know about their Water Baptism. It was not New Testament Christian baptism and if their baptism meant identification with Christ in His death and burial and resurrection not one of them knew anything about it. They received their Water Baptism more than three years before they received the Holy Spirit as their witness within that they were enjoying the benefits of the New Covenant.

I have never found a Bible teacher able to intelligently differentiate between John’s Water Baptism and that received by the household of Cornelius, the Gentile, some ten years later, but I do know that John’s baptism was for those who were in Covenant relation with God, the Jews. But to even a superficial student of the scriptures it is clear that John’s baptism was not a door of entrance into the Body of Christ.

Would you call John’s water baptism Old Testament baptism, New Testament baptism, Church baptism or Kingdom baptism?

If the New Testament were ushered in with John’s baptism then all that follows in the Book of Matthew must be New Testament truth which in your mind is “Church” truth. I think I will test your sincerity and see if you actually believe what you think you believe by asking you to send me a hundred dollars after you read these words in Matthew 5:42. “Give to him that asketh thee.” But on the basis of the Golden Rule in Matthew 7:12 you might tell me I shouldn’t ask it of you.

In Matthew 8:4 Christ told a man to offer a gift such as Moses commanded.

When the Saviour was in the shadow of the cross He had a severe rebuke for; the Scribes and Pharisees. In Matthew 23:33 He told them they were headed for hell. In the same chapter, when speaking to His disciples who were headed for heaven, he commanded them to do all that they were told to do by the hell-bound Scribes and Pharisees. Matthew 23:1 to 3. Why? Because these Scribes and Pharisees occupied the place of authority, Moses’ seat. Would you say that the members of the Church of Christ should recognize Moses’ seat during this dispensation? Certainly not. But Christ did not change this Old Testament seat of authority during His ministry to the circumcision. It was on the cross that He broke down the middle wall of partition between the Jew and the Gentile. So we must bear in mind that that middle wall of partition was standing when Christ in His sermon on the mount said, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law,” or when He said to a Gentile woman, “I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel,” Matthew 15:24.

You claim that the New Testament Church, or Body of Christ, and the House of Israel are identical—surely, you wouldn’t teach that there are any lost sheep in the Body of Christ, would you? And surely you wouldn’t teach that an unconverted Gentile is a lost sheep of the House of Israel, would you?

I dare say there are in your state, many lost sheep in the Reformed Church, baptized members, as there are in all denominations, but they are not the lost sheep of the House of Israel. They are the lost sheep of the House of Adam.

How plain are the instructions of Christ to His Apostles in Matthew 10:5 to 10. And if the New Testament Church began with John's water baptism then please explain why the Reformed Church does not obey Matthew 10:8, "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons," and the following verses. If that commission was for the Church then you are disobedient. But Matthew 10:5 explains for whom the Kingdom of Heaven message was intended. "Go not into the way of the Gentiles."

"But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 10:6).

"Go not"—"Go"—Is this the order of the Reformed Church today? Perhaps you give some time and money to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, but I am sure your principal effort is with the Gentiles. Then are you not disobeying Matthew 10:5? You may reply that there was a decided change in Acts 11:18. "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life"—That is true, but that was after the Holy Spirit had come with the New Testament.

If a new church began with John the Baptist, it must have been a Jewish church, for he was born to turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. Luke 1:16. To be sure a new movement among the Jews began with him and his ministry among God's ancient people was because of God's covenant with Abraham. Luke 1:73. In that sense there was the continuity of the covenant. But there was another covenant to be fulfilled in connection with his proclamation of the Messianic Kingdom; namely, the Davidic covenant. According to II Samuel 7:12 to 17, Isaiah 9:6 and 7, and Ezekiel 37:24 and 25, the throne of David is to be occupied by Israel's Messiah, the Son of God, and the nation Israel is to inhabit and possess the land that was guaranteed to them in both the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants. It is then, and not before then, that there is to be the fulfillment of Ezekiel 36:34 to 38. "The heathen that are left around about you shall know that I the Lord builded the ruined places and plant that that was desolate." Then shall forsaken Israel be called "Hepzibah" and desolate Palestine be called "Beulah," Isaiah 62:1 to 4. Then shall the Gentiles seek and find the Lord in Zion through the Jews. Zechariah 8:22 and 23. Micah 4:1 and 2. Then shall Amos 9:11 to 15 be fulfilled.

Why was it that even the intimate disciples of the Lord, who had been associated with Him and taught by Him for several years, trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel and asked Him the question, "wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" Luke 24:21, Acts 1:6. According to the Abrahamic covenant, the Davidic covenant, and the promised New covenant in Jeremiah 31:31 to 35, they had the perfect right to ask the question and expect the establishment of the Kingdom, for at that time they were wholly ignorant of the program of God for this age, mentioned in Acts 15:14 to 18 but altogether unknown to the apostles, as was all Body truth, until some years after the New Testament was ushered in at Pentecost. There was some excuse for their ignorance of God's program for this age, but absolutely none for that of the Post-millenarian since the announcement in Acts 15, in which we are plainly told that there would be an outgathering from the nations and then the return of the Lord to establish David's throne, that Jews and Gentiles might come to the Lord after the Lord is on that throne. Christ is now on His Father's throne in heaven. But any one who believes the Bible and understands it, knows that Israel's Messiah is yet to occupy David's throne on His Holy Hill Zion, and no one should be more dogmatic in such teaching than the one who insists on the continuity of the covenant. But how any student of the Word of God can read Luke 1:26 to 33 and Acts 2:30 in the light of Acts 15:14 to 18 and Ephesian Body truth and teach unbroken

continuity of the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants with respect to Israel Canaan and David's throne is more than I can understand.

In Luke 1:32 and 33, we learn that Christ was born to occupy the throne of David; "And the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David; and He shall reign over the House of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end." There is not the slightest suggestion that Christ was born to be the Head of the Church and surely no thinking man would be taught that Christ's present union with His Body, who is seated with Him in the heavenlies is the same relation that will exist between King David and the House of Jacob in the coming kingdom age. Christ was also raised from the dead to occupy David's throne. Acts 2:30. Christ is coming back to occupy David's throne, Acts 15:15 and 16. He is neither occupying David's throne nor reigning over the House of Jacob at this time. The House of Jacob is scattered among the nations of the earth awaiting the fulfillment of Luke 21:24. To call the Body of Christ the House of Jacob is the rankest perversion of the Word of God.

When Christ comes again to take the throne of David the Kingdom of the Heavens will be at hand. Then will the Lord gather the Israelites from the nations whither He hath scattered them and separate them from the heathen, "and bring them into their own land," Ezekiel 37:21. At that time He will also fulfill Ezekiel 36:25, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean."

It is difficult for me to see how Premillenarians who believe in what you call a suspended period, the parenthesis, and that Christ came to offer Himself to Israel as their king, in fulfillment of Ezekiel 36 and 37, insist on immersion. In this prophecy the Lord said, "Will I sprinkle"; and surely this would be more in keeping with the divers baptisms of Israel which were anointings, pourings and sprinklings, and not immersions, Hebrews 9:10. Therefore, so far as John's baptism is concerned, there is no proof of immersion. There have been thousands upon thousands of pages printed to prove that "baptidzo" means immersion and just as many to prove that it doesn't. As you know, the strongest verses of scripture presented by the immersionists are John 3:23. "There was much water there" Acts 8:38 "And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him—And when they were come up out of the water," and Roman 6:4 and 5, "Buried with Him by baptism into death. Planted together in the likeness of His death." In the first two scriptures there might be proof of immersion, but on the other hand, there are other scriptures with just as strong proof against immersion. As far as the Sixth of Romans is concerned, there is nothing there to indicate an actual experience and the symbol by water of that experience; therefore, it is impossible for me to read "water" into that chapter without reading into it "water regeneration."

I would be exceedingly happy if I could get settled in mind, with absolute certainty, just what was the mode and significance of water baptism before and after the death of Christ. We know that He spoke of His death as baptism. Luke 12:50. But until I know the "why and how" of water baptism, I will not be sheep-like and follow any of the fifteen or more different theories and use water in some manner to please you or any other man. I have the perfect right to follow my Apostle who said, "Christ sent me not to baptize but to preach the gospel."

Just as I do not believe the New covenant began with John's baptism, I do not believe that Adam or Abel or Seth or Enoch or Noah or Shem or Abraham or Isaac or Jacob or Judah or Joseph lived a day under the Old Covenant. Some of them were in the House of Israel, but God plainly tells us that He made the Old Covenant with the House of Israel when He led them up out of Egypt, Jeremiah 31:32 and 33. Hebrews 8:8 to 10. Abel and Noah and Abraham and others had righteousness, for they found grace in God's sight, but God's Old Covenant was made with a

nation that did not exist when these men were declared righteous by faith and those saved by Grace before Abraham's time were neither circumcised nor baptized. If Noah was baptized, the waters never touched him. I do not believe that the Body of Christ which is "in Christ" is any more the House of Israel than I believe that Noah's family which was "in the ark" was the House of Israel.

Neither do I believe that either the Old Covenant or the New Covenant was made with Gentiles. I believe the New Covenant guarantees that all Israel shall be saved. Jeremiah 31:34, Romans 11:26, Hebrews 8:11, whereas I know positively that this present evil age will culminate in a time of Apostasy, in a reign of lawlessness and a world judgment from the hand of God in connection with the coming of Christ for His Church and several years later with His Church.

Of course you know that I believe the fulfillment of the New Covenant for Israel's national salvation awaits the return of the Lord at which time the unfulfilled parts of the Abrahamic covenant and Davidic covenant will be fulfilled. Therefore, I think I believe in the continuity of the Abrahamic covenant as much as you do; but not in the unbroken continuity.

The report of the League of Nations is that the number of heathen that have been born into this world during the last one hundred years is in excess of the number of Christians during nineteen centuries and how you can be a Post-millenarian with the world in its present condition and scripture against you, I cannot understand. Sam Jones in his late years said, "If the church is to usher in the millennium it will have to back in for it is not headed that way."

I wonder if you have figured out how many of the unsaved sinners in Michigan, the United States and in the world constitute the quota that the Reformed Church should christianize in order to bring in the millennium. Are you satisfied with your progress, or is it not true that one of your leaders wrote that you cannot hold your own even in Michigan due to a decrease in infant additions because of birth control and because of the Evangelistic Zeal of those horrid premillennial Hollanders. During my eight years at North Shore Church I have seen eight times as many sinners accept Christ as the present total membership of our organization. Their birth was controlled by the Holy Spirit.

And these saved ones, whether or not they receive water baptism, will be in heaven with all the Reformed saved sinners. And then you and I will meet and forget our difference about "Water," as I understand from your message that a believer is declared righteous by believing the Gospel of Grace—and the baptism is but the seal of the righteousness of faith, but that the faith is a sufficient passport to heaven, if not into some man-made denominations.

And now a word of exhortation before we proceed to examine in the light of the Scriptures your "Circumcision—baptism" combination; for I must be obedient to Hebrews 10:25 "Exhorting one another and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." The day is rapidly approaching so suffer this word of exhortation—"Cease your Cain-like persecution of Dr. M. R. DeHaan. He is just like you and me, a fallible bit of clay, here in a sin-cursed lost world trying to represent the Lord Jesus Christ. He is a courageous, loyal servant of Christ and I know of no meeting in this country where there is the more evident presence and power of God than in the midst of the people to whom he ministers.

Is this verse torn out of your Bible, "forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you?" Ephesians 4:32. If you believe in the new dispensation you must believe in the new commandment "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." John 13:34. Just how do you apply to yourself, when praying at night "as we forgive our debtors?"

Now be gracious and do this for me; you love Dr. DeHaan and myself, and in spite of your post-millennial nonsense and infant baptism, we'll love you, if Dr. DeHaan is willing. I'll ask him. What do you say?

You have no idea what a blessing would come into your life and ministry, if you would forsake the II Peter 3:3 and 4 scoffers and get the truth of the Blessed Hope. It would make a real preacher out of a brilliant man like you. If you would like to hear more of this purifying glorious hope, I'll come up and see you.

Now be gracious and do this for me; you have attacked me in your church paper. I did not have an opportunity to defend myself. So advertise this Epistle in that paper and let your people read my defense.

DOES N. T. BAPTISM TAKE THE PLACE OF O. T. CIRCUMCISION?

First let me ask you this question. If I should bring into your presence three children,

1. The baptized infant child of Christian parents.
2. The unbaptized infant of saved Baptist parents.
3. The unbaptized infant of unbaptized unsaved parents;

would you say that each of these three infants sustains a different relation to God during this present reign of Grace? I know from your booklet that you are sure that there is a difference between child Number 1 and child Number 3; but I do not understand whether or not you would consider infant Number 2 as holy, according to I Corinthians 7:14.

I will have to confess that this verse of Scripture has bothered me no little, and I have never had a satisfactory explanation from any Bible student who was opposed to your Covenant program. But your explanation is equally unsatisfactory; for I do not believe that the water has anything to do with the holiness of the infant in the sight of God. If so, then water helps to make an adult holy in God's sight.

I must also confess to you that I have never heard any message on water baptism that was convincing proof to me that there may not have been in some of the Households baptized some children who were too young to exercise faith. I have been open and honest, studying diligently the subject pro and con, for surely you must know that my position is neither popular nor enviable. However, I have failed to find absolute scriptural proof that any infants were baptized with water. They may have been. You have admitted that it cannot be found in the Bible; but can be justified from the Bible. But you have neither found it nor justified it in your "Why We Baptize Infants."

You have stated on page 14 of that booklet that a Christian cannot be a Pre-millenarian and believe in infant baptism, and I know that if I must become a Post-millenarian, in order to accept infant baptism, you have a hopeless case on your hand, and in your judgment I must remain a heretic. But with your views, how an immersionist can please you any more than I can, I do not see, unless you want me to agree that we are all wrong and we'll compromise by "pouring" just to be on the safe side and have harmony. That seemed to be your attitude in your letter, that you could tolerate me, if I would just use water in some way. The last time I saw a baby sprinkled, the preacher made his talk after he had dipped several fingers in the bowl, and there were very few drops of water that touched its head. But I presume with you it is the ceremony that counts. But I just can't agree with you. If there is one iota of salvation virtue in water baptism, either by sprinkling, pouring or immersion, then salvation is not by grace. Paul was debtor to the Greeks and Barbarians. He was almost willing to be cut off from Christ to get

Israel saved. He travailed in birth for Galatian Gentiles. He would have baptized every man, woman and child, had there been the slightest contribution toward the believer's salvation in water baptism. But it was of so little importance to him that he said, "I know not whether I baptized any other." I Corinthians 1:16. That forever successfully refutes the position of the Roman Catholics, the Campbellites, the Lutherans, the Pentecostals, if not that of all other Christians who emphasize the importance of water baptism, for Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, was sent not to baptize but to preach the gospel. What gospel? He called it, "my gospel." Romans 16:25 and II Timothy 2:8.

If I could be taught by the Scriptures that Paul preached to the heathen the same message that John the Baptist preached to the Jews, or the same message that Peter and the eleven preached to that same people before, on or after Pentecost, I might change my mind about water baptism, but no one could possibly rightly divide the word of truth and reach such a conclusion.

I have tried to find infant baptism in I Corinthians 10:1 to 3. Because in I Corinthians 10:11 Israel's experiences are spoken of as types. When they were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, all their little ones were with them. But every member of every family was kept from getting wet. They went over on dry land. But there is no doubt that if that baptism is typical of water baptism for Christians in this age, then the little ones ought to be baptized also to carry out the type completely. But most of those who support infant baptism by this scripture insist that the infants must be immersed. And so the divisions and the sub-divisions.

Circumcision was not instituted in the Old Testament. It was carried over into the Old Testament. My belief is that circumcision did not have exactly the same significance with Israel under the Law, as it had when Abraham received circumcision as the seal of the righteousness which he had yet being uncircumcised. Romans 4:11. Abram was declared righteous more than twenty years before he was circumcised. He was never an Old Testament character. He was a justified heathen; justified in uncircumcision that he might be the father of uncircumcised believing heathen, who were considered dogs, even while Christ was on earth. Matthew 15:22 to 25. As circumcision was instituted before the Law was added, it remained after the Lord became the end of the Law at Calvary. Paul was absolutely justified in his circumcision of Timothy twenty years after Christ died. So was James, the Lord's brother, justified in his stand for the circumcision of even the infant sons of believing Jews some years later. Acts 21:18 to 25. And these Jews were receiving water baptism and circumcision during the same period.

So you err both with respect to circumcision and water baptism, in that you say that one began with the Old Testament and the other with the New. As circumcision did not begin with the Old Testament, water baptism did not begin with the New, but with the Old. Surely you would not say that John the Baptist told the Jews not to circumcise any more after he began to baptize with water. We have just shown that they continued that rite all through the Book of Acts; in fact, we have the record of circumcision of the flesh several years after the last account of water baptism in Acts 19:4 to 7.

By the simplest principle of Bible exposition, if there is any water in Colossians 2:12, "Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead," then the circumcision in Colossians 2:11 should be physical circumcision. But it is not. It is a "circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." And the eternal benefits that I expect to enjoy by the Grace of God are to be mine by the "baptism of Christ" on the cross, according to Luke 12:50, and though you may boycott me and exclude me from your "self-respecting denomination," you cannot rob me of a single benefit that my Redeemer

purchased for me at Calvary. You know full well that three-fourths of the people who have been baptized with water have never been saved. You also know that a large percentage of the preachers who are doing the baptizing are lost. You ought to know that it was circumcised men who crucified the Lord, and that the history of those circumcised Israelites and their fathers is told when the Holy Spirit handled Stephen so admirably: "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost, as your fathers did, so do ye." "The Just One, of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers." Acts 7:51 and 52. And as neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth anything in Christ Jesus, but a new creature, even all the water in creation can never make a new creature out of any sinner. But the precious blood of Christ will do the work in the twinkling of an eye and that is my theme in every message that I give forth. The world is sick of Churchianity.

My epistle is already quite lengthy, but there are some very vital points that we have not covered. You say on page 25, "Why We Baptize Infants;" "Certainly the Reformed Churches acknowledge no change in the infant or in its status because of the act of baptism. The baby is the same when carried away from the ceremony as it was before, and it would be in the same relation to God and the church even if the ceremony were never performed."

This seems to me the negation of some of your other arguments in favor of infant baptism. But if you admit that infant baptism is not to be found in the Bible and does not affect the infant's relation to God, it seems to me that you are arguing to show what is Reformed Church practice rather than what is Bible doctrine. As custodian of the Reformed Church, you have a perfect right to keep out any one who is more interested in Bible doctrine than Reformed Church practice. I was listening to a very interesting old-fashioned debate between a Campbellite preacher and a Baptist preacher in the South. The Campbellite insisted that it would be impossible for any one to enter heaven without being baptized in water for the remission of sins. He quoted Acts 2:38. The other preacher explained the Baptist position, that water baptism was not essential to salvation, but was a door of entrance to the Baptist church. The Campbellite replied, "well, according to your position, it takes more to get into the Baptist church than it does to get into heaven." It seems to me that the Reformed Church is requiring for membership that which is not required for membership in the Bible Church. When the Campbellite asked the Baptist what his denomination did with Acts 2:38, the Baptist replied, "we do not follow that order, which was for the Jews." "We follow the order in the tenth of Acts, in the experience of Cornelius the Gentile." "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all them which heard the word . . . And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord." Acts 10:44 to 48. If I should practice water baptism, I would certainly take the position of the Baptist rather than that of the Campbellite.

But this question has come to me over and over, "why was there one order to the Jew at Pentecost and after Pentecost, water baptism before Holy Spirit baptism, and another order with the Gentiles, Holy Spirit baptism and then water baptism." I have been told by Fundamentalist immersionists that the Jewish baptism was unto repentance for the remission of sins, and the Gentile baptism was a witness to the world. The first statement I find agrees with the Scriptures. For the truth of the second statement I have searched diligently, but it is not to be found in the Book. I have been told by men who are considered able Bible expositors, that the baptism in Galatians 3:27 is water baptism: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Others say, "No; Russellites, Adventists, Mormons and multitudes of all varieties of religious people have been baptized in the name of Christ but have not put Him on. Some say both Holy Spirit baptism and water baptism must be meant, because the disciples of Christ who

were baptized with water before the Holy Spirit came from heaven did not put on Christ; that the water baptism is putting on the uniform to show that you are a member of the One Body, into which both believing Jews and Gentiles were baptized by the Holy Spirit. If that is true, some of the disciples of Christ were rather premature in putting on their uniforms, for they were baptized before they got into the Body.

From your message, I am positive that you would not preach in the Reformed Church; “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Acts 2:38. Your denomination teaches that an adult must have the Holy Spirit as the evidence of salvation before he or she can receive baptism, unless baptized in infancy. If you do not, then your church is filled with baptized unregenerated members. Neither would you endorse for your church the order in Acts 8:5 to 18 . . . “Philip went down to the city of Samaria. “But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized” (Acts 8:12) “They sent unto them Peter and John—Who when they were come down prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit—Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 8:17) Now, if they believed the gospel and were baptized, according to Mark 16:16 and 17, they were saved. Then several days later the Holy Spirit came to them through the imposition of hands. Why does not your church observe this order? When you give the scriptural answer to this “why,” I am sure your eyes will be opened to the absolutely essential principle of dispensational application of the Truth of God. These people in the city of Samaria were Jews, according to Acts 11:19. Any intelligent student of the Word of God will see the progress and change from Acts 2:38 to Acts 10:44 to 48. But why they cannot and will not develop the progress and change from the tenth of Acts to Ephesians 4:5 to the One baptism, I cannot see.

Do I err when I say that with every recorded case of Water Baptism, there is the record of some Supernatural Manifestation, Miracle, Healing, Heavenly Sign, Sabbath, Gift of the Holy Spirit, Speaking with Tongues, Earthquake or some Divine Token? Then must I say that all of these Supernatural Demonstrations went to a certain point in early Church history, suddenly ceased and have no part in today’s church program; but that Water is one of the all-important things that remain? You give to me your Scriptural explanation of the cessation of those Miraculous Signs that accompanied Water Baptism, and I will apply the same Scriptural treatment to show you why I believe what I do with respect to Water Baptism. As I said before, you would excommunicate from your membership one who sought to insist upon a program of miracles for your church. I say to you that with Water Baptism must go the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the twelfth chapter of I Corinthians. But behold the confusion, the folly, the delusions and fanaticism in Christendom today because well-meaning servants of the Lord are doing exactly what you are doing. You are insisting on the practice of a rite which you admit cannot be found in the Bible, which you unscripturally call a “sacrament,” and your error lies in the fact that you confuse Israel with the Body of Christ and fail to rightly divide the word of truth in that you do not recognize the all-important “overlapping” principle of Bible study. Our healers and miracle performers, who today are perverting the Grace of Christ and subverting the souls of their unwary victims in the name of Jesus Christ, are making the same serious blunder. On the one side I am their constant target, because I oppose their unscriptural and fanatical teaching. And now come your assaults because I will not agree with a doctrine which you admit is not to be found in the Bible; and this I know without having come from Mars.

You also quote the Great Commission in support of your practice, but you do not quote all of it. How about the statement, “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have com-

manded you.” Matthew 28:20. I will guarantee you that I can show you at least fifty of the “all things” in the Book of Matthew that you do not teach your members to observe, because they belonged to Jews in the Kingdom age and not to Gentiles in the Grace dispensation. Some of the most gifted teachers in this country say that the Church did not work under the Great Commission, which is for the coming Kingdom age. I do not say that I agree with them, but I most assuredly assert that the Commission which the risen Lord in glory gave to the Apostle Paul supplemented that Great Commission, if it did not supersede it. When Christ was on earth He was a minister of the circumcision, made under the Law, sent only to the House of Israel. His earthly ministry was one of confirmation. On the cross, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, He was the mediator of the new covenant. “He taketh away the first that He might establish the second.” Christ in glory did not give to the heathen, through Paul, the same program He gave to the Twelve, who were ministers to the circumcision before and after His death. These Twelve are yet to sit on twelve thrones judging the Twelve Tribes of Israel, during the coming Kingdom age. Matthew 19:28. Paul is not to be associated with them, neither will any member of the Reformed Church.

On page 16 you quote your Church liturgy, which you say is Scriptural: “The Lord said unto Abraham and therefore to us.” Therefore, “we are the covenant people.” On page 26, you say that the baptized infant is therefore an attested and certified member of the church; that the infant is a member of the church even before baptism.

Of course this conclusion is reached on the argument that if Abraham’s infant Isaac was included in the covenant group and received circumcision, the child of Christian parents is included in the Christian Church and should receive water baptism.

I understand that you do not discriminate between the visible organized Reformed Church denomination and the Body of Christ as an organism. Therefore, according to your argument, the infant’s acceptance into the Body of Christ is by virtue of the parents’ faith and righteousness and therefore if the parents should receive the seal of righteousness, which is also the seal of the covenant, so should the infant. I am wondering how the child would be affected or his relation to God changed in case after his baptism your church should learn that the child’s parents were unsaved. Or do you have any unsaved members of the Reformed Church who are parents of baptized infants? It seems to me that your church covenant organization will not properly function unless you have a 100% regenerated membership, because there are no unregenerated members of the Body of Christ.

On page 20 you say, “you cannot, in early Christian thought, divide the family, having part of it within the covenant, and part outside.” Inasmuch as you believe that Water Baptism introduced the New Covenant, then you must believe the message of Christ in Matthew and Luke is New Covenant truth. Then kindly study your statement above in the light of Luke 12:52, For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two and two against three. The father shall be against son, etc.”

Now, please understand that I have nothing whatever against any individual member of the Reformed Church. I praise God for every saved member belonging to that organization, but I am sure that you will admit you have heard of some baptized members of that organization who were unsaved notwithstanding they were included in the covenant group.

There were many circumcised Israelites under the Old Covenant that were unrighteous, therefore their circumcision could not have been the seal and sign of righteousness. It was circumcised members of the Covenant group who killed the Prince of life. And how many of

John's disciples, who were both circumcised and baptized remained unrighteous and turned against the Lord?

In your Infant Baptism booklet, on page 21, you say that baptism is the sign and seal of membership in the Covenant group in the Christian Church. Again you say that circumcision was the sign and seal of personal faith on the one hand, and of membership in the Covenant group on the other—Page 23—“Baptism is the sign and seal of precisely the same things. Things equal to the same thing are equal to each other.” “Baptism has come in the place of circumcision.” Hence, it is right to baptize infants.

On page 21, you state that water baptism means to the Baptist the sign and seal of regeneration. Many Baptists will deny this. They will say that it is the sign or symbol of burial with Christ. If you find in the Bible where Water Baptism is the sign of either regeneration or burial or both, I'll show you where it is the sign of neither; and where it is not the sign of entrance into the Body of Christ. Therefore Water Baptism must have more than a double significance in the Word of God.

It was at least two years after John's “Kingdom of the Heavens” proclamation when Christ said “On this Rock I will build my Church.” Matthew 16:18. I again affirm that the first Water Baptism was that Christ should he made manifest to His earthly people Israel; and that this baptism was unto repentance for Jews. John 1:31. Acts 13:24.

I can enjoy full Christian fellowship with any sprinkled or immersed believer, if he loves the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth and is trusting in His precious shed blood, if that believer will grant me this privilege.

Any student of the Bible can find in early Church history that water baptism might be interpreted as having been a sign of personal faith. “Many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized.” Acts 18:8. But if the order mentioned in Mark 16:16 was observed, then the baptizing preceded salvation.

Moreover, if you had attempted to prove infant baptism by referring to the several cases of “Household” baptism, and had omitted your “Covenant” arguments, you might have presented a much stronger case. And I am sure that no Premillenarian Fundamentalist, whether Denominationalist or otherwise, would deny that we are the Spiritual Seed of Abraham.

But, in closing let me say that another of your fundamental blunders, is the fact that you do not recognize that there is a difference between circumcision in the case of Abraham and circumcision in the case of the nation Israel, under the Law; and in making this statement I am not unmindful of the fact that the Law could not annul the promise or make it of none effect. We are not under Israel's Law. A new Law came when Christ abolished death, the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. One who believes that John's Water Baptism ushered in the New Covenant must cling to Israel's Law, including their Sabbath, as the disciples who were with Christ on earth did.

It must be admitted in the light of Romans 4:11 that circumcision in the case of Abraham was a seal of the righteousness of his faith. You state correctly he believed God against all human possibility. In the light of Genesis 17:8 to 14, we know that circumcision was the covenant, in which the land of Canaan was guaranteed to Israel, and God Himself was guaranteed to that earthly people. But thousands of circumcised unrighteous Israelites died in their sins.

You will remember the college student's definition of a lobster—He wrote on his paper, “A red fish that crawls backwards.” The professor marked his paper, “Right except for three reasons. A lobster is not red; it is not a fish; it does not crawl backwards.”

So your three outstanding mistakes are:

1. Circumcision did not enter with the Old Covenant, but was instituted more than 400 years before the Old Covenant existed.
2. Circumcision of the infants of the Israelites was not the seal of the righteousness of faith, but the covenant concerning Israel in the land.
3. Water Baptism did not enter with the New Covenant, but with an Old Covenant prophet, with the announcement of Israel's King and Kingdom.

I did not intend to write such a long epistle, but am trusting you will be gracious enough to read at least a part of it to see why you and I disagree.

Hebrews 13:20 and 21.

Yours in the Blessed Hope,
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