COMMUNION OF SAINTS

THE

COMMUNION OF THE BIBLE.

DOVER, N. H.:
PUBLISHED BY THE FREEWILL BAPTIST PRINTING ESTABLISHMENT.

WILLIAM BURR, PRINTER.

1860.

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

THE

COMMUNION OF THE BIBLE.

DOVER, N. H.:
PUBLISHED BY THE FREEWILL BAPTIST PRINTING ESTABLISHMENT.

WILLIAM BURR, PRINTER.

1860.

COMMUNION OF SAINTS.

There seems not to be an ordinance nor item of faith of the Christian church upon which professors of religion do not differ. Warm and protracted contests have involved the plainest doctrine of the Bible in clouds and mysteries. Men have not been content to do their duty only, but have often performed for ordinances in the Christian church that which Christ never ordained, and that which his apostles never practiced. Even the Lord's supper is made a subject of controversy. In order to vindicate the propriety of the "*communion of saints*"—the free communion of *all* saints—I shall proceed in the following order:

I. *Define the sense of the term communion.*
II. *Circumstances attending its institution, time, &c.*
III. *The design of Christ in its institution.*
IV. *Who are the proper subjects?*
V. *State and answer the arguments in favor of sectarian or close communion.*
VI. *Bring objections against sectarian or close communion.*

Feeling as I do no censorious spirit rankling in my bosom against those who hold and practice differently—and that God looks on while I write—I trust I shall handle this subject candidly. Blessed Jesus! has it come to this, that thy own children shall differ about that ordinance wherein they view thy body broken and thy blood shed for their sins?

I. *Definition of the term communion.*

This term in the Greek is *Koinonai* (communion.) This term signifies, "The act of partaking in, community, companionship, relationship." (*Donegan.*) Christians can "*partake in*" the emblems of the body and blood of their Saviour—can form a Christian "*community*"—be in a state of "*companionship*" with other Christians in the kingdom and patience of Jesus—and have the dearest "*relationship*" with him, without being bap-

tized. This being an *axiom*, needs no proof. There is then nothing in the term in Greek that carries the idea of the previous baptism of the subjects of this rite : nor that they who surround the Lord's table must think *precisely* alike on all other *subjects*. It is necessary to have it fairly understood in the outset, that the point of difference between Freewill Baptists and Close Communion Baptists is *whether baptism is or is not an indispensable prerequisite to a proper observance of the Lord's supper*. We and our C. Baptist brethren can certainly have no *difference* of opinion respecting the *action* of baptism ; for we all agree that *immersion* is the only water baptism. But the question is, "Is this immersion related to the celebration of the Lord's supper in such a manner that without it, it is *inconsistent* and *sinful* to come to the Lord's table ? Will any one contend that from the import of the term communion in the original a previous immersion is supposed? Certainly not. But let us look at the signification of the term in English. 1. It signifies holding something in common with others.—The text so often quoted (Acts 2 : 42) to prove the "order of the ordinances," has no more to do with the celebration of the last supper, than Exodus 15 : 3, has. Says one, "they were in fellowship." So have thousands ate their meals in fellowship. In the 46th verse, it is said, "They continued daily with one accord in the temple and *breaking bread* from house to house." Here "*breaking* of bread" means the act of taking their common meals. Nothing more. They ate their meat with gladness—they did not fast, but had plenty. I grant that this breaking of bread was *a* communion, but not *the* communion at the Lord's table. There is nothing here even intimated of the observance of that ordinance ; yet this is the text so often brought into view to prove the "order" of the ordinances by the advocates of close communion. 2. Conformity or agreement. 2 Cor. 6 : 14, "What communion hath light with darkness ?" We know that light and darkness are states that do not conform one to the other ; and where one exists the other cannot exist at the same time. Here, then, it denotes conformity or agreement. 3. To contrive or consult together. Luke 7 : 11, "They communed one with another what they might do to Jesus." Ps. 4 : 4. *Commune* with thine own heart and be still. Luke 24 : 15, "While

they communed together and reasoned." Thus we see to *consult*, *agree* or *contrive* together, in the sense in which the inspired writers used the word, was a communion. 4. The Lord's supper. 1 Cor. 10 : 15, "The cup of blessings which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of *Christ* ? The bread that we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ ?" I have now given the *four* theological definitions of the word communion, and find them all reducible into one meaning, that is, *agreement*. In this last mentioned signification of the term, we understand a conformity of soul to Christ, and an agreement with other Christians in this rite. So in the English there is no previous baptism implied by the term communion ; and the idea that such a sense is contained *in* it or conveyed *by* it is purely chimerical. According to *any* definition of this term, I may consistently and understandingly sit down at the Lord's table with a brother in Christ, though in some points we differ ; for *here we agree*, or *commune*. If the communion or agreement is *real* in celebrating this supper, is it not inconsistent for him or myself to express by our actions a *virtual non*-communion or *dis*-agreement ? I wish to impress this thought. There is among orthodox denominations of Christians a *real agreement* or *communion* in the celebration of this supper ; and it is inconsistent for any one of them to say, "We cannot—we do not commune or agree with you," when they do agree in the *thing* to be done and *how* it is to be done ! But that there is nothing in *any correct* definition of the term communion, either in Greek or English, to prohibit unbaptized Christians partaking of the emblems of Christ's body and blood at *his own* table, and in obedience to his *own command*, will never be denied.

II. *The circumstances attending the institution of this supper, time, &c.*

This supper was instituted in the night in which Christ was betrayed by the traitorous and suicidal Judas. 1 Cor. 11 : 23. It was on the night *before* the Jewish passover. John 18 : 28, "They themselves went not into the judgment hall lest they should be defiled ; but that they might eat the passover." We read also, John 19 : 13, 14, that when Pilate brought Jesus forth to the judgment hall, it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour. From this it is evident our

Lord was betrayed before the Jewish passover; and that he instituted this supper before he was betrayed. At the time of the Jewish passover, Palestine was enveloped in darkness—the temple's veil was rent asunder—the hills and valleys were shook by awful convulsions—and the lights of heaven refused to illuminate a scene so hellish as the murdering of the Son of God! It is hardly rational to suppose that under circumstances alarming as these, that a guilty, murderous community would celebrate a national feast. It is highly probable that the Jews did not eat the passover at the time the Lord our passover hung upon the cross. It is true, we read that Christ ate the passover with his disciples before he was betrayed, (Luke 22: 15,) and we know that the passover was to be eaten on the *fourteenth* day of the month Nisan or Abib, (a part of March and a part of April.) But this amounts to no contradiction, when we consider the matter critically. The Jews began and ended their days at sunset. Christ and his apostles ate in the evening which commenced the *fourteenth* day; and the Jews were to eat on the evening that *closed* the *fourteenth* day. It is evident he ate *a* passover with his disciples before he was betrayed; and after that passover was eaten, he instituted the Lord's supper. The reason why I am more minute on this point is, I wish to arrive at "*the order*" of the ordinances which our close communion brethren endeavor to establish, only I expect to differ in "*the order*" with them in this respect, viz.: that the *supper was instituted before Christian baptism.* "Order," says one of their authors, "is Heaven's first law."

Again, as to the *time* of the institution of the supper and baptism. Every Protestant will acknowledge that none but Christ has power to institute ordinances in his church; and that the *order* in which *he instituted* them is the order of his church or kingdom. The last supper our Lord instituted in the night in which he was betrayed, and about *forty three days before* he instituted Christian baptism! "Order," says Mr. Foster, "is as beautiful in religion as in the works of creation." So I say, but who shall establish *the order?* I ask any Baptist or Pedobaptist, "Where do you get your authority for baptizing?" The answer is, "From the commission which Christ gave to his disciples," relying on his promise, that in the performance of this rite he will be with you to the end of time. When did he give this commission? About the time of his glorious ascension! And this was about *forty-three days* after he instituted the supper! What, then, is the *order* of the institution of the ordinances of Christ's church?

But the objection to this is at hand: "John the Baptist, Christ and his apostles, performed this rite before this; for Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, before the death of John." I admit all this. But that does not prove it to have been *Christian baptism.* Paul says the Hebrews were baptized (into) unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, just after they left Egypt. This was not *Christian* baptism. But, says one, "You destroy John's baptism." Not at all. Because it was not Christian baptism, strictly speaking, does not prove it to have been *rantism:* nor does it destroy it in the least. John did actually immerse in the Jordan (*en to Jordane*), and *all* they of Jerusalem were baptized of him in the river. If this was really Christian baptism, it is surprisingly strange that Peter on the day of pentecost should tell these very inhabitants, who had been previously baptized, (not only the *three thousand* but all who inquired,) to "*be baptized* EVERY ONE *of you.*" If John's baptism was *Christian baptism,* he would have said, "You must all be baptized, *except those* whom John has baptized." He never made ONE exception. Nor were any asked whether John had baptized them or not. While we read that *all they of Jerusalem* were baptized of John, and here shortly after *three thousand* more were baptized in the same city by the apostles, shall we think *these* are *one* baptism? And in the same place a few days after *five thousand* more believed. Acts 4: 4. Did not Peter address *one* on the day of pentecost whom John had baptized? or did there none *whom* John had baptized ever believe in Christ? Probably many of those baptized by the apostles on the day of pentecost, had been previously baptized by John or the apostles, before Christ suffered. John's baptism was preparatory to the setting up of Christ's kingdom. It was called *John's baptism.* Do we practice *John's* baptism *now?* No. We now baptize, not by virtue of John's baptism, but by virtue of Christ's command. In Acts 19, we find that some who were baptized unto John's

baptism (compare Acts 18 : 24, 25, with Acts 19 : 3,) were rebaptized by Paul or his companions. So it appears that some who were baptized unto John's baptism were again baptized. I am well acquainted with the arguments to the contrary by Robinson, Benedict and others; but that they were twice baptized is plain. John was sent to prepare the way for the setting up of Messiah's kingdom, and not to establish its ordinances; for that was Christ's business. Christ established the ordinances in his own church, and from him we receive authority to baptize, and not from John's baptism. In Christian baptism, there is something signified that never was understood nor signified in John's baptism, and that is the *burial* and *resurrection* of Christ. Rom. 6 : 4, "Therefore we are *buried* with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was *raised up* from the dead by the glory of the Father." And Col. 2 : 12, "*Buried* with him in baptism, wherein also ye are *risen* with him." A belief of these facts was necessary in order to the right performance of this ordinance. This was not required in John's baptism; for these facts then had not transpired. It is hoped, however, that none will deny that Christ appointed baptism as an ordinance in his church, and that he did this *after his resurrection.* Then we discover that in *order of time* the supper was *first* instituted.

Again, the transaction that is represented by the supper is one that took place *prior* to the one represented by baptism. By the *supper*, we represent the *sufferings and death* of Christ; but by baptism we represent his *burial* and *resurrection from the dead.* Which of these events transpired first? Certainly the one represented by the supper; that is, the death of Christ. This, then, is the "*the order*" of the ordinances! But were the apostles all baptized before the supper was instituted of which they partook? This remains yet to be proved. And even if it were proved, it would not sustain the proposition that "Christian baptism is prerequisite to the Lord's supper," for this plain reason, that it would still remain to be proved that it was Christian baptism.

Thus far we find nothing in the sense of the term *communion*, or in the *time* and circumstances of its institution, or even in the nature of the ordinance itself, to prove the proposition, that "no unbaptized person shall

come to the Lord's table." Now, as Jesus and his apostles have not taught this, shall *we* teach it? As long as he has not said, "No unbaptized person shall eat at my table," shall his *servants* say so? No, never! We Free-will Baptists are represented as alarmingly *inconsistent*, because we do not tell the Pedobaptists they have no right to the bread and wine, till they are baptized. Is it the *revealed* will of God that we should say this to them? If that *is* contained in his *revealed* will, we should not be called inconsistent, but presumptuously *wicked*, in thus violating God's holy command. On this ground, then, we ought to be no longer charged with *inconsistency.*

III. *The design of Christ in the institution of this supper.*

We cannot know the design of our blessed Lord in the institution of this solemn rite any further than he has seen fit to reveal it. No individual that regards the truth will pretend that Christ has said in plain words, that he designs this supper for baptized Christians only. He truly had a design in this ordinance. Will any one pretend that he had *no* design? I hope not. How do we know he had a design? We know his design from what *he said* and from what *he did.* He said to them, "Do this in remembrance of me." Paul says, "As oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye show forth the Lord's death till he come." He did not say, "As oft as ye drink this cup, you show that you have been baptized." Christ, at the institution of the supper, never *even mentioned* baptism; and when the time arrived that he instituted baptism in his church, he never mentioned the communion table. But says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Did he make either of these ordinances dependent on the other, so that it was sinful to perform either of them first? Not at all. Neither by what he *did* at this time are we taught that all that come to this table must think precisely alike. Judas and John did not think precisely alike. Some have denied that Judas was there; but I can prove that he was there as well as I can that John was there. After he gave them the cup, he told them plainly that the hand of him that would betray him was on the table, *Luke* 22 : 21. So at the very institution of this supper their views and feelings were not alike, nor was it the design of the supper to exhibit an uniformity

of feelings and views in all respects, but to show forth his death till he comes. Shall it be said that unless we agree in all points we cannot consistently celebrate the Lord's supper together? No, for scarcely can two men be found who agree precisely in all points of faith, and yet Christians generally agree in the design of the Lord's supper, and what it represents. Where there is so general an agreement as in this ordinance, may we not, should we not, express it? No one will say that Christ did teach *positively* that no unbaptized person should eat at his table. Then if he taught it at all, he taught it only *inferentially;* and if he taught it only inferentially, shall his ministers teach it *positively*, or in a manner *contrary* to that in which he taught it? If Christ never taught this doctrine *positively* (nor his apostles either) it is not a *command* that unbaptized Christians break by coming to the table, for *only an inference is broken!* Christ gave his disciples positive rules to go by—he taught positively; and as he has not taught this *positively*, he has not taught it at all; or, in other words, it is no rule of Christ, only an inference of men. Says the blessed Jesus, "This do in remembrance of me." "This is my body." "This is my blood." *His design* was that his suffering humanity should be brought by these symbols before our eyes. He knew how soon his children might forget that mangled body and flowing blood that rescued them from a burning deep; and this he designed that they should not forget. By this, then, we show forth his death, and even in the face of a wicked world, and in defiance of the blighted powers of hell, we keep his death in perpetual remembrance. Implied or included in this design of our Saviour, is a representation that we by faith feed on the Son of man and drink his blood, and a virtual covenant to be for the Lord. That this was and is the design of Christ in this supper, perhaps few Protestants will deny. If, then, Christ did not design that we should show that we have been previously baptized, or that we precisely agree in every other respect, by coming to this supper, why should any man teach thus, and hold these things to be indispensable to a religious observance of this supper? Let no man teach Christ's designs different from what he has taught them. By not keeping the design of Christ in view in the ordinance of baptism, what shipwreck of

faith has been made, and by our close communion brethren similar inconsistencies are upheld. But while in these inconsistencies and perplexities themselves, it is not strange that they think every body else inconsistent and heretical. If Christ had *one* design in view in this supper, then let us have *the same design*, and then we shall eat and drink acceptably and not to condemnation, and we shall examine *ourselves* and not others; do our own respective duties, and not prohibit any of God's children doing theirs; and whenever and wherever the table of the Lord is spread, we shall feel the command, "*Do this*," is binding on us as his followers. Thus far we have not found any thing in the design of our Saviour to prove "baptism an indispensable prerequisite to a proper celebration of the Lord's supper." Let it be remembered that baptism is not the only prerequisite *to close communion*, as I shall show hereafter.

IV. *Who are the proper subjects of communion at the Lord's table?*

I answer, *Disciples of Christ.* The grand question in regard to the point now under consideration is this, "Are baptized Christians the only proper subjects of this ordinance?—Are they the only persons who can eat at the table of Christ regularly or acceptably?—Are they the only persons that can eat "discerning the Lord's body?" If unbaptized persons *can* eat of the bread and drink of the cup, *discerning* the Lord's body, then they can eat acceptably, and are approbated in it as much as if they pray understandingly. Because they have not been baptized are their prayers *sinful?* Christ has commanded prayer as often as he has commanded the Lord's supper to be observed. Because they have not been baptized, is it therefore not their duty to pray? It is the duty of a Christian to pray both in his family and in secret. But if he does not pray in his family, is it therefore not his duty to pray in secret? Just so in the case now before us. It is the duty of every Christian to eat at the Lord's table and be baptized both. But because he has not been baptized, is it therefore not his duty to obey the command of Christ in the celebration of his supper? I ask, does the neglect of one duty, make the performance of another duty *sinful?* Is not the celebration of the Lord's supper a Christian duty? It most certainly is. What makes it a Christian

duty? The command of Christ, is the answer. Is it sinful to obey Christ? Ah! says one, it is sinful for a person to come to the communion table before he has been baptized. This is the pivot on which the whole argument turns. What makes it wrong for that unbaptized person to come to the Lord's table? Where has Christ forbidden this? Not in the Bible. Not in all the word of revelation. Then this is one sin not mentioned in all God's word!! If there is no Divine command transgressed by coming to this supper before being baptized, and an express command is obeyed in coming, in what does the sinfulness of thus obeying Christ consist? The sin is altogether imaginary! In what part of the New Testament people have learned that baptism constitutes a person a fit subject of this ordinance, I know not. But, says one, "Baptism does not make us proper subjects without faith." Very well, an unbaptized person may have faith; and "without it, it is impossible to please God." God is always pleased when we obey him in faith. Now as unbaptized Christians may in coming to the Lord's table obey him in faith, they may please God by so doing; but as they cannot please God while sinning against him, we must come to the deliberate conclusion that they are not sinning in thus obeying! These Christians have the evidence that they obey, and that God is pleased with them; for he often sends his spirit into the hearts of the Pedobaptists, while they sit at his table. Is it then a sinful act? Or shall we believe the Holy Spirit leads persons to believe they are doing right, when they are committing high treason against God? Or are none of the Pedobaptists led by the spirit? I said that *disciples* of Christ are proper and fit subjects of this ordinance. I presume this will not be denied. But I have the proof at hand and will therefore prove it. Acts 20: 7, "And upon the first day of the week when the *disciples* came together to break bread." Here we find that *disciples* where the proper subjects. None but disciples of Christ are proper subjects of either of the ordinances of the church of Christ. Christ never required any to be baptized or eat the supper, but disciples. In his commission to his disciples, he says, "Go ye therefore, *teach* (*make disciples of*) all nations, baptizing (*immersing*) them." Here we find they were first to become disciples before they were baptized. After this *teaching them* to observe all things, &c., Matt. 28: 20. Here Christ mentions baptizing first, for he does not mention the supper at all. Says Paul, 1 Cor. 10: 16, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" Do we think because he mentioned the cup first, he administered it first? Not at all? We have now arrived at the fact that none but *disciples* are proper subjects of either of the ordinances of the church of Christ in the world. We find, too, that *disciples* are proper subjects of both *ordinances*. That disciples are proper subjects of baptism, our opponents will not deny. I have proved that in Bible days this supper was administered *to disciples*. The next question is, can any one be a disciple of Christ without baptism? or previous to having been baptized? This has been likewise sustained, and this question all Close Communion Baptists answer affirmatively. A person then can be a disciple of Christ before he has been baptized. But we find that *all* Christ's disciples are commanded to "*do this*." "Drink ye *all* of it," says he. Again, "Teach *them* to observe *all things* whatsoever I have commanded you." Teach *them—whom?* Them disciples. Then *all* the disciples of Christ are commanded to do this, and *some* of them are not baptized. If the Bible is true, unbaptized persons may be Christ's disciples; and they were baptized because they *were already* his scholars or disciples. "This is the truth, and you cannot deny it." It is a fundamental principle in syllogistic reasoning that "whatever may be affirmed of any genus may be affirmed of all the species included under it." We will now throw the argument into the shape of a syllogism, in order to see more fully its true sense and force.

All Christ's disciples are commanded to celebrate this supper.
Part of Christ's disciples are unbaptized persons.
Therefore, some unbaptized persons are commanded to celebrate this supper.

But, say our close communion brethren, "Disciples must be *first* baptized, and then they may commune at the Lord's table." That is naked assertion, without any Divine testimony. Let us have *Divine* testimony on this point. We do not admit the sayings of Baxter, Dr. Wall, Justin Martyr, Benedict Pictet, Dr. Gill, Lord

Chancellor King, or Dr. Doddridge, to be inspiration, though we believe they were good men. These are some of the authors our close communion friends bring to prove their faith. But, by the most of these authors, infant baptism can be proved; and also that sprinkling water is baptizing a person! This is one of the *worst* features of close communion; it stands on the testimony of the fathers, and some of them Roman Catholic fathers too. Almost any inconsistency can be proved by the fathers. But let us have it from the mouth of inspiration, that *no unbaptized person shall eat of the Lord's supper*, and that is sufficient. It devolves logically upon those who affirm this, to prove it. It does not devolve on Freewill Baptists to prove that an unbaptized disciple may partake of the supper, but it is the business of C. Baptists to prove their affirmation. I know they say it is done, and it has been proved. The proof may satisfy some credulous minds, but it will require more conclusive reasoners than Gill, or Booth, or Fuller, on this subject, to satisfy minds that take *only inspiration* as testimony. Christ has told us who are members of his church and proper subjects of its ordinances, viz.: disciples or believers. Faith is prerequisite to the proper observance of either of the ordinances of Christ's church. This my Close Communion Baptist brethren believe as well as myself. Faith is the *only* prerequisite to a religious observance of the ordinances of the Christian church. But the objection is, "faith and baptism are *both* prerequisite to coming to the Lord's supper." Ah, where is the proof? So I may say, "*faith* and the *supper* are *both* prerequisite to baptism;" but there is no proof that even this is the case. The facts are that neither of the ordinances are prerequisite to discipleship—that persons may be disciples previous to their observing either—that the proper observance of one is not dependent on the other for its validity—that men may observe both and not be disciples of Christ—and that all Christ's disciples, baptized or unbaptized, are commanded to celebrate this supper as well as to be baptized or perform other Christian duties. Strange indeed it is, that an unbaptized minister acts justifiably when he reads God's word—when he sings—when he prays—when he preaches the gospel, and leads sinners to Christ—when he leaves his native land and spends

his life as a missionary in hostile climes—when he dies a martyr for the cause of Jesus. But when he comes to the communion table to show forth his faith in a crucified Saviour, he is sinning against God! Why does not his being unbaptized disqualify him to pray—to lead awakened sinners to Christ—to be heard in heaven when he pleads in their behalf—to be a minister or a missionary—to commune spiritually with his Saviour—to a seat in glory—if it disqualifies him for sitting around the table of the Lord here on earth? What is the answer to all this? Just this, his neglecting one duty does not lessen his obligation to perform another. Is not that man of God who has led thousands of souls to repent while the angels in the presence of God have rejoiced, fit to sit down with you at the Lord's table? Tell it not in Gath. Publish it not in the streets of Ashkelon. For the sake of the cause of God tell it not—lest infidelity rejoice—lest Christianity blush with shame! Blessed Jesus, is it *wrong for me* to sit with this child of thine at thy table? Who is it that keeps the tender children of Christ back from his table? Says one, "They keep themselves away by their wilful disobedience." Would they not set down with you, if you would give them liberty so to do? They would. Then *you* keep them back. Will not Christ say to you, "Inasmuch as you have done it to one of the least of these my disciples, ye have done it unto me?" Do you not "set at nought" him for whom Christ died, as *unfit* for a seat with you at his Master's table? Well did a worthy minister say, "Let my right arm be plucked from its socket sooner than I should say to one of the children of Christ, come not to this table." Where has Christ commanded his ministers to keep back *part* of his children from his table, or to break the bread and pour the cup to only part of his disciples? Where? To me, few are the attractions of close communion. Its blossoms are fading.

I am well aware how hard it is to gain a momentary ascendency over prejudice or tradition; but I think it will not be denied by any candid mind that it is the duty of *all* the disciples of Christ to celebrate the sufferings of their Saviour, and that disciples are proper subjects of the ordinance, and that unbaptized Christians are disciples of Christ. If this is admitted (as I think it must be) close communion must fall. If it is not sin-

ful for Pedobaptists to commune at the Lord's table *by themselves*, it is not sinful for them to sit down with Baptists at the same table. I know our Close Communion brethren call it *sin* for any denomination of Christians that have not been baptized to venture around the sacred board. But I know of no flaming sword to guard the table against any of God's children, no vengeance is denounced against any child of his, baptized or unbaptized, who comes to this feast with a penitent heart; but mercy, bleeding mercy, is there exhibited—dying love is there celebrated—the love of the Son of God upon whom was laid the iniquity of us all. Where is the sin for a child of God to come to this feast, and hold communion with God and with his children? What is sin? Inspiration answers, "a transgression of the law." What law does the real Christian transgress by coming to the Lord's table, when it is spread? Is it a *Divine* law? If it is, it is one that God has never seen fit to reveal, one that nobody ever saw. At least it cannot be found in the Bible now. It is no sin to obey Christ. But to prove that it is sin to come to the Lord's table while unbaptized, if the individual's heart is filled with love to God, is a difficult task. God has never said it was sin. Shall I tell a brother that by coming to the Lord's table while unbaptized, he is sinning—that he is committing high treason against the government of God? Never. This would be arrogantly severe and presumptuously cruel. Sin to come to the Lord's table! Sin to obey Jesus Christ!

But enough has been said already to prove that an unbaptized Christian can eat at the communion table acceptably with God. Says the blessed Jesus, "He that doeth the will of my Father, the same is my mother, my sister and brother." When some asked him what they should do in order to work the works of God, he said, "This is the work of God, to believe on him whom he hath sent." Then to believe in Christ is to do the will and work of God, and to be a brother in or to Christ, for such he acknowledges them. But remember the neglect of one duty does not render the obligation of the law of God to perform another *nudum pactum*.

But why do our Close Communion Baptist brethren *unchurch* and *disorganize* every denomination that practices sprinkling for baptism, *only?* Why is baptism held

up as the *only* door of communion? This, reader, is altogether *specious!* I profess to *know* both the "faith and practice" of the C. Baptist churches. I know they do exclude from their communion, or at least they *have* expelled members from their churches, just because they could not believe in *Calvinism* conscientiously, while they agreed with them in the ordinances of the church. *Arminianism* has been as truly a bar to communion as infant sprinkling! This I shall prove. Now is it exactly *fair*, or exactly *honest*, for them to pretend that *baptism* is the bar? A material difference of faith in any article of the creed of the church is *generally* a bar to communion, and a trial to the brethren, that merits its exclusion. Let the Methodist Episcopal church change their faith in infant baptism and practice the immersion of believers only, and will they then invite them? Not unless they change their name and the articles of their religion too. If baptism is the only bar, why not invite baptized persons of other denominations? I am well acquainted with the answer to this question. It is something like this: "The partaker is as bad as the thief." I affirm that baptism is not the only bar. Then why make so much ado about that? Why not make the other objections stand out as prominently as that? Why not say honestly to us, "The disbelief of any article of *our faith* disqualifies every other denomination for coming to the Lord's table?" As soon as they object to a Christian for not thinking as they do on one point, they may on every point in which they differ. Suppose I take the same ground of judging my brethren, when the table of the Lord is spread, if precise uniformity of faith is necessary to coming to the table together. I can perhaps find no one who agrees with me precisely,—and I come to the deliberate conclusion, that I am the only person on earth just fit in all respects to come to the Lord's table!

But, says my close communion brother, "Shall we let any one and every one come to the supper, who shall choose to come? Shall we object to no one 'that calls himself a brother?'" I answer in the words of St. Paul, "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one, no, not to eat."

Such an individual as the one here described we may not even eat with at a common meal, much less at the Lord's table. But if I set up human rules or human creeds, as "terms of communion" for God's children, and will not admit that it is right for them to celebrate this supper, unless they believe *my rule or creed*, and could I succeed in making Christians believe that entire uniformity of faith is absolutely indispensable, the Lord would have no table, but every Christian would sit down at his own table! Baptism may be as great a bar, it may be as strong an objection, as any one the C. Baptists urge; but it is not the *only* one. If even that was removed, there would be many insurmountable obstacles in the way of their inviting other Christians to partake with them yet remaining.

But once more, *Who are the* subjects? All admit baptized believers to be the proper subjects of this ordinance. The next question is, *who are baptized believers?* I answer, those who have been immersed in water upon an open profession of faith in Christ, into (in) the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. But do the C. Baptists deny that a person thus immersed has been baptized? Yes, many of them do unless it was done by a C. Baptist minister? In some of their churches it is, or *has been*, required that the candidate should be baptized by a minister of their "faith and order," in order to be received into the church, or to be considered baptized at all! If the individual had obeyed ever so conscientiously by being immersed by a Methodist (perhaps) he is considered still as unbaptized. In this, however, their churches are not uniform in practice. Say they, (some of them,) "The minister had no faith in it himself—he did not really believe in immersion as the only baptism, and what is not of faith is sin." "If we receive the baptism of a Methodist minister, we acknowledge him a lawful administrator; and if the Methodists baptize for us, we may have them administer the Lord's supper to us; and if we commune with those whom they have baptized, we may as well commune with them, and therefore we cannot commune with any but those who have been baptized by a 'legal administrator;' for what is not done legally in matters of religion is not to be countenanced, or approbated." This has been, in many parts, a subject

of grave deliberation. They consider baptism the "door" into the church, "and that no one has a right to administer the ordinance of baptism, unless he has been baptized himself, and *regularly set apart to the work of the* ministry." Consequently none are members of Christ's church on earth, but those who have been baptized by a *Close Communion Baptist minister!* for none else are "*regularly set apart to the work* of the ministry!" I do not say *every church* believes this, for they are by no means uniform; but I say many of their churches *do* (*or did*) believe as above stated. Nor will they commune with those that have been baptized by *one of their own ministers*, if he joins any other church. Many have left and joined other churches, and have constantly led lives of devotion and piety, yet they will not commune with them! Though they were *baptized into* the church by one of their own ministers, they have left the *only* church of Christ and joined the Presbyterians, Methodists, or Freewill Baptists, and consequently now they do not belong to the "*visible church of Christ!*" What a beautiful system of *caprice* the close communion doctrine forms, when we get it perfectly organized in all its parts and bearings! Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Freewill Baptists, and Methodists, are not members of Christ's church! and they cannot be unless they are admitted in by being baptized by a C. Baptist minister, who alone is the only "legal administrator!" What exalted claims! So we see that baptism is not what it is said to be, the only test of communion for real Christians—nor is *immersion* the only prerequisite to close communion; but it must be immersion *by a C. Baptist;* nor will even *that* do unless the person thus baptized continues to belong to a church of the *name* that the minister had who baptized him, or initiated him into at first! Does not this look like *Catholicism?* Do any say this is severe? Then compare the arguments of both systems together. Both claim to be the only *true* church of Christ—the only administrators of its ordinances. I know a Close Baptist minister that was first baptized by the Methodists. After this he changed his views somewhat, and joined the C. Baptists. He was subsequently called into the ministry; but before he was ordained, he was re-baptized. I do not state these things to exasperate any one, but as matter of

fact arguments, to show that with the C. Baptists baptism is not the only prerequisite to coming to the Lord's table. They then consider immersion by one of their own ministers a test of fellowship at the Lord's table, *provided always*, that the candidate does not "break his covenant" and join another church. Free-will Baptists confidently believe that all true disciples of Christ are proper subjects of both the ordinances of the Christian church—and that baptism *is baptism*, though it is performed by a Congregationalist, or any other minister in good standing in any orthodox church—that a person may be a disciple of Christ who has not yet been baptized by a Close Baptist minister—and that they *may* baptize some who are not Christians as well as other ministers,—and that a person may be a Christian who has not been baptized at all.

But is it the case that among all the Protestant sects, the C. Baptists have the only *regularly* authorized ministry? and are they the only ministers that can baptize legally? Strange it is that of all the converts of our time, none are to keep in remembrance the death of their crucified Lord by the ordinances he has appointed for that purpose, but those that are baptized by one particular denomination of Christians! Among the Presbyterians and other sects thousands are annually brought into the kingdom of Christ, and he has made it their duty to eat of the bread and drink of the cup. Now, who shall administer this sacrament to them? The truth is, the C. Baptists *would* not, nor could they if they would, for thousands of them perhaps never heard one of their preachers. Now if those ministers whom God has blest in their awakening and salvation are not to administer this ordinance to them, thousands and millions of them must go down to the grave without ever obeying the command, "*Do this* in remembrance of me." Is this the way Christ manages the concerns of his kingdom? Does he qualify a minister to save souls, and to oversee the church of God as a faithful pastor, and still he must not administer the Lord's supper? Who will charge him with such management as this? Christ has but *one* church—one family—and thousands are brought into that church or family in the different denominations, but not by baptism. The word church (ekklesia in the Greek) signifies a company called out. It is compounded of (ek) out of, and (kleo) to call. A man may be baptized a dozen times, and after all not be called out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's Son. Nor can a C. Baptist initiate a person into that kingdom by baptizing him, any more than I can.

We have now, *First*, examined the sense of the term communion. *Secondly*, the time and circumstances of its institution. *Thirdly*, the design of Christ as far as he has revealed it; and, *Fourthly*, we have tried to prove that Christians, or disciples of Christ, irrespective of their sectarian names, baptized or unbaptized, are the proper subjects, and have found in all this research nothing to militate or to preponderate against free communion of saints, even of the weight of a straw.

V. *Consider the arguments in favor of close communion.*

1. Order of the ordinances. Says Mr. E. Foster, in his "*Terms of Communion*," "Without order every thing is distorted and unseemly, loses its power to please, and ceases to be useful. Order in religion is as beautiful as in the works of creation. . . . . 'Let all things be done decently and in order,' says Paul, and surely in this we shall honor God and the religion we profess." I contend for *order;* and that the Lord's supper should be celebrated in a manner both decent and in order. The order St. Paul would have Christians observe in this ordinance was, that "if any were hungry they should eat at home, and that one should, in eating, wait for another." He says he had received of the Lord Jesus how it was to be done, that in the night in which he was betrayed he took bread, &c. He first took the bread and then the cup. This is the established order. But in the text quoted, 1 Cor. 14: 40, what kind of *order* was St. Paul speaking of? He was speaking of the disposition of spiritual gifts in the church, and how they should be improved—that one only should speak at a time—how the prophets should speak—and that no one should speak in an unknown tongue without an interpreter, &c. To bring this to prove an *order of time* in the celebration of the ordinances of the Church of Christ, is just as reasonable as the text the fathers used to bring as a proof of infant baptism, "Give to him that asketh," and ere long they found that *very young* infants "*cried for* baptism."

I have already shown the *order* of the *institution* of the ordinances, and that, in *order* of *time*, the supper was instituted *first*—that it represents an action or circumstance that took place prior to that circumstance represented by the ordinance of baptism. "Without order every thing is *unseemly*." I see nothing unseemly in the way my Presbyterian brethren, for instance, celebrate this supper. "*Unseemly*" means *indecent;* and as long as there is nothing indecent in the way they celebrate the supper, it is, of course, "*decent* and in *order*."

If Christ had taught this "*order*" as the close communionists do, we should have understood it. But as he has not taught it, perhaps it would be somewhat becoming for men not to insist upon establishing it now. Says the same author, "It was the duty of the Jewish priests to offer sacrifices at the temple, but it was their duty to wash or bathe themselves first." So it was, but what made it their duty? God commanded it. Lev. 22: 6. If God had made it the duty of the disciples to bathe themselves before coming to the Lord's table, he would have commanded it. God's command made it their duty; but God has never commanded Christians to bathe themselves, or to be baptized, just before eating this supper.

Again, "It was the duty of all Israel to march at the command of God, but it was their duty to march in a *prescribed* order, not in any other order, nor in *dis*order." How was this *order* to be ascertained? Did one tribe say, "We think we ought to move first"? Not so. God commanded that the tribe of Judah should march *first*. Numbers 10: 13, 14. He determined the order. If he had not told them who should go forward, then it would have been no sin for the tribe of Issachar to have taken the lead. Now, if I could find in the Bible, "Thus says God, you must be baptized before you celebrate the supper;" that I should at once call the order; but it is not there. But why take a positive command of God in a given case in order to prove that he has positively commanded that which he never has commanded? The above statements of order are calculated to cast a false impression; for they are held up in false colors. God's commanding one thing does not prove that he has commanded every thing we can imagine—nor that what we judge to be *the order* of his arrangements *is* that order. As far as we have followed the order of the sacraments, as argued by our close communion brethren, we find they place a bare matter of human judgment on even footing with a command of Jehovah. I will give one other specimen of the same kind of argument. "It was the duty of Nadab and Abihu to burn incense before the Lord; but it was not their duty to burn it with strange fire." We will take a view of this circumstance. Levit. 10: 1: "And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he COMMANDED *them* NOT." Do you suppose, while the trembling child of God comes to the Lord's table, that he knows that the Lord *commanded* him *not?* Where is that command? It is only a command of men. This is perhaps the reason that unbaptized Christians are not burnt up like Nadab and Abihu, or struck dead, as were Ananias and Sapphira, for coming to the Lord's table, viz.: they break only the commands of men. For well informed men to bring up this circumstance of God's wrath against these priests for breaking his known command, in order to keep the feeble follower of Christ away from his board, by holding up the glittering sword of Almighty vengeance over their heads should they partake, is, I think, not only inconsistent, but cruel! What is proved by this passage? Why, that God did command them not to burn incense with strange fire, and that because they did it he cut them off—and it proves, also, that under circumstances as criminal God would cut *us* off, and that, while God displays (instead of vengeance) his love to all who love his Son and obey him in this ordinance, no Divine command is violated or trampled by their obedience. It would require an infinite number of such arguments, as I have quoted, in favor of close communion, to prove it. These arguments are not conclusive, for this reason. A violation of *a positive* command is taken to prove it wrong to violate *no positive* command of God whatever. In fact, they are hostile to the close communion cause, and entirely irrelevant to the purpose for which they are brought; for they prove that if we break a positive command of God, God will not be well pleased with us; and, instead of sending his Spirit into our hearts, he would send his curses upon our heads; and this proves

the reverse of what they intend to prove by it, that is, no positive command is violated when any of Christ's disciples come around his table, where he refreshes them with his Holy Spirit, and fills their souls with his love. This proves that they are not transgressing any command of God. If I understand the foregoing arguments, they are sophistical. They come under that class of sophisms termed "*petitio principii*," a begging of the question. The question begged is that baptism is an indispensable prerequisite to a proper observance of the Lord's Supper. That no person, therefore, who has not been immersed in water can properly observe that supper, is the conclusion. This conclusion would be correct, if the question was not begged. "Baptism," say they, "is prerequisite to the Lord's supper." If we ask how that fact is proved, the answer is, "Baptism is prerequisite to the Lord's Supper." Thus a man proves God is eternal, because he is without beginning or end; that is, God is eternal because he is eternal. So argue Pedobaptists. "The covenant of grace and the covenant of circumcision are the same," and upon this begged question, all the mighty fabric is reared. The first thing is to prove that *two* covenants are *one*. This would be like proving that two straight lines can enclose a space—or that all right angles *are not* equal. All ordinances are founded not on the nature and fitness of things, but upon a positive command of God. If God, therefore, has placed two ordinances in his church for his children to observe, and has not said, "This you must do *first*, or else the performance of the *other* will be *sin*," I cannot be bound to believe thus. I will now give another specimen of *petitio principii* practiced by close communionists. "Baptism may be styled a *gospel* ordinance, and not a *church* ordinance; because it is not administered to church members, and because the pastor has authority to administer it independently of the concurrence of the church." This depends entirely on circumstances. If the church of which I am the pastor, should vote that a person who had applied for baptism was not, in its opinion, a proper subject, should I be at liberty to baptize that person? In this the question begged is, *that because* the administrator has authority to baptize without the concurrence of the church, baptism is not a church ordinance. Why has the pastor this

authority? Because baptism is not a church ordinance! Why is it not a church ordinance? Because the pastor has authority to baptize without the concurrence of the church!!

But, says the same writer, "The Lord's supper may be styled a *church* ordinance, because it is to be administered only to church members; and because the pastor cannot administer it without the concurrence of the church." Here you see a distinction between the two ordinances of the church of Christ. Baptism is a *gospel* ordinance; that is, part of the *glad tidings* (or gospel.) The Lord's supper is a *church* ordinance, designed for church members only! So there is but *one* ordinance in the church, and *one* in the gospel! Why was this distinction made? Because, if Mr. Foster had admitted that both the ordinances of the Christian church belonged *to* church members, it would overthrow the idea that *no unbaptized* person *can be a member* of the church of Christ in this world. But we will look at the proof again. Why cannot the Lord's supper be administered without the concurrence of the church? Because it is a church ordinance! Why is it a church ordinance (any more than baptism) then? Because it cannot be administered without the concurrence of the church! Arguing thus in a circle may satisfy some credulous minds —some who receive mysteries into their faith, because they are mysteries, and love to believe impossibilities; but will never satisfy the more inquiring part of mankind.

2. We are now brought fairly to test the objection urged by those who practice close communion, that is, "*Baptism* is the rite that *initiates* into the church." Says Dr. Gill, "to receive an unbaptized person into communion *was never once attempted among all the corruptions of the church of Rome.*" Very true. The Catholics deserve credit for this idea. It is theirs! This very idea of baptism being an initiatory rite into the Christian church is from Rome, "the mother church!" How sorry I have felt to see my Close Baptist brethren in order to support *this idea* yield the whole ground to Pedobaptists, and even to the Roman Catholics. Says Bishop Watson, "It has been established that baptism was put by our Lord himself and his apostles in the room of circumcision as an initiatory rite into the cove-

nant of grace." This was first argued by the "mother church!" The fathers believed it. They taught that without baptism there was no salvation—that the little infant, in danger of eternal damnation for his original sin, was to be washed—brought into the covenant of grace, and saved, by baptism. This was the great ground of infant baptism! The text they brought to prove this, was, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." This they understood as a literal baptism in water; and here, from a misapprehension of the text, arose a system of inconsistencies and practices in the days of the "fathers," even the recital of which would crimson the cheek of modesty, and chill the blood of the chaste. Here even the Close Baptists have come over on the ground of Pedobaptists by saying, that as no uncircumcised person ate of the passover, so no unbaptized person must eat the Lord's supper. Very nearly admitting what in baptism they deny. They deny that baptism came in the room of circumcision, but acknowledge it by arguing in support of close communion! In proof of this, I will transcribe a paragraph of the writings of the celebrated Abraham Booth, published by their General Tract Society in Philadelphia:

"I take it for granted that circumcision was absolutely necessary for every male in order to communion at the paschal supper and in the solemn worship of the sanctuary. And if so, had the most renowned antediluvians that ever lived, or most illustrious Gentile that ever appeared in the world, been contemporary with Moses and sojourners in the same wilderness, they could not have been admitted to communion in the Israelitish church without submitting to circumcision. Enoch, though as a saint he walked with God, though as a prophet he foretold the coming of Christ to judgment —Noah, though an heir of the righteousness of faith, a preacher of that righteousness and one of Ezekiel's worthies, (Chap. 14: 14, &c.,)—Melchisedek, though a king and a priest of the most high God, superior to Abraham, and the greatest personal type of the Lord Messiah that ever was among men—and Job, though for piety there was none like him on earth—these I say, notwithstanding all their piety and holiness, notwithstanding all their shining excellences, exalted characters, and

useful services, could not have been admitted to communion with the chosen tribes at the tabernacle of the God of Israel without a violation of the Divine command. This, I persuade myself, our opponents must allow; this I think they dare not deny. Yet, if Enoch had been in the camp of Israel when Korah and his company mutinied, and had been disposed to give the rebels a lecture on the second coming of Christ, I cannot suppose that his offered service would have been rejected by Moses or Joshua, merely because he was not circumcised. Or, if Noah had been present at the erection of the tabernacle, and inclined to give the people a sermon on the future incarnation of the Son of God, and the righteousness of faith, to which objects the structure, with its costly utensils and solemn services, had a typical regard, I cannot but think they would have given him a hearing. Nay, I appeal to our opponents themselves, whether they do not think so as well as I. Yet that favored people *could not* have admitted them to communion in some other branches of Divine worship, without transgressing the law of Jehovah. If this be allowed, the consequence is plain, and the argument, though analogical, is irrefragable. For the paschal feast and the sanctuary services were not more of a positive nature than the Lord's supper, nor were the former more peculiar to that dispensation than the latter is to this; but preaching and hearing the word are not peculiar to any dispensation of grace, as are baptism and the sacred supper."

Now we have it in plain English from the Baptist General Tract Society—that in the *other dispensation of grace!* circumcision stood in the same relation to the *paschal communion* that baptism in this *dispensation of grace* stands to the *communion at* the Lord's table! And that it would have been a violation of the law of Jehovah, had good old Enoch, (who had been in heaven, soul and body, for many generations,) been admitted to eat the passover while uncircumcised. We will now look at the design of this *paragraph* and the weight of this "*irrefragable*" argument. In the first place, "it is taken for granted that circumcision was absolutely necessary for males in order to communion at the paschal supper." Just as if it was not thus absolutely *decreed* by the only wise God. Exodus 12: 48, "No uncircum-

cised person shall eat thereof." This is immutably fixed so that we need not *surmise* it was so. It is also said in this argument that the Lord's supper is a positive ordinance, and implied to be of no less consequence than the paschal supper, only it was attached to another dispensation. This I admit. Now if the ordinances of the gospel were of as *much consequence* as those Jewish church ordinances were, and the order in which they should be administered was of the *same* importance, why was it not *mentioned* by the head of the church? Must we *reason analogically* to find whether an uncircumcised person should eat the passover? Not at all. But when we come to the bright shining light of the gospel dispensation, where life and immortality are brought to light, and God's will perfectly revealed to his children—that light that prophets and kings desired to see—we must *reason from analogy*, or a supposed analogy between Judaism and Christianity, that Christ designed we should follow the same order in his church that the Jews did in their national church! The command, "No uncircumcised person shall eat thereof," was given in order to prevent any *error* in this respect in the Jewish church; but when that *perfect dispensation* commenced, which should continue to the end of time, we have to *guess* or draw inferences, or fall into errors, as to the proper subjects of its ordinances! What stupendous conclusions. The fact that there is no command to prohibit unbaptized believers from celebrating the Lord's supper, is evidence that Christ never designed that one of the ordinances should depend on the other. I deny that the Christian church is a continuation of the Jewish nation or church. Where is the analogy between the ordinances of the Jewish and Christian churches? Some have imagined a great analogy between the ordinance of sprinkling a little water on an infant's *face* and circumcision! But the ordinance of sprinkling was an ordinance of man, and so this analogical reasoning is all to prove an "*order*," established by men! Did not God know as well that unbaptized persons might want to come to the table of the Lord as that uncircumcised persons might wish to eat of the paschal supper? He undoubtedly did. But he put a timely prohibition as to coming to the paschal supper, uncircumcised. Had he not as much regard for *order* in the

Christian as in the Jewish church? He certainly had. Then as long as he has not seen fit to prohibit unbaptized persons coming to the Lord's supper, it is evident he did not regard it in the light of our close communion brethren, as *disorderly* and *wicked* and *trampling* upon the authority of Jehovah. Christ has erected his church and given it every *necessary* rule, and none need to make *additional rules*. As long as he has commanded *all* his disciples to celebrate this supper, it is not my duty to command *part* of his disciples not to do it. Says Mr. Booth, "That circumcision was, by Divine command, an indispensable qualification in every male for a participation of the Jewish passover and communion in the sanctuary worship, is generally allowed." He then goes on to say, that he is far from thinking that baptism came in the room of circumcision; but that it is "*equally necessary* to communion at the Lord's table." If this is not arguing in a circle, I know not what is. Why was circumcision an indispensable qualification for the paschal supper? Because God commanded that no uncircumcised person should eat of it. Is there any like command in the Christian church to regulate the communion table? No. Then for unbaptized Christians to come to the communion table is *wrong*, because it is wrong, when no command is violated! To assume that this is wrong, is a *gratuitous* assertion, and then to prove it by making the *same* assertion, is arguing in a circle. But the idea prevailed among the fathers, that the priests and bishops had the duties of the Levites to perform, and that they were descendants from the holy orders of the Jewish church—that communion was instead of the passover—that the Christian church was a continuation of the Abrahamic church—that if any man did not obey the bishop, he deserved death; and among other things too numerous to mention, that baptism came in the room of circumcision; and as no uncircumcised person was to eat the passover, so no unbaptized person was to eat at the Lord's table! These were some of the whims of these *fathers*. Says Theophylact, "No unbaptized person communicates at the Lord's table." That the authority of the *fathers* is not like inspiration, will seem plain when we consider some of the acts of their great councils. *Be it remembered*, that the idea

that baptism as an indispensable prerequisite to the observance of the Lord's supper came from the "fathers." Says Mr. Foster, "The ancient churches universally practiced upon the belief that *baptism is prerequisite* to the Lord's supper." He quotes Justin Martyr and St. Austin, &c. So the ancient churches practiced upon the belief that infants dying unbaptized went to hell! Does this prove it? Justin Martyr was a Grecian convert; and he had a great many notions not generally believed by Christians now. He thought that the just, after the resurrection, would live in Jerusalem a *thousand years*—that the souls of the wicked would become capable of dying—that Christ lived *fifty* years on earth, and after death went down to hell and preached the faith to the patriarchs! We will now take a view of St. Austin as authority for the church to follow. In the year 416, the council of Mela met, and St. Austin was the principal director. This council of *fifteen* Africans, decreed that "Whosoever denieth that infants newly born of their mothers are to be baptized, let him be accursed!" "Whosoever, says Adam was created mortal, let him be accursed!" This, then, is the authority upon which rests the conclusion that baptism is prerequisite to communion at the Lord's table. I might dwell upon this authority, and tell of the council of Carthage, headed by St. Cyprian, and their grave (but most *immodest*) deliberations respecting the baptizing of infants. Do we, to prove our practice to be correct, have to go to the *fathers?* Many of these fathers had been converted from paganism, and brought off some of their pagan notions with them. It was a matter that fed the pride of these African fathers, to think they stood in the tracks of Aaron and Eleazer. Where did these fathers get this belief? Mr. Booth thought it would have been highly offensive to God for the ancient priests to have "admitted to the passover first, and then circumcised." No doubt it would, *for he forbade it.* Says the same writer again, "Theological writers have often called baptism the sacrament of *regeneration* or initiation, and the Lord's supper the sacrament of *nutrition.*" By the use he made of this statement, he (as well as the "Baptist General Tract Society,") thought the definitions good. We will now attend more minutely to the idea that *baptism* initiates into the church. By the Close Communion Baptists no unbaptized person is considered a member of the "*visible*" church of Christ, because baptism is the "*initiatory*" sacrament. I have already shown that this was an ancient notion. I will now attempt to prove that circumcision never initiated into the Jewish church, and that baptism never did initiate into the church of Christ.

1. Circumcision did not initiate into the Jewish church. Ishmael was circumcised on the same day his father Abraham was, it being when Ishmael was thirteen years old, and all Abraham's *men* and male servants on the same day. Gen. 17 : 26, 27. Ishmael, and these servants of Abraham's house, never belonged to the Jewish church, for the covenant, of which circumcision was the seal, was not established until a year after this, when Isaac was born. Gen. 17 : 19. So it did not initiate them into the church. Esau was circumcised as well as Jacob; and his posterity, the Edomites, the inhabitants of Mount Seir, for a long time practiced this rite; but they never belonged to the Jewish church! Almost the sole blessing secured to (a *part* of) the descendants of Abraham, by the covenant of circumcision, was the land of Canaan and a numerous posterity. At the birth of Jacob, of all the thousands that had been circumcised, he was the *only* heir to the blessings of the covenant of circumcision. The six sons of Abraham by Keturah, Gen. 25 : 2, were not members of the Jewish church, though they *were circumcised.* Gen. 25 : 5, 6, "And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac. But unto the sons of the concubines which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son (while he yet lived), eastward unto the east country." These never inherited the land of Canaan, nor did they ever belong to the Jewish church. Circumcision never *initiated* them into the church! for it never was an initiatory rite. After the erection of the Jewish people into a national church, which was done after they were *called out* of Egypt, (see definition of the term church originally, previously given,) to mount Sinai, all their children *were born* members. In their *forty* years' journey in the wilderness, they did not practice circumcision, yet they were members of the church! They were born members, and unless they were circumcised, they were to be *cut off* from the church or nation. Females belonged to the Jewish nation or church—circumcision did not initi-

ate them in! The male child was, at seven days old, a member of the church, and an heir of the blessings of the nation, before circumcision, as much as he was when ten days old, after circumcision. Those whom the Jews bought with money, or hired, were, by this contract, connected with the Jewish nation, and consequently it became their duty to be circumcised, and keep the laws of the nation. Therefore, we find that circumcision never initiated into the Jewish nation or church, but natural birth initiated.

2. Baptism does not initiate into the church of Christ. It is not yet revealed in the Bible that it came in the place of circumcision; and, even if it did, it does not prove it to be an initiatory rite. The Lord's supper and baptism are both ordinances of the Christian church and Christian religion, not of the Jewish religion. Many have lived in the church years, died and gone to heaven, who were never baptized. Many have been baptized (not sprinkled) in infancy, who never belonged to the real church of Christ. Even Simon Magus was baptized, and after that, Peter told him he had neither *lot* nor *part in* the matter! But, says my close communion friend, "I know that baptism without faith will not initiate into the church of Christ." But will not faith *alone bring us, graft us*, into Christ? It will. "If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature," so he can be "translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son" by *faith!* Consequently *baptism* does not initiate into that kingdom. If baptism *without* faith will not initiate into the Christian church, of course *it is not baptism alone* that initiates, and as the Bible teaches that by *faith* we are grafted into Christ and made members of his body, it is a just conclusion that baptism does not *initiate at all.* Many, we fear, are now in hell who have been baptized, but never belonged to the family of Christ. We read, Acts 2 : 47, "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." How did the Lord do this? By *converting their souls.* This is the way it was done. *Mark*, "the Lord added." The Lord did not baptize them! If they were added by baptism, they were not added by the Lord, but by the apostles. But being "added by the Lord," it became their duty to be baptized by the apostles. We see, in the very first Christian church on

earth, they were not added, or initiated, by *baptism*, but by the Lord. Baptism, therefore, does not initiate into the church of Christ, nor make the subject of the rite a disciple of Christ. When God converts a soul, that individual belongs to the church militant; and that individual voluntarily unites with some branch of the church of Christ in the world in the worship of God, and in conformity to the rules of that branch of Christ's church by his own choice, and is received into that branch by a vote of the church. As has been often observed, if baptism is the door into the church—if persons are received by baptism—then they must be baptized out of the church when they are excluded, or when they withdraw. If it is the door into the church, it is the door out of the church, too. If it requires baptism and faith *both* to initiate a person into the church of Christ, then those who have faith and are not baptized, are in a state hard to describe; and those who have been baptized without faith, are in the same condition, both of them *half* in the church! *partly* initiated into the church and *partly* not. Says one, the unbaptized believer belongs to the "invisible" church of Christ. I never read in the Bible of any of Christ's children being *invisible* to him. They are not *invisible* to us, for by their fruits we *know them.* Some of Christ's children exhibit more of the fruits of obedience than others, but they are not invisible. In Christ the *whole family* in heaven and in earth is named. So there is but one family. Christ's children on earth are not *invisible* to him. "His eyes are over them." We can see them. The idea that Christ has *two* churches, one visible and another invisible, here on earth, is unreasonable and unscriptural. In consequence of these two errors, viz., circumcision initiated into the Jewish church, and baptism initiates into the Christian church, Pedobaptists have their children baptized, as they call it, and Close Communion Baptists debar all unbaptized Christians—all the Pedobaptist sects—and many who have been baptized—from the Lord's table.

I have now investigated two objections against free communion, viz., the *order* of the institution of the ordinances, and that *baptism initiates* us into the church. The conclusions drawn by the Close Baptists from the *first* of these objections, are, that Christ instituted baptism

before he did the supper, and consequently it must be the first ordinance in the order of its performance. The second is, that baptism *admits* us into the church, and none but church members are to eat of the supper—unbaptized Christians are not members, and therefore they cannot consistently come to the Lord's table. The premises being incorrect, the conclusions of necessity are incorrect. I am as firmly satisfied that these objections cannot be sustained by the Bible, as I am that infant sprinkling cannot be sustained by it; and with all becoming modesty, I challenge Christendom to find the ordinance of infant sprinkling in the gospel.

3. The next objection we shall notice, is, that it is *criminal* for an unbaptized person to approach the table of the Lord. I will copy a phrase or two. "If an unbaptized person approaches the Lord's table, he tramples upon an ordinance most emphatically enjoined by Christ in the commission he gave his apostles." I have before said, that sin was a transgression of the *Divine* law; and that as no law was transgressed by unbaptized Christians celebrating the Lord's supper, I considered the sin chimerical. That there is any Divine command transgressed in so doing, I confidently deny. Do the Presbyterians *trample* on the ordinance by eating this supper? Forbid it, charity.

> "Let not this weak unknowing hand
> Presume thy bolts to throw,
> And deal damnation round the land
> On each I *judge* thy foe."

If the individual *tramples* the ordinance of baptism by celebrating the supper, he does, undoubtedly, when he rises as a preacher of the gospel. Says the author just quoted, "If it is sin for the unbaptized to approach the table of the Lord, it must be sin for *the church* to invite any unbaptized person to the table of the Lord, since by so doing they invite to sin." Is it not as evidently trampling the ordinance of baptism for a minister, who has not been baptized, and consequently (if Close Communion Baptists are right) does not belong to the church of Christ, to stand up as a teacher of religion, as it is for the unbaptized Christian to come to the supper? But still he is invited to preach. God has called him to preach! Preaching or teaching is a command of Christ. Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, for seeking the priesthood,

were slain, Num. 16. Why is not this held up to make the Pedobaptist ministers cease preaching? The preaching of the gospel is commanded, Mark 16: 15. If it is a sin against God to invite them to his table, it is to invite them to preach his gospel; and as they do not belong to Christ's church, (having never been baptized,) they are not Christ's ministers! How is it known to be sin to invite these unbaptized Christians to the communion table? "It is sinful to invite them to come to the table, because they have no right there; and they have no right there, because it is sinful!" It is not sinful to come *because God has* forbidden it; for this he has never done. What a complete system of inconsistency! Who shall judge whether it is sin or not? Says an author: "Faith is prerequisite to baptism, baptism to church fellowship, and *church fellowship* to communion at the Lord's table." Now we have *three* prerequisites to the Lord's supper. Baptism and faith both will not *now* answer; but *church fellowship* is the criterion. I will add one more prerequisite, that I think is *considered* more absolutely necessary than the three preceding, and that is, the *name*. Individuals can be found that have been *baptized*, have *faith*, and *church fellowship*; but, alas! the *name* is different, and therefore they must not approach the Lord's table, especially where they are prohibited. I can find individuals that agree with the Close Communion Baptists *as well* as they agree among themselves, and yet they must not commemorate the death of Christ with them because they have another name! I know of many Close Communion Baptists that agree with me in faith as well as my Freewill Baptist brethren do, and in the doctrine of *free* communion too. Their churches will commune with them, and why not with me? Because that when I write my name I put F. W. before the Baptist, when they place the word "*Regular*" before the Baptist. My name is just as *Scriptural* as theirs. The *doctrine*, I think, is more Scriptural than theirs. In Bible days, there was never any *sect* called Baptist, Methodist, or Presbyterian. There was one John the Baptist, and the reason why he was called Baptist was, he baptized his disciples. If he had *sprinkled* water *on* them, he would have been called "John the Rantist," or John the Sprinkler. The doctrine he preached agrees *as well* with what we preach as it does

with that which the Close Communion Baptists preach—let a candid world judge—and therefore if the name is worth any thing, our name is worth as much as theirs, there being as many vowels and consonants in it. But so it is; the *name* goes a great ways in fixing the terms of communion with many.

We have now arrived at no less than *four* prerequisites of close communion. First, *faith;* second, *baptism;* third, *church fellowship;* fourth, *the name.* If any object to the *fourth* prerequisite, which is the only one I have added, I only answer that *facts* attest the truth of it, and facts are stubborn arguments. But what is meant by *church fellowship?* Fellowship with the Methodist churches? No. With the General Baptist? No. With the Presbyterian? No. With the Close Communion Baptist? *Yes.* The reason why church fellowship with the Presbyterian church will not do, is, "They are no church of Christ, because they have never been baptized, and *baptism* is prerequisite to church fellowship." But the General Baptists, Freewill Baptists, and Seventh-day Baptists, have all been baptized, but *they* have not the same name! Does that not prove that the name has about as much to do with the *terms* of communion as any one thing else? But to say, because a Christian comes to the Lord's table before he has been baptized, that by so doing he *tramples* the authority of Jehovah under his feet, is no more correct than to say that by preaching the gospel of Christ he tramples the Divine command under his feet! Assertion is not always taken as proof.

4. I will now cite the text that has been supposed to prove it the duty of the Baptists to withdraw from other Christians in the celebration of the Lord's supper. 2 Thess. 3: 6, "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us." The argument they bring from this text is, "That the *order* of the primitive church was repentance and baptism before the Lord's supper, and prior to church membership—and that those that do not follow this *order* are walking *dis*orderly, and therefore they are commanded to withdraw from them. This is the *magnum argumentum.* I shall, in coming at

the true sense of this text, answer the three following questions:

1. What did Paul mean by the *tradition?*
2. What is meant by *disorderly* walking?
3. What is meant by the command "*to withdraw?*"

1. What did Paul mean by the tradition? He and Silas had been to Thessalonica, and preached before this. It was a place of considerable importance, being the ancient metropolis of Macedonia, and the church had been flourishing. Paul had a short time previous to this written them a letter, which was the first epistle that he wrote. The word "*tradition*" refers to what he, with Silas and Timotheus, had written in the former letter. He evidently did not mean *unwritten* sayings, which were orally communicated from one to another, though this is the common sense of the term, but the word of God as contained in the former letter, which is the only *tradition* the church of God should regard. "Which ye received of us"—that is, Paul, Silas, and Timotheus. What was that? Is baptism a tradition of men? Is the supper a tradition of men? In 1 Thess. 4: 11, 12, he tells them to "Study to be *quiet*, and to do your *own business*, and to work with your own hands, as we *commanded* you, that ye may walk honestly," &c. This, then, was the *original* oral *tradition* afterwards communicated in a letter. Then we have the *tradition* before us, with which the rest of the text corresponds.

2. What is meant by *disorderly* walking? This is the grand question in contemplation. We will look again at his former epistle. 1 Thess. 4: 1—6, "Furthermore, then, we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to *walk* and to please God, so ye would abound more and more. For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication, that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor. Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles that know not God, that no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter," &c. This makes it clear, that in the text under consideration he speaks in view of just such disorder as he here exhorts them in the name of the Lord Jesus to avoid. This agrees with the sense of the original word (*ataktos*) disorderly. The word

ataktos also signifies *unruly—dissolute.* (*Donegan.*) Dissolute, *loose, wanton, debauched.* (*Walker.*) Such disorderly characters as these we are commanded not to fellowship. Are all unbaptized Christians such characters as these?

3. What is meant by the command "*to withdraw?*" It means to *disfellowship* them as followers of Christ, for the same apostle says, "follow me, even as I follow Christ;" and if they are *dissolute* or disorderly, fellowship them not as following the example of Christ. On a similar occasion, he says, 1 Cor. 5: 11, "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such an one, no, not to eat." This is not to just disfellowship him at the Lord's table, but not to even eat a common meal with him! In order to be exact in the *withdrawing*, we must "keep not company," neither *civil* nor religious, "no, not so much as to eat." But to commune in singing, in praying, and in preaching, and then to withdraw at the Lord's table, are *three* evidences of fellowship, and one of disfellowship. Strange sort of withdrawal that! *Three* evidences against *one*, that you are in fellowship.

We then come to the conclusion, that the *tradition* of the apostle was not Christian baptism, which is an ordinance of Christ's own institution—that the *disorderly walking* was not coming to the Lord's table—and that *to withdraw* from a *dis*orderly walker was not to fellowship him in every thing but the Lord's supper. It is not yet proved that it is *disorderly* or *debauchery* for unbaptized Christians to eat at the Lord's table!

Again, Rom. 16: 17, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine ye have learned, and avoid them." This, also, has been supposed to prove it wrong for Baptists to commune with Pedobaptists. But, before I come to that conclusion, I must read the *next verse*, "For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." Those the apostle commands us to avoid here, are *disorderly walkers;* and he says, they are *not the servants* of Jesus Christ. Is this the character of the Pedobaptists? Are not they the servants of Jesus Christ? I will venture to say that there is not one text in all God's word to prohibit unbaptized Christians from coming to the Lord's table, or that proves it *wicked* and *trampling* on Christ's authority, for them thus to partake of the Lord's supper.

But where is the cause of laying so much stress on these texts just quoted? It is this: the texts are misapplied, and their sense perverted in order to make it appear sinful for Baptists to eat the supper with other Christians, and thus make a good excuse for their practice. They will occupy the desk with me, but a seat at their table I must not have. Thus our ministers are fit to preach the gospel, but they are not fit to partake of its ordinances! So a brother will in *private* acknowledge me to be a Christian, and, in all acts of religious worship, he will acknowledge me to be a Christian, but *one*. There he cannot acknowledge it. Says Mr. Foster, "We do cheerfully invite *all real Christians*, not only to the Lord's table, but to his baptism." Then *all real Christians* are invited to the Lord's supper! They do not generally invite me to be baptized, nor any of my F. W. Baptist brethren do they urge to that duty—nor do they invite us to come to the Lord's table. Therefore, we are not considered *real Christians;* for such are invited to do both! And all this time they call us *inconsistent;* but the reader will judge how *consistent* with common sense their "cheerful invitation" is.

I will now mention a text that has been often quoted to show that C. Baptists *cannot* consistently commune with others with whom they differ in some points of faith. It is this, Amos 3: 3, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" This has been cited a thousand times, in order to prove close communion. In the first place, this was written *eight hundred and twenty years* before the Lord instituted this supper! Again, it was spoken to Israel by the prophet, accompanied with *eight* other questions. God, in the verse preceding, threatened to punish them for their sins. They had broken God's law, and were not obedient to his will—they did not agree to walk with God, and he informed them that he could not dwell and walk with them, unless they agreed to his will. But, to fetch this to the aid of close communion, is much like the man who clung to the anchor when the ship was ready to sink! God is agreed to walk with his children, and says, "I will be with them and walk with them." God is with the Methodists, Presbyterians, &c., of a truth. He walks with them through the shadow of death, notwithstanding they have

some imperfections; but our close communion brethren seem to be very particular who they walk with! God is agreed to walk with *all* his children, even to the communion table, and how any can walk with him who are not agreed to this, I leave for those who practice this to answer. If a man will not walk with his brother whom he has seen, how can he walk with God whom he has not seen? Every person who reads his Bible knows this text has nothing to do with the question to be settled. The word *walk* cannot mean communion at the Lord's table, without an extravagant figure of rhetoric, not to be admitted in so plain a declaration as the one contained in the text. But a drowning man will grasp at a straw.

5. The next objection is, That, by admitting Christians of other names to commune with us, we acknowledge them to be baptized as well as ourselves, and "virtually say that your error is as good as our truth." This would hold good against us, if we refused *un*baptized Christians. We do not commune with them as *baptized* persons, but as Christians, unbaptized. We are yet without the proof, that baptism is prerequisite. If we acknowledged that it was, then the objection might be good, but now it is not applicable to us. It *would* apply to the *Roman Catholics*, for they say "baptism is that ordinance that makes us Christians;" but we hold that a person may be a Christian without baptism. Let no one, then, brand us with acknowledging them baptized by inviting them to the table of Christ. We repel such assertions.

6. The next objection is, that we commune with their errors and profess to commune with their practice. We do not profess to show an entire agreement in every point of faith and practice with those whom we invite. This, I have already shown, was not the design of the institution. We do not think it necessary to a proper celebration of the supper that in every minute point there should be entire uniformity. This does not exist often where the Lord's table is spread, even among the close communion Baptists themselves.

But do I *agree* with a man's errors, because I admit he has some correct sentiments? Is it not right for me to agree (or commune, the true sense of the term) with him when he tells the truth? or shall I, when he is correct, deny it? Does God, when he communes by his Holy Spirit with that individual, commune with his errors? Does he

commune with your errors? or have you none? We will take a case, a common one: I and my close communion brethren are engaged in a protracted meeting. Sinners are alarmed, and with an earnest heart say, pray for us. We kneel by the anxious to pray—we pray in union of spirit, and God hears our united cries, and in answer to our prayers and agreeably to his promise, "where two are agreed" it shall be done, he converts a score of anxious sinners. There was a communion in prayer and with God himself. It exhibits the *strongest*, the *nearest* union that Christians can have with God and with one another. Now I ask an enlightened community, if that minister did not express his fellowship with me more fully than he would by sitting with me and a hundred others at the Lord's table? Was it not an expression of the *length* and *breadth* of Christian fellowship? And after all this, the next Sabbath following he tells me he cannot sit around my Father's table with me!

7. By admitting unbaptized Christians to communion, they will be more likely to neglect to be baptized. Just so I might argue, that the young convert must not pray, for if he does he will most certainly neglect to be baptized! It is his duty to repent—to pray—to confess Christ, and to obey the ordinances of the gospel. By repenting will he be more likely to neglect to pray—by praying will he be the more likely to neglect to confess Christ—and by confessing Christ will he be the more likely to disobey his commands? The contrary is true. If he repents, he will be apt to pray, if he prays he will be likely to confess Christ publicly and to obey him. Experimental knowledge proves this objection irrational and inconsistent.

8. "We should have to commune with our excluded members." What does this objection prove? I will tell you. It proves that sectarian notions corrupt the church of Christ. Instead of these Christian *parties* keeping the church from receiving bad members to their communion, it *screens hypocrites*. Let a man be excluded from the C. Baptist church for *immorality*, and will any other church receive him? Not one. But suppose *we* receive him. This argues that he has no expectation of meeting the C. Baptists who excluded him at the Lord's table, for if he had he might have known that for his sins he might be rebuked before *all*, that the rest might fear, and his sins would find

him out. But instead of this, he thinks that no complaint will be brought against him from the former church, and he is *screened* from censure. Now reverse the order, and let him know if he hides his sins from us and gets into the church, he might meet them in one week in a public assembly, and he would not be likely to join another church under those circumstances, nor would he be received.

It is the duty of Christians to do good to all men, and especially to the household of faith—for we are no more strangers and foreigners but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God. If a *bad* member flees from one church to find refuge in another church, his latter brethren ought to hear any complaint of his former brethren; and if he is immoral, they ought not to receive him into their church, and if he is received, he should be cut off. But by our feeling that we are not brethren, and by our acting as though we were not *fellow citizens*, the church is corrupted and hypocrites are sheltered. This is not the effect of free communion. But what if you did set at the table with a bad man, as bad as Judas, does that make it wrong for you to eat and drink? Some say, if Judas was there the apostles did not know him to be a bad man. Strange that when Christ had said, "one of you shall betray me," and they had been saying, "Lord is it I?" and Judas said, "*Master*, is it I?" and Jesus said, "thou hast said"—when he said it is he to whom I will give the sop when I have dipped it—and he gave it to Judas—strange, I say, that they did not know Judas to be a bad man!

Now, says one, "You open the door of communion to the wicked." Not at all. I neither open or shut the door; that is Christ's business, and as his minister it is right for me to say to those who come to the Lord's table, "If you eat and drink unworthily, you eat and drink damnation to yourselves." It is the duty of every particular church to judge of the standing of its members. It is the duty of every Christian to put himself under the government of some particular church, otherwise the churches cannot judge of their standing. On this ground, we cannot invite Christians that belong to no church, for we know not that they are in fellowship with any branch of Christ's church, and are not commended to the Christian public by the judgment of any branch of the Christian church. It is not expected that we shall

invite any persons to come, but such as are known to be the professed members of the church of Christ. If a man is amenable to no church for his conduct as a Christian, we are under no obligation whatever to recognize him as a member of Christ's church by inviting him to the ordinances of his house. Judas Iscariot was a professed disciple of Christ. But are our close communion brethren never deceived? Do their views and practices keep back all who are unworthy! Not so. Many who are baptized by them are no better than any other hypocrites of a different name. But in order to keep away hypocrites shall we keep back the dear children of Christ—dear to him—for he has purchased them by his blood? Shall we keep them back when he has told them to come? The fact that a person has been baptized is not an infallible evidence of his being a real believer in Christ.

9. The last objection I shall consider is, "You commune with unbaptized persons, but you will not receive them into your church, which is inconsistent." This objection is not quite correct. We do not receive persons into our churches *because* they are *already* baptized, or because they have *already* observed the Lord's supper, but because they feel it their *duty* and privilege to do this as children of Christ. Not because they have had this privilege, but because they love God and *want* this privilege. We vote members in and vote them out. If we baptize them in, we must baptize them out. An unbaptized person is never received, but on condition he will be baptized and perform all other Christian duties. On this ground, an individual acts when he invites a neighbor to eat with him. The man sits down; but after the repast, says the neighbor, I am well pleased with your fare, and I want to make it my home with you. Says the first, you can take up your abode with us, if you will conform to our rules and regulations. He hears the regulations, and says, I think I could not enjoy myself under *all* these rules. Very well, says the first; these are our rules; upon which the other thinks he can better enjoy himself elsewhere, and passes on. They agreed to eat together, but in family regulations they did not agree. Thus we agree to eat with our unbaptized brethren, while in our church regulations we do not agree, and of course have the opportunity of being

under such regulations as we may prefer. So our C. Baptist brethren receive an unbaptized minister into their meeting houses, sing with him, pray with him, and worship God with him, for in this they argee; but at the Lord's table they do not invite him to partake, for here they think he has no right to come. They disagree with him here, or at least they differ in prerequisites for the table. This is more inconsistent than we are in communing with him, for here too we agree, as well as we do in his preaching or praying, and as far as we agree we feel willing to go with God's children. Let us, then, if we manifest a difference with others, do it in the things wherein we *differ*, and not wherein we *agree*.

VI. *Objections against sectarian or close communion.*

1. We think it contrary to the spirit of Christian love and of the gospel. "Why dost thou judge thy brother, or why settest thou at naught thy brother?" Rom. 14 : 10. "Is Christ divided?" 1 Cor. 1 : 13. "Let each esteem other better than himself."

2. It is not in the Bible, therefore we are not bound to believe it.

3. It *severs* the children of God, even young converts who join different branches of Christ's church, and chills their feelings towards each other.

4. It does not go well in time of reformation. When Christians' hearts are filled with love to God and his children, they will sometimes come together and break over the rules of the close communion system—this is often the case.

5. It prohibits Christ's ministers from coming to the Lord's table with those very souls they have led to Christ, and who are endeared to them by the strong ties of Christian love.

6. It is not the communion of the Bible. 1 Cor. 10 : 16, 17. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread." Here we see that the communion of the Bible is the communion of *the body of Christ.* No *one sect* is the *body* of Christ, therefore the communion of a sect is not the communion of the Bible. We being many are *one body*, and are *all partakers* of that one bread. In the communion of

the Bible *all the body* or church are said to be *partakers* of *that one bread.* It is spread for all. A *sectarian* communion is not spread for all the church, but for only a branch or sect. It is therefore not the communion of the Bible. The blood and body of Christ are represented by *all his church*, and they are all partakers of his blood and body spiritually; and for any branch of his church to claim to be the whole *body* of Christ's church is a gratuitous and arrogant assertion, neither true in reason nor in fact, nor is the table thus spread the table of the Lord, but the table of a sect!

Freewill Baptist Books.

We are frequently receiving small orders for our Books from distant parts of the country, to which the cheapest and safest mode of conveyance is by mail. For the convenience of all concerned, we have prepared the following table, which shows the cash prices of our Books, single and by the dozen, with the cost of postage added. Orders accompanied with the cash, at these rates, will be immediately filled and despatched to any part of the United States east of the Rocky Mountains, by mail, *postage paid:*

	Price.	*Postage.*	*Total.*
Psalmody, 18mo. in Sheep, single copy,	,75	,18	,93
do do dozen,	6,75	1,96	8,71
do Embossed Morocco, single,	,84	,17	1,01
do do do dozen,	7,56	1,92	9,48
do 32mo. single,	,62	,07	,69
do do dozen,	5,63	,80	6,43
Christian Baptism, *Bound,* single,	,25	,4	,29
do do do dozen,	2,25	,42	2,67
do do *Paper Covers,* single,	,15	,2	,17
do do do dozen,	1,80	,26	2,06
Register for 1861, single,	,10	,2	,12
do do dozen,	,84	,19	1,03
do do 50 copies,	3,00	,80	3,80
Life of Colby, single,	,50	,10	,60
do do dozen,	4,50	1,15	5,65
Life of Marks, single,	1,00	,20	1,20
do do dozen,	8,40	2,34	10,74
Church History, single,	1,25	,26	1,51
do do dozen,	10,50	3,10	13,60
Christian Melody, single,	,62	,06	,68
do do dozen,	5,25	,69	5,94
Sacred Melody, single,	,25	,04	,29
do do dozen,	2,10	,37	2,47
Zion's Harp, single,	,25	,05	,30
do do dozen,	2,10	,57	2,67
Church Member's Book, single,	,30	,05	,35
do do do dozen,	2,52	,60	3,12
Treatise, single,	,20	,03	,23
do dozen,	1,68	,34	2,02
Facts and Reflections, single,	,20	,03	,23
do do dozen,	1,68	,36	2,04
Thoughts upon Thought, single,	,25	,04	,29
do do do dozen,	2,10	,45	2,55
Manual, single,	,25	,40	,29
do dozen,	2,10	,48	2,58
Appeal to Conscience, single,	,14	,02	,16
do do dozen,	1,18	,19	1,57
Communionist, single,	,08	,02	,10
do dozen,	,67	,17	,84
Choralist, single,	,58	,13	,71
do dozen,	5,22	1,50	6,72
Minutes of General Conference, single,	,75	,17	,92

(There is no discount on the Minutes by the dozen.)