

## CONFESSION OF FAITH.

### CHAPTER 28.-Of Baptism.

II. The outward Element to be used in this sacrament is water, wherewith the Party is to be Baptized, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, by a Minister of the Gospel, lawfully called thereunto<sup>1</sup>.

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Question 1.—*Is the outward element to be used in the sacrament of baptism water?*

*Answer.*—Yes. Matt. 3:11; John 1:33; Acts 8:36; 10:47. Thus do the Papists err who do join oil, salt, spittle and other things to this element. These things belong rather to the profanation, than administration of baptism, Ezek. 36:25. *The element is water*, that is, common, clean water, without any distinction. John the Baptist used this, Matt. 3:11; John 1:33; 3:23. This is also true for the apostles, Acts 10:47; 8:36, 38. Baptism is therefore called “the washing of water,” Eph. 5:26. The Papist additions of exorcisms, making of crosses, papal saliva, oil, salt, flour, and other such concoctions are human fabrications which are sacrilegious and therefore are to be rejected with abhorrence.

The reasons for the use of water appear in the following: 1.) Water is a cheap and common element, which is easily obtained. 2.) In the beginning the Spirit moved on the waters, and was the cause of generation, Gen. 1:2; so in the baptism of water and the Spirit, is effected our regeneration, Tit. 3:5. 3.) Water washes away the filth of the body, so does baptism the spots of the soul, Heb. 10:22. By this water, Christ cleanses his Church, Eph. 5:26. 4.) Water quenches the thirst of the body, so does baptism the thirst of the soul, John 7:37-39. 5.) Water cools the heat of the body, so does baptism the heat of God’s wrath, and the fire of our lusts, Luke 16:24; 1 Pet. 3:21. 6.) Baptism is the sacrament of illumination, Heb. 6:4, 10:32. Thus *to illuminate*, is used for baptizing; and baptism is called illumination; and the days of baptism are called the days of light. Now water is an element which is diaphorant—that is, it is a body by which light is transmitted to us; so is mental illumination by the water of baptism, by which we are besprinkled: for the gifts of the Spirit are expressed by the sprinkling of clean water, Ezek. 36:25; and by the sprinklings of the old purifications, Heb. 9:13, 14; 1 Pet. 1:2; and the sprinkling of the lamb’s blood in the passover, Ex. 12:22; Heb. 11:28, to which the apostles allude, Heb. 10:22; 12:24; 1 Pet. 1:2.

Question 2.—*Is the party to be baptized to be baptized with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost?*

*Answer.*—Yes. Matt. 28:19. Thus do the Papists err maintaining that no formula was prescribed by Christ, but that it is received only from tradition that a certain formula of words is employed. So, too, we oppose certain other fanatics who are opposed to the ordinary formula because certain “superstitious” power seems to be ascribed to it. 1.)

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. 3:11; John 1:33; Matt. 28:19, 20.

Christ gave this formula to the Church, as is clear, Matt. 28:19. 2.) These words contain the word of promise proper and essential to baptism—the revelation of the economic Trinity promising, working and sealing redemption, *cf.* 2 Cor. 13:14. 3.) Those passages which are adduced to support the contrary, where the apostles are said to have baptized in the name of Christ, Acts 2:38; 8:16; or into Christ, Rom. 6:3, do not teach with what form they baptized, but the efficient cause—they baptized by Christ's command and authority; and the final cause—into his faith and doctrine, *cf.* 1 Cor. 10:2. 4.) The formula embraces all things in few words which are sealed to us by this sacrament. There is the institution of God; the promise of grace; and the stipulation of duty of the believer, *cf.* Acts 16:30-33. 5) There is a special relationship between each Person and the person being baptized: that the Father is his Father, the Son is his Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit is his Comforter and Sanctifier, Matt. 28:19.

Question 3.—*Is the sacrament of baptism with water to be administered by a minister of the Gospel, lawfully called thereunto?*

*Answer.*—Yes. Matt. 28:19, 20. They must be men who have been *lawfully commissioned* to preach and baptize. 1.) This is evident from common practice since the time of Christ. 2.) The right to baptize belongs only to those to whom was given by Christ the right of preaching the Gospel. Now no one ought to preach except he be called, Heb. 5:4, and sent, Rom. 10:15. Christ has conjoined preaching and baptizing as parts of the public ministry which are indissolubly joined together; the apostles—and thus all ministers, who are their lawful successors—have been commissioned to baptize, Matt. 28:19, 20. 3.) Baptism must be administered in the name of Christ; that is, upon the command and according to the institution of Christ, Acts 2:38. 4.) They were neither private persons nor mere laymen who are said to have baptized in the Book of Acts. It is true, Philip baptized the eunuch, Acts 8:38; Ananias baptized Paul, Acts 22:16, and those who belonged to the household of Cornelius were baptized by private individuals, Acts 10:48. We deny that the individuals mentioned above were without a divine commission; let this be proven. *Philip* was a deacon, Acts 6:5, who was commissioned to baptize, and furthermore, he was an evangelist, Acts 21:8. *Ananias* was a disciple who received an express command from God, Acts 9:10, 11, 15. The family of Cornelius was baptized by Peter's command, and thus, whoever baptized was commissioned to do so, Acts 10:46-48. 5.) Because the contrary notion is founded upon the erroneous foundation of the absolute necessity of baptism. This we shall in its proper place discuss and overthrow.

Therefore no one may baptize unless he has been commanded by Christ to do so—and thus is a servant of Christ and a steward of the mysteries of God, 1 Cor. 4:1.