

PROOF OF INFANT BAPTISM

Dwight's Theology, vol. v, p. 259

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"For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the believing wife, and the unbelieving wife by the husband, else were your children unclean; but now are they holy."

The word "unclean" in almost all instances in the Scriptures denotes that which may not be offered to God, or may not come into His temple. Of this character were the heathen universally; and they were, therefore, customarily and proverbially denominated unclean by the Jews. The unbelievers here spoken of were heathen, and were therefore unclean. In this sense, the children born of two heathen parents are here pronounced to be unclean also; as being in the proper sense heathen. To be holy, as here used, is the converse of being unclean; and denotes that which may be offered to God. To be sanctified, as referring to the objects here mentioned, is to be separated for religious purposes; "consecrated to God," as were the firstborn, and vessels of the temple; or to be in a proper condition to appear before God. In this text it denotes, that the unbelieving parent is so purified by means of his relation to the believing parent, that their mutual offspring are not unclean, but may be offered to God. There is no other sense in which a Jew could have written this text, without some qualification of these words. The only appointed way in which children may be offered to God is baptism.

Justin Martyr, born at the close of the first century, observes, when speaking of those who were members of the church, that "a part of these were sixty or seventy years old, who were made disciples of Christ from their infancy." But there never was any other mode of making disciples from infancy, except baptism.

Saint Augustine born in the middle of the fourth century says "the whole church practices infant baptism; it is not instituted by councils, but was always in use." He also says that "he did not remember ever to have read of any person, whether catholic or heretic, who maintained that baptism ought to be denied to infants." "This" he says, "the church has always maintained"

(Dwight's Theology, vol. v, p. 2,59).