

**THE BAPTIZED FAMILY;
OR, AN INQUIRY INTO THE
CONDITION OF CHILDREN
IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

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The Baptized Family; Or, an Inquiry into the Condition of Children in the Christian Church by
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BAPTIZED FAMILY;
OR, AN INQUIRY INTO
THE CONDITION OF CHILDREN
IN
THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

BY CÆSAR MALAN, D.D.,
OF GENEVA.

Translated from the French
BY M. J. MULLIGAN.
With a Recommendatory Preface
BY THE REV. R. J. BRYCE, LL.D.

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

THERE has lately appeared a work against the baptism of the infant children of Christians. It is in the form of a dialogue; and the interlocutors are *Samuel* and *James*. The former, who disapproves of such baptism, sustains his objections to it by the following arguments:—

1st. *The danger of infant baptism*, inasmuch as it becomes, in many instances, a hindrance to conversion.

2nd. The baptism of water does not confer any grace on the children of Christians, since they stand in the same relation to God as the children of the heathen.

3rd. Baptism has not replaced the Jewish ordinance of circumcision.

4th. The baptism of water, which is the external sign of the baptism of fire, or the Holy Spirit, belongs only to the spiritual church—viz., only to believers.

These arguments, which are stated with calmness and devout feeling, receive but feeble replies from *James*. The reader may consequently be led to infer that *Samuel* is in the right, since his opponent has so little to say in opposition to his views.

The object of the following dialogue is to supply what *James* either could not or would not say to his friend. It will, therefore, contain an examination of *Samuel's* arguments; and this will require considerably more time than is occupied by him in bringing them forward. For it is with certain opinions, as with those subtle and powerful odours which cannot be removed from a garment without great trouble. Thus the Apostle Paul was obliged to write a long epistle, to check merely a few errors of certain Christians among the Hebrews.

However, this subject is important, for it is connected with the fundamental principles of our faith, and, therefore, demands the attention and study of every disciple of the truth. But, as it is one of those questions that cause so much unhappy disunion amongst those who are redeemed by the same Saviour, it ought to be treated with prudence, and in the spirit of love, lest controversy, should assume the place of discussion, and become more injurious to peace than useful to the faith.

PREFACE TO THE TRANSLATION.

BY THE REV. R. J. BRYCE, LL.D.

SOME years ago, an amiable and highly gifted youth, whose parents, both Baptists, were among my dearest friends, left home, in delicate health, in the Autumn, with the intention of passing the Winter in Italy. He was accompanied by another invalid, an old school-fellow, to whom he was much attached; but, on reaching Geneva, the latter, I forget why, gave up the idea of Italy, and set off in another direction; so my young friend, shrinking from the alternative of four or five solitary months in a land of strangers, lingered at the foot of the Alps for a few weeks, and then returned home. His bodily health was not improved, but his soul had "passed from death unto life."

He had been religiously brought up—diligently instructed in Christian doctrine, and carefully trained in the practice of Christian virtue. This education had produced its natural results; and nothing was wanting but that which is beyond the sphere of natural causes.

His understanding, originally fine and now highly cultivated, had cordially assented to all the truths of revelation; while his moral sentiments were sound; and his conduct irreproachable. He was haunted by no scepticism, and had fallen into no vice; but he had not been born again: that great change awaited him at Geneva.

He had a letter of introduction to Cæsar Malan; and, as soon as he could after his arrival, he went to present it. He was most kindly received, and most cordially invited to return. One or two visits more placed him on a footing of intimacy with his new friend, to enjoy whose society and attend on whose ministry it was that he prolonged his stay in Geneva. In short, it pleased God, by the conversation and preaching of Dr. Malan, to carry home to the heart and conscience of this young man, the truths which, till then, had penetrated no deeper than the understanding, and to teach him the great secret of laying hold on Christ as *his own Saviour*. It is thus that He who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will, manifests His sovereignty in the choice of the means by which He brings His elect to Himself, and vindicates His own claim to all the glory of the work. It was not for lack of Christian conversation and evangelical preaching at home, that this youth was sent all the way to Geneva, to be converted to God.

Nor did the mother of my young friend (now his only surviving parent), grudge or envy the Swiss pastor the honour of having been the instrument of her son's

saving change. On the contrary, her heart overflowed with joy and thankfulness, not only for the happy event itself, but also for having been shown so strikingly that it was God's doing, and guarded so effectually from giving any part of the glory to any other.

When the young man was preparing to return home, Dr. Malan presented him with the original of the following tract; and, when his sufferings came to an end, his mother gave it to me. I read it with great interest, especially the earlier portion of it, in which an important part of the argument is presented in almost the same shape it had taken, some years before, in my own mind, when reflection and study of the Scriptures solved some doubts I had been led to feel about the lawfulness of Infant Baptism. I naturally wished to have it published in English, and prevailed on a lady, belonging to my congregation, to undertake the translation of it. She had proceeded a good way, when circumstances occurred which rendered it necessary to suspend the work, and it lay by for several years, principally from want of leisure, on my part, to read the original a second time, and with a more critical eye. But a conversation which I had with a friend in Scotland, in the end of 1857, or the beginning of 1858, recalled my attention to the matter so strongly, that I put aside other occupations for a little, re-examined certain passages, in which the correctness of the author's views had been questioned, and came to the conclusion