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ARTICLE, I.

EVOLUTION.<sup>1</sup>

*Gentlemen of the Alumni Association:*

At the same time that you honored me with an invitation to deliver an address before you on this occasion, the Board of Directors of the Theological Seminary, in view of the fact that "Scepticism in the world is using alleged discoveries in science to impugn the word of God," requested me "to give fully my views, as taught in this institution, upon Evolution, as it respects the world, the lower animals, and man." Inasmuch as several members of the Board are also members of this Association, and both Board and Association feel the same interest in the Seminary, I have supposed that I could not select a subject more likely to meet with your approval than the one suggested to me by the Directors.

I am all the more inclined to make this choice, as it will afford me the opportunity of showing you that additional study has, in some respects, to a certain extent modified my views since I expressed them to many of you in the class-room.

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<sup>1</sup> This Address was delivered May 7th, 1884, before the Alumni Association of the Theological Seminary at Columbia, S. C., and is published in the SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW at its request, and also at the request of the Board of Directors of the Theological Seminary.

## ARTICLE III.

## THE CHURCH ONE, THE WORD ONE, AND THE COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM STANDS.

The Church of God is one. He has never had but one Church on the earth. There is one Head of the Church and the Church is his body. One head with two bodies would be monstrous. There have been three different dispensations—the Patriarchal, the Jewish, and the Christian—but only one Church. It did not begin with the Apostles, nor with Abraham, but at the Fall, when Redemption's work commenced, and the gospel was first preached in the promise about the seed of the woman. Many sects, many denominations of professed Christians exist, but in so far as they are true Churches holding the Head, they all constitute but one Church. Paul, writing to the Ephesians, declares in the strongest terms that the Old Testament Church was the same with the Christian, telling these Ephesian converts that so long as they were without Christ they were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel. To become a Christian was to enter the commonwealth of Israel. The Jewish Church and the Christian were the same, differing in some minor things, but one in the main. Both had the same Saviour, and were to be saved in the same way. Abel, Enoch, Abraham, David, Isaiah, and all the other saints of God in the two former dispensations, looked forwards by faith to the coming Christ, and we look backwards by the same faith to the Christ that did come. Jesus is the common centre, and his people in every age and country sit round him in concentric circles. In a true and proper sense you can say of them all that they were *Christians* just as much as we are, for equally and alike they all belonged to Jesus, and equally and alike Jesus belonged to all of them.

Let any one read the language of our Lord (Matt. xxi. 33–43) in the parable of the vineyard. That vineyard was his Church and it had been "let out" to the Jewish people, but they did not prove faithful. And what then did the Lord of the vineyard? Destroy his vineyard and make a new one? No; he "miserably

destroyed those wicked men," and "let out his vineyard to other husbandmen." He took it from Jews and intrusted it to Gentiles, but it is the same vineyard still.

Let any one read Rom. xi. 16-24. The Church is there described as an olive tree, of which the natural branches, who were the Jews, were for the most part broken off, and wild olive branches, that is, Gentiles, grafted in, the root and trunk remaining, however, still the same. The Church is one and remains always the same, whether with Jewish or Christian people for its branches. And the Jews shall one day be grafted into their own olive tree again.

There has never been but one Church of God. Beginning in fallen Adam's family with the first promise, it comes down through the first or Patriarchal dispensation to Abraham, in whose family it becomes a more formal organisation, and so it passes on to the time of Moses who led "the Church in the wilderness" to Sinai, where it received "the lively oracles" to conserve them, all through the second or Jewish dispensation, and pass them down to us of the third or Christian dispensation of the one Church of God.

So, too, God's word is one. There are two Testaments, but they make one Bible. It is *the* Bible—that is, *the* Book—because there is none other in the world. This Book stands alone. All that is true, or of any original value, in any other books touching religious truth, comes from this Book. Nature's voice confirms Scripture, but she always equivocates until the Word speaks. And men know nothing of God as they need to know him, without the word. The Book is made up of many parts, some written earlier, some later, some in one language or country, some in another language or country, yet it is one Book. Moses wrote the first five portions some twenty-five hundred years after the Fall. Before his time men possessed no written Scriptures and had to depend on *tradition*, which was, of course, more to be relied on in those days because of the much longer lives of men. After so long a time God saw fit, for the better preservation and propagation of his truth, to have it committed to

writing. After the five books of Moses came the Historical books and the Psalms and the Prophets and the Evangelists and the Epistles, but the whole make but one Book or Bible. It is all the one Word of God, having one author, the Holy Ghost, though he used different men as amanuenses, and having one theme, the Lord Jesus, who appears on every page and in every line of it all. Accordingly our Catechism holds it forth as the only and the sufficient rule of our faith and of our practice.

Thus we read in Acts vii. 38, that Moses "when he was with the Church in the wilderness" "received there the lively oracles" to give them unto us. In Rom. iii. 1, Paul says that to the Jews were committed the "oracles of God." Also, that "all the Scripture (meaning the Old Testament) is given by inspiration of God." Speaking of the prophecies of the Old Testament, Peter tells us that "holy men of old spake as moved by the Holy Ghost." Our Lord Jesus commands us to "search the (Old Testament) Scriptures." On the way to Emmaus, beginning at Moses and all the prophets, "he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." The apostles continually reasoned "out of the Scriptures" of the Old Testament. They constantly appealed to them thus: "What saith the Scripture?"

The Christian Church cannot afford to have the Old Testament made, to any degree, or in any sense, obsolete. It cannot endure the dismemberment of having the Church of Abraham, of David, and of the Prophets, unchurched. This we suppose to be a tendency of opinion amongst some of our Baptist brethren. They seem to incline to the idea that there was no church on earth before Christ came, or at least to deny that the Jewish Church, or that of the Patriarchs, if worthy to be called by that name at all, was the same with the Christian Church. Indeed, they could not well identify the Jewish with the Christian Church, because they do not acknowledge the visible Church at all. "The Seven Congregations or Churches of Christ in London," in their "Confession of Faith" in 1646, published to relieve themselves of certain aspersions, do say that Christ has a kingdom on earth, which is his Church, "which Church is a company of visible

saints, and to this Church he hath made his promises." But in 1689 the "ministers and messengers of upwards of one hundred baptized congregations in England and Wales (denying Arminianism)," in putting forth their confession of faith are still more in the negative, and only say concerning the visible Church, that "all persons throughout the world professing the faith of the gospel . . . are, and may be called, visible saints, and of such ought all particular congregations to be constituted." And they speak thus "of a gospel Church: We believe that a visible Church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers," etc. These quotations are made from Professor Sewall S. Cutting's *Historical Vindications*, published in Boston in 1859. But Dr. Wayland, speaking of "an established confession," says, "With us it is impossible. We believe in the fullest sense in the independence of every individual church of Christ. We hold that each several church is a Christian society, on which is conferred by Christ the entire power of self-government. No church has any power over any other church. No minister has any authority in any church, except that which has called him to be its pastor. Every church, therefore, when it expresses its own belief, expresses the belief of no other than its own members."<sup>1</sup>

It appears to Presbyterians a very dreadful thing that the Church of Christ on the earth should not only be divided into separate denominations, but actually cut up thus into little separate joints or fragments, each dissociated from its fellows. But our brethren of the Baptist and other Independent persuasions allow a just and proper reaction from the monstrous headship of the Pope, and from that external unity of the Church, to carry them to this opposite extreme. And so it appears to Presbyterians that it would be a very dreadful thing to cut off more than one-half the Bible at a single blow, nor any less dreadful to cut off and cast out the whole Church of God upon the earth for all the first four thousand years of its inspired history. Our Baptist brethren will not accept any argument for the church membership of infants drawn from Old Testament principles and

<sup>1</sup> *Notes on the Principles and Practices of Baptist churches*, by Francis Wayland, New York, 1857, pp. 13, 14.

practices. We are ready to give what they have a right to demand—a “Thus saith the Lord”—for our doctrine and doing, but they insist that no such divine prescription shall be drawn from the Old Testament. This appears to Presbyterians the same as to say that the Old Testament is not Scripture—is no part of the word of God. The eminent and excellent Dr. Wayland (whom we remember with especial love and gratitude, mixed with the profoundest reverence, as for a time our faithful, as well as able, college professor, and our affectionate and helpful spiritual guide in critical days of our youth) says in his work previously named (Chapter XVI. p. 85): “The fundamental principle on which our difference from other evangelical denominations depends is this: We profess to take for our guide, in all matters of religious belief and practice, the *New Testament*, the *whole* New Testament, and *nothing but* the New Testament. [Italics Dr. W’s.] Whatever we find there we esteem binding upon the conscience. What is not there commanded is not binding.” This is certainly very strong language. When made the subject of unfavorable comments as a denial of the divine inspiration of the Old Testament, Dr. Wayland said he did not think himself called to make any reply to such an imputation, that all he had “intended was to exclude the authority of tradition and of all uninspired men.” His language then was surely too strong and his assertion too wide. But he proceeds to acknowledge that he holds “the New Testament to be the standard by which the precepts and teachings of the former revelation are to be judged, and that thus it is our only *rule* of faith and practice.” He adds that “its relation to the Old Testament is that of the meridian sun to the preceding twilight.”

It is now submitted that this is quite different from the language of Chillingworth so generally adopted by all outside of the Roman Catholic Church: “The Bible, the Bible alone, is the religion of Protestants.” It is submitted that there is a grave disparagement of the word of God in comparing any part of it to dim “twilight.” Further, where will this respected author find a “Thus saith the Lord,” for putting up the New Testament as “a standard by which the precepts and teachings of the former reve-

lation are to be judged" by men? We are taught that the Old is all *fulfilled* in the New Testament, and this language is proper to be used, but it seems rather irreverent to call any portion of that which holy men of God spake and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, a "former revelation," whose teachings men may set aside. Dr. W. says (p. 133): "By this word we are to decide upon the obligatoriness of every part of the older revelation." It is submitted that this expression is open to serious objections. Surely if the New Testament is a judge of the Old, the Old is equally a judge of the New. Had the New in any respect contradicted the Old, the Church could never have received it, but contrariwise it confirmed every moral precept of the Hebrew Scriptures, and fulfilled perfectly and completely all their ceremonial portions. Both Testaments are parts of the one rule of faith and practice. It will not do to set aside the law written by inspired prophets as requiring another standard to judge it, and that according to *our* "deciding." Inspired David said truly of the Old Testament: "The law of the Lord is perfect." Inspiration must not override and trample down inspiration. Apostle must not, will not, does not, contradict prophet. We dare not say that the New Testament is our only rule, lest we provoke Him who also gave us the Old as a perfect standard, but reverently do we bow to every part of the one word of God.

The Christian Church, let it be now repeated, cannot get along without that portion of the word of God which the Old Testament contains. With reverence let it be spoken, "the *New Testament*, the *whole* New Testament, and *nothing but* the New Testament" would not be, if separated from the Old, a perfect and sufficient rule of faith and practice. There certainly are some things binding upon the conscience now which we do not find set down clearly in the New Testament. Where, for example, is there any law of incest in the New Testament? If the eighteenth Chapter of Leviticus is not given us for the regulation of our marriage relations, what law has the Christian Church on the subject, and what right would it have to discipline a member who should be guilty of incest in its most shocking forms? If we discard the Old Testament as not part of our rule

of faith, where can we find any full statement of the moral law? Where do we get the doctrine of the Creation, of the First Covenant, of the Temptation, of the Fall, of the original interposition for our salvation? Where and when was uttered the first gospel? Where originates the idea of atoning blood and propitiatory sacrifice and the prophetic, priestly, and kingly offices of Christ? How could we get on without the argument for the truth of Christianity from the fulfilled prophecies, especially those relating to our Saviour? In fact, how could we go about to prove the New Testament to be God's word at all, if we should reject all argumentation and proof from the Old Testament Scriptures? How could we dispense with that most rich, most precious, most complete repository of every experience of believers which is to be found in the Psalms?

There is a third statement now to be made which cannot be contradicted. It is that in the Patriarchal dispensation of the Church, God entered into a solemn covenant with Abraham, and that in the Jewish dispensation, he also made a covenant with his people Israel when he took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt. This second covenant introduced the ceremonial law which, in the third or Gospel dispensation, was all of it fulfilled in the person of our Lord, and therefore was abolished and made to pass away. But the covenant God had made with Abraham, as it antedated the Mosaic economy, so it also survived it. That covenant still stands, for God said it was to be an everlasting covenant. And Paul tells the Galatians that Moses' ceremonial law, which was 430 years after the Abrahamic covenant, when itself abolished, did not and could not carry that covenant with it. The covenant with Abraham, he tells us, stood by itself for 430 years, and had no sort of dependence upon the Mosaic ritual. Paul also tells the Galatians that if they were Christians, then were they Abraham's seed and heirs with Abraham of the promise which God made to him and to his seed after him. Here, then, is a "Thus saith the Lord"—a clear and positive warrant, and *that from the New Testament*, to satisfy us that the covenant with Abraham is still standing, and all Christians heirs of all its privileges and all its promises.



It is very far from being true, as our Baptist brethren suppose, that this everlasting covenant of God with Abraham was a mere political charter, conferring citizenship in the Jewish state. Paul declares that "circumcision was a seal of the righteousness of faith." Could any covenant be a mere political or temporal covenant which has a seal to it like that—a seal of the righteousness of faith? A seal of the righteousness of faith must be a seal that is an assurance or certificate of all the promises and privileges of the covenant of grace. What did God promise to Abraham when he made the covenant with him? "I will be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee." Is there any better, can there be any higher or more spiritual promise? If God is God to us, what more do we want? If God is God to our children, what more can we desire for them? Such was God's part in the covenant with Abraham. What was Abraham's part? "Walk before me (said the Lord) and be thou perfect." What more in the way of duty could have been laid on Abraham? Every kind of service was included in that stipulation. What higher or more spiritual life for him than to "walk before God and be perfect"?

From the time of the covenant with Abraham the Church of God was shut up in the one family of Abraham. Previously it had been composed of individuals from many families and of divers nations. Henceforth the rest of mankind are given up of God, but Abraham's family is walled around and made to constitute the visible Church of God upon the earth. Abraham becomes the father of all believers, and he is the father of all believers now, and will be to the end, for it is written, "If ye be Christians, then are ye Abraham's seed." Henceforth the idea of individual union to the Church is modified by that of family union to the Church—"the promise is unto you and your children." Baptism, like circumcision, involves and implies the training of the children of the Church. "Walk before me and be thou perfect," was spoken to the father of the faithful, and is spoken to every believing father, to be repeated by him to his children as soon as they can understand the precept. God's words are to each son of believing Abraham, "I will be a God

to thee and to thy seed after thee." Thy seed, thy children, are heirs according to the promise. The true unit in the Church of God, ever since the days of Abraham, is not the individual person, but the family. It is families that make up the visible Church on earth—professors of Christianity and their children. Household baptism is Christian baptism in its most impressive and completest form when parents bring their children to be acknowledged by the Church as hers and her Lord's. So far as recorded, the apostles never baptized the head of a family without admitting his household to the ordinance. For there are named in the New Testament just eight particular individuals who received baptism, viz.: the eunuch, Saul, Simon Magus, Gaius, Crispus, Cornelius, Lydia, and the Philippian jailer. These are all. Now the eunuch and Saul certainly had no families, and there is no evidence that Simon Magus or Gaius had. Of the remaining four it is expressly said the households of three, namely, of Lydia, of the jailer, and of Crispus, were baptized, and it seems to be implied in the record that the household of Cornelius also was baptized. To these four we must add that of Stephanas, which is expressly recorded. Here, then, are the records of nine personal baptisms—in four of the cases there were no children to be baptized, but of the other five, who were heads of families, the record is that their households were baptized.

Now, the "strength of the argument (viz., that as households ordinarily include children, we have no right to exclude them from the general statement) lies not in any one case, but in the repeated mention of whole houses as baptized." "Who can believe that not one infant was found in all these families, or that Jews accustomed to the circumcision and Gentiles accustomed to the lustration of infants, should not have also brought them to baptism?" What, will they have us believe that the apostles gathered into the Church only old bachelors and childless householders? Look at the case again: five families out of the nine cases of personal baptism which are recorded in Scripture, or rather, five out of seven, for surely Saul and the eunuch should not be counted, whatever we are to think about Simon and Gaius—five cases of personal baptisms that are recorded where it was possible

that there might have been some children, and not another case recorded, and yet we are required to believe that there was no little child in all these five households!

But the most important feature of the whole subject is not connected with the question whether there were children in those families or what their ages may have been, but rather the fact of these whole households being baptized. This involves the conception of a *Christian family*. Family religion is often referred to by the apostle—"the household of Chloe, the household of Stephanas, the church in the house of Aquila and Priscilla, the household of Aristobulus, the household of Narcissus"—these are familiar expressions in the mouth of Paul. Family religion, the right training of the children of the Church, the bringing of them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, why, that is one main hope we have of success in the holy war, as it is one main object of the setting up by the Lord of a Church that was to be perpetuated through successive generations.

Now, under the Abrahamic covenant the infant of eight days must by divine command have applied to his person the seal then used, which was circumcision. The duty imposed was twofold: *first*, the child was to be devoted by the parents and acknowledged by the Church; *secondly*, the seal of the covenant was to be imposed on the person of the infant. Of course, the babe was no believer, and understood not what was done to it. Yet God, who was then, as he is now, a Spirit and to be worshipped always in spirit and in truth, and who gave to Abraham a spiritual covenant, with a high and holy promise and a high and holy obligation imposed, this glorious God and Redeemer required this service at the hands of his people. But, of course, circumcision could not be for the sake of circumcision, but for something higher than itself, of which it was the seal or token, namely, for the *covenant*, of the stipulations of which it is the witness and the assurance. There is an essential and there is an accidental part. The essential part stands, and will stand to the end. The accidental, the symbolic, part is changed. The duty and privilege of consecration and acknowledgment stands—the sign and seal is altered, and baptism comes in the room of

circumcision. The old seal is substituted by a new and milder one suited to the character of the new dispensation. The bloody knife gives place to water, but the meaning is the same; corruption was formerly *cut off*, now it is *washed away*. The same truth is signified; the same promise and the same vow remains for the parties, viz., God and the believer; the same covenant stands, and it has the same subjects, viz., believers and their little children.

There then is where we stand—on a “Thus saith the Lord” never abrogated by him, and which no man and no Church has any right to abrogate. It was the express ordinance of the Almighty that the children of believers have the seal of the everlasting covenant with the Father of all believers applied to them, because they, too, are God’s, just as their parents are, and they, too, have an interest in his promise as truly as their parents. We no more dare to take away from than to add to his word. And therefore reverently, humbly, trustfully, thankfully we baptize them into the Adorable Name.

Let us refer briefly to our Saviour’s manner of dealing with little children. Fond mothers, no doubt aspiring for the honor of his touching them, possibly going higher still and wishing to secure just what they got—the Saviour’s blessing on their little unconscious babes—bring them to Jesus. The disciples rebuke them. Jesus, who said to Peter, referring to little children, “Feed my lambs,” is much displeased with them and says, “Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.” It is for such as they. It is theirs. Now, he meant either that his kingdom on earth, that is, his Church, is for such and that they belong to it and it to them; or else he meant that his kingdom in the heavens is theirs, which would make it plain that to them also belongs a membership in his earthly kingdom. It matters little which meaning we fix on—both necessarily come together. But what does he to the little ones? He takes them up in his arms, gives them imposition of hands (that very sacred and significant rite of the ancient Church which we still venerate and practise), and then

blesse them with audible voice! What more than all this is ever done in baptizing? And what minister or Church shall dare to say that infants may not have baptism with water in the Adorable Name applied to their persons, since the blessed Master himself with his own hands did all this to the infants of Perea?

Let us refer to another significant passage of Scripture. In 1 Cor., chap. vii., Paul counsels believing husbands or wives not to forsake their heathen partners if these are willing to continue the connexion. The Christian wife might gain her husband; the Christian husband might gain his wife for the Lord and the Church. And he tells such persons, for their comfort, that their own faith, as it were, sanctifies their unbelieving partners, and that the children of parents thus divided as to religious belief and profession, are not unclean, but *holy*. Now, what else can he mean but that the children of such a believing father or of such a believing mother, notwithstanding that the other parent rejects Christ, are still *holy* as belonging to him, and may be rightly dedicated to him in baptism? These were children of Christians, not Jews, and what Paul refers to as the means of their dedication and acknowledgment as Christ's was not the old seal, of course, but the new seal—not the Circumcision but Baptism.

Let it never be said that Infant Baptism is a relic of Popery. If it were a Romish invention, we might well expect to find it nowhere amongst those early Christian bodies which left the communion of Rome. On the contrary, we find it everywhere, amongst them all, and amongst all the modern Churches also, one single body of Christians alone excepted. The Greek Church, which always resisted Rome, nevertheless baptizes infants. The Armenian Church early separated itself, and they practise infant baptism. So do the Nestorian Christians in Persia, and so do the Christians of St. Thomas, who are named in Church history as early as the middle of the fourth century, and so do the Christians of Abyssinia. Then there are the Waldenses, a very ancient Christian people, whose history can be traced up almost to the apostolic times—they baptize infants.

And let it be observed that Church history gives us no account

of any sect or body of professing Christians that ever did object to infant baptism until we come all the way down to the Petrobrusians, an obscure and small sect, in the twelfth century. Think of it: there is no Church objecting to infant baptism for nearly 1,200 years after Christ. And our Baptist brethren, whom we love and honor for their many and great Christian excellences of character, but from whom we have to differ as to both the mode and subjects of baptism, were never known as a separated and distinct body until before or about the middle of the seventeenth century. The peculiar views which separate them, not only from us, but from the whole Christian world everywhere, are, comparatively speaking, *novelties*. They are not the ideas of the apostles nor of the early believers; and inasmuch as these brethren belong to one of the youngest Christian bodies, we may say without offence, we trust, that it does look somewhat presumptuous for it not only to unchurch and to refuse communion with all other denominations of the people of the Lord Jesus, but also to claim a monopoly of all true learning and sound Christian knowledge and faith.

If we go back to within three hundred years of the apostles, we find that no Christian society had then certainly been heard of that refused baptism to infants. Pelagius arose and preached that infants are born free from moral defilement. Augustine pressed the heretic with this question: Why are infants baptized if they have no sin? Pelagius knew not how to meet the inquiry. Then one charged his doctrine with this necessary inference that it must needs lead to the denial of infant baptism. And Pelagius, who was a good man and a learned scholar, though unsound in the faith, resented this charge as a slander, and declared indeed that he "had never heard of any, even the most impious heretic, who denied baptism to infants." Augustine also declared that he had never heard of any such erroneous doctrine. And so we can trace the matter up through Origen and Tertullian and Irenæus and Justin Martyr to within fifty or one hundred years of the apostles' day, and can discover evidence that all these men and their contemporaries believed the institution to have come down from those who brought in the Christian dis-

pensation. And well they might believe so. For had the apostles been Baptists, they would surely have embraced the opportunity afforded them to declare plainly that children, hitherto acknowledged members of the Church, were now to be excluded from it. That was the time for such a doctrine to have been set forth, and not the middle of the seventeenth century. Had the apostles preached as our Baptist brethren do on this subject, we should have found the abolishment of the Abrahamic covenant declared somewhere in the New Testament, and Justin Martyr and Irenæus, and other early Christian writers, and all those who followed, must have known that little children were no longer to be received into the Church. But instead of this, what we hear from Paul is that Christians are all Abraham's children, and heirs of the promise made to him and to his seed to all generations; and what we hear from Peter is that "the promise is unto us and to our children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." JNO. B. ADGER.