

Andrew Fuller
CENTER *for* BAPTIST STUDIES
at THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

William Kiffen

THE PREFACES

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The Prefaces of William Kiffin

Introduced by Michael A.G. Haykin

Transcribed and Edited by Michael A.G. Haykin & Joshua R. Monroe

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Transcribed and edited by Michael A.G. Haykin and Joshua R. Monroe

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The Andrew Fuller Center for Baptist Studies

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

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**“BY THE COMPASS OF THE WORD”:
A QUATERCENTENARY APPRECIATION OF
WILLIAM KIFFEN**

by Michael A.G. Haykin

In the globalization of Christianity in the past two centuries, Baptists have had a key part to play and are now a worldwide community. Unlike other Christian traditions, however, Baptists do not point back to one key individual theologian as their founder. Instead their name recalls the rediscovery of certain elements of a vital New Testament ordinance. Thus, when Baptists emerged in the seventeenth century from the womb of English Puritanism during a period of theological turmoil and religious war, they insisted that only believers undergo baptism and that it be done by immersion. Most of the main authors who defended this conviction in that world have been long forgotten. Ironically, the two seventeenth-century figures whom many recall as Baptist pioneers, John Bunyan (1628–1688) and Roger Williams (*c.*1603–1684), were actually not in the mainstream of Baptist life: Williams was a committed Baptist less than a year while Bunyan did not believe believer’s baptism was necessary for entry into the Baptist community.

This year, though, we have the opportunity to remember a truly central figure in the emergence of the Baptist movement, namely, William Kiffen (1616–1701). When Joseph Ivimey (1773–1834), the nineteenth-century Baptist historian, published the life of William Kiffen in 1833 he did so in the conviction that Kiffen was “one of the most extraordinary persons whom the [Calvinistic Baptist] denomination has produced, both as to the consistency and correctness of his principles and the eminence of his worldly and religious character.” Ivimey especially hoped that his account of Kiffen’s life and ministry would spur his younger Baptist contempo-

raries to take Kiffen as “a pattern of piety and integrity.”¹ To what degree this hope was realized cannot be pursued here; but, in the more than a century and a half between Ivimey’s day and the present, Kiffen’s remarkable life has been increasingly known solely to scholars studying the origins and rise of the Baptists in seventeenth-century England.

Early years and conversion

Kiffen was born in London in 1616 of unknown parents, though his father’s roots probably lay in Wales—Kiffen is ultimately a Welsh name.² He was orphaned in 1625 when both of his parents died during an outbreak of the plague. Four years later, Kiffen was apprenticed, most likely to a glover. In 1631, unhappy about his future prospects as a glover, he decided to run away from his master. He happened by St. Antholin’s Church, where a Puritan by the name of Thomas Foxley (fl.1640s) was preaching that day on “the duty of servants to masters.” Seeing a crowd of people going into the church, Kiffen decided to join them. Kiffen was convinced that Foxley’s sermon was intentionally aimed at him. As has been the experience of many under the Spirit-anointed preaching of the Word, Kiffen was convinced that Foxley’s sermon was intentionally directed at him. He decided to go back to his master with the resolve to hear regularly “some of them they called Puritan ministers.”³

Over the next couple of years he heard a number of well-known Reformed preachers of the day, men such as John Davenport (1597–1670) and Lewis Du Moulin (1606–1680), but it was the preaching of the Arminian John Goodwin (c.1594–1665) that God eventually used to bring Kiffen to Christ. The preaching of these men gave Kiffin a firm grounding in the central themes of Puritan theology and spirituality. Here is his comment on a sermon that heard John Davenport preach on 1 John 1:7 (“And the blood of Jesus Christ, his son, cleanseth us from all sin”):

¹ *The Life of Mr. William Kiffin* (London, 1833), xi, ii. This work is an annotated and edited version of Kiffen’s autobiography. For the spelling of Kiffen’s name, I am following the leading authority on the life and ministry of Kiffin, Dr. Larry Kreitzer of Regent’s Park College, Oxford University.

² Geoffrey Thomas, e-mail to the author, August 22, 2001.

³ William Orme, *Remarkable Passages in the Life of William Kiffin* (London: Burton and Smith, 1823), 3.

He shewed the efficacy of the blood of Christ both to pardon and to cleanse from sin; and answered objections, which the unbelieving heart of man brings, against that full satisfaction which Jesus Christ hath made for sinners; I found many of them were such as I had made in my own heart; such as the sense of unworthiness, and willingness to be better before I would come to Christ for life, with many other of the like kind. This sermon was of great use to my soul. I thought I found my heart greatly to close with the riches and freeness of grace which God held forth to poor sinners. I found my fears to vanish, and my heart filled with love to Jesus Christ. I saw sin viler than ever, and felt my heart more abhorring it.⁴

The Particular Baptist leader

By 1638 Kiffen had left the Anglican state church and had joined what he termed an “Independent congregation” in London.⁵ When Kiffen joined this congregation, it was without a pastor. At one time it had been led by a certain Samuel Eaton (d.1639). When Kiffen joined the church, though, Eaton was in prison, where he would die the following year. Kiffen accepted an invitation to preach to the congregation, later known as Devonshire Square Baptist Church, and at some point over the course of the next three or four years Kiffen was chosen as their pastor.

During this entire period Kiffin continued to study the Bible for direction with regard to the constitution and form of a local church. Over forty years later, when he recalled this period of his life, what stuck out in his memory was his diligent examination of the Bible to find the “right way of worship.”⁶ By the fall of 1642 he, as well as the congregation, had come to a decidedly Particular, or Calvinistic, Baptist position.

Two years later Kiffen was a signatory for his church, along with the

⁴ Orme, *Remarkable Passages*, 4–5.

⁵ Orme, *Remarkable Passages*, 14.

⁶ “To the Christian Reader” in his *A Sober Discourse of Right to Church-Communion* (London: Enoch Prosser, 1681), [i].

leadership of six other London Baptist congregations, of *The First London Confession of Faith*.⁷ This confession sought to demonstrate the Calvinistic perspective and Baptist ecclesiology of these churches. Kiffen not only signed the document but also appears to have played a significant role in writing it. The confession would serve as the theological basis for the Particular Baptists during their rapid advance in the late 1640s and the 1650s and then, after the restoration of the monarchy, throughout the years of persecution from 1660 to 1688. It would only be replaced at the close of the 1680s by the *Second London Confession of Faith* (1677/1688)—also known as the *1689 Confession*—which Kiffen also signed.

From the 1640s till his death Kiffen played a prominent role in the expansion of the Particular Baptist movement beyond London. Extant documents from places as far afield as Wales, Ireland and the Midlands, reveal Kiffen's involvement in planning new churches and associations, giving them advice and counsel, and generally providing stability to the Baptist cause during these early days of the movement. It was during his years of leadership of the movement that those positions distinctive of the Particular Baptists were hammered out, and Kiffen had no small part in the determination of the identity of this Christian tradition.

Kiffen wrote only one major work, his *A Sober Discourse of Right to Church-Communion* (London, 1681), a fervent and noteworthy defense of closed communion that he wrote against the open-communion and open-membership position of John Bunyan.⁸ However, he wrote a number of small pieces, some of which appeared as prefaces to various books. In what follows, six of these prefaces are reprinted—all of them, except for the preface to the *First London Confession*, for the first time since the seventeenth century. They reveal a man and, due to his significant influence, a community, the English Particular Baptist community that sought to live above all “by the compass of [God’s] Word.”⁹

⁷ See below, for Kiffen's preface to this confession.

⁸ See below, for Kiffen's preface to another work against Bunyan, that by Thomas Paul.

⁹ See below for Kiffen's description of his fellow Baptist John Norcott.

Further reading

For Kiffen's autobiography, see William Orme, *Remarkable Passages in the Life of William Kiffin* (London: Burton and Smith, 1823) and Joseph Ivimey, *The Life of Mr. William Kiffin* (London, 1833). There is also a small twentieth-century biography, B. A. Ramsbottom, *Stranger Than Fiction. The Life of William Kiffin* (Harpenden, Hertfordshire: Gospel Standard Trust Publications, 1989), but, as of yet, no definitive biography. Larry J. Kreitzer, however, has published four fabulous volumes of his studies on various primary sources relating to Kiffen entitled *William Kiffin and his World* (2010–) and more are promised. These will definitely be indispensable for a definitive biography of Kiffen. For a small study of Kiffen, see Barrie R. White, "William Kiffin—Baptist Pioneer and Citizen of London", *Baptist History and Heritage*, 2 (1967): 91–103, 126.

5

A *K. Bevin*
GLIMPSE OF
SIONS GLORY:

OR,
THE CHURCHES
BEAUTIE specified.

*Published for the Good and Benefit of all
those whose Hearts are raised up in the expe-
ctation of the glorious Liberties of
the SAINTS.*

P S A L. 87. 3.

Glorious Things are spoken of Thee O thou Citie of GOD.

E S A Y 40. 10. 11.

*Behold, the LORD shall come with might against the strong
ones, and his arme shall rule for him, &c.*

Printed by W. Larnar
Anchor neere Pauls-Chaine
L O N D O N,

Printed for WILLIAM LARNAR, and are to
be sold at his Shop at the Signe of the golden
Anchor neere PAULS-Chaine.

MDCXLI.

I

“The Epistle to the Christian Reader”
in *A Glimpse of Sions Glory: or The Churches Beautie specified*
(London: William Larnar, 1641)

Christian reader, thou hast here presented to thy view a small tract: the matter whereof is weighty, and of concernment to all that are the professed subjects of Jesus Christ. It is a thing of sad consequence to consider how we have been kept under blindness and darkness, although not totally, yet in great measure, in regard of such truths as do immediately strike at Antichrist and his false power. As namely this great truth, Christ the King of his church; and that Christ hath given this power to his church, not to a hierarchy, neither to a national presbytery, but to a company of saints in a congregational way. Now these truths strike directly at Antichrist, and [are] therefore kept and quelled down as errors. And so by reason of this obscurity (we being half blind) such bright truths seem strange to us, and go under many aspersions and calumnies, as carnal, erroneous, absurd, and the like. And truly we have been so accustomed to the yoke, that we seem to beat down freedom, with casting up a thousand surmises, dreaming of strange consequents. Nay, there is a generation of men in these times (some or most of them seeming to plead for Christ) as are inveterate against the one true way of Jesus Christ, as if it would be the bondage of Rehoboam, succeeding the light oppression of Solomon¹: whereas it will prove to be a haven to our tedious storms, and a period to many distractions.

Reader, give over thy wonted censuring of men’s labours; and learn to be more wise; lay aside all prejudicial thoughts concerning this tract, and weigh it in the balance of the sanctuary, comparing it with the word; if it

¹ See 1 Kings 12.

will hold out there, then embrace it, and make use of it for thy comfort. Indeed it may be beneficial to thee divers ways.

First, by this thou mayst learn to prize Jesus Christ more; what was that among other things that made Christ so beloved and excellent in the eyes of his Spouse? His head was of gold.² Now what is this head of gold, but that excellent government, that is upon his shoulder?³

Secondly, it will administer comfort to thee, in regard of the former yokes, of which there are hopes, they will be broken off, at least in the accomplishing of these truths. Nay the day is now dawning, wherein Zion’s peace and comforts shall be fulfilled, Jesus Christ set up, the sole and great King of his Church.

Thirdly, it will teach you to make that use of it that the apostle Peter doth of the like truths: “What manner of persons ought we to be?”⁴ The use of it is divers, beyond my reach or weak judgment to prescribe; and indeed my commendation of it doth but darken it, I being so far below the matter and the author. But thy experience may make up that of which I fall short. So commending thee (both in the use of this, and any thing else that bears the stamp and image of truth upon it) to the teaching of that Spirit, that is the Author of all truth in the hearts of believers, to be taught by it. I leave thee in the perusing of this small treatise; hoping thou wilt reap some good by it. Farewell.

Thine in the Lord Jesus to command,
William Kiffin.

² See Song of Solomon 5:11.

³ See Isaiah 9:6.

⁴ 2 Peter 3:11.

Coll. M. 1. 1. THE (1644) 1644
CONFESSION

OF FAITH,

Of those **CHURCHES** which are
commonly (though falsely) cal-
led **ANABAPTISTS**;

Presented to the view of all that feare
GOD, to examine by the touchstone of the Word
of Truth : As likewise for the taking off those
aspersions which are frequently both in Pulpit and
Print, (although unjustly) cast upon them.

ACTS 4. 20.

Wee cannot but speake the things which wee have seene and heard.

ISA I. 8. 20.

*To the Law and to the testimony, if they speake not according to
this Rule, it is because there is no light in them.*

2 COR. I. 9, 10.

*But wee had the sentence of death in our selves, that wee should not
trust in our selves, but in the living God, which raiseth the dead;
who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver, in whom
wee trust that he will yet deliver.*

LONDON,

Printed by *Matthew Simmons* in *Aldersgate-streete.*

1644.

A

2

“Foreword” to
*The Confession of Faith Of those Churches
which are commonly (though falsly) called Anabaptists*
(London: Matthew Simmons 1644)

To all that desire the lifting up of the name of the Lord Jesus in sincerity, the poor despised churches of God in London send greeting, with prayers for their farther increase in the knowledge of Christ Jesus.

We question not but that it will seem strange to many men, that such as we are frequently termed to be, lying under that calumny and black brand of heretics, and sowers of division as we do, should presume to appear so publicly as now we have done: but yet notwithstanding we may well say, to give answer to such, what David said to his brother, when the Lord’s battle was a fighting, 1 Sam. 29:30, “Is there not a cause?”¹ Surely, if ever people had cause to speak for the vindication of the truth of Christ in their hands, we have, that being indeed the main wheel at this time that sets us awork; for had any thing by men been transacted against our persons only, we could quietly have sitten still, and committed our cause to him who is a righteous judge, who will in the great day judge the secrets of all men’s hearts by Jesus Christ. But being it is not only us, but the truth professed by us, we cannot, we dare not but speak; it is no strange thing to any observing man, what sad changes are laid, not only by the world, that know not God, but also by those that think themselves much wrong, if they be not looked upon as the chief worthies of the church of God, and watchmen of the city.

¹ This is likely a reference to 1 Samuel 17:29, when David and his brother Eliab argue about fighting Goliath. The KJV reads thus: “And David said, What have I now done? Is there not a cause?” The closest match in 1 Samuel 29, the chapter quoted above, is verse 8, “And David said unto Achish, But what have I done?” The above may be a conflation of the two.

But it hath fared with us from them, as from the poor spouse seeking her Beloved, Cant. 5:6–7. They finding us out of that common road-way themselves walk, have smote us and taken away our vale, that so we may by them be recommended odious in the eyes of all that behold us, and in the hearts of all that think upon us, which they have done both in pulpit and print, charging us with holding free-will, falling away from grace, denying original sin, disclaiming of magistracy, denying to assist them either in persons or purse in any of their lawful commands, doing acts unseemly in the dispensing the ordinance of baptism, not to be named amongst Christians.² All which charges we disclaim as notoriously untrue, though by reasons of these calumnies cast upon us, many that fear God are discouraged and forestalled in harbouring a good thought, either of us or what we profess; and many that know not God encouraged, if they can find the place of our meeting, to get together in clusters to stone us, as looking upon us as a people holding such things, as that we are not worthy to live. We have therefore for the clearing of the truth we profess, that it may be at liberty, though we be in bonds, briefly published a Confession of our Faith, as desiring all that fear God, seriously to consider whether (if they compare what we here say and confess in the presence of the Lord Jesus and his saints) men have not with their tongues in pulpit, and pens in print, both spoken and written things that are contrary to truth. But we know our God in his own time will clear our cause, and lift up his Son to make him the chief cornerstone, though he has been (or now should be) rejected of master builders.³ And because it may be conceived, that what is here published, may be but the judgment of some one particular congregation, more refined than the rest; we do therefore here subscribe it, some of each body in the name, and by the appointment of seven congregations, who though we be distinct in respect of our particular bodies, for conveniency sake, being as many as can well meet together in one place, yet are all one in communion, holding Jesus Christ to be our head and Lord; under whose government we

² The Particular Baptists had been slanderously charged with baptizing women in the nude.

³ Psalm 118:22 (KJV): “The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.”

desire alone to walk, in following the Lamb wheresoever he goeth.⁴ And we believe the Lord will daily cause truth more to appear in the hearts of his saints, and make them ashamed of their folly in the land of their nativity, that so they may with one shoulder, more study to lift up the name of the Lord Jesus, and stand for his appointments and laws; which is the desires and prayers of the condemned churches of Christ in London for all saints.

Subscribed in the names of seven churches in London.

William Kiffin

Thomas Patience

John Spilsbery

George Tipping

Samuel Richardson

Thomas Skippard

Thomas Munday

Thomas Gunne

John Mabbatt

John Webb

Thomas Killcop

Paul Hobson

Thomas Goare

Joseph Phelpes

Edward Heath.

⁴ Revelation 14:4.

JUSTIFICATION 32

BY

CHRIST
ALONE,

A Fountaine of life and comfort,
Declaring that the whole worke of
mans salvation was accomplished by Jesus
Christ upon the crosse, in that he tooke away & healed all
his, from all sinnes, and presented them to God holy
without fault in his sight. And the objections against
this are Answered, for the consolation of such as be-
lieve; & that they may not ascribe that which is
proper to Christs Precisly Office, to
their beleiving.

Isa. 53. 11. *By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many
for he shall beare their iniquities.*

Joh. 19. 28. 30. *Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished,
that the Scripture might be fulfilled; he said it is finished, and he bowed his
head and gave up the ghost.*

Col. 2. 1. 2. *In the body of his flesh through death, to make you holy and
unblamable, and without fault in his sight.*

Rom. 5. 9. *Being justified by his blood.*

Cant. 4. 7. *Thou art all faire my love, there is no spot in thee.*

June 17. By Samuel Richardson.

LONDON; Printed by M. S. & are to be sold by Hannab Allen
at the signe of the Crowne in Popes-head-Alley. And George Whis-
ington at the Anchor neere the Royall-Exchange. 1647.

3

“Foreword” to Samuel Richardon,
Justification by Christ Alone, A Fountaine of Life and Comfort
(London: M.S., 1647)

To the Holy Spouse of Jesus Christ, who are subject to him in the obedience of the gospel. Grace and peace be multiplied.

Dearly beloved brethren;

As there is nothing that frail man is more liable to, than in the things of God to mistake, and call darkness light, and light darkness,¹ so by how much the more spiritual any truth is, by so much the more men are apt to fall short of the knowledge of the glory of it, and to intermingle with it something of their own, as that which may make it commendable and beautiful in their eyes. And above all others that which this small ensuing treatise speaks of, namely, justification by Christ alone, without having respect either to any thing in the creature, or done by the creature. This favouring so much of pure grace in respect of love of God, and that covenant which lies between Christ and God; as that the poor creature, man, knows not how to own or receive it. And truly it must be no less nor no other power put forth by God to cause the soul to believe this, then was put forth in raising up Christ from the dead, Eph. 1:18.

And truly amongst those who are the beloved ones of our Lord Jesus, who have a like share and interest in him as their life and peace, there is an aptness in men to miscarry in the knowledge of this rich grace of God. Some being apt to conceive that there is no justification of a creature in no sense before and without faith, and so make faith a joint-partner with

¹ Isaiah 5:20.

Christ in the business of justification. For indeed this is to me a certain truth, that whatsoever gives a being to a thing must needs be a part of that thing which it gives being to, and therefore if there be no justification in no sense considered, but as it hath respect to faith. It is much feared, that that opinion claims a great share of that glory which is peculiar to Christ Jesus alone. That the scripture holds forth justification by faith in a sense is very clear; but yet under no other consideration, but by way of evidence, Heb. 11:1–2, and as it respects the taking away of sin from off the conscience; for indeed the debt is paid by the blood of Christ alone, and we are therefore said to be justified by his blood, Rom. 5:9. For indeed as Christ Jesus our Lord hath paid the debt, “The Lord having laid upon him the iniquities of us all,”² so doth he declare this (satisfaction and acceptance of us in Christ) by faith; that being the eye of the understanding whereby the soul comes to see the great things which God the Father hath prepared for them. Beloved these are the last times, wherein it behooves you to beg with much earnestness strength from the Lord; that he may put straight steps to your feet, that you may walk to his praise, exalting him alone as your life and glory. Which was the main end of the author presenting these few lines to your consideration, wherefore read it carefully, and noble Berean-like try all things, and hold fast that which is good. And is shall be his desire, who desires nothing more in this world, than your growth in the knowledge of Christ Jesus, and your walking as the children of the light, that the God of all grace may cause grace to abound in you to his own glory.

So prayeth he that is yours in the Lord, in all services of duty and love.
William Kiffin.

² Isaiah 53:6

SOME
Serious Reflections
On that Part of
The *BUNIONS*
Confession of Faith:
TOUCHING
Communion
WITH
Unbaptized Persons:
AS ALSO
Arguments against the
Use, and Seven Queries
to the Author.

of Christ & the Church.

that is first in his own cause
and just, but his Neighbour cometh
and seeth him.

Psalms 55. 12, 13, 14. For it was not an Enemy
that reproached me, then I could have
borne it, &c.

802.94. Th.

London, Printed for Francis Smith, at the
Elephant and Castle near the Royal EX-
change in Cornhill, and at the
same sign the first Shop with-
out Temple-Bar, 1673.

4

“To the Reader” in Thomas Paul, *Some Serious Reflections On that Part of Mr. Bunion’s Confession of Faith: Touching Communion With Unbaptized Persons* (London: Francis Smith, 1673)

Courteous Reader,

Here is presented to thy serious consideration, some observations upon a late book, entitled, *The Confession of Faith*, of J[ohn] B[unyan]. Wherein that author declareth his faith concerning church fellowship, and the way of entrance therein; endeavouring, after his manner, to prove that men and women that believe in Jesus Christ, although not baptized with water, may be members of any particular church of Christ and ought to be admitted to the Lord’s Supper, and all other church ordinances, a doctrine not known or practiced in the first gospel churches, or by any others of what persuasion whatever, that have professed the Christian faith, since that time to this very age. As for the practice of the churches in the primitive times, the Scripture is in no one thing plainer than in this, that all persons before they were added to the church, were baptized with water, which appeareth both by the commission given by Jesus Christ, Matt 28:19, and the practice of the apostles, Acts 2:38–39, which is more at large showed in this treatise. I suppose the author who himself is against the baptizing of children, and for the baptizing of believers, upon their profession of faith in Christ, makes it none of the least of his arguments, why he is against children’s baptism, than this, viz. that there being no express precedent or example in the Scriptures for children’s baptism, therefore children ought not to be baptized. If this argument be good (as I believe it is) that causeth him to forsake the practice of baptizing children, why should it not be as good at

least to him in the case in hand? But to cause in him the same belief, that none ought to be admitted to the Lord’s Supper, but such as are baptized with water, seeing there cannot be precept... or example in the Scriptures that any unbaptized person was ever admitted to the Lord’s Supper; for the Scriptures alleged to by him, and some consequences drawn therefrom to the contrary, if they be seriously considered by the reader, they show a great deal of boldness and confidence of his own, but not anything to the matter, to prove what they are brought for, but it is very usual for such persons who have not the truth with them, to fill their writings with their own confidences, that so they may induce a belief in others, of the things they assert from their own authority. The severe charges laid by him against those that are contrary minded, if true, would be sufficient to frighten them into his persuasion, but we pass not for man’s judgment, knowing that he which judgeth us is the Lord, who will bring the hidden things of darkness to light; all we plead for is, that all that profess themselves to be Christians, should walk according to the primitive pattern, and in this matter we are sure we follow none other but the footsteps of the flock of Christ in all ages.

We would appeal to the conscience of this opposer, whether the arguments published by many for baptizing of children, have not more force in them, and of greater antiquity (although in our judgments short of proof) than any other that is writ by him, to prove the lawfulness of any to receive the Lord’s Supper that is not first baptized with water. I shall say nothing of the great contempt cast by him upon water baptism, but desire the Lord may humble him for it. Wisdom is justified of her children.¹

I desire to honour and reverence those many faithful Christians that differ from us, who notwithstanding value this ordinance of Christ, only mistake in the subject, and are far from placing religion only in this or any other institution from Christ; but finding the Scriptures show no other rule in the order of instituted worship, than upon believing, to be first baptized, then added to the church, we dare not be wise above what is written.

Communion with all saints, in all things, is a desirable thing, and not the least part of that glory which will for ever be enjoyed in heaven, and it would be a blessed thing, if while Christians differ in their light, the best

¹ Luke 7:35.

knowing but in part,² it might be made up by an increase of love, this would convince the world they were Christ's disciples indeed. But care must be had in the first place, to observe the rules given by our great Lord, and to walk according to them, and not for communion sake to leap over the order Jesus Christ hath prescribed in his Word. I shall not trouble thee any longer, but commend the consideration of the matter ensuing to thy serious thoughts, and the blessing of that God who is able to cause all grace and truth to abound in thy soul.

Thine in the Lord,
W. K.

THE
LIFE and DEATH
OF

That Old Disciple of *Jesus Christ*,
and Eminent Minister of the
GOSPEL,

Mr. *HANSERD KNOLLYS*,

Who Dyed

In the Ninety Third Year of his Age.

Written with his own Hand to the
Year 1672. and continued in Ge-
neral, in an Epistle by Mr. *Wili-*
liam Kiffin.

To which is added,
His last Legacy to the Church.

LONDON,
Printed for *John Harris* at the *Harrow*
in the *Poultrey*, 1692.

5

“The Epistle to the Reader” in *The Life and Death of That Old Disciple of Jesus Christ, and Eminent Minister of the Gospel, Mr. Hanserd Knollys*
(London: John Harris, 1692)

It was the special charge God gave to his people of old, that the many signal providences and mercies that they had received from him, should by them be recorded and left to their children’s children, to that end, that the memorial of his goodness might cause them to love and fear his name, and therefore they are required to bless the Lord from the fountain of Israel, from the very beginning of all his favours towards them. And it is no small favour the servants of God are made partakers of, that his people of old have left so many testimonies of the gracious goodness of providences of God towards them, they being a means to strengthen the faith of his people, in a dependency upon him in all those variety of dispensations that do attend them in this world. That whatever troubles they meet withal in this life, they may know that God deals no otherwise with them than he hath done to those that formerly have feared his name, and may be comforted with the same comforts and supports which his servants formerly have received from God. The author of these ensuing experiences, was that ancient and faithful servant of God, Mr. Hanserd Knollys, who departed this life in the 93rd year of his age, having been employed in the works and service of Christ, as a faithful minister for above 60 years, in which time he laboured without fainting under all the discouragements that attended him, being contented in all conditions, though never so poor in this world, under all persecutions and sufferings, so he might therein serve his blessed Lord and Saviour. I have my self known him for above 54 years, and can witness to the truth of many things left by him under his own hand. It is great pity that the last 20 years of his life cannot be found amongst his writ-

ings, which to the knowledge of many were attended with the same sufferings as formerly, and with the same holy behaviour under them. He in that time was a prisoner in the New Prison for the truth's sake many months, where with great cheerfulness he remained, comforting and encouraging all that come to visit him, with many blessed exhortations to cleave to the Lord. None were sent empty away without some spiritual instructions, and many of his fellow-prisoners were greatly strengthened and comforted by that heavenly counsel that dropped from his lips, spending much of his time there in prayer and study of the word of God, daily preaching to them the things that concern the Kingdom of God.

He was chosen an elder to a congregation in London, with whom he laboured for near 50 years, under many difficulties that did attend him, but neither the poverty of the church, nor the persecutions that attended him, were any temptation to him to neglect his duty towards them, but was willing to be poor with them in their poverty and to suffer with them in their sufferings, being willing to labour for his own and his family's bread, by keeping a school, when they were not able to supply his wants, although he wanted not opportunity to have advanced himself in the world, if he would have accepted them. But like a faithful pastor he chose rather to be poor, and suffer affliction, than to leave the duty and work he was called unto, in which he was employed, until he arrived to the age of above 90 years. And when he found weaknesses attend him, his love and affection to that poor church was such, that he was daily exercising his thoughts to have an able minister for them in his room, declaring to several of his friends what great satisfaction it would be to him, to see one settled amongst them, and that he would be willing to part with something of that little which he had (if there was need) for his maintenance of the church, towards the supply of him. And it pleased God to provide one for them, to his great satisfaction and rejoicing. And so great was his natural affection, and tender care for his daughter and grand children, who he knew were like to come to some distress, that he did accordingly at that great age again undertake the teaching of a school, that he might do to the uttermost of his ability to provide for them.

And having finished his work, he fell asleep in the Lord, the 19th of September, 1691. That these experiences may be of use to all those that read

the same, is the desire and prayer of

Thine in the Lord,

William Kiffin.

BAPTISM

Discovered Plainly & Faithfully,

According to the

WORD OF GOD.

WHEREIN

Is set forth the Glorious Pattern of Our Blessed Saviour JESUS Christ, the Pattern of all Believers in his Subjection to Baptism. Together, with the Example of Thousands who were Baptized after they Believed.

By *JOHN NORCOTT*. Late Servant of Jesus Christ, and of his Church.

The Third Edition, Corrected by *Will. Kiffin*, and *Rich. Claridge*.

With an Appendix by another Hand.

Jer. 6. 4. Ask for the Old and the Good Way, and walk therein, & you shall find rest for your souls.

Isa. 30. 21. This is the Way, walk in it.

1 COR. 11. 1. Be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ.

Mat. 3. 20. And when Jesus was Baptized or dip't, he came up out of the Water.

Luc. 7. 30. But the Pharisees and Lawyers rejected the Counsel of God against themselves, not being Baptized or dip't.

Printed at *Rotterdam*, and now Re-printed at *London*, by the Assigns of *Widow Norcott*, and Sold by *Will. Marshal* at the Bible in *Newgate-street*, 1694.

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“Foreword” to John Norcott, *Baptism Discovered
Plainly & Faithfully, According to the Word of God*
3rd edition, corrected by William Kiffin and Richard Claridge
(Rotterdam ed.; repr. London, 1694)

To all that love the Lord Jesus Christ, and his holy ordinances in the truth,
Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied.

Dearly Beloved!

As the Lord Jesus Christ is most precious to your souls, his name being as “ointment poured forth,” and his “love better than wine,” Song 1:23, so hath every truth of his, a due value and esteem with you. Whatsoever hath the divine impress upon it, ye readily embrace; but not that, which is but tradition of man. Hence it is, that ye are for a church of Christ’s own erection, for a ministry of his own calling, and for ordinances of his own appointing. ’Tis both your desire and endeavour to follow Christ fully, and therefore cannot admit of any thing in doctrine, or worship, that is not exactly consonant to his revealed will. Ye are so tender of Christ’s honour, which shines in all his commands, that ye cannot deviate knowingly the least tittle from any one of them. O what an awe Christ’s authority carries with it! Ye are the sheep that hear his voice, the servants that do his will, and the people that are obedient in the day of his power. Blessed are ye that make his word your rule, and resolutely do practice according thereunto!

The author of this short and plain discourse, was a true lover of our Lord Jesus, and his holy appointments, he steered his whole course by the compass of the word, making scripture-precept, or example, his constant rule in matters of religion. Other men’s opinions or interpretations were

not the standard by which he went. But through the assistance of the Holy Spirit, he laboured to find out what the Lord himself had said in his Word. And therefore throughout this little book, he still keeps close to the Scriptures, vouching no authority for what he delivers, but from thence.

What approbation this piece hath found, may appear from hence: that since the first edition of it here in England, it hath been reprinted in Holland, was also lately translated into Welsh, and now growing scarce, and much asked for, the bookseller hath been advised to give it another impression. In which there are few material alterations or additions, the author’s own phrase, and method being generally preserved.

The Lord, who is able to give seed to the sower, and to bless the seed sown, prosper this plain discourse to every soul that shall read it, which is the hearty desire of,

Yours in the Lord,

Will. Kiffin,
Rich. Claridge

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