

Scripture Testimonies

extract from Proposition XIII § ix

§ ix. We find several testimonies in Scripture that sufficiently show that external rites of this kind are not a necessary part of the New Covenant dispensation, and therefore it is not necessary to continue them now, although they were practiced for some time in the old days. I shall give a few examples of them, by which it will be clear, from the nature of the thing as well as from those testimonies, that the ceremony of bread and wine has ceased, as well as the other things which our adversaries admit to have ceased.

The first example is Romans 14:17: “For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.” Here the apostle clearly shows that the kingdom of God, the Gospel of Christ, does not depend on food and drink and that kind of thing, but rather on righteousness. This is clear from the context, where he is speaking of the guilt and danger of judging one another about food and drink. So then, if neither the kingdom of God, nor the Gospel, nor the work of Christ, depends on it, then the eating of outward bread and wine cannot be a necessary part of Gospel worship, nor any perpetual ordinance of it.

Another testimony from the same apostle is even plainer (Colossians 2:16). Throughout this whole second chapter the apostle clearly advocates in our favor, and against the formality and superstition of our opponents. In the beginning he speaks of the great privileges that Christians have in Christ when they have come to the life of Christianity, and therefore Paul tells them (verse 6): “As they have received Christ, they are to walk in him; and to be careful not to be spoiled through philosophy and empty

deceit according to worldly principles, because all fullness is in Christ whom they have received. They are circumcised with the circumcision done without hands, which the apostle calls the circumcision of Christ, and are buried with him by baptism, and also risen with him through faith in the power of God.”<sup>1</sup> Here the apostle says they participated in the true baptism of Christ and are arisen with him. Let us see whether he thinks it is necessary that they should make use of food and drink, such as bread and wine, to put them in remembrance of Christ death, or whether they ought to be judged because they did not do it (verse 16). Paul says, “Let no one judge you in food or in drink.” Isn’t bread and wine food and drink? But why? he answers, “they are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ.”

Sources: Robert Barclay, *Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, Proposition XIII § ix (Glenside PA: Quaker Heritage Press, 2002) pp. 402-403 and Roberti Barclaii, *Teologiae verè Christianae apologia*, facsimile (Amsterdam: Jacob Claus, 1676) pp. 310-311.

---

<sup>1</sup> Summary of Colossians 2:6-12.