

BAPTISM.

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"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (a).

These are not idle words, but the utterances of the Lord of glory; and, without reasonable doubt, signify the *baptism* of water, and the *baptism* of the Holy Ghost.

That these matters should engage our most careful and earnest attention, arises from the fact that they are the infallible words of Him who came from heaven to save sinners. Hear Him:

"For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting; whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak." (b).

Two baptisms were promised under the new covenant, or gospel dispensation, and two were received.

John the Baptist, who came "to make ready a people prepared for the Lord," (c), in "the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ," (d), "did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins," (e), and promised the baptism of the Spirit to those who received the baptism of water, and in these words:

"I indeed have baptized you with water; but he [Christ] shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." (f).

Jesus, after his resurrection from the dead, and just before his ascension to heaven, reminded his disciples of this important promise, and pointed them forward to its full and glorious realization; and—

"Being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, Ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye

shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." (g).

This baptism was received on the day of Pentecost, when—

"There came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." (h).

Jesus, our example, and our teacher, received these two baptisms.

"Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him; and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased." (i).

The Samaritan converts received these two baptisms; for—

"When they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women," and "when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John; who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost; (for as yet he was fallen upon none of them; only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost." (j).

So, too, the Gentiles at Cesarea, Cornelius and his household, received these two baptisms, though not precisely in the same order; for they received the baptism of the Holy Ghost first, an exception to the general rule; and this, no doubt, to convince Peter and the Jewish converts that "God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." Peter says:

"And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then

[a] John 3: 5. [b] John 12: 49, 50. [c] Luke 1: 17. [d] Mark 1: 1. [e] Mark 1: 4. [f] Mark 1: 8.

[g] Acts 1: 4, 5. [h] Acts 2: 2-4. [i] Luke 3: 21, 22. [j] Acts 8: 12, 14-17.

remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, what was I that I could withstand God?" (k).

They now had been "born of the Spirit," but it was essential that they should be "born of water," and this that great Apostle well knew; therefore "he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." (l).

The subject under consideration is of such vast moment to all who have a desire to serve God and be saved, that we will venture still further evidence as to the fact of there being two baptisms under the Gospel covenant.

"And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus; and finding certain disciples, [who were neither Christ's nor John's, as they knew nothing of the Holy Ghost, which John and Christ both preached], he said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost [so indispensable to salvation] since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, [such was primitive christianity], the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophecied." (m).

Paul, in treating of the manner in which Christians were saved, writes to Titus as follows:

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, [outside of the gospel order], but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, [i. e. of the new birth], and renewing of the Holy Ghost." (n).

This, beyond question, relates to the way in which they were brought into covenant relations with God. That two baptisms were preached and received by the early Christians is still further apparent from Paul's letter to the Hebrews, (o), where, in particularizing "the principles of the doctrine of

Christ," he says, "Of the doctrine of baptisms," [two, at least.]

Again; Jesus said to his Apostles, "Go teach [make disciples of] all nations, baptizing them;" (p) by which we learn that they were to administer water baptism to all persons, of all nations, who received their teachings; and Paul says, "by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles." (q). Now these two statements joined together prove the fact of the two baptisms, and of their importance in the Church of Christ. The Christian ministry were sent to baptize the believers with water, but Christ alone baptizes with the Spirit.

Having proceeded thus far with our subject we may state, that baptism by water, baptism of the Spirit, and the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, are the three heaven-ordained witnesses of the New Covenant, the gospel of Christ, by which it is established and confirmed.

"There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three agree in one." (r).

God, in his wisdom, has joined these three witnesses in one; wherefore, "what God has joined together, let no man put asunder."

When Jesus came to consummate his work for the salvation of man, he did so by his obedience to his Father's will at the waters of baptism, (s), as well as by his obedience "unto death, even the death of the cross." (t). And it was not until his baptism that his Sonship was acknowledged from on high; (u) this act being followed by the testimony of the Spirit. In view of these facts we see why John says that "Jesus, the Son of God," "came by water and blood;" and why it is that he further says, "it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth." (v). These three witnesses, or either of them, must not be silenced, —they must not be treated with discre-

[k] Acts 11: 15-17. [l] Acts 10: 48. [m] Acts 19: 1-6. [n] Titus 3: 5. [o] Hebrews 6: 2.

[p] Matt. 28: 19. [q] 1 Cor. 12: 13. [r] 1 John 5: 7, 8. [s] Matt. 3: 15. [t] Phil. 2: 8. [u] Matt. 3: 16, 17. [v] 1 John 5: 6.

spect, contempt or disregard. Let them speak; their voice is the voice of the living God! Wherever the true Church of Christ is, they will speak, and their glorious voice will be heard, and will thrill with heavenly delight the hearts of the humble and the contrite ones.

Having seen the importance of baptism, we inquire after the meaning of the word; and the *mode* of administering the rite of water baptism.

From the statements of the Bible it is evident that *baptism* means immersion, and nothing less. "And John was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim," for the very significant reason that, "there was *much water there.*" (*w*).

Now if any mode requiring only a small amount of water would have answered, John certainly would have availed himself of it; for it would seem from the account that the only thing that specially rendered Enon a suitable place for administering the rite was, "because there was *much water there.*" Whether Enon was directly on the banks of the Jordan, as some suppose, or "a place of springs," as some hold that its name signifies, certain it is it was a place abounding with water,—"much water,"—and for this very reason it was a suitable place for baptism.

Jesus, "the Good Shepherd," when he entered "in by the door" into the sheepfold, did so, evidently, by baptism. "To him the porter, [John the Baptist], openeth," "and the sheep follow him." (*x*).

And when he received baptism, he "was" baptized of John *in Jordan*. And straightway coming *up out of the water*, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him." (*y*). "Much water," clearly, was required in baptizing Christ. If any one could be spared the *inconvenience*, and humility, of going down into the water in order to receive baptism, surely, it was the sinless Son of God. But his receiving baptism in the manner indicated, has given the rite his sanction and seal, and exemplified the

way in which those who would be his disciples must follow him.

When Philip baptized the Ethiopian eunuch it was evidently where there was "much water;" for "they went down both *into the water*, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up *out of the water*, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip." (*z*). This points unmistakably to immersion. It was, without doubt, quite *inconvenient*, in some sense, for this traveler to go "down into the water," in order to receive baptism; and, it was in some measure inconvenient for Philip to go "down into the water" in order to administer the rite; but Philip knew his duty in the premises, as did also the eunuch, and their mutual object was to *obey God*. Human wisdom would have said, A cup of water will suffice; let this man "of great authority" be baptized in his chariot, or by its side, at most. But the wisdom of God as Philip knew it, said, go "down both into the water," and there administer the rite.

As a further evidence that *baptism* is *immersion*, we quote the teachings of Paul to the early Saints. He says to them:

"Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation [process ordained] of God." (*a*).

By this statement we learn that in Christian baptism the person is both *buried*, and *risen* with Christ. Certainly there is no mode by which this can be accomplished but by immersion. Paul alludes to the manner of baptism, in writing to the Roman Saints, in similar terms. He says to them:

"Know ye not, [as though all should know], that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore [because we are baptized] we are *buried* with him *by baptism* into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." (*b*).

This puts the matter beyond question, that Christian baptism is that by which the individual is both *buried* and *risen* with Christ, and wherein also

[*w*] John 3 : 23. [*x*] John 10 : 3, 4. [*y*] Mark 1 : 10.

[*z*] Acts 8 : 38, 39. [*a*] Col. 2 : 12. [*b*] Rom. 6 : 3, 4.

is shown the burial and resurrection of Christ. When the person is "buried with" Christ in baptism, therein is shown their death to sin; "knowing this," says the Apostle, "that our old man is [in baptism] crucified with him, [Christ], that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." (c). And when the person is "raised up," or "risen with him," out of the waters of baptism, they are not only "freed from sin," but have entered into "newness of life."

Smith, in his Dictionary of the Bible says :

"Baptism properly and literally means immersion."

He further says :

"The language of the New Testament, and of the primitive fathers sufficiently points to immersion as the common mode of baptism."

Calvin, in his Institutes says :

"The word *baptizo* [baptize] signifies to immerse, and the rite of immersion was performed by the ancient church."

Luther :—

"Baptism is a Greek word, and may be translated immersion, as when we immerse something in water, that it may be wholly covered." (d).

Beza :—

"Christ commanded us to be baptized; by which word, it is certain, immersion is signified." (e).

Vitringa :—

"The act of baptizing is the immersion of believers in water. This expresses the force of the word. Thus also it was performed by Christ and his Apostles." (f).

Salmasius :—

"Baptism is immersion, and was administered in former times, according to the force and meaning of the word." (g).

Bretschneider :—

"An entire immersion belongs to the nature of baptism." "This is the meaning of the word." (h).

Bloomfield, in his Critical Digest on Romans sixth chapter and fourth verse says :—

"There is here plainly a reference to the ancient mode of baptism by immersion."

Neander, in his letter to Judd, says :

"As to your question on the original rite of baptism, there can be no doubt whatever that,

in the primitive times, it was performed by immersion, to signify a complete immersion into the new principle of the divine life which was to be imparted by the Messiah." (i).

Mosheim, the very learned and accurate church historian, says :—

"Baptism was administered in this [first] century, without the public assemblies, in places appointed and prepared for that purpose, and was performed by an immersion of the whole body in the baptismal font." (j).

Donnegan, in his Greek Lexicon, says :—

"Baptizo, [baptize], to immerse repeatedly into a liquid, to submerge," etc.

Bas, in his Lexicon for the New Testament, says :—

"Baptizo—to dip, immerse, plunge in water; to bathe one's self; to be immersed in sufferings or afflictions."

Stourtz, a native Greek, in a work published in 1816, says :—

"Baptizo has but one signification. It signifies, literally, and invariably, to plunge."

We cannot better close this branch of our investigation than by quoting the late Dr. Charles Anthon, (Professor of Languages in Columbia College, New York), in a letter to Dr. E. Parmly, March 27th, 1843, in which he says :—

"The primary meaning of the word [Baptizo] is to dip or immerse; and its secondary meanings, if it ever had any, all refer, in some way or other, to the same leading idea.—Sprinkling, etc., are entirely out of the question." (k).

But some urge that baptism *must* have been administered otherwise than by immersion in the times of the Apostles, as, (they claim), it is evident that the Philippian jailer and his household were baptized *in the house*. To this we reply, that it is plain from the history of that affair that both he and his household *went out of the house* in order to be baptized, which they would not have done if immersion was not the essential mode. The account says that Paul and Silas—

"Spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to *all* that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, [evidently after the baptism], he set meat before them, and re-

[c] Rom. 6: 6. [d] Op. 1, p. 336. [e] Epistola, to in Marc 7: 4. [f] Aphor. Theol. Sanct. Aphoris, 884. [g] De Cesarie Virorum, p. 669. [h] Theology, Leipzig, 1830, vol. 2, p. 681.

[i] Judd's Reply to Stewart, p. 194. [j] Part 2, ch. 4, par. 8. [k] Fuller, on Baptism, p. 52.

joined, believing in God with all his house." (l).

Here we find :

1. Paul and Silas preached the word of the Lord to the jailer and his household.

2. The jailer "washed their stripes."

3. He "was baptized, he and all his, straightway."

4. And he afterward "brought them into his house."

Now the fact that he "brought them into his house" *after their baptism*, is strong circumstantial evidence that they not only did not receive baptism in the house, but that they had previously gone out of the house for the very purpose of baptism.

"But further," says the objector, "how could the three thousand be immersed in one day?" To this we reply:—It is probable that the greater part, if not the whole of the one hundred and twenty Disciples present on the day of Pentecost, were Christ's ministry; for the endowment received then was promised especially to his ministry. (m). But granting that not over one-fourth of them were authorized to baptize, those thirty could baptize each their one hundred in at least an hour. Again; John's baptism was a valid one; and might it not have been found that many of the three thousand had received that baptism? If so, this would have lessened the number to be immersed. As for water in which to have administered the rite, Jerusalem was the capital of Judea, "a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills." (n). Near the city was the brook Cedron, which, (as this occurred in the spring of the year), would yield plenty of water for such purposes. There were other brooks near Jerusalem; those leading from the fountains of Siloam and Gihon; besides, pools for bathing were common; also reservoirs built for the public use. There was, therefore, no want of water in order to immerse the three thousand.

The pre-requisites to baptism are

faith and repentance, on the part of the person receiving the rite. The gospel is addressed to none but those who are capable of:

1. Hearing the gospel in an understanding manner.

2. Of believing it.

3. Of repentance.

4. And, of obeying that "form of doctrine."

All others such as infants, and persons idiotic, or insane, are excluded by its very terms:

"He that *believeth* and is baptized shall be saved." (o).

And Peter, who held the keys of the kingdom, said to the believing Jews on the day of Pentecost:

"*Repent* and be baptized every one of you." (p).

All persons not capacitated to understand the simple requirements of the gospel, with its precious promises, are not under condemnation.

"For this is the condemnation, [says Jesus], that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." (q).

We must not require the blind to distinguish between colors, nor condemn the deaf for not learning and loving the melody of music. Nor must we condemn those who for want of capacity, or opportunity, do not obey the gospel. To make one accountable for what he does not know, and has no means of knowing, would be both folly and wickedness. The grounds of condemnation are:

1. Knowledge and light, including the opportunities for obtaining such.

2. Willful neglect of, or negligent or willful transgression against them. "To him that *knoweth* to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." (r). Consequently, those who *do not know* to do good, or have not the opportunity to either *know* or *do*, they are not under condemnation.

Jesus said to the Pharisees, "If ye were blind, ye should have *no sin*." (s)

Infants, insane persons and idiots, are to the gospel requirements and

[l] Acts 16: 32-34. [m] Luke 24: 42. [n] Acts 1: 4-8. [o] Deut. 8: 7.

[p] Mark 16: 16. [q] Acts 2: 38. [r] John 3: 19. [s] Jas. 4: 17. [t] John 9: 41.

promises "blind," for want of mental perception and intellectual ability; and hence they are not subjects of its call, nor accountable to its requirements.

The condition upon which the eunuch could receive baptism was, "If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest." (t). So in the case of the jailer and his household. When the jailer inquired of Paul and Silas, saying:—"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" "they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house;" and after baptism, the jailer "set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house." (u). "All his house" were capable of hearing "the word of the Lord," and all were capable of "believing."

In all places where baptism was administered, these pre-requisites,—faith and repentance,—are either stated or implied. We herewith submit the views of some eminent Bible scholars.

Calvin :—

"Because Christ requires teaching before baptism, and will have believers only admitted to baptism, baptism does not seem to be rightly administered, except faith precede." (v).

Saurin :—

"In the primitive church, instruction preceded baptism, agreeably to the order of Jesus Christ; 'Go teach all nations, baptizing them.' Thus, likewise, we understand St. Peter, when he says that the baptism which saves us, is 'not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience.'" (w).

Conscience is our moral sense of right and wrong. Infants and persons of unsound mind do not possess this.

Baxter :—

"I profess my conscience is fully satisfied from this text, 'Go teach all nations,' etc., (x) that it is one sort of faith, even saving, that must go before baptism." (y).

Fuller :—

"The Commission specifies, as subjects for baptism, those who are taught and believe." (z).

Baptism, without faith and repent-

ance on the part of the candidate, is both unscriptural and contrary to right reason.

The objects of baptism, the ends to be obtained by it, we will now consider.

"The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ," (a), was clearly defined by John the Baptist when he came preparing "the way of the Lord," by making "His paths straight," in doing which he did "preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." (b). Bible believers will not question the correctness of John's teaching, and consequently they must conclude that "the baptism of repentance" is "for the remission of sins." Peter on the day of Pentecost, declared to the believing Jews precisely the same thing :

"Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." (c).

Peter knew that what he taught was true and right. Jesus had said to him and his fellow Apostles, "He that heareth you heareth me." (d), Let us therefore beware how we read. "Remission," here, evidently signifies release, discharge, pardon, or forgiveness; hence the importance that attaches to our knowing the object for which God has appointed this ordinance.

Another evidence that baptism is for the remission of sins we find in the case of Saul of Tarsus. Ananias, who was sent of God to him, said to him on coming into his presence :

"Why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (e).

Another evidence that baptism was ordained of God to cleanse from sin, is found in these words of Paul, where he says Christ "loved the Church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word," [i.e. of the gospel.] (f).

It is just as reasonable that, in the economy of God, sins should be remitted, or cleansed away by water baptism,

[t] Acts 8 : 37. [u] Acts 16 : 30, 34. [v] Harm. Evang. Comment. ad. loc. [w] Sermon. tome. 1 pp. 301, 302. [x] Matt. 28 : 19. [y] Disputat. of Right to Sac. p. 150. [z] On Baptism, p. 117.

(a) Mark 1 : 1. (b) Mark 1 : 5. (c) Acts 2 : 38. (d) Luke 10 : 16. (e) Acts 22 : 16. (f) Eph. 5 : 25, 26.

as that looking upon the "serpent of brass," should heal those bitten by the "fiery serpents," (g), or that the walls of Jericho should fall down at "the sound of the trumpet," and the "shout" of Israel; or that the Captain of Syria's hosts should be cleansed of leprosy at the command of God, by dipping himself "Seven times in Jordan." (h).

The virtue, power, and efficacy of the ordinance arises from its having been appointed of God.

Faith and repentance bring a change of heart,—of desire and purpose,—and baptism, a *change of state*. When the individual is "buried with Christ in baptism," he becomes "dead to sin," and, "freed from sin;" and when he is "raised up," it is "in newness of life;" and he is, therefore, "a new creature;" "translated into the kingdom of God's dear son;"—he has entered into the sheepfold by the door.

To the idea that baptism is for the remission of sins, it is objected, that Christ received baptism, and he was not a sinner. While we are full well aware that Christ *did no sin*, yet we are equally well aware that sin was *imputed unto him*. "He hath made him to be sin for us," said Paul. (i). The law of the gospel, enunciated by Christ himself and his ministry, made no distinction in favor of the morally good, as excusing them from complying with its requirements. All were reckoned under sin, for as the Apostle says, "the Scripture hath concluded *all* under sin."

(j). Christ took not on himself "the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore *in all things* it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren." (k). He "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men."

(l). Jesus knew that John preached "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins," and he evidently accepted it just as it was preached; and though he was not a sinner by his own disobedience, yet, inasmuch as he was

made "to be sin for us," and "made like unto his brethren," "in all things," it was essential that he should receive baptism for the remission of sins (imputed). Hence, when he demanded baptism of John he said, "Suffer it to be so now, for thus [in baptism] it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." (m).

We now give the statements and admissions of a few eminent writers on theology.

Origen, who lived in the beginning of the third century, says:—

"The baptism of the church is given for the forgiveness of sins."

Calvin:—

"Baptism resembles a legal instrument properly attested, by which He assures us that all our sins are cancelled, effaced and obliterated, so that they will never appear in His sight, or come into His remembrance, or be imputed unto us. For He commands all who believe to be baptized *for the remission of sins*. Therefore those who have imagined that baptism is nothing more than a mark or sign by which we profess our religion before men, as soldiers wear the insignia of their sovereign as a mark of their profession, have not considered the *principal thing* in baptism; which is that we ought to receive it with this promise, 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.'" (n).

John Wesley, in his comment on the New Testament, says:—

"Baptism administered to real penitents, is both a *means* and a seal of pardon. Nor did God ordinarily in the primitive church bestow this [pardon] on any, unless through *this means*." (o).

The reader may desire to know, seeing that such prominence is given to this ordinance, whether baptism is appointed as a *saving* ordinance. To this we reply, that God has nowhere promised, under the gospel dispensation, to save those who *refuse* to be baptized in the *manner*, and for the purposes for which that rite was appointed; but he has promised to save those who believe and are baptized.

That it, like faith, and repentance, is *a means*, in connection with others, of securing man's salvation from sin, and salvation in God's everlasting king-

(g) Num. 21 : 6-9. (h) 2 Kings 5 : 8-14. (i) 2 Cor. 5 : 21. (j) Gal. 3 : 22. (k) Heb. 2 : 16, 17. (l) Phil. 2 : 7.

(m) Matt. 3 : 15. (n) Inst. 1. 4. cxv. p. 327. (o) p. 25.

dom, is just as true as the words of Christ and the Apostles.

Jesus says, "He that believeth *and is baptized shall be saved.*" (p). Again: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (q). This evidently relates to the *baptism of water*, and the *baptism of the Holy Ghost*, as no other means is spoken of in the Scriptures by which "a man" can undergo such a change of condition or state, as is here contemplated.

Justin Martyr, who was a leading minister and writer in the church within fifty to seventy years after the Apostles, teaches as above. He says:—

"Then we bring them to some place where there is water, and they are regenerated by the same way of regeneration by which we were regenerated; for they are washed in water in the name of God, the Father and Lord of all things, and of our Savior Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit; for Christ says, Unless you be regenerated [born] you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven."

H. Wall says:—

"There is not any one Christian writer, of any antiquity, in any language, but who understands it, [John 3 : 5], of baptism." (r).

When writing to Titus, Paul declares:—

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, [before receiving the gospel], but according to his mercy he *saved us, by the washing of regeneration, [baptism], and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.*" (s).

As a further proof of the *saving efficacy of baptism in the gospel plan*, we quote the plain and definite language of Peter, one of the chief Apostles:—

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit; by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometimes were disobedient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were *saved by water*. The like figure whereunto even *baptism doth now save us*, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." (t).

The Ark, in which Noah and his family were saved would have been of

no purpose nor avail in their salvation but for the water that bore it upon its bosom. As water was essential to the salvation of Noah and his family in the ark, so, by the appointment of God, water baptism is made essential to salvation under the gospel of Christ.—While the ark, as a fact, did save eight souls by water; as a figure it pointed forward to salvation in Christ; so while water baptism as a fact saves from past sins and brings the individual into covenant relations with God, it as a figure points to the glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ. Hence we are "buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are *risen with him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." (u).

All men are to be finally judged "according to their works;" (v); wherefore, all those who hear the gospel and have opportunity to obey its requirements and yet *refuse* to do so, will be found under condemnation. Such persons reject the "good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (w).

Jesus says:—

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that *doeth* the will of my Father which is in heaven." (x).

"Blessed are they that *do* his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." (y).

Having now treated of baptism, its meaning, mode of administration, its objects or ends, who only are its subjects; also its pre-requisites, and its saving efficacy; we will consider the question of how, when, and why, this gospel ordinance was changed.

Eusebius, "the father of church historians," relates how aspersion, or sprinkling water upon the individual was applied as baptism, in the case of Novatus, about A. D. 263. He says of him:—

"Who aided by the exorcists, when attacked with an obstinate disease, and being supposed at the point of death, was baptized

(p) Mark 16:16. (q) John 3:5. (r) Fuller on Baptism, p. 102. (s) Titus 3:4, 5. (t) 1 Peter 3:18-21.

(u) Col. 2:12. (v) Rev. 20:12; 22:12. Rom. 2:6; 14:12. 2 Cor. 5:10. Matt. 16:27. (w) Eph. 2:10. (x) Matt. 7:21. (y) Rev. 22:14.

by aspersion, in the bed on which he lay; if, indeed, it be proper to say that one like him did receive baptism. But neither when he recovered from disease, did he partake of other things, which the rules of the church prescribe as duty, nor was he sealed, [in confirmation], by the bishop. But as he did not obtain this, how could he obtain the Holy Spirit?" (z).

This, no doubt, was the leading step to a great schism.

Dyonisus says:—

"We justly cherish an aversion to the Novation, by whom the Church, is split asunder, and some of the brethren have been drawn into impiety and blasphemy, and most nefarious doctrine has been introduced respecting God, and our most gracious Lord and Savior Christ has been calumniated as devoid of compassion; which also, beside all this, sets aside the holy baptism, and overturns the faith and confession that precede it." (a).

This one false step in regard to baptism appears to have led directly to others equally bad.

Bingham, in his *Antiquities*, says:—

"Baptism was administered by immersion; and no mention is made of any other mode till the middle of the third century."

The Church had evidently become corrupted, to no small degree, even before this time. Mosheim, on this (third) century, says:—

"The face of things began now to change in the Christian church. The ancient method of ecclesiastical government seemed, in general, still to subsist, while, at the same time, by imperceptible steps, it varied from the primitive rule." (b).

Venema:—

"It is without controversy, that baptism in the primitive church, was administered by immersion into water, and not by sprinkling. The essential act of baptizing, in the *second* century, consisted, not in sprinkling, but in immersion in water, in the name of each person in the Trinity. Concerning immersion, the words and phrases that are used, sufficiently testify; and that it was performed in a river, a pool, or a fountain. To the essential rite of baptism, in the *third* century, pertained immersion, and not aspersion, except in cases of necessity, and it was accounted a half-perfect baptism. Immersion in the *fourth* century, was one of those acts that were considered as essential to baptism;—nevertheless, aspersion was used in the last moments of life, on such as were called clinics—and also, where there was not a sufficient quantity of water."

The Monks of Cressy, A. D. 754, inquired:—

"Is it lawful, in case of necessity occasioned by sickness, to baptize an infant by pouring water on its head, from a cup, or the hands?"

To which Pope Stephen third, replied:—

"Such a baptism performed in such a case of necessity, shall be accounted valid." (d).

In speaking of the foregoing, Basnage says:—

"This is accounted the first law against immersion. The Pontiff, however, did not dispense with immersion, except in case of extreme necessity. This law, therefore, did not change the mode of dipping, in public baptisms; and it was not until the legislature in a Council at Ravenna, in the year 1311, declared immersion and pouring indifferent." (e)

Brenner, quoted by Professor Stuart, says:—

"Thirteen hundred years was baptism generally and ordinarily performed by the immersion of a man under water; and only in extraordinary cases was sprinkling or effusion permitted. These latter methods of baptism were called in question, and even prohibited."

INFANT BAPTISM.

In regard to infant baptism, Luther says:—

"It cannot be proved by the sacred Scriptures that infant baptism was instituted by Christ, or begun by the first Christians after the Apostles." (f).

Chambers:—

"It appears that in the primitive times none were baptized but adults." (g).

Curcellæus:—

"The baptism of infants, in the first two centuries after Christ, was altogether unknown; but in the third and fourth, was allowed by some few. In the fifth, and following ages, it was generally received. The custom of baptizing infants did not begin before the *third* age after Christ was born. In the former ages no trace of it appears, and it was introduced without the command of Christ." (h).

Neander:—

"It cannot possibly be proved that infant baptism was practiced in the Apostolic age." (i).

Infant baptism is utterly subversive of the leading thought of the gospel, viz., man's personal accountability to God.

(d) Apud. Labbei Concilia. Tom. 6 p. 1650. (e) Monumenta, vol. 1, in Robinson's Hist. of Bap., ch. 33. (f) In A. R's Vanity of Infant Baptism, part 2, p. 8. (g) Cyclopedia, art. Baptism. (h) Institut. Relig. Christ. (i) Apost. Age, vol. 1, p. 140.

(z) Eccles. Hist., p. 266. (a) Euseb. Eccles. Hist., p. 276. (b) Ch. Hist., p. 63. (c) Hist. Eccles. Secul. 1. 2 138, &c.

As for the condition of the Church in the second century after Christ, it was beyond question much changed.

Mosheim says of it:—

“There is no institution so pure and excellent which the corruption and folly of man will not in time alter for the worse, and load with additions foreign to its nature and original design. Such, in a particular manner, was the fate of Christianity. In this [second] century many unnecessary rites and ceremonies were added to the Christian worship, the introduction of which was extremely offensive to wise and good men. These changes, while they destroyed the beautiful simplicity of the gospel, were naturally pleasing to the gross multitude.” (j).

Among the *changes* that took place in this century, (though not extensively practiced till the third), was “trine immersion;” (the candidate being immersed three times;) of which Tertulian, about A. D. 200, says, it was “doing somewhat more than the gospel required.”

“Trine immersion continued to be practiced in the West, as well as the East, till the end of the sixth century, when it was decreed by the fourth council of Toledo, that the *primitive baptism*, by a single immersion, should be restored.” (k).

The seeds of apostacy and corruption began to be sown in the Church even in the times of the Apostles, as may be seen by reading, (l) which resulted in her total apostacy from Christ, as shown in Revelations twelfth chapter, and it would seem from Church history that about the latter part of the sixth century there was scarcely a vestige or semblance of Christianity to be found on earth. Of these times Mosheim says:—

“The public teachers and instructors of the people grievously degenerated from the Apostolic character. They seemed to aim at nothing else than to sink the multitude into the most opprobrious ignorance and superstition, to efface from their minds all sense of the beauty and excellence of genuine piety, and to substitute in the place of religious principles, a blind veneration for the clergy, and a stupid zeal for a senseless round of ridiculous ceremonies. This, perhaps, will appear less surprising, when we consider that the ‘blind led the blind;’ for the public ministers and teachers of religion were, for the most part, grossly ignorant.” (m).

(j) Church Hist., p. 46. (k) Fuller, on Bap., p. 37. (l) Acts 20: 28-30. 1 Cor. 1: 10-12. 2 Thess. 2: 1-7. 2 Tim. 4: 1-4. 2 Pet. 1: 1-3. 1 John 2: 18, 19. (m) Mosh. Hist., p. 138.

Isaiah clearly foresaw this apostacy, and predicted its terrible results. He says:—

“The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws *changed the ordinance*, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate; therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left.” (n)

The “inhabitants” of the earth, at large, have had no direct interest in any “everlasting covenant,” except that one of which Jesus was the Mediator,—the gospel covenant. In this they had, for it was to be preached to “all nations,”—“to every creature.” This covenant they did, as nations, receive, and this they have “broken,” and have “changed” the leading, distinguishing “ordinance,” viz., baptism.

When the reformers came they reformed the practices of a corrupt church, but they did not *restore* and re-establish the “broken” covenant under which the Christian world was then worshipping; hence they did not *restore* the primitive ordinances, doctrines, church organization, spiritual blessings and powers. This remained to be done in this present century, by Joseph Smith, in fulfillment of Revelations fourteenth chapter, sixth and seventh verses, and by virtue of a direct commandment from God.

Reader, will you obey that “form of doctrine” which was received by, and which saved, the primitive Christians? If you will receive it out of a pure desire, calling upon God, He will give you the Holy Spirit to bear witness with your spirit that the doctrine is divine, and is “the power of God unto salvation.”

“Fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool; but my righteousness shall be forever, and my salvation from generation to generation.” (o).

“Fear God, and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come; and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” (p).

(n) Isa. 24: 5, 6. (o) Isa. 57: 7, 8. (p) Rev. 14: 7