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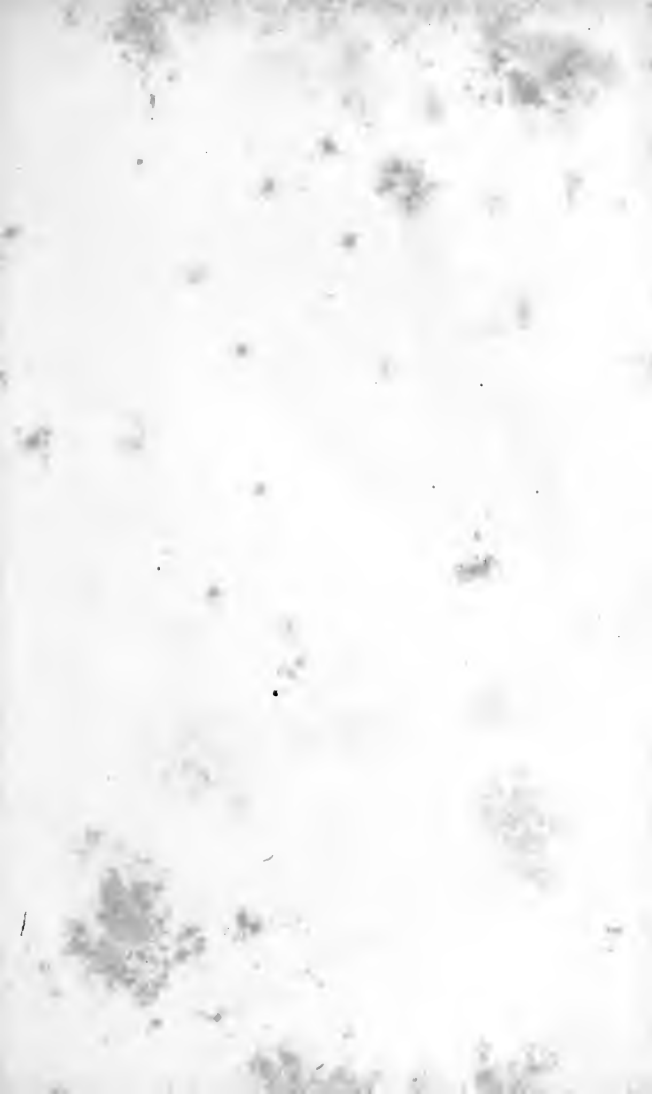
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THREE REASONS,

WHY I AM A BAPTIST.

BY

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TWELFTH THOUSAND.

CINCINNATI:
MOORE, ANDERSON & COMPANY,

28 WEST FOURTH STREET.

1853.

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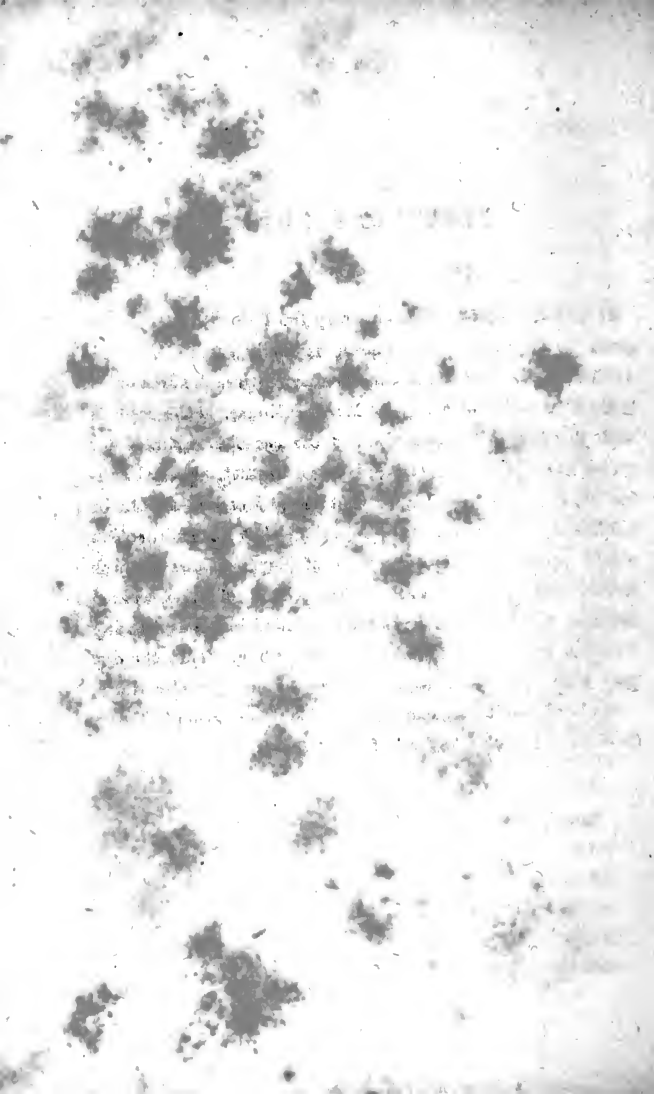
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IF any one wishes to know why the following pages are given to the public, the reason is easily furnished. The Author was invited, some months since, to preach a Discourse at the Dedication of a Baptist Meeting-House. He complied with the invitation, and deemed the occasion suitable for giving some of his reasons for being a Baptist. Many brethren have expressed a desire that these Reasons should be published, giving it as their opinion, that the publication would promote scriptural views of Baptism and Church Government. In deference to the wishes of those valued brethren, the Discourse has been expanded into the following Treatise, and is now submitted to the public. That the day may soon come when there shall be, as in apostolic times, "one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism," and one form of Church Government, is the Author's fervent prayer.

J. M. PENDLETON.

BOWLING-GREEN, KY., *May 4, 1853.*

(iii)



## THREE REASONS

### WHY I AM A BAPTIST.

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WERE I to state that I am a Baptist because Baptists believe the Bible to be the word of God, and cordially subscribe to the doctrine of salvation by grace—justification by faith—regeneration by the Holy Spirit, and all kindred topics—some other person might say, “I belong to a different religious communion for the same reasons.” It is necessary, therefore, that my reasons embrace the distinctive peculiarities of Baptists. In other words, I must show why Baptists differ from other religious denominations.

*I am a Baptist then,*

I. BECAUSE BAPTISTS REGARD THE BAPTISM OF INFANTS AS UNSCRIPTURAL, AND INSIST ON THE BAPTISM OF BELIEVERS IN CHRIST—AND OF BELIEVERS ALONE.

In showing the validity of this reason, I must enter into an investigation of the subject of Infant Baptism. The investigation will, I trust, not be wanting

in impartiality and courtesy. May it result in the development and maintenance of truth!

My position is that there is no Scriptural authority for infant baptism. Neither precept for, nor example of it can be found in the Sacred Writings. In establishing this position I shall, in opposition to the requirements of logic, assume the burden of proof and attempt to perform a work of supererogation. That is to say, I shall endeavor to prove a negative.

Baptism is a New Testament ordinance. This the Westminster Confession of Faith concedes. The New Testament, therefore, should settle every question relative to baptism. This is the universal opinion of Baptists. Pedobaptists, however, are not willing—as we shall see—to make an exclusive appeal to the New Testament in determining who are proper subjects of baptism. More of this in another place.

My object at present is to show that there is no authority in the New Testament for infant baptism. Let us see. “To the law and to the testimony.”

1. *The account given of John's baptism affords no justification of infant baptism.*

In the third chapter of Matthew it is thus written: “In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye; for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.....Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw

many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them : O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance : And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father : for I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham.”

From these verses we learn that John preached repentance—that those whom he baptized confessed their sins—and that descent from Abraham was not considered a qualification for baptism. There is nothing in the narrative that can suggest the idea of the baptism of impenitent adults or unconscious infants. And this is equally true of the account of the Harbinger’s ministry given by the other three evangelists.

Paul, in explaining John’s baptism, says, “John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him who should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.” *Acts*, xix. 4. Here it is plain that John required repentance and faith in the Messiah in those he baptized. There is not the remotest allusion to the baptism of any who either did not or could not repent and believe in Christ. Baptists, so far as the subjects of baptism are concerned, certainly copy the example of the first Baptist.

2. *The disciples of Christ baptized no infants during his ministry.*

The only reference we have to the baptisms administered by them before the Redeemer's death and resurrection is in John iii, 26, and iv, 1, 2. It might be inferred from the third chapter that Jesus himself baptized, but the first two verses of the fourth chapter explain the matter as follows: "When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples," &c.

Baptism was not administered by the Savior, but as his apostles acted under his authority, he is represented as doing what was done by his direction. The fact, however, which deserves special attention is that Jesus *made* and baptized more disciples than John. There is a distinction between *making* and *baptizing* disciples. First in order was the process of discipleship to Christ, and then baptism as a recognition of discipleship. Could infants be made disciples? Manifestly not. Then, according to this passage, they were not eligible to baptism; for the inference is irresistible that none were baptized who were not first made disciples.

The portions of Scripture quoted, taken together, may be considered fair exponents of the baptismal practice from the beginning of John's ministry to the death of Christ. I do not ask whether infant baptism is named; is it even indirectly alluded to? Let the candid reader answer.

3. *The oft-repeated verse, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me : for of such is the kingdom of heaven"—does not justify infant baptism.*

For what purpose were these children taken to Christ? That he should baptize them? Evidently not; for *he* did not baptize. Were they carried to him that his disciples might baptize them? If so, it is marvelous that the disciples rebuked those who had charge of them. The preceding verse shows why these children were taken to Christ. "Then were there brought unto him little children, that *he* should put his hands on them, and pray : and the disciples rebuked them." *Matt.* xix. 13. There was a specific object in view. It was not that the "little children" might be baptized, but that the Savior might put his hands on them and pray. Who has the right to infer that these children were baptized or that baptism was named in their presence? It is often argued that the phrase, "of such is the kingdom of heaven," indicates that those children were "members of the visible church." This does not follow. The Savior does not say that these children were of the kingdom of heaven; but he says, "*of such* is the kingdom of heaven." The idea of resemblance is clearly presented. Rev. A. Barnes, in his notes on the passage, says, "*Of such, as these—* that is, of persons with such tempers as these—is the church to be composed. He does not say *of*

*those infants*, but of such persons as *resembled* them, or were *like* them in temper, was the kingdom of heaven made up. It was proper, therefore, that he should pray for them." Mr. Barnes is good Presbyterian authority, and is highly celebrated as an expositor of Scripture. In Matthew xviii, 3, the Savior says, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Here we have again the idea of *resemblance* between little children and converted persons, but there is not a word concerning infant baptism. May I not say that the New Testament, from the birth of John the Baptist to the death of Christ, is as silent as the grave in reference to the baptism of infants? However, if Pedobaptists were to admit this, they would still insist, many of them at least, that there is authority for their practice bearing date subsequent to the Redeemer's death and resurrection. Let us see whether there is such authority.

4. *The commission given by the Savior to his apostles just before his ascension to heaven, furnishes no plea for infant baptism.*

The circumstances connected with the giving of this commission were replete with interest. The Savior had finished the work which he came down from heaven to accomplish. He had offered himself a sacrifice for sin. He had exhausted the cup of atoning sorrow. He had lain in the dark mansions of the grave. He had risen in triumph from the



dead, and was about to ascend to the right hand of the Majesty on high. Invested with perfect mediatorial authority, he said to his apostles: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

*Matthew*, xxviii, 18, 19, 20. Mark records the same commission thus: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." *Mark*, xvi, 15, 16. Luke represents the Savior as saying, "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." *Luke*, xxiv, 46, 47.

Surely the language of this commission is plain. Matthew informs us that teaching, or making disciples (for the verb *matheteuo* means make disciples) is to precede baptism—Mark establishes the priority of faith to baptism, and Luke connects repentance and remission of sins with the execution of the commission. No man can, in obedience to this commission, baptize an unbeliever or an infant. The unbeliever is not a penitent disciple, and it is obviously im-

possible for the infant to repent and believe the gospel.

I lay it down as a principle of common sense, which commends itself to every unprejudiced mind, that *a commission to do a thing or things authorizes only the doing of that thing or those things specified in it.* The doing of all other things is virtually prohibited. There is a maxim of law—*Expressio unius est exclusio alterius.*\* It must necessarily be so; for otherwise there could be no definiteness in contracts between men, and no precision in the enactments of legislative bodies, or in the decrees of courts of justice. This maxim might be illustrated in a thousand ways. Numerous Scriptural illustrations are at hand. I will mention a few: God commanded Noah to make an ark of *gopher-wood*. He assigns no reason why *gopher-wood* should be used. The command, however, is positive and it forbids the use of every other kind of wood. Abraham was commanded to offer his son Isaac for a burnt-offering. He was virtually forbidden to offer any other member of his family. Ay more, he could not offer an animal till the original order was revoked by him who gave it, and a second order was given, requiring the sacrifice of a ram in the place of Isaac. The institution of the passover furnishes a striking illustration, or rather a combination of illustrations. A lamb was to be

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\*The expression of one thing is the exclusion of another

killed—not a heifer—it was to be of the first year—not of the second or third—a male—not a female—without blemish—not with blemish—on the fourteenth day of the month—not on some other day—the blood was to be applied to the door-posts and lintels—not elsewhere, &c. The constitution of the State of Kentucky supplies many illustrations. I avail myself of but one. It is provided that Judges (appellate and circuit) shall be removed from office by the Governor “on the address of two-thirds of each house of the General Assembly,” and provision is also made for their removal by impeachment. These are the two methods of removal known to the constitution. I ask if all other methods of removal are not virtually prohibited? Let every man divest himself of prejudice and answer.

In application of the principle I have laid down, and of the law-maxim I have illustrated, I affirm that the commission of Christ to the apostles in requiring them to baptize disciples, believers, prohibits in effect the baptism of all others. It will not do to say we are not forbidden in so many words to baptize infants. The same may be said of unbelievers; ay, of horses, and cattle; and bells.

Rev. F. G. Hibbard, a Methodist minister “of the Genessee conference,” in his work on “Christian Baptism,” comments with some severity on an extract he makes from “Jewett on Baptism.” Jewett, in illustrating the view of the commission already

presented says, "If I commission my agent to purchase for me a lot of Webster's *large* dictionaries, does he not violate his instructions, if he also buy on my account a lot of the *abridgments*? But he says, 'You did not *forbid* the purchase of the abridgments.' Did not *forbid* the purchase! I answer, it was not necessary for me to insert in your commission a prohibition against purchasing other books. Your instructions were definite; and when I directed you to buy the *large* books, you must have known that you had no authority to buy *small* books; you have done it at your own risk."

Mr. Hibbard says, "All this shows just how far some authors look into a subject before they pronounce upon it. The analogy, however an unpracticed reader may be influenced by it, is an unfair and perfectly puerile statement of the case. For in the first place, Pedobaptists do not take their *authority* for baptizing infants from the mere *absence of a prohibition* of such a practice, as the pretended analogy teaches. We know not, indeed, how a Christian author could make such a representation of the opinions of his brethren. All we affirm touching this point is, that the total *absence* of a prohibition, in this particular commission, does not *prove* a universal prohibition; it proves nothing at all, either *pro* or *con*. And yet our author attempts to prove that the absence of an express prohibition, in this specific case, *does* directly prove a general prohibition. Fur-

thermore, the analogy is without any just force whatever, because, although a command to buy *large* books, is no authority for the purchase of *small* books; and a command to baptize *believers* is no authority for baptizing *infants*, yet as such commands contain no prohibition, there may exist circumstances, or there may, in another way, be instructions communicated, to authorize the purchase of the small books, alias the baptism of infants; and this may be such a perfect matter of understanding between the master and the 'agent,' as to render it wholly unnecessary to specify it. And this, we maintain, is the exact state of the case in relation to infant baptism." Pp. 235, 236.

Mr. Hibbard has been pronounced by a distinguished Baptist minister, "the Carson of his denomination on the subjects and mode of Baptism." This is high eulogy; for Baptists consider Carson's work on Baptism the ablest which the baptismal controversy has elicited. Far be it from me to disparage Mr. H.'s book. It displays more ability and scholarship than any Methodist work I have read. With a disposition, therefore, to do him perfect justice, I solicit the reader's attention to the concession made in the foregoing extract. A more comprehensive concession could not be expected from a Pedobaptist. It is conceded that "a command to baptize *believers* is no authority for baptizing *infants*." Very well. This

is the position Baptists have ever maintained. The commission of Christ to his apostles requires the baptism of believers: therefore it does not, Mr. H. being judge, authorize the baptism of infants. It may be more satisfactory to present the argument in syllogistic form. Here it is: A command to baptize believers is no authority for baptizing infants: The commission contains a command to baptize believers: therefore the commission is no authority for baptizing infants. If there is a flaw in this syllogism, or if it does Mr. H.'s concession the least injustice, I am not aware of it. I conclude, then, that Mr. H. will not hesitate to say, with Baptists, that the commission does not authorize infant baptism. Still he insists strenuously on the baptism of infants, and argues that there is authority for the practice, independent of the commission. This is strange indeed. For it is plain from the consolatory assurance subjoined to the commission, that the Lord Jesus intended that it should remain in full force to the end of the world. Here, then, was a commission given by Christ, which enjoined baptism upon believers to the close of time—a commission which, according to the general view of Pedobaptists, *originated Christian* baptism—a commission in which there is no reference to infants at all—and yet infants, as Mr. Hibbard teaches, are to be baptized! It is strange that his philosophical mind did not perceive that the perfect silence of the

commission, in regard to infants, furnishes, to say the least, strong *prima facie* evidence against the validity of their claim to baptism.

But, says Mr. H., referring to Mr. Jewett's illustration, "there may exist circumstances, or there may, in another way, be instructions communicated, to authorize the purchase of the small books, alias the baptism of infants; and this may be such a perfect matter of understanding between the master and the 'agent,' as to render it wholly unnecessary to specify it. And this, we maintain, is the exact state of the case in relation to infant baptism."

Mr. Jewett's commission to his agent to buy Webster's *large* dictionaries, is intended to represent Christ's commission to his apostles to baptize believers. Mr. H. says, "a command to buy *large* books, is no authority for the purchase of *small* books;" but he urges that authority to buy small books may be given in another way. The question, however, arises, Is it given? And Mr. J.'s illustration supplies a negative answer. For if the agent had authority to buy *small* dictionaries, it is inconceivable that the principal should call him to account for buying them, and require him to sustain whatever loss might accrue from the purchase. Thus it appears that while Mr. H. complains of the unfairness of Mr. J.'s analogy, he overlooks one of the most important points in the analogy. The agent, according to the illustration, could have had no au-

authority to buy small books, and yet Mr. H. will have it that the authority was so well understood between the principal and agent, that it was needless to specify small books in the commission of the principal to the agent! "And this, we maintain,—says he,—is the exact state of the case in relation to infant baptism." That is to say, the matter was so well understood between Christ and his apostles that they were to baptize infants; that it was "wholly unnecessary" for him in the commission to command them to do so! A private understanding, apart from the commission, was it? If Mr. H.'s view is correct, it is difficult to say why the commission was given at all. If the apostles understood that they were to baptize infants—and if that understanding superseded the necessity of the mention of infants in the commission—surely their understanding that they were to baptize believers, disciples, rendered it needless for believers, disciples, to be named. Moreover, the apostles had baptized the disciples Jesus made during his ministry—and they baptized no infants—to say the least, it has never been proved that they did—if, therefore, the Savior had intended that both believers and infants should be baptized, it is much more reasonable to suppose that he would have mentioned infants than believers. The apostles had witnessed many exemplifications of believers' baptism—of infant baptism they knew nothing—and it was specially necessary for the baptism of infants to



be enjoined in the commission, if the Savior considered them proper subjects of the baptismal rite. Why was not their baptism enjoined? Why? The only answer is, it was not the will of the author of the commission.

From this somewhat extended examination of the commission, I feel fully authorized to say that it furnishes no plea for infant baptism. I know it will be said—for it has been said a thousand times—that if infants are not to be baptized because they cannot believe, they cannot be saved because they cannot believe. If the salvation of infants depends on their faith they cannot be saved. They are incapable of faith. They are doubtless saved through the mediation of Jesus Christ, but it is not by faith. It seems to me that our opponents egregiously fail to accomplish their object in urging this objection to our views. They must intend to make us admit the propriety of infant baptism, or force us to a denial of infant salvation. But we make neither the admission nor the denial. As soon as we say that infants are not saved by faith, but without faith, their objection is demolished.

5. *There is no instance of infant baptism on the day of Pentecost.*

This fact is worthy of special consideration. The apostles were, on that memorable day, copiously imbued with the Holy Spirit—they were baptized in the

Spirit—they were endued with power from on high. All things whatsoever Jesus had said to them were brought to their remembrance. They were required for the first time to show their understanding of the commission of their ascended Lord. How did they understand it? How did they execute it? First, the gospel was preached. The people were pierced to the heart, and said, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” Then Peter said unto them, “Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” No one contends that the command, “Repent,” is applicable to infants, and it is certain that the injunction, “Be baptized,” has no reference to them; for it is as clear as the sun in heaven that the same persons are commanded to repent and be baptized. It is supposed by some, however, that the phrase, “The promise is unto you and your children,” refers to infants. The term children evidently means posterity, and the promise cannot be divested of its relation to the Holy Spirit. This promise was not only to the Jews and their posterity, but to Gentiles—“to all that are afar off!” This restriction is laid upon the promise—“even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” And whether the term “call”

is used in its general sense, as in Proverbs viii, 4, or in its special sense, as in 1 Cor. i, 24, it is in either case inapplicable to infants.

Did any obey Peter's command, "Be baptized?" It is written, "Then they that gladly received his word, were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." The baptism was limited to those who gladly received Peter's word, and as infants were obviously not of that number, to infer that they were baptized is utterly gratuitous. There is nothing in the Pentecostal administration of baptism which intimates that infants were considered proper subjects of the ordinance.

6. *There is nothing like infant baptism in the account given of Philip's labors in Samaria.*

The reader can examine for himself the eighth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. There it will be seen that Philip began to execute the commission of the Savior by *preaching*. He "preached Christ unto them." He doubtless remembered the words of the risen Redeemer, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," etc. The Samaritans "believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ"—and what then? "They were baptized both men and women."

Here was a practical exposition of the commission of Christ. Is there anything in this exposition

which can suggest the idea of infant dedication to God in baptism? Surely not. Philip's plan of operation was evidently uniform. Hence, when he fell in with the Ethiopian eunuch—as we learn from the latter part of the same chapter—he first “*preached unto him Jesus.*” The eunuch professed *faith* in the Messiah. Then Philip *baptized* him. As “*faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God,*” there must be preaching before faith, and there must be faith prior to baptism, because this is the order established by Christ, in the commission. Alas for those who invert this order!

7. *The household baptisms recorded in the New Testament do not sustain the practice of infant baptism.*

I will take them in their order. In the tenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, there is an account of Peter's visit to Cornelius. He preached, and the Spirit was poured out. His Gentile hearers spoke with tongues and magnified God. Then said Peter, “*Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.*” Here was a household baptism, but there are things said of the subjects of this baptism that could not be true of unconscious infants. One fact, however, settles the whole matter. In the second verse of the chapter it is said that Cornelius “*feared God with all his house.*” Can infants fear God?

The baptism of Lydia and her household is next in order. The reader will please read the narrative, Acts, xvi, 13, 14, 15. No one denies that Lydia was a believer. She was, therefore, a proper subject of baptism. But it is inferred that as her household was baptized, infants must have been baptized. This does not follow, for the very good reason that there are many households in which there are no infants. The probability is—and it amounts almost to a certainty—that Lydia had neither husband nor children. She was engaged in business—was “a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira”—which was about three hundred miles from Philippi. If she had had a husband and infant children, is it not reasonable to suppose that her husband would have taken on himself the business in which she was engaged, allowing her to remain at home with the infant children? She evidently had no husband with her; for it cannot be supposed that she violated conjugal propriety so far as to reduce her husband to a cipher, by saying “*my house*,” etc. Nor can we believe that the sacred historian would have spoken of the *house of Lydia*, in verse forty, if she had had a husband. The most reasonable inference is that her household consisted of persons in her employ—that they believed and were baptized as well as Lydia—and that they were the “*brethren*” whom Paul and Silas “comforted,” when released from prison, they “entered into the house of Lydia.”

I have said enough to invalidate Pedobaptist objections to the Baptist explanation of this narrative, and I am required to do nothing more. Pedobaptists affirm that Lydia had infant children. On them then devolves the burden of proof. They must prove that she had infant children. This they never have done—this they never can do. And hence the narrative furnishes no argument which can logically inure to their benefit.

The same chapter (Acts, xvi,) contains a record of the baptism of the jailer and his household. Here it is necessary to say but little; for every one can see that there were no infants in the jailer's family. Paul and Silas "spake unto him the word of the Lord, *and to all that were in his house.*" It is also said that the jailer "*rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.*" Surely the word of the Lord was not spoken to infants—surely infants are incapable of believing. It is worthy of notice that this record shows how Paul understood the commission of Christ. It is only necessary to refer to the household of Crispus (Acts, xviii, 8,) to show what has just been shown; namely, that a man's house may believe on the Lord as well as himself. It is not said in so many words that the house of Crispus was baptized, but it is said that he "*believed on the Lord with all his house.*"

In 1<sup>st</sup> Cor: i, 16, Paul says: "And I baptized also the household of Stephanas," etc. Will any one

infer that there were infants in this family? This inference cannot be drawn in view of what the same apostle says in the same epistle, (xvi, 15): "Ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints." Infants could not addict themselves to the ministry of the saints. It follows that there were no infants in the family of Stephanas. I am aware that, to invalidate this conclusion, a *chronological* argument has been used. It has been urged that although infants were baptized in the family of Stephanas, when Paul planted the church at Corinth, sufficient time elapsed between their baptism and the date of Paul's first epistle to the church, to justify the declaration—"they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints." This argument avails nothing in view of the fact that the most liberal chronology allows *only a few years* to have intervened between the planting of the church and the date of the epistle.

I have now referred to all the household baptisms mentioned in the New Testament, and there is no proof that there was an infant in any of them. On the other hand, facts and circumstances are related which render it a moral certainty that there were no infants in those baptized families. It will not do to say that *ordinarily* there are infants in households. It must be shown that it is *universally* the case. Then the household argument will avail Pedcbap-

tists—not till then. But it can never be predicated of all households that there are infants in them. Many a Baptist minister, in the United States, has baptized more households than are referred to in the New Testament—and no infants in them. It is said that *thirty* entire household baptisms have occurred in connection with American Baptist Missionary operations among the Karens. In view of facts like these, how sophistical appear the reasonings of Pedobaptists, in reference to the household baptisms of the New Testament.

8. *The allusions to baptism in the apostolical epistles forbid the supposition that infants were baptized.*

Paul refers to the “*baptized*” as “dead to sin”—as rising from the baptismal waters to “walk in newness of life”—as “putting on Christ”—as “risen with him through the faith of the operation of God”—as “baptized for the dead,” or in the belief of the resurrection—as making “a profession of faith”—a “profession before many witnesses,” etc. These phrases are utterly destitute of meaning if applied to unintelligent babes.

Peter defines baptism to be the “answer of a good conscience toward God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” This is a general definition. And it forbids the idea that baptism was, in apostolic times, administered to any except accountable agents. What conscience has an infant? There is no operation of conscience prior to accountability. Baptism,



then, in its administration to infants, cannot be what Peter says it is. This is, for Pedobaptists, an unfortunate fact—a fact significant of the unscripturality of their practice.

There is, in this connection, another thing worthy of consideration. Paul, in his epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, exhorts children to obey their parents, etc. It is generally supposed that about ten years intervened between the introduction of the gospel into Ephesus and Colosse, and the writing of those epistles. Now, if those children, or any of them, had been baptized when the gospel was introduced into those cities, is it not strange that the apostle, in urging obedience upon them, presented no motive derived from their “dedication to God in baptism?” There is no allusion to any “vows, promises, and obligations,” made and assumed for them by their parents or sponsors at their baptism. There is nothing said analogous to the personal acceptance of a draft drawn upon them in anticipation of their intelligence and responsibility. Here I present a query: Would a Pedobaptist apostle have pursued this course? To bring the matter nearer home: Would a Pedobaptist Missionary write a letter to a Pedobaptist church—making special mention of parents and children—urging both to a faithful performance of relative duties—and say nothing of the obligations of either parents or children, as connected with, or growing out of infant baptism?

I suppose no one has sufficient credulity to answer the question affirmatively. The apostle of the Gentiles, therefore, did what we cannot reasonably imagine a Pedobaptist missionary or minister to do! All whom it concerns may, if they please, consider this a *suggestive* fact.

9. *The language of 1 Cor. vii, 14,—“Else were your children unclean, but now are they holy”—has no reference to infant baptism.*

This passage is often quoted with an air of triumph, as if it conclusively settled the question. There is not the remotest allusion to baptism. What are the facts in the case? Simply these: The question was agitated at Corinth, whether believing husbands and wives should not separate themselves from their unbelieving partners? The idea was entertained by some, at least, that an unbeliever was “unclean” to a believer, even as a Gentile was, under the Mosaic dispensation, “unclean” to a Jew. Paul corrects this false impression, by showing that “the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband.” Without entering into a critical examination of the term “sanctified,” I avail myself of the fact that the sanctification was such as to justify the continuance of the marriage relation between the believing and the unbelieving partner. “Else”—that is, if the sanctification did not remove the supposed uncleanness from unbelieving parents—“were

your children unclean; but now are they holy." The passage is intensely strong against infant baptism. It shows that the children of the members of the Corinthian church, sustained the same relation to the church that unbelieving husbands and wives did, and that if believing husbands and wives abandoned their unbelieving partners, believing parents might, with the same propriety, separate themselves from their children. Perhaps a distinguished Pedobaptist's exposition of the passage may be more satisfactory than mine. Mr. Barnes says: "There is not one word about baptism here; not one allusion to it; nor does the argument, in the remotest degree, bear upon it. The question was not whether children should be baptized, but it was whether there should be a separation between man and wife, where the one was a Christian and the other not. Paul states, that *if* such a separation should take place, it would *imply* that the marriage was improper; and, *of course*, the children must be regarded as unclean."

Thus it appears that this passage, so often made the basis of sophistical arguments, affords no support to the cause of infant baptism.

I have now noticed the prominent New Testament arguments for infant baptism. Is there precept or example to justify it? Celebrated Pedobaptists shall answer this question. Dr. Wall, in his "History of Infant Baptism," on the very first page of

his "Preface," says, that "among all the persons that are recorded as baptized by the apostles, there is no express mention of any infant." Neander, undoubtedly the first church historian of his age, referring to "the latter part of the apostolic age," expresses himself thus: "As baptism was closely united with a conscious entrance on christian communion, faith and baptism were always connected with one another; and thus it is in the highest degree probable that baptism was performed only in instances where both could meet together, and that the practice of infant baptism was unknown at this period. We cannot infer the existence of infant baptism from the instance of the baptism of whole families, for the passage in 1 Cor. xvi, 15, shows the fallacy of such a conclusion, as from that it appears that the whole family of Stephanas, who were baptized by Paul, consisted of adults." *Planting and Training of the Church*, pp. 101, 102. Professor Stuart, in his *Essay on Baptism*, in the reference he makes to infant baptism, says: "Commands, or plain and certain examples, in the New Testament, relative to it, I do not find. Nor with my views of it, do I need them." P. 101. Dr. Woods, long a colleague of Professor Stuart, in the Andover Seminary, in his "Lectures on Infant Baptism," remarks as follows: "It is a plain case that there is no express precept respecting infant baptism in our Sacred Writ-

ings. The proof, then, that infant baptism is a divine institution, must be made out in another way." P. 11.

These are important concessions, made by men whose celebrity is co-extensive with Christendom. Now if the New Testament does not sustain infant baptism, ought it not to be given up? If, as the Westminster Confession affirms, "Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ," it is self-evident we ought to go to the New Testament to learn who are proper subjects of baptism. If it was ordained by Jesus Christ, we should allow him to decide who are to be baptized, and not refer the matter to either Abraham or Moses. But Pedobaptists, unable to prove infant baptism from the New, go to the Old Testament, and try to sustain it by reasoning, analogy, inference. Was there ever such a course adopted before to establish a divine ordinance? Ask a Jew why his ancestors, for so many centuries, observed the feasts of the Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles? and he will tell you that God commanded them to do so. Ask a Christian why believers should be baptized and partake of the Lord's supper? and his response will be, these are injunctions of Jesus Christ. Ask a Pedobaptist, however, why infants ought to be baptized? and he will at once plunge into the mazes of Judaism, and argue the identity of the old "Jewish Church," and

the Gospel Church, insisting, in the meantime, most strenuously on the substitution of baptism for circumcision. This is a strange method of proving that infants ought to be baptized. It argues a consciousness of the utter absence of New Testament authority for infant baptism. It indicates that there is no command to baptize infants; for a command would supersede the necessity of *argument* to show the propriety of the practice. No man enters into an argument to prove that believers ought to be baptized. The positive injunction of Christ renders it superfluous.

Pedobaptists assume the identity of what they call the "Jewish Church," with the Christian Church, and on this ground insist on infant membership. I shall allow some of their distinguished men to speak for themselves. Mr. Hibbard says: "Our next proper position relates to the substantial oneness, or identity, of the Jewish and Christian Churches. I say *substantial* oneness, because, although in many secondary and adventitious points they differ, still, in all the essential features of the real church of God, they are one and the same. And here it is proper to admonish the reader of the importance of this position. It is upon this ground that we rest the weight of the Bible argument for infant baptism." Christian Baptism, pp. 31, 32. This language is plain and easily understood, though any one familiar with the

baptismal controversy, will detect in the phrase "*substantial oneness*," an unwillingness to indorse the "identity" theory without qualification.

Dr. Miller, for many years a professor in the Princeton Seminary, New Jersey, says: "As the infant seed of the people of God are acknowledged on all hands to have been members of the church, equally with their parents, under the Old Testament dispensation, *so it is equally certain that the church of God is the same in substance now that it was then.*" The *italics* are the Doctor's. Here also is a disposition to recoil from a bold avowal of the doctrine of identity. "*The same in substance*"—is the felicitous phrase selected to meet the logical exigencies that might possibly occur. Again Dr. M. remarks, "It is not more certain that a man, arrived at mature age, is the same individual that he was when an infant on his mother's lap, than it is that the church, in the plenitude of her light and privileges, after the coming of Christ, is the same church which, many centuries before, though with a much smaller amount of light and privilege, yet, as we are expressly told in the New Testament, (Acts, vii, 38), enjoyed the presence and guidance of her divine Head in the wilderness." Sermons on Baptism, pp. 18, 19.

Dr. Rice, in his Lexington Debate, says, "*The church, then, is the same under the Jewish and Christian dispensations—the same into which God did, by*

*positive law, put believers and their children.*" P. 285.

Dr. R., it will be seen, is bolder than Mr. Hibbard or Dr. Miller. He says nothing about "substantial oneness"—"the same in substance," etc., but with characteristic fearlessness announces his position, and to attract special attention, *italicizes* the words in which he expresses it.

I think I have now fairly stated the Pedobaptist view of the identity of the Jewish theocracy, and the church of Christ. Can this view be sustained? It is, as I believe, impossible to sustain it. I shall aim to show that the position is utterly untenable. First, however, let me define the term *church*. It means a congregation, an assembly. The Greeks used the term *ekklesia*, to signify an assembly without any regard to the purposes for which the assembly met. Hence the tumultuous concourse of the citizens of Ephesus referred to, Acts, xix, 32, and 41, is called in the Greek Testament *ekklesia*, and the term is translated *assembly*. The word, therefore, while it denotes an assembly, does not, in its general signification, denote the *kind* of assembly. This being the case, the Jewish nation or congregation might with propriety be called *ekklesia* or church. In the New Testament, however, the term *ekklesia*, (generally translated church), in its application to the followers of Christ, refers either to a



particular congregation of saints, or to the redeemed in the aggregate. The sacred writers speak of the *churches* of Asia, the *churches* of Judea, the *churches* of Macedonia, the *churches* of Galatia, etc., and these churches were evidently composed of persons who made credible profession of faith in Christ. In apostolic times, the members of a particular congregation were called "saints," "believers," "disciples," etc. They were separate from the world—a spiritual people. Baptists say that in this sense of the term Church, there was no church before the gospel dispensation. There were, doubtless, many pious persons from the days of Abel to the coming of Christ, but there was not a body of true saints separate from the world. The Jewish nation was separated from other nations, but it was not a nation of saints. It was a kind of politico-religious body, and circumcision was a mark of nationality. The righteous and the wicked belonged to this body, and were entitled to its privileges. But there was no spiritual organization composed of regenerate persons, called out, separated from the Jews as a people, till John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea. I have been thus particular in defining the term church, that there may be no misapprehension as to its meaning.

I now proceed to show that the Jewish theocracy and the Christian Church cannot be identical.

1. *Because when the Jewish organization had been*

*in existence for centuries, the prophets predicted the establishment of a new kingdom.*

In Isaiah ii, 2, it is written, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it." There is manifest reference here to the kingdom of Christ. It is not intimated that this kingdom had been established, but it was to be established. The phrase, "Last days," means what it signifies when Paul says "God has in these *last days* spoken to us by his Son." It designates the period of the gospel dispensation. The prophecy of Daniel, ii, 44, deserves special consideration. Having referred in the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream to the Babylonian, the Medo-Persian, the Grecian and the Roman empires, he says: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." This kingdom was to be set up several centuries after Daniel prophesied. The phrase, "Set up," must indicate the establishment of a new kingdom. There is no intimation that the old Jewish kingdom was to be reorganized. This new kingdom was to stand forever. It was not to fall like the secular empires, symbolized by the gold, silver, brass and iron of

Nebuchadnezzar's image, but it was to be a permanent kingdom—maintaining an uninterrupted existence amid the lapse of ages and the revolutions of time. Who does not see that this kingdom must be identical with the church of Christ, of which he said: "The gates of Hell shall not prevail against it." The kingdom, the church, is to *stand*. Why? Because the machinations of Satan cannot overthrow it. John the Baptist referred, in his preaching, to the *new* kingdom. His voice was heard in the wilderness of Judea, saying, "Repent ye; for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Was it the old Jewish kingdom that was at hand? Obviously it was not. Jesus Christ, in the very beginning of his ministry, announced the same kingdom as *at hand*. He said, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel." The time to which the prophets—Daniel especially—referred, was fulfilled. The new kingdom was at hand. Hence the command was, "Repent ye, and believe the gospel." Such preaching had never been heard before. The injunction, "repent," was new; and the argument enforcing it was new. There was something so novel and so distinctive in the preaching of Christ and his harbinger, as to indicate the introduction of a new era. That the preaching of John was the beginning of a new era, is manifest from the Savior's language: "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the

kingdom of God is preached, and every man preseth into it." In view of the considerations now presented, I ask, how can the Jewish theocracy and the Gospel Church be one and the same? If the Jewish kingdom and the kingdom of Christ are identical, how is it that when the former had been in existence for centuries, the organization of the latter was foretold by the prophets? Can the identity of the two be established? Surely not. And yet, upon this identity, Mr. Hibbard says, "we rest the weight of the Bible argument for infant baptism." It rests, then, on a foundation of sand. Mr. H. is in a dilemma. He may choose either horn of this dilemma, and it will gore him unmercifully. If such a foundation can sustain the argument for infant baptism, there is no *weight* in the argument: but if the weight of the argument crushes the foundation, there is no *solidity* in the foundation.

2. *Another fact fatal to the identity contended for is, that those who were regular members of the old Jewish Church, could not become members of the Gospel Church without repentance, faith, regeneration and baptism.*

The plainness of this proposition renders it needless to dwell upon it at any great length. A few considerations will sufficiently develop its truth. The inhabitants of Judea were, of course, members of the "Jewish Church." I would prefer the phrase, "Jewish theocracy" or "Jewish Commonwealth"—

but through courtesy I will say, "Jewish Church." The Jews in Jerusalem, and in the land of Judea were members of this church. John the Baptist called on these church members to repent and do works meet for repentance, and believe on the coming Messiah as preparatory to baptism. The Pharisees and Sadducees, two prominent sects among the Jews, were church members. John spoke of them as a "generation of vipers." The Pharisees had no adequate conception of the necessity of a proper state of heart, and the Sadducees were semi-infidels. They were no doubt recognized as worthy members of the Jewish Church, but they were utterly unfit for the Church of Christ. John let them know that their relationship to Abraham was no qualification for a place in the kingdom of heaven. Nicodemus was a Pharisee, and an *official* member of this Jewish Church, and yet was ignorant of the doctrine of regeneration. Being "born again" was a mystery to him. He was an unregenerate man. The Savior said to him, "Marvel not that I said *unto thee*, ye must be born again." Nor did Jesus regard any of the Jews as qualified for baptism till they became his disciples. Hence it is said that he "*made* and baptized more disciples than John." The Scribes, lawyers and doctors of the Jewish Church, the great Teacher denounced as hypocrites; "for," says he, "ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye

them that are entering, to go in." This passage proves two things: That the kingdom of heaven was then in existence, and that it was not identical with the Jewish kingdom. If it had not been in existence it could not have been shut up. If it was identical with the Jewish kingdom, the Scribes were already in it. But they were not in it; for the Savior says, "ye neither go in yourselves," etc. If, then, they were in the Jewish kingdom, and were not in the kingdom of heaven, the two kingdoms cannot be the same. It is almost an insult to my readers to argue a point so plain; but I must meet and refute what Pedobaptists call arguments.

3. *It deserves special notice that the covenant of the Jewish Church and the covenant of the Gospel Church are different.*

The truth of this proposition Pedobaptists deny. They assume that the "covenant of grace," or "gospel covenant," was made with Abraham, and that the "covenant of circumcision" was so identified with it that circumcision became the seal of the "covenant of grace." On this subject, Dr. Summers, a distinguished Methodist divine, may speak for the various denominations of Pedobaptists. In his late work on Baptism he says that "infants are specifically embraced in the gospel covenant. When that covenant was made with Abraham, his children were brought under its provisions, and the same seal that was administered to him was administered also

to them—including both those that were born in his house, and those that were bought with his money. They were all alike circumcised in token of their common interest in that covenant, of which circumcision was the appointed symbol. That covenant is still in force." Page 23.

Here it is assumed that the gospel covenant was *made* with Abraham—that circumcision was its seal, etc. Pedobaptists have a decided preference for the singular number. They will not say *covenants*—it is *covenant* in conversation, in books, and in sermons. Paul speaks of "*covenants*"—"covenants of promise"—"the two *covenants*," etc. How the "covenant of circumcision" can be identified with the "covenant of grace," or "gospel covenant," defies comprehension. What Dr. Summers calls the gospel covenant was not *made* with Abraham. He quotes Paul, but Paul does not say so. The language of the apostle is, "The covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, (that is in reference to the Messiah,) the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul that it should make the promise of none effect." This covenant was *confirmed* to Abraham, not *made* with him. It was made before. It must have had an existence, or it could not have been confirmed. The confirmation of anything implies its previous existence.

I shall not attempt to penetrate the counsels of eternity to ascertain the particulars of the origin of

the covenant of grace. It is sufficient for my present purpose to say that it is doubtless the result of the sublime consultation of the three persons of the Godhead in reference to the prospective condemnation and ruin of the race of Adam. The first intimation of the existence of this covenant was given in the memorable words, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." This incipient development of God's kindness to man no doubt cheered Abel, Enoch, and all the pious who lived in the world's infancy. The nature of the covenant recognized when mercy's faint whisperings were first heard, was more fully developed when that covenant was *confirmed* to Abraham in the remarkable words, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Irrespectively of the provisions of this covenant there never has been, and there never will be salvation for Jew or Gentile. There is no salvation except in the Messiah, and Paul informs us that he is referred to as the "seed" of Abraham. "He saith not, and to seeds as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ." The covenant with respect to the Messiah was *confirmed* to Abraham when he was seventy-five years old, (Genesis, xii,) and the covenant of circumcision was *made* with him when he had reached his ninety-ninth year, (Genesis, xvii).

Twenty-four years intervened between the two



transactions, and yet Pedobaptists insist there was but one covenant! One covenant was *confirmed* to Abraham, and one *made* with him, and there was but one. That is, in Pedobaptist arithmetic, one and one do not make *two*, but *one*!

Now if, according to Dr. Summers, the gospel covenant was made with Abraham, and if circumcision was the seal of that covenant, then it had no seal for twenty-four years after it was made. Moreover, if the gospel covenant or covenant of grace was *made* with Abraham, by the provisions of what covenant were Abel, Enoch and others saved who lived before the days of Abraham? This question I submit to all the Pedobaptist doctors of divinity in Christendom. If they will only consider it they will see how absurd it is to say that the gospel covenant or covenant of grace was *made* with Abraham. If, as Dr. Summers affirms, circumcision was the seal of this covenant, what became of females? Was there no securing of the blessings of the covenant to them? or were they left to the "uncovenanted mercies" of God? The truth is, the sacred writers never refer to circumcision or baptism as a "seal" of a covenant. Circumcision is called a "token of the covenant" God made with Abraham, and a "seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised." It was never a seal of the righteousness of the faith of any other man. Under the gospel dispensation baptism is not a seal,

and Pedobaptists know not whereof they affirm when they so represent it. Believers are "sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." But, for argument's sake, let baptism be considered a seal—a seal of the same covenant which, it is said, was formerly sealed by circumcision. Then the perplexing question arises, Why apply the seal of baptism to both sexes, when the seal of circumcision was applied to but one? Circumcision, it is argued, was a type of baptism. This is a burlesque on logic. The type had reference to males alone. Therefore the anti-type has reference to both males and females! Such reasoning makes sad havoc of common sense. There is another absurdity in making baptism the anti-type of circumcision. Baptism is referred to by Peter as a "figure." If, then, circumcision was a type of it, it was a type of a type, or a figure of a figure, which is preposterous.

But to be more specific with regard to the covenants: The covenant of circumcision made with Abraham received its full development in the covenant of Mount Sinai. There was, if the expression is allowable, a new edition of the covenant. The Sinaic regulations were made in pursuance of the provisions of the covenant made with Abraham, and on this account circumcision, the "token of the covenant," was incorporated into those regulations, and became a rite of the Mosaic economy. Hence Jesus said to the Jews, "If a man on the Sabbath day

receive circumcision, *that the law of Moses should not be broken*; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the Sabbath day?" This language shows that the covenant of circumcision was so identified with the Sinaic covenant that the failure to circumcise a man was a violation of the law of Moses. The old Jewish Church, therefore, grew out of the covenant of circumcision, which was the germ of the Sinaic covenant that God made with the Israelites when he "took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt." This covenant, entered into at Mount Sinai, was to continue in force, and did continue in force, till superseded by another and a better covenant. It preserved the nationality of the Jews, while circumcision marked that nationality, and indicated a *natural* relationship to Abraham. This celebrated patriarch was to have a numerous *natural* seed, to which reference is made in the covenant of circumcision—and by virtue of the provisions of the covenant *confirmed* to him in reference to the Messiah, he was to have a *spiritual* seed also. He was to be the father of the faithful. Hence Paul says, "They who are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed." "That he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised," etc. The process of *spiritual filiation* to Abraham is effected by faith. Jews, therefore, his natural seed, cannot become his spiritual

seed without faith. But if faith creates the *spiritual* relationship to Abraham, Gentiles may become his spiritual seed as well as Jews, for they are equally capable of faith. And for the encouragement of Gentiles who were uncircumcised, Paul refers to the fact that Abraham was justified by faith *before* he was circumcised.

I have referred to the perfect development of the Abrahamic covenant of circumcision in the Sinaic covenant. I may now refer to the full development of the covenant respecting the Messiah in the new covenant, out of which has grown the Gospel Church. This is termed the *new* covenant in contradistinction from the Sinaic covenant. The development of its provisions was to occur many centuries subsequent to the giving of the law, although those provisions had an embryo existence in the covenant confirmed to Abraham concerning Christ. Jeremiah, in the thirty-first chapter of his prophecy, refers to the two covenants—the old and the new—and Paul, in the eighth chapter of Hebrews, quotes Jeremiah as follows: “Behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the

house of Israel, after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." This is the "*new covenant*"—the "*better covenant which was established upon better promises*"—the covenant which is pre-eminently spiritual—and of which Jesus is the Mediator. The mediatorship of the Messiah, in connection with this covenant, shows that the gospel covenant grows out of the covenant "*confirmed of God*" to Abraham concerning Christ.

How essentially different the old covenant and the new! And yet Pedobaptists insist that the old Jewish Church and the Christian Church are the same! "*God found fault with the old covenant,*" and superseded it by the new one; and yet, it seems, that the new, which supersedes the old, is substantially identical with it! It is strange that men do not observe that God, in describing the new covenant, says expressly—"*NOT ACCORDING TO THE COVENANT THAT I MADE WITH THEIR FATHERS*"—the old covenant. I suppose it will be said that the Sinaic covenant has "*vanished away,*" but that the covenant with Abraham, of which circumcision was a token, is still in

force. Perhaps I ought to leave it for others to say that I have shown that the covenant of circumcision was *merged* in the covenant of Sinai. This being the case, it must have passed away with it.

Several distinctive points of difference between the old covenant and the new may be seen in Galatians iv, 22-31. Mr. Barnes thinks this portion of Scripture rather difficult of exposition. It does no doubt present serious difficulties to the mind of a Pedobaptist expositor. The wonder is that the man who has anything like a correct understanding of it, can be a Pedobaptist. There are four allegorical personages referred to by the apostle—namely, Hagar, Ishmael, Sarah and Isaac. Hagar was a “bondmaid,” and gave birth to a son “after the flesh”—that is, there was in his birth no departure from the principles of ordinary generation. This “bondwoman” represents the Sinaic covenant, and “answereth to Jerusalem, which now is”—the old Jewish Church. Mount Sinai, represented by Hagar, “gendereth to bondage.” Hence “Jerusalem”—the old Jewish Church—is said to be “in bondage with her children.” To “gender to bondage” was all that Sinai could do. There was no provision in the Sinaic covenant for anything more. Sarah, the free woman, represents the new covenant, and the Gospel Church, of which that covenant is the charter. She gave birth to Isaac, who was born “by promise”—“after the Spirit”—that is, according to a promise, the fulfill-

ment of which involved a supernatural agency. "Jerusalem, which is above"—the Christian Church, represented by Sarah, "is free, which is the mother of us all"—of all Christians. Believers in Christ are "the children of promise, as Isaac was." They are born "after the Spirit," and "of the Spirit." And thus it is as clear as the sun in his noontide glory, that while the old Jewish Church was supplied with its members by *generation*, the Church of Christ is furnished with its members by *regeneration*. This is one prominent difference between the two, and it is great as that between light and darkness, or immortality and death. "But as then," says the apostle, "he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now." Ishmael persecuted Isaac, and so the children of the Sinaic covenant, Abraham's seed according to the flesh, persecuted, in apostolic times, the beneficiaries of the new covenant, Abraham's spiritual seed. Sinai, in "gendering to bondage," also "gendered" a persecuting spirit. And it is worthy of remark, that a large infusion of Judaism into the sentiments of a religious denomination, will make it a persecuting denomination. This fact is both significant and suggestive. Nevertheless, what saith the Scripture? "Cast out the bondwoman and her son; for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free."

Here is authority for keeping all except regenerate persons out of the church of Christ. "Cast out the bondwoman and her son." The Jews, considered as Abraham's natural seed, had no right to the blessings and privileges of the church of Christ. They had first to become Christ's; then they were Abraham's seed in the most important sense. Paul never forgot one of the fundamental principles of the gospel economy, announced by John the Baptist when he said to the Pharisees and Sadducees, "Think not to say within yourselves we have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." They were, under the new dispensation, to claim nothing on the ground of their lineal descent from Abraham. Religion was to be an intensely personal concern. Daniel Webster once said, "The bed of death brings every human being to his pure individuality." This is true, but Christianity does the same thing before it is done by "the bed of death." The gospel places every one on the basis of his "pure individuality" before God. But enough on this point. I have examined at some length the "covenants," about which so much is said in the baptismal controversy. I think I have shown that the covenant of the Jewish church and the covenant of the gospel church are essentially different, and that the "substantial identity" of the two churches, as contended for by Pedobaptists, cannot be maintained.



4. *The supposed identity of the Jewish Church and the Christian Church involves absurdities and impossibilities.*

According to this view the Scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, and all the Jews, were members of the church, and yet it is notorious that they procured the crucifixion of the Head of the church. These church members, many of them occupying "official positions," evinced the most rancorous enmity to Jesus Christ, and said, "We will not have this man to reign over us." They charged him with being in league with Beelzebub in the expulsion of demons. And when he was condemned to death they said, "His blood be upon us and our children." Strange language for church members to employ! Who can believe they were members of a church "the same in substance" with the Christian Church? This view of the matter evidently involves an absurdity. Nor is this all. If the Pedobaptist position is tenable the three thousand converts on the day of Pentecost were added to the church, though they were in it before! The Lord added daily to the church not only the saved, but those already members! When a great company of priests became obedient to the faith, they joined themselves to the apostles, and were put out of the synagogues, though the Jews putting them out were of the same church! Saul of Tarsus "persecuted the church and wasted it"—"made havoc" of it—and when converted

became a member of the church, though he had always been one! Ay, more, he obtained his *authority to persecute* from official members of the church! These and many other absurdities and impossibilities are involved in the supposition that the Jewish Church and the Christian Church are the same. They are not the same. The phrases, "same in substance," "substantially identical," etc., cannot avail Pedobaptists; for there is no sort of identity. A "substantial sameness" cannot be discovered with a theological microscope. Paul's teaching is that Jesus Christ makes "of twain one *new* man." That is, regenerated Jews and Gentiles are the materials of which the *new* man or church is composed. There is reference to an organization, and the descriptive epithet "*new*" is applied to it. Pedobaptists virtually say that the Lord Jesus did not make a "new man." They advocate the claims of the "old man," admitting, however, that he is changed in some immaterial respects, so that his "substantial identity" remains unimpaired.

What effect would have been produced on the minds of the unbelieving Jews in apostolic times if it had been intimated that their church was identical with the Gospel church? They would have been highly insulted. And Paul exemplified the most indignant eloquence whenever false teachers attempted to contaminate the purity of the Christian Church with the leaven of Judaism. The old Jew-

ish Church and the Christian Church were then regarded by believers and unbelievers as essentially distinct. No one thought of their "substantial identity;" for infant baptism was unknown, and there was nothing to suggest the "identity" doctrine. The truth is, it is as easy for a camel to go through the eye of a needle as for the identity of the Jewish Church and the Christian Church to be maintained. And if there is no identity, infant membership in the Jewish commonwealth is no authority for infant membership in the gospel church; and it is perfectly gratuitous to insist that baptism has come in the place of circumcision. Still the advocates of infant baptism argue that circumcision is superseded by baptism, and that as infants were circumcised under the old, they should be baptized under the new dispensation. Hence Dr. Miller says, "Our next step is to show *that baptism has come in the room of circumcision*, and, therefore, that the former is rightfully and properly applied to the same subjects as the latter." Again: "There is the best foundation for asserting, that baptism has come in the place of circumcision.....Yet, though baptism manifestly comes in the place of circumcision, there are points in regard to which the former differs materially from the latter." Sermons on Baptism, pp. 22, 23. Here the doctrine is stated unequivocally that baptism comes in the place of circumcision. How it takes its place, and yet "differs materially from it" on some

“points,” must ever be a mystery to all men who have not a large share of Jesuitical penetration.

Dr. Rice says: “It is certain that baptism came in place of circumcision—that it answers the same ends in the church now, that were answered by circumcision under the former dispensation.” Lexington Debate, p. 302.

Dr. Summers affirms, “that baptism is the ordinance of initiation into the church, and the sign and seal of the covenant now, as circumcision was formerly, is evident.” Summers on Baptism, pp. 25, 26.

I have now presented strong Presbyterian and Methodist authority, and in the face of it I fearlessly deny that baptism has come in the place of circumcision. The argument for infant baptism derived from the supposed substitution referred to is, in view of the following considerations, altogether inconclusive.

1. *It was necessary for the circumcised to be baptized before they could become members of the Church of Christ.*

How was this, if baptism came in the place of circumcision, and is a seal of the same covenant? Was the covenant first sealed by circumcision, and subsequently sealed by baptism? Were there two seals? If so, away goes the substitution theory. If the same persons were circumcised and baptized, there was, so far as they were concerned, no substitution of baptism for circumcision. In their case circum-

cision was not abolished, and nothing could take its place. It occupied its own place, and that place had to be *vacated* before anything else could occupy it. Dr. Miller speaks of baptism as coming "*in the room*" of circumcision; but there was no "*room*" till the non-observance of circumcision made "*room*." Why, then, were those who had been circumcised baptized? Why was Jesus himself both circumcised and baptized? These are unanswerable questions, if, as Pedobaptists insist, baptism came in the place of circumcision. Dr. Miller's views involve another difficulty. He says, p. 74, "The children of professing Christians are already in the church. They were born members. Their baptism did not make them members. It was a public ratification and recognition of their membership. They were baptized because they were members."

It is easy to see that these are sophistical assumptions. One fact scatters them to the four winds of heaven. That fact is that the New Testament subjects of baptism are never represented as baptized, because they are in the church, but that they may enter into it. Dr. M.'s reason for administering baptism labors under the misfortune of being remarkably unscriptural. By the way, if the infants of professing Christians are in the church by virtue of their birth, this is a very good reason for not baptizing them at all.

Any one who is skilled in the baptismal contro-

versy can see that Dr. M.'s *Abrahamic* and *Judaistic* notions vitiate his logic in its application to evangelical subjects. He reasoned in this way: The natural seed of Abraham were members of the Jewish national Church by virtue of their birth. And so far his reasoning was correct. They were circumcised because they were by natural generation made beneficiaries of the covenant of which circumcision was the "token." Genesis xvii, 11. Dr. M.'s next step was this: The children of professing Christians are born members of the Christian Church, and are entitled to baptism, even as Abraham's natural seed were entitled to circumcision. But is this true? It is not. Whatever rational analogy may be traced between circumcision and baptism must inure to the opponents of infant baptism. How plain this is! Abraham's natural seed were circumcised because they had a birthright interest in the covenant God made with Abraham. Christians are Abraham's *spiritual* seed. They become so by faith in Christ, and are beneficiaries of the new covenant, the provisions of which are eminently spiritual. There is a recognition of their interest in the blessings of this covenant in baptism. It was proper to circumcise Abraham's natural seed—it is proper to baptize his spiritual seed. But who are his spiritual seed? Believers in Christ, and believers alone. Infants, therefore, have no right to baptism, because they are not Abraham's spiritual seed. Jewish infants were fit subjects for

circumcision, because they were Abraham's *natural* seed; but neither Jewish nor Gentile infants can be his *spiritual* seed—because of their incapacity to exercise faith—and therefore they ought not to be baptized. I insist, then, that correct analogical reasoning from circumcision to baptism, saps the very foundation of Pedobaptism, and furnishes Baptists with an argument, of the strength of which they have never fully availed themselves. This may be considered a digression. If so I return to the subject of which I was treating. I was aiming to show that baptism did not come in the place of circumcision, and referred to the well known fact that multitudes of circumcised persons were also baptized. This, it seems to me, could never have taken place if baptism came in the room of circumcision. The circumcision of Timothy is, in this connection, worthy of notice. His mother was a Jewess, and his father a Greek. Owing to the latter fact, doubtless, he remained uncircumcised. After his conversion and baptism, Timothy was circumcised by Paul. This was done to conciliate the Jews—which shows that they considered circumcision a mark of nationality. Now, the question arises, Why did Paul circumcise Timothy, who had been baptized, if baptism came in the place of circumcision? Thus, in the New Testament, we have baptism administered after circumcision, and circumcision performed after baptism, and

yet Pedobaptists say that the one came in the place of the other.

2. *A second fact worthy of notice is that circumcision was confined to one sex.*

Premises and conclusions are often the poles asunder. Of this we have a striking illustration in the reasoning of Pedobaptists from the circumcision of children under the old dispensation to the baptism of children under the new. The fact they begin with is of course this: Male children were circumcised under the Old Testament economy. The deduction is, Therefore male and female children ought to be baptized under the gospel economy! Is this logic? If but one sex is recognized in the premise, how is it that there is a recognition of both sexes in the conclusion? There must be something wrong in the reasoning, which brings out more in the conclusions than is contained in the premises. This is the infelicity of the Pedobaptists' argument in reference to the matter now under consideration. They most gratuitously infer, that as children of one sex were formerly circumcised, therefore children of both sexes should now be baptized. I maintain that if baptism came in the place of circumcision, it ought to be administered exclusively to males. But it is by divine authority administered to females; therefore it did not come in the place of circumcision. Pedobaptists must admit that, so far as females are



concerned, baptism did not come in the place of circumcision; for circumcision occupied no *place*, and therefore could not be *displaced* by anything else. This, however, is so plain as to need no elaboration.

3. *The eighth day was appointed for the circumcision of infants.*

Is this true of infant baptism? The thing itself is not commanded, to say nothing of the time. But I meet Pedobaptists on their own ground. They say baptism has come "in the room of circumcision." If they believe this, consistency requires that they baptize male children alone, and that they be baptized on the eighth day. Do they pursue this course? They do not, and their failure to do so might, by the censorious, be construed into a want of confidence in the correctness of their sentiments.

4. *Jewish servants of any age were circumcised by virtue of their relation to their masters.*

Abraham circumcised his servants as well as his children. The Jews, no doubt, copied his example. The relation servants sustained to their masters, entitled them to circumcision, and made it incumbent on the masters to perform the rite. Now, if baptism has come in the place of circumcision, all Pedobaptist masters are under obligation to baptize their male servants, without regard to age. Those born in their houses ought, of course, to be baptized on the eighth day, and those "bought with their money," ought to be baptized if they are eighty

years old. When Pedobaptists adopt this practice, Baptists, it is true, will smile at their *credulity*, but respect their *sincerity*. Who believes that servants of any age are entitled to baptism in consequence of the relation they sustain to their masters? Some few may probably be found who believe it, and they—*they alone*—believe that baptism came in the place of circumcision. I have intimated that masters ought to baptize their own servants. On Pedobaptist principles, they ought to baptize their servants and children too. Jewish fathers and masters circumcised their children and servants. There were no persons corresponding to modern “baptizers,” called on to perform the ceremony. Every father and master had the right to officiate, and it is well-known that in one instance, (Exodus, iv, 25,) the mother “cut off the foreskin of her son.” If baptism has taken the place of circumcision, it occupies its place; and fathers and masters, mothers and mistresses have an undoubted right, and it is their imperative duty, to baptize their male children and servants. Who, in view of this fact, can believe that baptism has come in the room of circumcision?

5. *The council of Apostles, Elders and brethren at Jerusalem, virtually denied the substitution of baptism for circumcision.*

In Acts xv, we have an account of this council. The reason for its convocation was this: “Certain men” went from Judea to Antioch, and “taught the

brethren," saying: "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." Paul and Barnabas joined issue with these "men," and after much disputation, it was determined to send a deputation to Jerusalem, to consult the "apostles and elders about this question." Paul and Barnabas belonged to this deputation, and upon their arrival at Jerusalem, *before the council met*, some of the believing Pharisees urged the necessity of circumcision. The same question, therefore, was agitated both at Antioch and Jerusalem. That question was whether the believing Gentiles ought to be circumcised. The council met, and after due deliberation and consultation, "it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church," to decide against the circumcision of the Gentiles. Now, if baptism came in the place of circumcision, the apostles knew it; and this was the time to declare it. A simple statement of the fact would have superseded all discussion. Why did they not say, "circumcision is unnecessary, because baptism has taken its place?" This is what Pedobaptists would have said if they had been in that council. The inspired apostles, however, did not say it. Indeed the decision of the council had reference to the believing Gentiles alone, and the understanding evidently was that believing Jews were at liberty to circumcise their children. This we may learn from Acts, xxi, 17—25, and it is a fact utterly irreconcilable with the substitution of baptism for circum-

cision. When circumcision was regarded as a mark to designate nationality, Paul made no objection to it, but when its necessity to salvation was urged, he considered the great doctrine of justification by faith in Christ, disparaged and shorn of its glory. To all circumcised with this latter view, he said: "If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing." But to return to the council at Jerusalem: If baptism came in the place of circumcision, the very reason which called that council together, must have led to a declaration of the fact, and it is infinitely unaccountable that it did not. The truth is, baptism was not, in apostolic times, considered a substitute for circumcision. Hence the Jerusalem council could not, and did not say it was. Its decision involved a virtual denial of the very thing for which Pedobaptists so strenuously contend.

I have now given a specimen, and but a specimen, of the considerations which show that baptism has not come in the place of circumcision. I might write a volume on this one point; but it is needless. He who will not be convinced by the five facts already presented, would not be convinced "though one should rise from the dead."

The Scripture argument on infant baptism is now closed. I have examined the supposed New Testament claim of infants to baptism, and also the Old Testament claim, and can perceive no mark of validity in either. My readers will, therefore, allow

me to indorse what the North British Review, the Organ of the Free (Presbyterian) Church of Scotland says, in its August No., 1852—"SCRIPTURE KNOWS NOTHING OF THE BAPTISM OF INFANTS."

From the word of God, Pedobaptists go to Church History and seek "aid and comfort" from its records. What does Church History say of infant baptism? Much, I admit, but there is no proof that it was practiced before the latter part of the second century. The proof is, by no means, conclusive that it was practiced before the third century. This the reader will see as I proceed. I quote from Dr. Wall, of the Church of England, whose "History of Infant Baptism" is in high repute wherever the English language is spoken. Referring to the well-known passage in Irenæus, he says: "Since this is the *first mention* that we have met with of infants baptized, it is worth the while to look back, and consider how near this man was to the apostles' time." Irenæus, according to Dr. Wall's chronology, lived about the year 167. It is well to give the disputed passage. Here it is: "For he [Christ] came to save all persons by himself: all, I mean, who by him are regenerated unto God; infants, and little ones, and children, and youths, and elder persons. Therefore he went through every age; for infants being made an infant, sanctifying infants," etc. It is needless to quote farther; for the controversy in reference to this passage is about the meaning of the term *regen-*

*erated*. It is *renascor* in the original. This word signifies to *regenerate*, and the advocates of infant baptism affirm that by regeneration, Irenæus meant baptism. This is what Dr. Wall terms the "first mention," etc. There is one objection fatal to the Pedobaptist interpretation of the language of Irenæus. It makes Jesus Christ the administrator of baptism—who "by him are regenerated," etc. It cannot possibly be proved that there is an allusion to baptism in this celebrated passage. The learned Winer, speaking of infant baptism says, "Irenæus does not mention it as has been supposed."\*

Dr. Doddridge says: "We have only a Latin translation of this work; and some critics have supposed this passage spurious; or, allowing it to be genuine, it will not be granted that *to be regenerate*, always in his writings, signifies *baptized*."†

Pedobaptists must deeply feel their need of something to sustain their practice when they attempt to extort from Irenæus testimony in favor of infant baptism. He says nothing about baptism in connection with infants.

Tertullian, who lived about the year 200, is generally referred to by Pedobaptists, as the first opponent of infant baptism, but they argue that his opposition proves the existence of the practice. If

\* Christian Review, Vol. 3, p. 213.

† Miscellaneous Works, p. 493.

Tertullian alludes to the baptism of infants, it is strange that his opposition to it can avail those whose views are in direct conflict with his. I insist, however, that it is by no means certain that Tertullian refers to the baptism of infants at all. The term which he uses, and which Dr. Wall translates "little children," is "*parvulos.*" Irenæus speaks of "*infantes, parvulos,*" etc. He makes a distinction between "infantes" and "parvulos." If Tertullian uses the latter term as Irenæus did, he does not refer to the baptism of unconscious infants, but to the baptism of "little children." Whether these "little children" were capable of exercising faith in Christ, is a question into which I shall not enter. The only fact which concerns me is that Tertullian advised a delay of the baptism of *little children.*

Having now come down to the beginning of the third century, may I not say that if infant baptism rests for its support on the practice of the first and the second century, it rests on a foundation of sand? If any man alludes to it during the first two hundred years, Tertullian is that man, and Pedobaptists concede that he opposed it.

From Tertullian, Dr. Wall comes to Origen, whom he represents as living A. D. 210. Origen wrote in Greek, and his works in the original were chiefly lost. Hence Dr. Wall uses the following language: "But concerning the authenticity of 'em there does need something to be said. For the Greek—

which is the original—of all Origen's Works being lost, except a very few, there remains only the *Latin* translations of 'em. And when these Translations were collected together, a great many spurious ones were added and mixt with 'em, and went under Origen's name. But upon the renewal of Learning, the critics quickly smelt 'em out, and admitted none for his, but such as appeared to have been done into *Latin* either by St. *Hierom* or else by *Rufinus*. \* \* \* \* \*. But these two men used several methods in translating. For, whereas Origen's Books contained in them several expressions not consistent with the Faith in some points, St. *Hierom* changed nothing, but expressed everything as it was in the original, as he owns himself: but *Rufinus* altered or left out anything that he thought not orthodox. \* \* \* \* \*. Whereas now in these Translations of *Rufinus*, the reader is *uncertain* (as Erasmus angrily says) *whether he read Origen or Rufinus.*" History of Infant Baptism, chap. 5. *Rufinus*, Dr. Wall concedes, translated Origen's Homilies on Leviticus, and his Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans. Here we have Origen's strong testimony, as is supposed, in favor of infant baptism. In his eighth Homily he is represented as saying, "Infants also are *by the usage of the church* baptized." In his Commentary on Romans, this language is attributed to him: "The church had *from the apostles a tradition* [or order] to give baptism even to infants."



This is Dr. Wall's translation. He was very anxious to translate the Latin word *traditio*, order. His conscience, however, would not allow him to do so. He therefore put the word *order* in brackets. Let it not be forgotten that the translation of these portions of Origen's Works, was made from Greek into Latin, by Rufinus, who "altered or left out anything that he thought not orthodox." Who knows, therefore, who can ever know, whether Origen wrote what is here attributed to him? What alterations were made in his writings? Such as Rufinus, in his orthodoxy, thought proper. What things were "left out?" Only those that Rufinus *thought* ought to be left out! Erasmus, a prodigy of learning in his day, was uncertain whether he "read Origen or Rufinus." But if Origen did say what Rufinus represents him as saying, what does it amount to? Absolutely nothing with those who recognize the word of God as the only rule of faith and practice. The "usage of the church," and "a tradition from the apostles" are referred to as authority for infant baptism. There is no appeal to the Holy Scriptures. Who but a Romanist is willing to practice infant baptism as a tradition, and not a divine ordinance? Origen's testimony is valuable to a Papist—worthless to a Protestant.

Leaving the "uncertain" writings of Origen, Dr. Wall conducts us into the Council of Carthage, A. D. 453. This council was composed of sixty-six Bishops,

or Pastors, and Cyprian presided over it. One of the questions submitted to its consideration was whether a child should be baptized before it was eight days old? Fidus, who presented the question, was in the negative, and rightly too, if the law of circumcision was to regulate the matter. The very fact that such a question was sent to the council, shows that infant baptism was comparatively a new thing. If it had been practiced from the days of the apostles, does not every sane man believe that the matter would have been settled before A. D. 253, whether infants should or should not be baptized before the eighth day? The council decided against the delay of baptism to the eighth day, assigning this weighty reason: "As far as in us lies, no soul, if possible, is to be lost." Here it will be seen that the necessity of baptism, in order to salvation, is recognized. In this supposed necessity, infant baptism doubtless had its origin. This will be clear when I present the testimony of the great Neander. This stupid council of Carthage attempted to justify infant baptism by reference to the fact that when the son of the Shunamite widow (mentioned in 2 Kings, chap. iv,) died, the prophet Elisha so stretched himself on the child as to apply his face to the child's face, his feet to the child's feet, etc. By this, said the council, "spiritual equality is intimated"—that is, a child is spiritually equal to a grown person! A conclusive reason for infant baptism, truly! The members of this council

were so ignorant of the very Scriptures to which they referred, that they seem not to have known that it is said, "and when the child was *grown*," etc. This was said before the child's death and miraculous restoration to life. The cause of infant baptism must be desperate when the decision of *such* a council is invoked to sustain it.

Dr. Wall refers to other "christian fathers," as they are termed, and quotes largely from Augustine, who lived in the latter part of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth century. He died A. D. 430. Baptists do not deny that infants were baptized from the days of Cyprian. They believe, however, that from the days of the Apostles till now, God has had a people in the world who have protested against infant baptism as a human tradition. They consider the woman mentioned in Revelations xii, the representative of the Church of Christ. She fled into the wilderness, etc. The corrupt organization which developed the deformities and atrocities of the Romish hierarchy is not, in the estimation of Baptists, any part of the Christian Church. Ecclesiastical historians, generally, use the term "church," to denote that organization. And they say truly, the "church" practiced infant baptism. Augustine speaks of the whole church—"universa ecclesia"—as favoring infant baptism. No doubt what he called the "church" did. But was it the Church of Christ? Baptists say it was not. Before I dismiss Augustine, it is

proper to say that he refers to infant baptism as an "apostolic tradition." "*Apostolica traditio*," is the phrase he employs. He meant, doubtless, that it was handed down from the apostles by tradition, that infants were to be baptized. And this implies the silence of the New Testament on the subject. No one would say that it was handed down by tradition, that believers were to be baptized. Why? Because the baptism of believers is taught in the New Testament, and hence tradition in regard to it is absolutely precluded. Not so in reference to infant baptism. Here there is room for tradition, because the Scriptures are silent. Romanists and Protestants believe that a thing authorized by tradition is not authorized by the word of God. Romanists, however, take the "traditions of the church," in connection with the word of God, to constitute the rule of faith and practice, while Protestants professedly repudiate "traditions," and yet indorse a most mischievous "tradition," in the baptism of infants. Let any sober-minded man say whether Augustine would have expressed himself as he has done if he had believed that the New Testament authorized the baptism of infants. And nothing but New Testament authority will ever satisfy Baptists. It is the greatest folly to talk to them of tradition.

Dr. Summers, in his late work on Baptism, represents Augustine as saying, that the "Catholic Church," and every "sect" and "schism" practice

infant baptism, and hold that "baptized infants do obtain the remission of original sin, by the baptism of Christ." There must be some mistake about this, because it not only conflicts with historical facts, but stultifies the Council of Mela, in Numidia, A. D. 416—a council over which Augustine presided, and which decreed as follows: "Also, it is the pleasure of the bishops to order that whoever denieth that infants newly born of their mothers, are to be baptized, or saith that baptism is administered for the remission of their own sins, but not on account of original sin, derived from Adam, and to be expiated by the laver of regeneration, *be accursed.*" Now, if the "Catholic Church," with every "sect" and "schism" practiced infant baptism, against whom was the anathema of the Council of Mela fulminated? If no one denied that infants ought to be baptized, the Council decreed a superfluous malediction, not more creditable to the intellect than to the hearts of its members. There *were* opposers of infant baptism. Hence, the curse denounced with so much bitterness, and carrying with it the influence of Augustine's mighty name. And here it may be said that the advocates of infant baptism have often evinced a persecuting spirit. It will never be known till the revelations of the last day, what multitudes have been put to death for denying the right of unconscious infants to the ordinance of baptism. O Babylon! drunken with the blood of the saints and the martyrs of Jesus, a fearful doom

awaits thee. During the dark ages, the spirit that prompted Augustine and his coadjutors to anathematize the opposers of infant baptism prevailed, and became intensely rancorous. Could the martyred Paulicians, Waldenses, and Albigenses rise from the dead, they would tell a tale that would send a thrill of horror through the heart of humanity. But I must not enlarge.

It has been intimated that infant baptism had its origin in the supposed necessity of baptism to salvation, and I have promised to present the testimony of the celebrated Neander on this point. He says, "That not till so late a period as (at least certainly not earlier than) Irenæus, a trace of infant baptism appears, and that it first became recognized as an apostolic tradition in the course of the third century, is evidence rather *against* than *for* the admission of its apostolic origin; especially since, in the spirit of the age when Christianity appeared, there were many elements which must have been favorable to the introduction of infant baptism,—the same elements from which proceeded the notion of the magical effects of outward baptism, the notion of its *absolute necessity for salvation*, the notion which gave rise to the mythus that the apostles baptized the Old Testament saints in Hades. How very much must infant baptism have corresponded with such a tendency, if it had been favored by tradition!"\*

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\* Planting and Training of the Church, p. 102.

Dr. Wall, referring to the "ancient Fathers," says: "They differed concerning the future state of infants dying unbaptized: but all agreed that they missed of Heaven."\*

In view of this testimony of two distinguished Pedobaptists, who does not see that infant baptism originated from its supposed inseparable relation to salvation? A fundamental misconception of the truth of the gospel gave it birth, while misapprehension of the teachings of the New Testament prolongs its disastrous existence. The "Historical Argument" for infant baptism affords very little "aid and comfort" to Pedobaptists. But suppose it was a thousand times stronger. Suppose every writer from the death of the last apostle had expressed himself in favor of it; even then it would be nothing less than an act of will-worship, while the Scriptures are silent in reference to it. The perplexing question, "Who hath required this at your hands?" ought to confound its advocates. "The Bible, the Bible alone," said Chillingworth, "is the religion of Protestants." Arguments from antiquity, to be available, must penetrate the antiquity of the apostolic age, and rest on the teachings of the New Testament. All other arguments are worthless.

Before dismissing the subject of infant baptism, I must present a few of the many objections to it.

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\* History of Infant Baptism, part 2, chap. 6.

1. *A decided objection to it is that its advocates cannot agree why it should be practiced.*

How conflicting, how antagonistic their views! Roman Catholics baptize infants in order to their salvation. They consider baptism essential to the salvation of adults and infants. They have sometimes shown the *sincerity* of their belief by attempting to baptize children *before they were born*. If Episcopalians believe their "Prayer Book," they baptize infants to make them children of God by regeneration. Calvin, as may be seen in his "Life, by Henry," vol. 1, pp. 82, 83, maintains that infants are capable of exercising faith, and that their baptism is an exemplification of believers' baptism. This seems also to have been Luther's opinion. Wesley, in his "Treatise on Baptism," says: "If infants are guilty of original sin, they are proper subjects of baptism: seeing, in the ordinary way, that they cannot be saved, unless this be washed away in baptism." The "Directory" of the Westminster Assembly, places the right of the infants of believers to baptism, on the ground that they are "*federally holy*." The opinion most generally entertained among Pedobaptists, probably is, that infants should be baptized to bring them into the church. But Dr. Miller insists that the children of professing Christians are born members of the church, and are baptized because they are members. And Dr. Sum-



mers derives the right of infants to baptism from "their personal connection with the second Adam." These are a specimen of the reasons urged in favor of infant baptism. How contradictory! How antagonistic! It seems that infants are baptized that they may be saved—that they may be regenerated—because they have faith—because their parents are believers—because they are involved in original sin—and because they are holy—because they ought to be brought into the church—and because they are in the church by virtue of their birth—and because of their "personal connection" with Christ, in consequence of his assumption of human nature! It would certainly be well for the various tribes of Pedobaptists to call a general council, and try and decide why infants should be baptized. The reasons in favor of the practice are, at present, so contradictory and so destructive of one another that it must involve the advocates of the system in great perplexity. Many, though, would object to such a council because, for obvious reasons, the Pope of Rome should preside over it, and others would object because it would probably be in session as long as the council of Trent. Still, if one good reason could be furnished for infant baptism, by the united wisdom of Catholics and Protestants, it would be more satisfactory than all the reasons which are now urged.

2. *A second objection to infant baptism is that its tendency is to unite the church and the world.*

Jesus Christ evidently designed the church to be the light of the world. His followers are not of the world, but are chosen out of the world. If anything in the New Testament is plain, it is plain that the Lord Jesus intended that there should be a distinct line of demarkation between the church and the world. I need not argue a point so clear. Now the tendency of infant baptism is to unite the church and the world, and obliterate the line of demarkation which the Savior has established. Let the principles of Pedobaptism universally prevail, and one of three things will inevitably follow. Either there will be no church—or there will be no world—or there will be a *worldly church*. The universal prevalence of Pedobaptist sentiments would bring all “born of the flesh” into the church. To be *generated*, not *regenerated*, would be the qualification for membership. The unregenerate members would be in a large majority. The world would absorb the church, or, to say the least, there would be an intensely worldly church. Is this not true of the national churches of Europe? The time has been, whatever may be the case now, when in England, “partaking of the Lord’s Supper” was a qualification for holding the civil and military offices of the kingdom. Thus a premium was offered for hypocrisy. In Germany,

it is said, that women cannot be licensed as prostitutes unless they are members of the State Church, while the tax they pay goes into the treasury from which the clergy draw their salaries!\* In the United States of America there are so many counteracting influences that infant baptism cannot *fully* develop its tendency to unite the church and the world. Indeed, in some respects, Pedobaptists practically repudiate their own principles. They do not treat their "baptized children" as church-members. If they did, there would truly be a deplorable state of things.

3. *Another objection to infant baptism is, that it cherishes in "baptized children" the delusive belief that they are better than others—that their salvation is more hopeful.*

In many instances, it is to be feared, they are led to consider themselves in a saved state. The children of Romanists must so regard themselves, if they attribute to baptism the efficacy ascribed to it by the Papal hierarchy. If the children of Episcopalians believe the "Book of Common Prayer," they must grow up under the false persuasion that in baptism they "were made members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of Heaven." If the children of Methodists believe the "Discipline," and that the prayer offered at their baptism

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\* See Dr Maclay's Letter to Dr. Aydelotte.

was heard, they must recognize themselves as baptized not only "with water," but "with the *Holy Ghost*." If the children of Presbyterians believe the "Westminster Confession" and "Directory," they look upon themselves as "federally holy"—"in covenant with God"—and that the "covenant is sealed" by their baptism. Will not all these classes of children consider themselves better than others? Will they not, under the teaching they receive, view other children as consigned to the "uncovenanted mercies of God," while they occupy a high vantage ground? And will not their delusive belief present a serious obstacle in the way of their salvation? I would not needlessly give offense, but it does appear to me that there is no rational probability of the salvation of Pedobaptist children, unless they disbelieve the dogmas inculcated in their baptism. Will the children of Romanists ever be saved while they regard their baptism as having placed them in a state of salvation? Will the children of Episcopalians become the "children of God" while they entertain the absurd notion that they were made his children by baptism? Will the children of Methodists be regenerated while they ignorantly imagine that they have been baptized "with the Holy Ghost?" Will the children of Presbyterians repent—acknowledge their guilt and condemnation as sinners before God—while they lay the pernicious, though "flattering unction to their souls," that they

are "federally holy," and "in covenant with God?" Alas for the children of Pedobaptists! I see not how their salvation comes within the limits of possibility or probability, until they consider the teachings of their "Prayer Books," "Disciplines" and "Confessions of Faith," on the subject of baptism, as absolutely *false*. They must take the first step in the pursuit of salvation, by denying the truth of what they have been taught concerning their baptism. It will be asked, Are not thousands of the children of Pedobaptists converted to God? I concede it. But why is it so? One prominent reason, doubtless is, that on the part of their ministers and parents, there is a practical repudiation of their baptismal theories. The "baptized children," whatever the baptismal formulas may say, are taught that they are sinners, unregenerate, lost, condemned, and exposed to the wrath of God, for the very reason that they are not "in covenant" with him. Thanks be to God, that the preaching and teaching of Pedobaptists do not accord with their "Confessions of Faith," so far as the subject of infant baptism is concerned. The discrepancy is vital to the welfare of their offspring.

4. *A fourth objection to infant baptism is that it interferes with the independent action of the minds of those baptized in regard to baptism, and in numberless instances prevents baptism on a profession of faith in Christ.*

Suppose, when "baptized children" grow up to be men and women, they are annoyed with doubts, as is

often the case, in reference to the validity of their baptism. They feel at once that they cannot entertain these doubts without virtually calling in question the propriety of what their parents had done for them in their infancy. Filial respect and reverence present almost insuperable barriers in the way of an impartial investigation of the subject. The question comes up, "Shall we *reflect* on the wisdom of our parents, by declaring their act null and void?" If the parents are dead and gone to heaven, the difficulty is often still greater. The question then assumes this form: "Shall we repudiate what our now glorified parents did for us when they 'dedicated us to God' in our infancy? "It often requires a great struggle before the repudiation is resolved on. The man is not to be reasoned with who will deny that infant baptism interferes with the independent, unbiased action of the mind in reference to baptism. And then, how many would now be baptized on a profession of faith in Christ, were it not for their infant baptism! They hesitate to say that the "infantile rite" was worthless. They know that great and good men have practiced infant baptism. Their minds are perplexed. They wish it had so happened that they had not been baptized in infancy. Still the sprinkling of the baptismal (!) waters upon them in babyhood now prevents an intelligent immersion into Christ upon a profession of faith in his name. Is it not an objection to infant baptism that it prevents

so many from obeying Christ, and even fosters a spirit of disobedience?

5. *The tendency of infant baptism is to supplant believers' baptism, and banish it from the world.*

This is the last objection I shall urge, not because there are not many other objections, but because the limits I have prescribed to myself forbid their presentation. It is admitted on all hands that the New Testament enjoins the baptism of believers. The universality of the admission precludes the necessity of proof. The baptism of believers is a divine ordinance. Is it reasonable to suppose that two divine ordinances antagonize with each other? Pedobaptists say infant baptism is a divine ordinance, and they are slow to allow its antagonism with the baptism of believers. But the antagonism is direct, positive. The tendency, the inevitable tendency of infant baptism, is to supplant the baptism of believers. A supposition will make this plain: Let it be supposed, then, that the principles of Pedobaptists prevail throughout the world. All parents come into the church, and have their children "dedicated to God in baptism." If this supposition were realized, where would believers' baptism be? It would, in one generation, be banished from the world. An ordinance established by Christ, to be observed to the end of time, would be abolished. There would be no gospel baptism on earth. One of the institutions of the Head of the church would not be allowed a

place in the world which he made, and in which he labored, toiled, suffered, and died! How horrible is this! A human tradition arraying itself in deadly hostility to an ordinance of Heaven, and attempting, with all the energy of desperation, to destroy it, and leave no memorial of its existence on the face of the globe! If there were no other objection to infant baptism this is amply sufficient to induce all who love the Savior, and revere his authority, to wage against it a war of extermination.

The considerations which I have presented satisfy me that infant baptism belongs to the "traditions of men." There is no authority for it in the New Testament, and there is none in the Old. The argument from Church History amounts to nothing, and there are very decided objections to the practice. *I am a Baptist, then, because Baptists regard the baptism of infants as unscriptural, and insist on the baptism of believers in Christ, and of believers alone.*

II. I AM A BAPTIST BECAUSE BAPTISTS CONSIDER THE IMMERSION IN WATER, OF A BELIEVER, ESSENTIAL TO BAPTISM—SO ESSENTIAL THAT THERE IS NO BAPTISM WITHOUT IT.

While the term baptize does not decide who are to be baptized, it indicates the action to be performed. That action Baptists say, with strongest emphasis, is immersion. In maintaining their position, they confidently refer to the following facts :



1. *Greek lexicons give, immerse, dip or plunge, as the primary and ordinary meaning of baptizo.*

Here it is proper to state that *baptizo* and *baptisma* are, in King James's version of the Scriptures, *anglicized*, but not translated. This is invariably true of the latter term, and it is true of the former whenever the ordinance of baptism is referred to. *Baptismos* is used four times. In three instances it has no reference to the ordinance of baptism, and is translated "washing," which washing was evidently the result of immersion. In the other instance it is not translated, but anglicized. *Bapto* is employed in the Greek New Testament three times, and *embapto* three times. Both are translated "dip" in the common version. There is no more difference in their meaning than there is between the term "dip" and the phrase "dip in." These verbs are never used in connection with baptism as a religious ordinance. *Baptizo* is the verb invariably employed. I have alluded to *baptizo* and *baptisma* as anglicized words. By this it is only meant that their termination is made to correspond with the termination of English words. In *baptizo* the final letter is changed into *e*, and in *baptisma* the last letter is dropped altogether. To make this matter of anglicism perfectly plain, it is only necessary to say, that if *rantizo* had been subjected to the same treatment by the King's translators which *baptizo* received at their hands, we would have *rantize*, in the New Testament, wherever we now

have sprinkle. King James virtually forbade the translation of *baptize* and *baptism*. This has been often denied, but it is susceptible of conclusive proof. The King's third instruction to his translators reads thus: "The old ecclesiastical words to be kept, as the word church not to be translated congregation." It is absurd to say that this rule had exclusive reference to the term "church;" for this term is manifestly given as a specimen of "old ecclesiastic words." And why should plurality of idea be conveyed by the phrase "ecclesiastical words," if the rule had respect to only *one word*? The question, then, in dispute is: Are *baptism* and *baptize* "old ecclesiastical words?" They certainly were *words* when the Bible was translated, or they would not be found in it. They had been used by church historians, and by writers on ecclesiastical law, and were, therefore, *ecclesiastical*. And they had been in use a long time, and were consequently *old*. They were "old ecclesiastical words." Such words the King commanded "to be kept"—"not translated." It is worthy of remark, too, that the Bishop of London, at the King's instance, wrote to the translators, reminding them that his Majesty "wished his *third* and *fourth* rule to be specially observed."\* This circumstance must have called special attention to the rule under consideration. In view of these facts, it may surely be

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\* Lewis's History of Translations, page 319.

said that the translators knew what were "old ecclesiastical words." Let their testimony, then, be adduced. In their "Preface to the Reader," they say that they had, "on the one side, avoided the scrupulosity of the Puritans, who left the *old ecclesiastical words*, and betook them to other, as when they put *washing* for *baptism*, and congregation for church; and on the other hand had shunned the obscurity of the Papists," etc. Is not this enough? Here there is not only a contemporaneous admission that "*baptism*" was included in the old ecclesiastical words, but this admission is made by the translators themselves—made most cheerfully—for it was made in condemnation of the Puritans, and in commendation of themselves.

My position is certainly established by the foregoing considerations; but to fortify it, so that it may forever defy the assaults of polemic ingenuity and wrath, reference may be made to the King's fourth rule. It reads thus: "When any word hath divers significations, *that* to be kept which hath been most commonly used by the most eminent Fathers, being agreeable to the propriety of the place and the analogy of faith." Suppose I were to admit, for argument's sake, what many Pedobaptists contend for, that *baptizo* has divers significations—every man of intelligence knows that from the days of the apostles to the reign of King James, *immerse* was its commonly received meaning. Was not immersion ordi-

narily practiced for *thirteen hundred years?* Dr. Whitby, Dr. Wall, Professor Stewart, and I know not how many other Pedobaptists of distinction, make this concession. Far be it from me to say that *baptizo* is a word of many significations; but even if it were, the King's translators, if they had rendered it at all, would have been compelled by the fourth rule to translate it immerse; for it was most commonly used in this sense by the most eminent Fathers. But it will be perceived that the King's *third* rule renders inoperative his fourth, so far as old ecclesiastical words are concerned. Whether such words have one meaning, or a thousand meanings, they are "to be kept—not translated." The translators were not at liberty to refer to the signification immemorially attached by the Greeks to *baptizo*—a signification which received the cordial indorsement of "the most eminent Fathers." They might have examined the indorsement if the royal decree had not said, "*hitherto, but no farther*—the old ecclesiastical words to be kept."

The fact that *baptizo* is an anglicized, and not a translated word, makes an appeal to Greek lexicons necessary in ascertaining its meaning. Lexicons indeed do not constitute the *ultimate* authority, but I first avail myself of their testimony. I have made it a point to examine all the lexicons I have seen (and they have been many) in reference to the signification of *baptizo*. There is a remarkable unanimity among them in representing immerse, or its equiv-

alent, as the primary and ordinary meaning of the word. According to lexicographers, it is a word of definite import, as much so as any other. It is as specific as *rantizo*, and it might be argued just as plausibly that *rantizo* means to immerse, as that *baptizo* means to sprinkle. I have seen no lexicon that gives sprinkle as a meaning of *baptizo*, and but one that makes "to pour upon" one of its significations. In Liddell & Scott's Greek and English Lexicon, edited by Mr. Drisler, of New York, "with corrections and additions," "to pour upon" is given as the seventh meaning of *baptizo*. It is a significant fact, however, that while passages in classic Greek authors are referred to as illustrative of the ordinary meaning of the word, there is no mention of any passage that sustains the unscholarly definition, "to pour upon." There is another thing which it is painful to relate. It is stated—and so far as I know it has not been denied—that in the English edition of Liddell & Scott, "to pour upon," is not to be found as a meaning of *baptizo*.\* Mr. Drisler, it seems, anxious to aid the cause of Pedobaptists, has, on his own authority, represented *baptizo* as signifying "to pour upon." He must be a man of nerve! He is surely the incarnation of temerity! He is obnoxious to the charge of literary forgery! He represents Liddell & Scott as saying what they have not said. He de-

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\* See Western Baptist Review, Vol. III, pp. 437, 438.

serves the contempt of the literary world, and the indignant hissings of all the truth-loving portion of mankind. When the unpardonable liberty taken by Mr. Drisler was made the subject of newspaper animadversion in the year 1848, it was intimated—whether at his instance I know not—that in the next edition of the lexicon, the interpolated definition, “to pour upon,” would be expunged. This, however, has not been done; for in an edition that bears date 1850, the apocryphal phrase is to be found. So much for this explanation, which Mr. Drisler’s want of conscientiousness has rendered necessary. I now repeat that there is among Greek Lexicons a perfect concurrence in assigning immerse or its equivalent as the ordinary meaning of *baptizo*. This ought to settle the baptismal controversy. For what says Blackstone, who is almost the idol of the legal profession? “Words are generally to be understood in their *usual and most known signification*; not so much regarding the propriety of grammar, as their *general and popular use*.”\* Immerse was the “usual and most known signification” of *baptizo*, among the Greeks. It was its “general and popular use,” as we shall see in the proper place.

To return to the argument derived from lexicons:

All English dictionaries give immerse or its equivalent as the ordinary meaning of dip. It would,

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\* Chitty’s Blackstone, Vol. I, page 59.

therefore, be very unreasonable to deny that *dip* ordinarily means to immerse. Greek lexicons give immerse as the ordinary meaning of *baptizo*. Is it not, then, just as unreasonable to deny that *baptizo* ordinarily means immerse as it would be to deny that *dip* has this signification? Indeed, there is no argument employed by Pedobaptists to divest *baptizo* of its usual meaning, which may not be as plausibly employed to divest *dip* of its ordinary import. The truth is, though *dip* is a definite and specific term, *baptizo* is more so. We speak of "the *dip* of the magnetic needle," and "the *dip* of a stratum, in geology." Pope speaks of "*dipping* into a volume of history." And in some places there is a practice which the ladies call "*dipping* snuff." If Pedobaptists could find *baptizo* used in such connections there would be rejoicing from Dan to Beersheba. They would aim to extract sprinkle, pour, and I know not what else, from such uses of the word. The man who would attempt to prove that *dip* means sprinkle and pour, would be laughed at; but he could make a more plausible and respectable effort in adducing his proof than if he were to attempt to prove the same thing in reference to *baptizo*. Let us see: Such a man might say, Johnson and Webster, in their large Dictionaries, give "moisten" and "wet," as meanings of *dip*, and refer to Milton as authority, who uses the language which follows: "A cold shuddering dew *dips* me all o'er."

Talking with himself, such a reasoner might say, "It is a fixed fact that dip means to 'moisten' and 'wet.' Who will dispute what Johnson and Webster say, sustained, as they are, by the 'Prince of British poets?' Very well. Dip means to moisten and wet. Everybody knows that a thing can be moistened or made wet by having water poured or sprinkled on it? Therefore dip means to pour and sprinkle!!" Now I affirm that this argument is more plausible than any I ever heard from a Pedobaptist minister to prove that *baptizo* means pour and sprinkle. And yet who does not see that it is replete with sophistry? It assumes as true the obvious fallacy, that if a process can be accomplished in two different ways, the two verbs employed to denote those two ways mean the same thing. An object may be moistened by being dipped in water, but moisten and dip are not synonymous. The same object may be moistened by having water sprinkled or poured upon it, but neither moisten and sprinkle, nor moisten and pour, are identical in import. And though the moistening may *result* from the dipping, sprinkling, or pouring, the three acts are clearly distinguishable, and definite terms are used to express them. It is proper to say of the Greek Lexicons to which I have referred, that they were all made by men who had no partialities for Baptists. A regard for truth, therefore, and no desire to give currency to the practice of immersion, elicited from them the definition they have given of



*baptizo*. Baptists may well felicitate themselves that their opponents bear strong testimony in their favor; for I proceed to say,

2. *That not only Lexicographers, but distinguished Pedobaptist scholars and theologians, admit that baptizo means to immerse.*

Here I shall probably be told that it is unfair to take advantage of Pedobaptist concessions. I insist that there is nothing unfair in such a course. No one can maintain that there is without implicating the Apostle Paul; for in his triumphant argument on "Mars Hill," he availed himself of the declaration of certain Greek poets—recognized the truth of the declaration, but did not attempt to prove it. I shall aim to do nothing that is unjustified by the example of Paul. Pedobaptist concessions are of great value; for it may be said, in the language of another: "This testimony of theirs, to me, is worth a thousand others; seeing it comes from such as, in my opinion, are *evidently interested to speak quite otherwise.*" I ask the reader's earnest attention to the following extracts:

I begin with John Calvin, a learned Presbyterian, who lived three hundred years ago. He was very decided in his opposition to Baptists, or "*Anabaptists,*" as he contemptuously called them. He wrote in Latin, and I avail myself of Pedobaptist translations of the original.

In his Institutes, Book IV, chapter 15, paragraph 19, he expresses himself thus: (I adopt Professor

Stuart's translation :) "It is of no consequence at all (minimum refert) whether the person baptized is totally immersed, or whether he is merely sprinkled by an affusion of water. This should be a matter of choice to the churches in different regions; although the word *baptize* signifies to *immerse*, and the rite of immersion was practiced by the ancient church." This translation might have been made stronger. Professor S. might have said, "the word *baptize* itself, or the *very* "word *baptize*," etc.; for the original is "*ipsum baptizandi verbum*," etc. So, also, as Calvin uses the word "*constat*" as an impersonal verb, the translation should be, "it is evident," or "certain that the rite of immersion," etc.

Dr. George Campbell, a distinguished Presbyterian of Scotland, in his "Notes" on Matthew, iii, 2, says, "The word *baptizein*," (infinitive mode, present tense, of *baptizo*,) "both in sacred authors, and in classical, signifies, *to dip, to plunge, to immerse*, and was rendered by Tertullian, the oldest of the Latin fathers, *tingere*, the term used for dying cloth, which was by immersion. It is always construed suitably to this meaning."

In his "Lectures on Systematic Theology and Pulpit Eloquence," Lecture x, he expresses himself thus: "Another error in disputation, which is by far too common, is, when one will admit nothing in the plea or arguments of an adversary to be of the smallest weight. \* \* \* \* \*. I have heard a

disputant of this stamp, *in defiance of etymology and use*, maintain that the word rendered in the New Testament *baptize*, means more properly to sprinkle than to plunge, and, *in defiance of all antiquity*, that the former method was the earliest, and for many centuries, the most general practice in baptizing. One who argues in this manner, never fails, with persons of knowledge, to betray the cause he would defend; and though, with respect to the vulgar, bold assertions generally succeed, as well as arguments, sometimes better; yet a candid mind will disdain to take the help of a falsehood, even in support of the truth."

Witsius, "Professor of Divinity in the Universities of Franeker, Utrecht, and Leyden," says in his work on the "Covenants," "It cannot be denied, but the native signification of the words, *baptein* and *baptizein*, is to *plunge* or *dip*." Chapter on Baptism.

Professor Stuart, so long an ornament of the Andover Seminary, Massachusetts, in his work on the "Mode of Baptism," says on page 14, "*Bupto* and *baptizo* mean to *dip*, *plunge*, or *immerge*, into anything liquid. All lexicographers and critics of any note are agreed in this. My proof of this position, then, need not necessarily be protracted; but for the sake of ample confirmation, I must beg the reader's patience, while I lay before him, as briefly as may be, the results of an investigation, which seems to leave no room for doubt." It will be seen that Pro-

fessor Stuart fully sustains what has been said of Greek Lexicons.

I now quote from the greatest man, as I think, that ever belonged to the Presbyterian denomination. No one will question his scholarship. I refer to Dr. Chalmers. In his Lectures on Romans, he says, Lecture xxx, on chap. vi, 3—7: "The original meaning of the word baptism, is immersion, and though we regard it as a point of indifferency, whether the ordinance so named be performed in this way or by sprinkling—yet we doubt not, that the prevalent style of the administration in the apostle's days, was by an actual submerging of the whole body under water. We advert to this, for the purpose of throwing light on the analogy that is instituted in these verses. Jesus Christ, by death, underwent this sort of baptism—even immersion under the surface of the ground, whence he soon emerged again by his resurrection. We, by being baptized into his death, are conceived to have made a similar translation."

But why proceed farther with the testimony of distinguished Pedobaptist scholars and theologians? What I have adduced is surely sufficient. These witnesses testify that *baptizo* means to immerse; nor do they say that it means to sprinkle and pour. True it is, that Calvin considered it a matter of "no consequence" as to immersion or sprinkling, and Chalmers regarded it a "point of indifferency;" but

they are both clear as to what the word *baptizo* means. This is all I want—their *testimony* as to the meaning of the word. Their *opinion* as to the admissibility of sprinkling, I reject; for it is utterly gratuitous and absurd, unless *baptizo* means to sprinkle. This they did not say, and could not say. I hope it will be observed that I make a distinction between a fact and an opinion. He who, acquainted with the *usus loquendi* of a term, testifies that it means a certain thing, bears witness to a *fact*: but if he says it is not important to adhere to the meaning established by the *usus loquendi*, he expresses an *opinion*.

It may be asked why those Pedobaptist scholars who have conceded that *baptizo* means to immerse, have not become practical immersionists? This is a question difficult to answer. That they ought to have shown their faith by their works, does not admit a doubt. Some, perhaps, have failed to do so, on account of the strength of early predilections—others have not felt willing to disturb their denominational relations—and others still have had a horror of the charge of fickleness. Probably, however, the greater number, like Professor Stuart, have persuaded themselves that as the Christian dispensation is eminently spiritual, provided the heart is right, it is a matter of but little moment as to a particular observance of “external rites.” Such persons seem to forget that the way to show that the heart is right with God, is

to do the *very thing* he has commanded. The reasons suggested for the failure of those Pedobaptists who make such concessions as have been referred to, to do their duty, are, I acknowledge, altogether unsatisfactory. I cannot give satisfactory reasons: I cannot perform impossibilities. I am glad it is not incumbent on me to present adequate reasons. Those who admit that Jesus Christ commanded his disciples to be immersed, and, at the same time, array themselves in practical opposition to immersion, are accountable to him.

3. *The classical usage of baptizo establishes the position of Baptists.*

I have said that Lexicons are not the ultimate authority in settling the meaning of words. The truth of this remark can be readily seen. Lexicographers are necessarily dependent on the sense in which words are used, to ascertain their meaning. But it is not impossible for them to mistake that sense. If they do, there is an appeal from their definitions to the *usus loquendi*, which is the ultimate authority. I shall now show how classic Greek authors used the word *baptizo*—not that I am complaining of the Lexicons—but that I may show that the usage of the word fully justifies the Lexicons in giving immerse, or its equivalent, as its ordinary meaning. It is pleasant to go back to the ultimate authority.

Few men have ever examined the classic import of *baptizo*, so unweariedly, and so extensively, as the

late Dr. Carson; but as he was a Baptist, I decline availing myself of the results of his investigations. For obvious reasons, I prefer that Pedobaptists shall say what is the classic meaning of *baptizo*. I quote from Professor Stuart's work on the "Mode of Baptism." He makes extracts from the following Greek authors :

PINDAR, who was born five hundred and twenty years before Christ, says, "*As when a net is cast into the sea, the cork swims above, so am I UNPLUNGED (abaptistos)* ; on which the Greek scholiast, in commenting, says: As the cork, *ou dunei*, does not sink, so I am *abaptistos, unplunged, not immersed*. The cork remains *abaptistos*, and swims on the surface of the sea, being of a nature which is *abaptistos* ; in like manner I am *abaptistos*," etc. Pindar was describing the utter incompetency of his enemies to *plunge* him into ruin. It is only necessary to say to the English scholar, that the letter *a*, (in Greek, Alpha,) prefixed in the foregoing extract to *baptistos*, conveys a negative idea. *Abaptistos*, therefore, means *unplunged, undipped, or unimmersed*. *Unsprinkled* or *unpoured* is perfectly out of the question.

HERACLIDES PONTICUS, who lived about three hundred and thirty-five years before the Christian era, says, "*When a piece of iron is taken red hot from the fire, and PLUNGED in the water, (udati baptizetai,) the heat, being quenched by the peculiar nature of the water,*

ceases." *Baptizo* certainly signifies immerse, in this passage.

PLUTARCH, who died about A. D. 140, refers to a Roman General "DIPPING (*baptisas*) his hand into blood," etc. Again he says, "PLUNGE (*baptison*) yourself into the sea." And again, "Then PLUNGING (*baptizōn*) himself into the Lake Copias," etc.

LUCIAN, who died A. D. 180, "represents Timon, the man-hater, as saying: *If a winter's flood should carry away any one, and he, stretching out his hands, should beg for help, I would press down the head of such an one when SINKING, (baptizonta,) so that he could not rise up again.*"

HIPPOCRATES, who lived about 430 years before Christ, says, "*Shall I not laugh at the man who SINKS (baptisonta) his ship by overloading it, and then complains of the sea for ingulfing it with its cargo?*"

STRABO, the celebrated geographer, who died A. D. 25, a very short time before John the Baptist began to preach in the wilderness of Judea, "speaking of a lake near Agrigentum, says: *Things that elsewhere cannot float, DO NOT SINK (mee baptizesthai) in the water of this lake, but swim in the manner of wood.*" Again: "*If one shoots an arrow into the channel, [of a certain rivulet in Cappadocia,] the force of the water resists it so much, that it will scarcely PLUNGE IN (baptizesthai).*" Again: "*They [the soldiers] marched a whole day through the water,*



PLUNGED IN (*baptizomenōn*) up to the waist." Once more: "The bitumen floats on the top [of the Lake Sirbon] because of the nature of the water, which admits of no diving, nor can any one who enters it, PLUNGE IN, (*baptizesthai*,) but is borne up."

JOSEPHUS, who died A. D. 93, aged fifty-six, and was, therefore, cotemporary with the Apostles, "speaking of the ship in which Jonah was, says, *mellontos baptizesthai toō skaphous*, the ship being about to sink." He also uses the expression, "Our ship being IMMERSSED OR SINKING (*baptisthentos*) in the midst of the Adriatic." Referring to the youth Aristobulus, who was drowned by order of Herod, he says: "The boy was sent to Jericho, and there, agreeably to command, being IMMERSSED in a pond, (*baptizomenos en kolumbethra*,) he perished." Again: "As they [the sailors] swam away from a SINKING ship (*baptizomenees neōs*)." Once more: "The wave being raised very high, OVERWHELMED OR IMMERSSED them (*ebaptise*).

ARISTOTLE, who died 332 years before the Christian era, "speaks of a saying among the Phenicians, that there were certain places, beyond the pillars of Hercules, which, when it is ebb-tide, are not OVERFLOWED (*mee baptizesthai*).

DIODORUS SICULUS says: "Most of the land animals that are intercepted by the river [Nile] perish, being OVERWHELMED (*baptizomena*)." Again: "The

river, borne along by a more violent current, OVERWHELMED (*ebaptize*) many."

PLUTARCH "speaks of Galba, as *ophleemasi bebaptismenon*, OVERWHELMED with debts. He also uses the expression *upo toon pragmatoon baptizomenous*, OVERWHELMED *with business*."

The reader, by referring to Stuart, on the "Mode of Baptism," pp. 14, 15, 16, 19, 20, can test the accuracy of these quotations from that work. It will be seen that I have used the Roman instead of the Greek letters. I have done this for the satisfaction of a large majority of those who will peruse these pages.

It will be seen that *immerse* is the classical meaning of *baptizo*. In all the preceding quotations, it might be employed with propriety. A "*sinking ship*," for example, is a ship about to be immersed. Nor is it any abuse of language to say that places "not overflowed," are not immersed. As to being immersed in business, with cares, with debts, etc., they are common forms of expression. I solicit special attention to the fact, that of the Greek authors referred to, some lived before the coming of Christ—some during the apostolic age—and some at a period subsequent to that age.

*Seven hundred years* intervened between the birth of Pindar and the death of Lucian. During those seven centuries, usage shows that *baptizo* meant to

immerse. Most of the classic Greek writers lived before baptism was instituted, and, consequently, knew nothing of immersion, as a religious ordinance. Those who lived after this institution cared nothing for it. There was no controversy as to the meaning of *baptizo*, during the classic period of Grecian history. There was no motive, therefore, that could so operate on Greek writers as to induce them to use the word in any but its authorized sense. That sense was most obviously to immerse. Even Dr. Edward Beecher, though perfectly infatuated with the notion that *baptizo*, "in its religious sense," means to "purify," admits that in classic usage it signifies to immerse. He says: "I freely admit that in numerous cases it clearly denotes to immerse—in which case an agent submerges partially or totally some person or thing. Indeed, this is so notoriously true, that I need attempt no proof. Innumerable examples are at hand." Beecher on Baptism, p. 9.

No man who has any reputation to lose, as a Greek scholar, will deny that *baptizo*, at the introduction of the Christian era, meant to immerse, and that usage had fully established this meaning. Even Doddridge and Barnes virtually admit this is its meaning in the New Testament, when used as descriptive of the sufferings of Christ. Hence the former paraphrases, Luke, xii, 50, thus: "But I have, indeed, in the meantime, a most dreadful baptism to be baptized with, and know that I shall shortly be bathed,

as it were, in blood, and *plunged* in the most *overwhelming* distress," etc. Family Expositor, p. 204. Barnes, in his Notes on Matthew, xx, 22, commenting on the phrase, "The baptism that I am baptized with," represents the Savior as saying to his disciples, "Are ye able to *suffer* with me—to endure the *trials* and *pains* which shall come upon you and me, in endeavoring to build up my kingdom? Are you able *to be plunged* deep in afflictions, to have sorrows *cover you like water*, and to be *sunk beneath calamities as floods*, in the work of religion? Afflictions are often expressed by being *sunk in the floods*, and *plunged in the deep waters*." These passages are well explained, but they cannot be explained at all, unless baptism means immersion. *Baptizo* literally means immerse; therefore, in its figurative application, it is used to denote an immersion in sorrow, suffering and affliction.

But, say some, though *baptizo*, in classic Greek, means to immerse, it does not follow that it is to be understood in this sense in the New Testament. They discourse learnedly on the difference between classic and sacred Greek. They insist that *baptizo* has, in the Scriptures, a *theological* sense. In short, they feel quite a contempt for Ernesti's "Principles of Interpretation." They forget that "when God has spoken to men, he has spoken in the language of men, for he has spoken by men, and for men."

For the special benefit of these *wise* critics, I quote from the ablest Methodist work I have seen, (Watson's Theological Institutes, Vol. II, p. 153). The author is showing, in opposition to the Socinian view, that the apostles employed terms in reference to the death of Christ which convey the idea of expiation. He says: "The use to be made of this in the argument is, that as the apostles found the very terms they used with reference to the nature and efficacy of the death of Christ, fixed in an expiatory signification among the Greeks, they could not, *in honesty*, use them in a distant figurative sense, much less in a contrary one, without due notice of their having invested them with a new import being given to their readers. \* \* \* \* \* In like manner, the Jews had their expiatory sacrifices, and the terms and phrases used in them are, in like manner, employed by the apostles to characterize the death of their Lord; and they would have been as guilty of misleading their Jewish as their Gentile readers, *had they employed them in a new sense, and without warning, which, unquestionably, they never gave.*"

Dr. Hodge, in his "Way of Life," expresses the same sentiment. To all this I cordially subscribe. The apostles found certain terms in use among the people, which conveyed the idea of expiation. They used those terms, and evidently in that sense. As honest men, they could not do otherwise, without giving information of the fact. So reasons Mr. Wat-

son. Very well. The same apostles found the term *baptizo* fixed in its meaning, and that meaning was to immerse. Could they then "in honesty" employ it to denote sprinkle and pour without notifying their readers of the fact? Richard Watson being judge, they could not. "Unquestionably" they never intimated to Jew or Gentile that they used the word in a new sense. Now I insist that Methodists ought either to admit the validity of this argument in reference to *baptizo*, or reject as inconclusive Watson's reasoning against Socinians. It is to be remembered, however, that those who say that the *sacred* meaning of *baptizo* differs from its *classic* meaning, must prove it. The burden of proof is on them. If they say it means sprinkle, let them show it. If they affirm that it means pour, let them establish this signification. And if Dr. Beecher can do anything for his "purification theory," let him do it. Baptists occupy a position which commends itself to every unprejudiced mind. They say that *baptizo*, among the Greeks, meant to immerse, and that John the Baptist, Jesus Christ, and the apostles, used it just as the people understood it.

I think it has now been shown that the classical signification of *baptizo* is immerse, and that it is perfectly gratuitous to assert that its Scriptural differs from its classical import.

4. *The design of baptism furnishes an argument in favor of the proposition I am establishing.*

It represents the burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Paul says: "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore 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. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." Romans vi, 3, 4, 5. "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." Col. ii, 12. "The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also 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." 1 Peter iii, 21.

It is clear from these passages that baptism has a commemorative reference to the burial and resurrection of Christ. The two ordinances of the church symbolically proclaim the three great facts of the gospel. These facts, as Paul teaches, (1 Cor. xv 3, 4,) are that Christ died, was buried, and rose again. The Lord's supper commemorates the first fact. All are agreed in this view. At the sacramental table the disciples of Christ are solemnly reminded that their Redeemer submitted to the agonies of death. They weep over him as crucified—dead. In baptism they see him *buried* and *raised again*, just as they

see him *dead* in the sacred supper. Baptism is, therefore, a symbolic proclamation of two of the three prominent gospel facts—the burial and resurrection of Christ. These facts are infinitely worthy of commemoration, and there is no evangelical commemoration of them, unless the ordinances of the church are observed with the proper design. This by the way. Baptism also expresses in emblem the believer's death to sin, and resurrection to newness of life. In "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," there is a spiritual death to sin, and a spiritual resurrection to newness of life. These two facts are emblematically set forth in baptism. Hence the absurdity of baptizing any who are not dead to sin. We are baptized into the death of Christ. We profess our reliance on his death for salvation, and we profess, also, that as he died *for* sin, we have died *to* sin. As burial is a palpable separation of the dead from the living, so baptism is a symbolic separation of those dead to sin from those living in sin. And as a resurrection from the dead indicates an entrance into a new sphere of existence, so baptism, in its similitude to a resurrection, denotes an entrance upon a new life. Hence Dr. Chalmers, in his Lecture on Romans, vi, 3-7, remarks that we "are conceived in the act of descending under the water of baptism, to have resigned an old life, and in the act of ascending, to emerge into a second or new life." There is an



emblematic renunciation of "the old life," and there is an emblematic entrance upon "the new life." Wm. Tyndale very appropriately remarks: "The plunging into the water signifieth that we die and are buried with Christ, as concerning the old life of sin, which is Adam. And the pulling out again signifieth that we rise again with Christ in a new life, full of the Holy Ghost."

Baptism likewise anticipates the believer's resurrection from the dead. This we learn from 1 Cor. xv, 29: "Else what shall they do, who are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?" These questions are proposed by Paul in the midst of an argument on the resurrection of the dead. Some of the Corinthians, it seems, denied the doctrine of the resurrection, and yet it does not appear that they questioned the propriety of an observance of the ordinance of baptism. Paul virtually tells them that baptism has an anticipative reference to the resurrection on the last day. It has this reference because it has a commemorative reference to the resurrection of Christ. It anticipates, because it commemorates. The reason is obvious. The resurrection of the Lord Jesus procures the resurrection of his followers, and is an infallible pledge of it. The two resurrections are inseparable. Baptism, therefore, while it commemorates the resurrection of Christ, anticipates, of necessity, the resurrection of his followers. Dr.

A. Clarke, in his commentary on the verse under consideration, says: "The sum of the apostle's meaning appears to be this: If there be no resurrection of the dead, those who, in becoming Christians, expose themselves to all manner of privations, crosses, severe sufferings, and a violent death, can have no compensation, nor any motive sufficient to induce them to expose themselves to such miseries. But as they receive baptism as an emblem of *death*, in voluntarily going under the water, so they receive it as an emblem of the *resurrection* unto eternal *life*, in coming up out of the water: thus they are *baptized for the dead*, in perfect faith of the resurrection."

Now, if these views of the design and emblematic import of baptism are correct, it follows inevitably that the immersion in water of a believer in Christ is essential to baptism—so essential that there is no baptism without it. If baptism represents the burial and resurrection of Christ, it must be immersion. Do the sprinkling and pouring of water bear any analogy to a burial and resurrection? Absolutely none. They would never suggest the idea of burial or resurrection. Immersion, however, bears a striking resemblance to a burial and resurrection. We are "buried by baptism"—that is, by means of baptism. When the baptismal process is performed there is certainly a "burial." The two are inseparable; and therefore, where there is no "burial," there is no baptism. Were it necessary, I might show that

Wall, Whitefield, Wesley, Doddridge, Chalmers, Barnes, Macknight, Bloomfield, and many others, all Pedobaptists, admit that the phrase, "buried by baptism," alludes to immersion.

It is quite common, however, for the Rabbis of Pedobaptist Israel, in these latter days, to insist that there is no reference to "water baptism." Spiritual baptism, say they, is spoken of. They think in this way to nullify the argument for immersion. But do they accomplish their object? Let us see. I will meet these Rabbis on their own chosen ground. Let it be conceded, then, for argument's sake, that "buried by baptism" denotes spiritual baptism. Then there is a spiritual burial. Now it is a well settled point among Pedobaptists that the outward baptism is a sign of the inward. If, then, the inward baptism involves a spiritual burial, the outward baptism should involve a burial in water, that it may adequately represent the inward. Men may torture and put to the rack the phrase, "buried by baptism," but it will testify of immersion. It cannot be divested of its allusion to Christian immersion.

To conclude the argument from the design of baptism:—How stands the matter? If baptism commemorates the burial and resurrection of Christ, it must be immersion. If it is an emblematic representation of death to sin, and resurrection to newness of life, (and to this view Pedobaptists do not specially object,) the representation is essentially incomplete

without immersion. If there is something in it which anticipates and resembles the resurrection of the dead, still it must be immersion. Sprinkling and pouring are as infinitely unlike a resurrection as they are unlike a burial. Even if Dr. Beecher's "purification theory" were to receive the countenance which he no doubt thinks it deserves, immersion would be more suitable than sprinkling or pouring. Is not the whole soul defiled with sin? Must not the whole soul be cleansed from sin? If, then, baptism is received (some take this view) as a symbol of the necessity of purification, something that affects the whole body is required to indicate the totality of that necessity. Or if baptism is regarded as a sign of the purification already accomplished, then the immersion of the body in water is appropriate to show that the soul has been washed from sin in the blood of Christ.

5. *The places selected for the administration of baptism, and the circumstances attending its administration, as referred to in the New Testament, afford an additional argument in proof of the position of Baptists.*

John baptized in Jordan. That the Jordan is a suitable stream for purposes of immersion is manifest from the testimony of one of the most distinguished of modern travelers and scholars—Dr. Edward Robinson. Speaking of the Jordan, he says: "We estimated the breadth of the stream to be from eighty to one hundred feet. The guides supposed it to be

now ten or twelve feet deep. I bathed in the river, without going out into the deep channel.”\*

Even Dr. Lightfoot, who was quite conspicuous in his opposition to immersion, in the Westminster Assembly, expresses himself thus: “That the baptism of John was by plunging the body, seems to appear from those things which are related of him; namely, that he *baptized in Jordan*; that he baptized in *Enon*, because there was much water there; and that Christ, being baptized, came up out of the water; to which that seems to be parallel, (Acts, viii, 38,) “*Philip and the eunuch went down into the water,*” etc.†

I am aware that Pedobaptists argue that John’s was not Christian baptism—that he did not live under the gospel dispensation, etc. Dissenting, as I certainly do, from these views, I waive a consideration of them as foreign from my present purpose. It is sufficient for me to say, that even if it could be shown that John’s was not Christian baptism, it would avail Pedobaptists nothing. Why? John performed an act called baptism, and various circumstances, as well as the meaning of the word, indicate that that act was immersion. Pedobaptists attempt to invalidate the force of those circumstances by denying that John administered *Christian* baptism. But they admit that the apostles, after the resurrection of

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\* Biblical Researches in Palestine, Vol. II, p. 256.

† Quoted in Clarke’s Commentary, Vol. V, p. 325.

Christ, administered Christian baptism. Very well. The same term used to denote the act performed by John, is used to designate the act performed by them. It must, therefore, have been the same act. For surely no sane man will say that the term baptize means one thing in its connection with John's ministry, and a different thing in connection with the ministry of the apostles. Hence I repeat that if it could be shown that John's was not Christian baptism, it would amount to just nothing at all.

There is another Pedobaptist sentiment which deserves exposure: It is that Jesus Christ was baptized to initiate him into the priestly office. To show the absurdity of this view, I need only ask a few questions: Was not the Messiah "made a priest after the order of Melchisedec, and not after the order of Aaron?" How could he be a priest, according to the law of Moses, when he belonged to the "tribe of Judah?" Was not the priestly office confined to the tribe of Levi, and to the family of Aaron, in that tribe? Did not the law say: "The stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death?" All that Pedobaptists say about the baptismal initiation of Christ, into the priestly office, is at war with the Scriptures. And why this attempt to show that the Savior was made a priest by his baptism? The object must be to evade the moral power of his example. For no man can lay aside his prejudices, and deny that Jesus Christ was immersed in the

Jordan. But if the people can be made to believe that the baptism of Christ had special reference to his sacerdotal consecration, they will feel comparatively exempt from obligation to follow his example, as they are not baptized that they may become priests. The truth is that Jesus, in his baptism, as well as in other respects, has "left us an example, that we should follow his steps."

The Jordan was, unquestionably, a suitable stream for purposes of immersion, and John baptized in Jordan, and Jesus, when baptized, "went up straight-way out of the water." John also baptized "in Enon, near to Salim." John iii, 23. Why? Let Dr. Miller answer. He says: "Independently of immersion altogether, plentiful streams of water were absolutely necessary for the constant refreshment and sustenance of the many thousands who were encamped from day to day to witness the preaching and the baptism of this extraordinary man; together with the beasts employed for their transportation. Only figure to yourselves a large encampment of men, women and children, etc. \* \* \* \* \* As a poor man, who lived in the wilderness, whose raiment was of the meanest kind, and whose food was such alone as the desert afforded, it is not to be supposed that he possessed appropriate vessels for administering baptism to multitudes by pouring or sprinkling. He, therefore, seems to have made use of the neighboring stream of water for this purpose, descending its

banks, and setting his feet on its margin, so as to admit of his using a handful, to answer the symbolical purpose intended by the application of water in baptism." Miller on Baptism, pp. 92, 93.

What to call this extract, I really do not know. It is not argument—it is not logic—it is not common sense. There seems to be a mixture of assertion, supposition and fiction. No man was more competent to prepare such a mixture than Dr. M.\* Where did he learn that "plentiful streams of water were absolutely necessary" for the purposes which he specifies? What he says about the "large encampment," must have been a day-dream—and so must

\* I refer to Dr. Miller's work on Baptism on account of his prominent position in the Princeton Seminary for a long series of years. The book itself is remarkably unworthy of notice. It substitutes assertion for proof. "*I can assure you,*" is the dogmatic phrase often used where other men would have attempted to adduce proof. There are blunders that would be unpardonable in any student that ever was, is now, or ever will be at Princeton. For example, Dr. M. says: "The evangelists tell us that the Scribes and Pharisees invariably washed (in the original baptized) their hands before dinner." Any Greek scholar, by turning to Mark vii, 3, may see that *nipto* is used in the original. Again: Dr. M. says, Judas "is said by Christ himself, to baptize his hand in the dish (as it is in the original, Matthew, xxvi, 23)". *Baptizo* is not in the original. The word used is *embapto*. These may serve as specimens of the unscholarly errors of the book. Its author's position is surely the only thing that has ever brought *such a book* into notice



have been the *beastly* portion of his statement. The evangelists say nothing of the "encampment," and make no allusions to the "beasts." Poverty is a misfortune, but not a crime; and, therefore, I shall not take offense at the reference to the indigence of the first Baptist preacher. However, it may be questioned whether John was not able to own "appropriate vessels" for purposes of "pouring or sprinkling." But admitting his extreme poverty when he went to the Jordan to baptize, he then became so popular that an intimation from him that he would like to have "appropriate vessels," would have secured as many as all those "*beasts*" could have transported. Why did he not, then, get "vessels," and supersede the necessity of his going to "Enon, near to Salim," where there was "much water?" Would not Herod, also, have furnished "appropriate vessels," at the time he "did many things, and heard John gladly?" But enough of this.

And what does Dr. Rice, in his Lexington Debate, page 193, say of the "much water?" Here is his language: "John, it is true, was baptizing in Enon, near Salim, because there was much water there. But did he want much water to baptize in; or did he want it for other purposes? As I have already stated, multitudes of the Jews who resorted to him, remained together several days at a time. They must observe their daily ablutions. For these and

for ordinary purposes, they needed much water; but it cannot be proved that John wanted the water for the purpose of baptizing."

Doctors of Divinity should, of course, be wise men. They ought not, however, to be "wise above what is written." Where did Dr. Rice learn that the "multitudes" who went to John "remained together several days?" Who told him about those "daily ablutions?" By what sort of tortuous logic can he show that the Jews "needed much water" for other purposes, but not for baptismal purposes, when baptism is the only thing requiring water mentioned in the controverted passage? Who authorized him to fabricate premises that he might draw from them such a conclusion as he desired? It is humiliating when such men as Drs. Miller and Rice "handle the word of God deceitfully." I have allowed these gentlemen to answer the question, Why did John baptize in Enon, near to Salim, where there was much water? They have given their answers—and *such answers!* It is time for the Evangelist to speak, and for Doctors of Divinity to keep silence. What does he say? "And John, also, was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, *because* there was much water there: and they came and were *baptized.*" Is there any thing here about "encampments," "beasts," "daily ablutions," etc.? Did not the people go to John to be *baptized*—not to encamp—not to water their beasts—not to "observe their daily ablutions?"

Did not John select Enon as a suitable place for his purpose, *because* there was much water there? And did he not need "much water" in baptizing? And is not this a powerful circumstantial argument in favor of immersion? I speak in plainness and sorrow when I say that those who expound the passage under consideration as Drs. Miller and Rice have done, assign a reason for John's selection of Enon as a baptismal place which the Holy Spirit has not assigned. There is not an angel in heaven who would not tremble at the very thought of doing such a thing. Alas! presumptuous mortals do many things from which angels would instinctively recoil. Were it not a solemn matter, it would be amusing to present a parallel to the reasoning that has now passed under review. If it were said that a man has erected a "merchant mill" on a certain stream *because* there is much water there, most persons would say that he wanted much water for purposes of grinding. Such men as Drs. Miller and Rice, however, would say: "You totally misconceive the man's object. He has built his mill on that stream, not because he needs the water to turn his machinery, but that those who "encamp" at the mill may have water to drink, and perform their "daily ablutions," and that their "beasts" may drink also." This would be the reasoning; and most people would say, if the authors of such reasoning are not sent to a Lunatic Asylum, there is no use for Lunatic Asylums.

After all, I must say that Dr. Rice is a logician—a conclusive reasoner—and an admirable preacher. I refer now to his ordinary pulpit ministrations. But put him on the wrong side of a question, as he is in the baptismal controversy, and he is at once like Samson, shorn of his locks. It is the cause, rather than the man, that is weak.

To demolish all that has ever been said about John's selecting places where there was much water for other than baptismal purposes, I need only state a few facts: We are told that in the early part of the Savior's ministry, "great multitudes followed him"—subsequently he miraculously fed at one time "four thousand," and at another "five thousand men, beside women and children"—and on another occasion "an innumerable multitude gathered together, so that they trod one upon another." But there was nothing said about water. It is not said that "seeing the multitude, he went where there was much water, that they might be refreshed—but he went into a mountain. Why is water not mentioned in connection with the crowds that so often thronged about the Savior? When, however, John's baptism is referred to, (John, iii, 23,) it is said he was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, *because there was much water there*. Did he select that place that the people and their beasts might drink, be refreshed, etc.; and was the Savior less considerate? The truth is—and it is vain for men or devils to deny

it—much water was required in baptism. This would not have been the case if baptism had not been immersion. There is nothing said about baptism in connection with the multitudes that often crowded around the Savior, and therefore there is no mention of water—“much water.”

The baptism of the Ethiopian (referred to Acts, viii, 38,) is worthy of consideration. The sacred historian says: “And 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,” etc. It has been often said that going into the water does not *necessarily* imply immersion. And who supposes that it does? It would surely be possible to “go into water,” and “come up out of it,” without being immersed. But suppose, as in the case before us, between the two movements the act of baptism occurs. What then? Evidently the word baptize must determine the nature of that act. This is the view entertained by Baptists. They say the term baptize shows what act Philip performed after he descended with the eunuch into the water. And they confidently appeal to all Greek literature, profane and sacred, in support of the position that *baptizo* means to immerse. Hence they would be as fully satisfied as they now are of the eunuch’s immersion, if not one word had been said about the descent into the water. Still they regard the going down into the water and the coming up out of the

water as furnishing a very strong circumstantial proof of immersion. They assume that Philip and the eunuch were men of good sense, and, if so, they did not go into the water for purposes of "pouring or sprinkling." Persons of good sense could not do so foolish a thing.

But it is said that the Greek preposition, *eis*, translated *into*, means *to*, and that Philip and the eunuch only went *to* the water. As sensible men, they would not have done that, if pouring or sprinkling had been the act to be performed. Why go down *to* the water? Why not have a cup full, or a spoonful, taken up to the chariot?

In reference to *eis*, Dr. Summers, in his book on Baptism, p. 100, says: "When *eis* means *into*, it is before the noun, as well as before the verb." The argument based on this statement is, that as *eis* is used but once in Acts, viii, 38, Philip and the eunuch did not go *into*, but only *to* the water, and the conclusion is, that "the eunuch was not immersed."

Did Dr. S. ever read the second chapter of Matthew, in Greek? If so, he knows that in verses 11, 12, 13, 14, 20, 21, 22, we have the phrases, "into the house," "into their own country," "into Egypt," "into the land of Israel," and "into the parts of Galilee." He knows, also, that *eis* is translated *into*, in all these places, and that it is used but once. If, then, the statement of Dr. S. is true in regard to *eis*, the "wise men" did not go "*into* the house," did

not return "*into* their own country." Joseph was not required to "flee *into* Egypt," etc.

Again, if the philology of Dr. S. is worth anything, the devils referred to, Matthew, viii, 31, 32, 33, did not enter "*into* the swine," and the swine did not run "*into* the sea," and the keepers of the swine did not go "*into* the city," etc. In all these places, *eis* is used but once. It seems, also, that the Savior, in Matthew, ix, 17, did not speak of putting wine *into* bottles, but only *to* bottles; for *eis* is used but once. Query: How could the "new wine" break the "old bottles" without being put into them? Once more: It is said, Matthew, xxv, 46, "And these shall go away *into* everlasting punishment, but the righteous *into* life eternal." Here, also, *eis* is used but once, and according to the criticism I am exposing, the wicked do not go "*into* everlasting punishment," nor the righteous "*into* life eternal." But in all these passages, Pedobaptists very readily admit that *eis* means *into*. They have no objection to this meaning, unless baptismal waters are referred to. This little word *eis*, is a strange word, indeed, if what they say of it, is true. It will take a man *into* a country, *into* a city, *into* a house, *into* a ship, *into* heaven, *into* hell—*into* any place in the universe, except the water! Poor word! afflicted, it seems, with hydrophobia. It will allow a person to go *to* the water, but not *into* it. However, where baptism is not referred to, it may denote entrance into water, as in

Mark, ix, 22. But laying irony aside, I affirm in the face of the literary world, that Greek writers often use *eis* twice, to express the idea of entrance into a place—once in composition with the verb, and once before the noun or pronoun—and they often use it but once to denote the same idea of entrance *into* a place. The man who does not know this, ought to relinquish all pretensions to Greek scholarship. A Freshman, in any of our colleges, would deserve rebuke, were he to make such statements in reference to *eis*, as Pedobaptist Doctors of Divinity, frequently make.

Suppose the following facts were published in any Pedobaptist paper in America: “An officer of the United States’ Government was traveling—riding in a carriage, and reading in the prophecy of Isaiah. A minister was going on foot, in the same direction, and was invited by the officer to ride with him. Having accepted the invitation, the minister preached Jesus to the officer; and as they journeyed, the officer said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And the minister said, If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest. And the officer said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the carriage to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both the minister and the officer, and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water,” etc. Let such a narrative as this be published in a Pedobaptist paper,



and the readers of that paper, without an exception, would say: That minister was an immersionist, and that officer was immersed. Now, I ask, if such a narrative as this, would not be substantially the narrative we have in Acts, viii, 27—39? Let the reader determine. When will men learn to exercise a little common sense in reference to religious matters?

Pedobaptists are exceedingly unreasonable in their management of the baptismal controversy. They insist that it is utterly improbable that suitable water could be found at Jerusalem for the immersion of three thousand persons, on the day of Pentecost—that there is no reference to a stream of water in connection with the baptism of Saul of Tarsus, the jailer, etc., etc. One would imagine that if there was anything said about a “river,” “much water,” etc., it would be conceded that these baptisms were immersions. But it would not be so. For when Baptists refer to the Jordan or Enon, where there was “much water,” or to the water into which Philip and the eunuch went down, Pedobaptists argue that an abundance of water, by no means, indicates that the act of immersion was performed. We cannot please them at all. They are like the Jewish children in the markets: If we pipe to them, they will not dance; if we mourn to them they will not lament. If there is no mention of a “river” in connection with a baptismal narrative of the New Testament, the cry is, “no immersion, scarcity of water,” etc. If the

river Jordan is named, the same cry of "no immersion," is heard. So that, according to Pedobaptist logic, scarcity of water, and abundance of water, prove the very same thing! How are we to meet in argument, men who draw the same conclusion from premises as far apart "as from the center, thrice to the utmost pole?" They repudiate all the laws of logic, and trample under their feet, all the principles of common sense. But I will not indulge in severity of remark. Such men probably have enough to suffer from the accusations of conscience, if, indeed, conscience has not ceased to perform its office.

John Calvin felt the force of the argument in favor of immersion, derived from the places selected for the administration of baptism. Hence, in his Commentary, (translated by Rev. William Pringle, Edinburgh, and printed for the Calvin Translation Society,) he remarks, on John, iii, 22, 23, "From these words we may infer that John and Christ administered baptism by plunging the whole body beneath the water." On Acts, viii, 38, he says: "Here we see the rite used among the men of old time, in baptism; for they put all the body into the water. Now the use is this, that the minister doth only sprinkle the body or the head. But we ought not to stand so much about a small difference of a ceremony, that we should, therefore, divide the church, or trouble the same with brawls, \* \* \* \* \*  
\* \*. Wherefore the church did grant liberty to

herself, since the beginning, to change the rites somewhat, excepting the substance." So much for the testimony of the Founder of Presbyterianism.

Before I proceed to the historical argument in favor of immersion, I will say that if *baptizo* means to immerse, it does not mean sprinkle or pour. If it means sprinkle, it does not mean immerse or pour. If it means pour, it does not mean sprinkle or immerse. It is nonsense to say that the word can denote three actions so dissimilar. It is an outrage on the philosophy of language. Did not Jesus Christ, in enjoining baptism, give a specific command? If he did not, it is impossible to know what he requires, and the impossibility releases from all obligation to obey the requirement. I say boldly that it is not the duty of any man to be baptized, if he *cannot* know what baptism is. All candid persons, upon examination of the subject, must admit that the Savior gave a specific command, when he enjoined baptism on believers. And if so, he did not require them to be immersed in water, *or* that water be poured *or* sprinkled on them. He did not require any *one* of three things; for on this supposition, the command loses its specific character. The matter then comes to this point: Did Christ require believers to be immersed in water, or to have water applied to them by sprinkling or pouring? Now, if the word baptize, in the New Testament, means sprinkle or pour, as Pedobaptists insist; and

if baptism is an "application of water," is it not infinitely remarkable that water is never said to be baptized upon the subject of the ordinance, and that the water is never said to be applied? If baptize means sprinkle or pour, the water is baptized, not the person. We cannot speak of sprinkling a man without an ellipsis or figure of speech. And no rational person would expect to find either an ellipsis or figure of speech in the apostolic commission. Sprinkling implies the separation and scattering of the particles of the substance sprinkled. A man cannot be poured, because pouring implies a continuous stream of the substance poured. I say again, if baptize, in the New Testament, means sprinkle or pour, the water is baptized. But nowhere is water found in the objective case, after the verb baptize, in the active voice, and nowhere is it the nominative case to the verb in the passive voice. We never read, I baptize *water* upon you; but I baptize *you*. It is never said: *Water was baptized* upon them; but it is said: "*they were baptized*, both men and women." The subjects of the ordinance are baptized, the water is not. And, therefore, baptize, in the New Testament, signifies neither sprinkle nor pour. But substitute immerse for it, and how plain and beautiful every baptismal narrative! I immerse *you*, not the water. *They were immersed*, that is, the "*men and women.*" Those who do not look upon this statement of the matter as conclusive against sprinkling and

pouring, ought (even if they are Doctors of Divinity) to apply themselves at once to the study of English Grammar. A knowledge of this science, coupled with candor and common sense, would extricate them from the mazes of error.

6. *History bears testimony to the practice of immersion, except in cases of sickness and urgent necessity, for more than thirteen hundred years.*

I avail myself, as I have done, of Pedobaptist witnesses: My first witness is Richard Baxter, author of the "Saints' Rest." He says: "It is commonly confessed by us to the Anabaptists, as our commentators declare, that in the apostles' times, the baptized were dipped over head in the water, and that this signified their profession, both of believing the burial and resurrection of Christ; and of their own *present* renouncing the world and flesh, or dying to sin and living to Christ, or rising again to newness of life, or being buried and risen again with Christ, as the apostle expoundeth, in the fore-cited texts of Col. ii, and Rom. vi."\*

The celebrated Dr. Samuel Johnson refers to the Roman Catholics as giving the sacramental bread to the laity, and withholding the cup from them. He remarks: "They may think that in what is merely ritual, deviations from the primitive mode may be admitted on the ground of convenience; and I think

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\* Quoted in Booth's *Pedobaptism Examined*.

they are as well warranted to make this alteration, as we are to substitute sprinkling in the room of the ancient baptism.”\*

John Wesley, in his Journal of Feb. 21, 1736, writes as follows: “Mary Welch, aged eleven days, was baptized according to the *custom of the first church*, and the rule of the Church of England, by immersion.”

Dr. Miller, with his bitter opposition to immersion, says: “It is not denied that, for the first few centuries after Christ, the *most common* mode of administering baptism was by immersion.”†

The learned Mosheim, in his Church History, says of the first century: “The sacrament of *baptism* was administered in this 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.”

Of the second century, he says: “The persons that were to be baptized, after they had repeated the creed, confessed and renounced their sins, and particularly the devil and his pompous allurements, were immersed under water and received into Christ’s kingdom,” etc.

Of the fourth century, he says: “Baptismal fonts were now erected in the porch of each church, for

\* Boswell’s Life of Johnson, Vol. II., p. 383.

† Miller on Baptism, p. 116.

the more commodious administration of that initiating sacrament.”\*

The celebrated Church Historian, Neander, in his Letter to Judd, expresses himself thus: “As to your question on the original rite of baptism, there can be no doubt whatever, that in the primitive times, the ceremony was performed by immersion, to signify a complete immersion into the new principle of life divine, which was to be imparted by the Messiah. When St. Paul says, that through baptism we are buried with Christ, and rise again with him, he unquestionably alludes to the symbol of dipping into, and rising again out of the water. The practice of immersion, in the first centuries, was, beyond all doubt, prevalent in the whole church: the only exception was made with the baptism of the sick, hence termed *baptisma clinicorum*, which was performed merely by sprinkling.”† I might quote other testimony like this, from Neander’s “Church History,” and his “Planting and Training of the Christian Church,” but the foregoing is sufficient from the great Lutheran.

Dr. Whitby, of the Church of England, in his Commentary, says, on Rom. vi, 4, “It being so expressly declared here and Colos. ii, 12, that we are ‘buried with Christ in baptism,’ by being buried

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\* Maclaine’s Mosheim, (in 2 Vols.,) Vol. I., pp. 46, 69, 121.

† See Appendix to Judd’s Review of Stuart.

under water ; and the argument to oblige us to a conformity to his death, by dying to sin, being taken hence and this immersion being religiously observed by ALL CHRISTIANS FOR THIRTEEN CENTURIES, and approved by our church, and the change of it into sprinkling, even without any allowance from the author of the institution, or any license from any council of the church, being that which the Romanist still urges to justify his refusal of the cup to the laity ; it were to be wished, that this custom might be again of general use, and aspersion only permitted, as of old, in case of the clinici, or in present danger of death.”

And what says Professor Stuart? Quoting Augusti, who refers to the ancient practice of immersion as “a thing made out,” he says : “So, indeed, all the writers who have thoroughly investigated this subject, conclude. I know of no one usage of ancient times, which seems to be more clearly and certainly made out. I cannot see how it is possible for any candid man who examines the subject, to deny this.” Again : “The mode of baptism by immersion, the Oriental Church has always continued to preserve, even down to the present time. The members of this church are accustomed to call the members of the western churches, *sprinkled Christians*, by way of ridicule and contempt. They maintain, that *baptizo* can mean nothing but *immerge* ; and that *baptism by sprinkling* is as great a solecism as *immersion by aspersion* ; and they claim to themselves the honor of having pre-



served the ancient sacred rite of the church free from change and from corruption, which would destroy its significance.”\*

Coleman, in his recent work, entitled “Ancient Christianity Exemplified,” referring to immersion, says: “In the primitive church, immediately subsequent to the age of the apostles, this was undeniably the common mode of baptism. The utmost that can be said of *sprinkling* in that early period is that it was, in case of necessity, permitted as an exception to a general rule. This fact is so well established that it were needless to adduce authorities in proof of it. \* \* \* \* \* It is a great mistake to suppose that baptism by immersion was discontinued when infant baptism became generally prevalent: the practice of immersion continued even until the thirteenth or fourteenth century. Indeed it has never been formally abandoned; but is still the mode of administering baptism in the Greek Church and in several of the Eastern Churches.”†

This testimony is worthy of special consideration; for Coleman often takes occasion to express the *opinion* that immersion is not essential to baptism. He sometimes steps out of his way to do this, but the undeniable facts of history prompt a reluctant declaration of the truth.

\* Stuart on Mode of Baptism, 75, 76, 77.

† Pages 395, 396.

As immersion was the general practice for more than thirteen hundred years, the reader may be anxious to know how it has been, to so lamentable an extent, superseded by sprinkling. The following quotations explain the matter :

Dr. Wall, in his "History of Infant Baptism," speaking of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, which continued from A. D. 1558 to 1603, says : " It being allowed to weak children (tho' strong enough to be brought to church) to be baptized by affusion, many fond ladies and gentlemen first, and then by degrees the common people would obtain the favor of the Priest to have their children pass for weak children, too tender to endure dipping in water. Especially (as Mr. Walker observes) *if some instance really were, or were but fancied or framed, of some child's taking hurt by it.* And another thing that had a greater influence than this, was ; That many of our *English* Divines and other people had, during Queen Mary's bloody reign, fled into Germany, Switzerland, etc., and coming back in Queen Elizabeth's time, they brought with them a great love to the customs of those Protestant churches wherein they had sojourned : And especially the authority of *Calvin*, and the rules which he had established at Geneva, had a mighty influence on a great number of our people about that time. Now *Calvin* had not only given his Dictate, in his Institutions, that *the difference is of no moment, whether he that is baptized be dipt all over ;*

and if so, whether thrice or once; or whether he be only wetted with the water poured on him: But he had also drawn up for the use of his church at Geneva, (and afterward published to the world,) a form of administering the sacraments, where, when he comes to order the act of baptizing, he words it thus: *Then the minister of baptism pours water on the infant; saying, I baptize thee,* etc. There had been, as I said, some Synods in some Dioceses of France that had spoken of affusion without mentioning immersion at all; that being the common practice: but for an Office or Liturgy of any church; this is, I believe, the first in the world that prescribes affusion absolutely."

Dr. Wall also refers to the influence of the Westminster Assembly, in substituting pouring and sprinkling for immersion. That Assembly not only made a "Confession of Faith," but a "Directory for the public Worship of God," in which "pouring or sprinkling" is declared "not only lawful, but sufficient, and most expedient." Such a declaration surely would not have been made, if "pouring" and "sprinkling" had not been of comparatively recent origin in England. This, however, by way of parenthesis. Dr. Wall says: "So (parallel to the rest of their reformations) they reformed the Font into a Basin. This Learned Assembly could not remember that Fonts to baptize in, had been always used by the primitive Christians, long before the beginning

of Popery ; and ever since churches were built : But that sprinkling, for the common use of baptizing, was really introduced (in *France* first, and then in other Popish countries) in times of Popery : And that accordingly all those countries in which the usurped power of the Pope is, or has formerly been, owned, have left off dipping of children in the Font : But that all other countries in the world (which had never regarded his authority) do still use it : And that Basins, except in case of necessity, were never used by Papists, or any other Christians whatsoever, till by themselves. The use was ; The minister continuing in his reading Desk, the child was brought and held below him : And there was placed for that use a little Basin of water about the bigness of a syllabub pot, into which the minister, dipping his fingers, and then holding his hand over the face of the child, some drops would fall from his fingers on the child's face. For the *Directory* says, it is *not only lawful, but most expedient* to use pouring or sprinkling."\*

My last quotation, in vindication of the "truth of history," is taken from the *Edinburgh Encyclopedia*, edited by Sir David Brewster, a distinguished Pedobaptist. It contains the following account of "sprinkling." "The first law for sprinkling was obtained in the following manner : Pope Stephen II, being

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\* History of Infant Baptism, Part II, Chapter ix.

driven from Rome by Astolphus, King of the Lombards, in 753, fled to Pepin, who, a short time before, had usurped the crown of France. While he remained there, the monks of Cressy, in Brittany, consulted him, whether in case of necessity, baptism performed by pouring water on the head of the infant would be lawful. Stephen replied that it would. But though the truth of this fact should be allowed, which, however, some Catholics deny, yet pouring or sprinkling was admitted *only in cases of necessity*. It was not till the year 1311, that the legislature, in a council held at Ravenna, declared immersion or sprinkling to be indifferent. In this country, [Scotland], however, sprinkling was never practiced in ordinary cases till after the Reformation; and in England, even in the reign of Edward VI, trine immersion was commonly observed. But during the persecution of Mary, many persons, most of whom were Scotsmen, fled from England to Geneva, and there greedily imbibed the opinions of that church. In 1556, a book was published at that place, containing 'The form of prayers and ministration of sacraments, approved by the famous and godly-learned man, John Calvin,' in which the administrator is enjoined to take water in his hand and lay it on the child's forehead. These Scottish exiles, who had renounced the authority of the Pope, implicitly acknowledged the authority of Calvin; and returning to their own country, with John Knox at their

head, in 1559, established sprinkling in Scotland. From Scotland, this practice made its way into England, in the reign of Elizabeth ; but was not authorized by the established church." *Article Baptism.*

If I have not now shown that immersion was practiced for more than thirteen centuries, except in cases of sickness and necessity, it is impossible for any thing to be shown. The man who is not convinced by the testimony adduced in support of this fact, would not be "persuaded though one should rise from the dead." Such a man, if he had a purpose to accomplish by it, would deny that the sun shone for the first thirteen centuries of the Christian era. What then is to be thought of those Pedobaptist ministers who say that "it cannot be proved that immersion was practiced before the sixteenth century?" They are remarkable men—*remarkable* either for ignorance or a want of candor. I do not determine the point of their *remarkableness*. They ought to study, at least, the alphabetical portions of Church History. They would then know, that until the last few hundred years, immersion was the general rule, and aspersion the exception. They would learn that at one period the propriety of a copious pouring of water on the entire persons of the sick, on their beds, instead of baptism, was seriously called in question, and, by some, most positively denied. They would ascertain (though the fact would greatly astonish them) that many more *infants* have been

immersed than ever had the operation of sprinkling or pouring performed on them. The man who denies this fact, knows comparatively nothing of ecclesiastical history. Immersion, however, so far as unconscious infants are concerned, is no better than sprinkling. Both are uncommanded in the word of God, and belong to the large family of human traditions.

My readers must decide whether my second reason for being a Baptist, is valid. To me, its validity appears perfectly unquestionable. I AM A BAPTIST BECAUSE BAPTISTS CONSIDER THE IMMERSION IN WATER, OF A BELIEVER IN CHRIST, ESSENTIAL TO BAPTISM—SO ESSENTIAL THAT THERE IS NO BAPTISM WITHOUT IT.

Before I proceed to give my third reason for being a Baptist, it is, perhaps, proper that I briefly notice the most prominent Pedobaptist objections to immersion. A brief notice is all that is necessary.

1. *John, it is argued, baptized not in, but at Jordan.*

Episcopalians and Methodists are precluded from a resort to this argument; for the "Book of Common Prayer," and the "Discipline," both teach that Jesus was baptized "*in* the river Jordan." John baptized *in* the wilderness. Here we have the same word *in*, the representative of the Greek *en*. How would it do to say John baptized *at* the wilderness? The Greek is surely a strange language, if it has no preposition which means *in*. If *en* has not this meaning, there is no word in the language that has.

Let any Greek scholar try to express, in Greek, the idea of being *in* a place, *in* a house, *in* a river, etc., without the use of *en*. The ordinary meaning of *en*, is *in*, and of *eis*, *into*.

2. *John, it is said, baptized "with water."*

It is insisted that "*with water*," denotes that the water was *applied* in baptism. It is enough to say, in reply to this objection, that Baptists never immerse *without* water. John speaks of baptism *in* water, *in* the Holy Ghost, and *in* fire. King James's Translators, no doubt, rendered *en*, *with*, to make, what they considered, an emphatic distinction between the baptismal elements. They were wrong. Every scholar knows that the proper rendering is, *in water*. The little preposition *en*, acts a conspicuous part here, also. It is the same word already defined. It is as proper to say that John baptized *with* the wilderness, and *with* the Jordan, as that he baptized *with* water. *En* is translated *in*, in the first two instances, and why should it be rendered *with*, in the last? Can any scholar give a good reason? But, as I have said, Baptists do not immerse without water. If I say, "the clothes were washed *with* water," does it follow that they were not dipped into it? Surely not.

3. *It is urged with great confidence that three thousand persons could not have been immersed on the day of Pentecost.*

It is supposed that water could not be had for the purpose. Indeed! Where now is the "much water"



that Dr. Rice found necessary for the "daily ablutions" of the Jews? They certainly performed their "ablutions" at home, if they could not be dispensed with when they went to John's baptism. Jerusalem, according to Robinson, "would appear always to have had a full supply of water for its inhabitants, both in ancient and modern times. In the numerous sieges to which, in all ages, it has been exposed, we nowhere read of any want of water within the city."\* Where people can live there is water enough for purposes of immersion. But why dwell on this point? If Jerusalem had been situated on the Mediterranean sea, Pedobaptists would not allow *eis* to take the three thousand converts *into* its waters. They are no more willing to admit immersion, where there is an abundance of water, than where there is a supposed scarcity.

But it is insisted that it was impossible for the three thousand converts to be immersed on the day of Pentecost, and therefore water must have been sprinkled or poured on them. I answer, it takes about as much time to sprinkle as it does to immerse. Much the greater portion of time, in modern baptisms, is occupied in repeating the words of the baptismal ceremony. If it is said, that sprinkling was more expeditiously performed in ancient than in modern times, I have an equal right to say the same thing

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\* Biblical Researches, Vol. I, p. 479.

of immersion. If the apostles alone baptized on the day of Pentecost, (which, however, cannot be proved,) they could have easily immersed the three thousand.\* If Pedobaptists deny this, let them account for the historical fact that Austin the monk, sent by Pope Gregory the Great into England in the year 597, to convert the inhabitants, "consecrated the river Swale, near York, in which he caused ten thousand of his converts to be baptized in one day." They were immersed.

4. *It is thought to militate against immersion that the Holy Spirit is said to be poured out.*

If so, it militates equally against sprinkling. If pouring is baptism, why is not the Spirit sometimes said to be baptized? He is said to be poured out! There is as much difference between the pouring out of the Spirit, and the baptism of the Spirit, as there is between the pouring of water into a baptistery and the immersion of a person in that water. Those baptized "with the Holy Ghost," or rather "*in* the Holy Ghost," were placed under the influence of the Holy Ghost, just as a person baptized in water is put under the influence of the water. If the Pedobaptist reasoning on this subject is correct, what follows? Why, that as the Spirit is said to be "given," to "fall upon," to "testify," to "fill," to "write," etc.,

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\* The writer once saw the venerable Reuben Ross, when more than sixty years of age, baptize sixty-six persons in thirty-three minutes; and there was no indecent haste.

therefore, giving, falling upon, testifying, filling, writing, etc., are all baptism. Surely this will not do.

5. *Saul of Tarsus, it is affirmed, was baptized standing up.*

The participle *anastas* is sometimes so translated, but in numerous instances denotes the beginning of a process by which a thing is done. It is said, (Luke, i, 39,) "And Mary *arose* (*anastasa*—same word with a feminine termination,) in those days, and went into the hill country," etc. Did Mary *stand up* and go? Does not *anastasa* here denote the beginning of the process by which she reached the hill country? In Luke, xv, 18, the prodigal son says, "I will arise (*anastas*) and go to my father," etc., and in verse 20 it is said: "And he *arose*, (*anastas*,) and came to his father." Did he *stand up* and go to his father? Was not the *anastas* the commencement of the returning movement? He *arose* and returned to his father. Now Luke wrote the Acts of the Apostles. Is it not reasonable, then, to believe, that when he says (Acts, ix, 18,) that Saul *arose* (*anastas*) and was baptized, he means by *anastas* the beginning of a process necessary to his baptism? He evidently *arose* that he might be immersed; but no rising up—no *anastas*—was necessary, if water was to be poured or sprinkled on him. His immersion implied the movement indicated by *anastas*, while pouring or sprinkling could imply no such movement. In the thirty-ninth verse of the same chapter it is said: "And

Peter arose (*anastas*) and went with them"—that is, to Joppa. He did not stand up still and go; but he arose as the first thing to be done in getting to Joppa, just as Saul arose as the first thing to be done in getting to a suitable place for immersion. But I shall let Saul, who afterward became Paul, settle this matter himself. In Romans, vi, 4, including himself with those to whom he wrote, he says: "*We are buried with him by baptism.*" If Saul was buried by baptism, he was immersed. There is no burial in pouring or sprinkling.

6. *It is argued that the question, Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized? (Acts, x, 47,) intimates that the water was to be brought, etc.*

This objection to immersion is almost a laughable one. The question only means, Can any one forbid the baptism of these Gentiles, who have received the Holy Spirit as well as the Jews? Baptist ministers, in receiving candidates for baptism, often say to the Churches, "Can any man forbid water," etc. Does this imply that the water is to be brought in a "bowl" or "pitcher?"

7. *It is said that the jailer could not have been immersed in prison. (See Acts, xvi, 30-34.)*

Baptists do not say he was immersed in prison. The jailer *brought out* Paul and Silas from the prison before he said, "Sirs, what must I do," etc.? Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him, and to all that were *in his house*. It seems, then, that they

were in his house, (verse 32). In verse 34 it is said, "And when he had brought them into his house," etc. The thirty-third verse contains an account of the baptism. They left the house when the baptism took place, and they went back into it after the baptism was over. Why did they leave the house to sprinkle or pour water? Was it necessary? Evidently not; but it was necessary to the administration of apostolic baptism.

8. *Pedobaptists urge that the baptism of the Israelites unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea is irreconcilable with the idea of immersion.*

In being baptized into or unto Christ, we publicly assume him as our leader. The Israelites, in being baptized unto Moses, publicly assumed him as their leader. The analogy of their passage through the sea, with the cloud above them, to Christian immersion, no doubt suggested to Paul the language he has employed. There was no literal baptism—and there was no pouring or sprinkling. How often is Psalm lxxvii, 17, referred to, to prove that the Israelites had water poured on them. Unfortunately for this view of the matter it is said, "The *clouds* poured out water. It was a *cloud* that Paul refers to—the miraculous cloud, the symbol of the Divine presence. This cloud had just as much water in it as that on which the Savior rode triumphantly to heaven, and no more. It will be observed that the Israelites were baptized unto Moses *in the cloud and in the sea.*

In literal baptism the person is baptized only in water. The water envelops, surrounds the individual. In the case of the Israelites it took the sea (which was as a wall on each each side) and the cloud (which was above) to complete the envelopment. He who does not see that baptize is figuratively applied to the Israelites, because the word literally means immerse, is not to be reasoned with. If it could be conceived that the miraculous cloud poured forth water, and that the pouring constituted the baptism, what had the sea to do in the baptismal operation? Absolutely nothing: but Paul says, "our fathers were baptized unto Moses *in the cloud and in the sea.*"

9. *It is contended that the phrase, "divers washings," Hebrews, ix, 10, (in the original baptisms) indicates more baptisms than one.*

It is a significant fact that Macknight, a Presbyterian translator, renders the phrase "divers immersions." The Mosaic law required unclean persons "to bathe themselves in water"—it required "unclean vessels to be put into water," and it said, "all that abideth not the fire ye shall make go through the water." If it is not conceded that these regulations involved "divers immersions," it ought not to be admitted that the sun rises in the East. Moreover, Paul, in the same chapter of Hebrews, uses *rantizo*, to sprinkle, three times. If by "divers washings" he included sprinklings, why did he use a different

word altogether, when, 'as every body allows, he intended to convey the idea of sprinkling? Can any Doctor of Divinity tell?

10. *Immersion, it is affirmed, is indecent, and dangerous.*

What says Richard Watson, in his "Theological Institutes," which are so highly approved by his Methodist brethren? Here is his language: "With all the arrangements of modern times, baptism by immersion is not a decent practice: there is not a female, perhaps, who submits to it, who has not a great previous struggle with her delicacy." Again: Even if immersion had been the original mode of baptizing, we should, in the absence of any command on the subject, direct or implied, have thought the church at liberty to accommodate the manner of applying water to the body in the name of the Trinity, in which the essence of the rite consists, to different climates and manners; but it is satisfactory to discover that all the attempts made to impose upon Christians a practice *repulsive to the feelings, dangerous to the health, and offensive to delicacy*, is destitute of all Scriptural authority, and of really primitive practice."\*

Immersion not a "decent practice!" And yet the Methodist Discipline authorizes it! It authorizes an indecent practice, does it? Ay, more: it recog-

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\* Vol. II, pp. 648, 660.

nizes immersion as valid baptism, and its validity must arise from the appointment of Jesus Christ. It cannot be valid unless he has appointed it. Will Methodists dare say that an appointment of his is not a "decent practice?" Will they say that this "practice" is "repulsive to the feelings," and "offensive to delicacy?" It may be "repulsive to the feelings" of the enemies of Christ to do what he has commanded, but it is not to the feelings of his friends; for they have not the spurious "delicacy" referred to. No "female," it seems, "submits to" immersion "without a great previous struggle with her delicacy!" Ah, indeed! Baptists who practice immersion know nothing of this "great struggle." Pedobaptists, however, find it much easier to dissuade "females" from being immersed by referring to the indelicacy of immersion, than by attempting to prove, in honorable argument, that immersion is contrary to the word of God. The reason is, the pride, corruption, and carnality of the heart, are readily enlisted by an artful appeal to "delicacy," "decency," etc. But may Heaven have mercy on the man who makes such an appeal!

It is time to speak and write plainly. I say, then, that the man who sees any thing "indecent," "indelicate," or "vulgar" in immersion—ay, in the immersion of "females," is an "indecent" man. He is a man of "indelicate" feelings. The vulgarity is in the man—not in the immersion. Such a man



may write "Theological Institutes," or, like Dr. Summers, he may write a vulnerable book on baptism, or, like Dr. Lee, he may make the indecency of immersion the theme of newspaper articles—but he is *a vulgar-minded man*. Immodest persons often make the greatest pretensions to modesty, and the reason is they deem it necessary to *make pretensions* because they are so utterly destitute of what they pretend to have. As to the charge that "immersion is dangerous" I dispose of it with the remark that, it is notoriously untrue.

In the foregoing extract from Watson, where he refers to the "church as at liberty to accommodate the manner of applying water," etc., the discerning reader will detect the *germ* of Popery. Ah! that "liberty to accommodate!" etc. How infinitely mischievous has been its operation. The "liberty" assumed "to accommodate," etc., that is, to deviate from the order established by Christ, resulted in the rise of the Romish hierarchy, and has led to the formation of every Pedobaptist church under heaven. This fact is intensely suggestive.

I have now examined all the prominent objections of Pedobaptists to immersion, and what weight is there in those objections? They are as light as the thin air—lighter than vanity. The objections themselves indicate the weakness of the cause they are intended to support. An examination of them only deepens the conviction of my mind that the immer-

sion in water of a believer is essential to baptism—so essential that there is no baptism without it.

III. I AM A BAPTIST BECAUSE BAPTISTS ADOPT THE FORM OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT RECOGNIZED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT—THAT IS TO SAY, THE CONGREGATIONAL FORM OF GOVERNMENT.

There are three prominent forms of church government indicated by the terms Episcopacy, Presbyterianism, and Congregationalism.

Episcopacy recognizes the right of Bishops to preside over districts of country, and one of its fundamental doctrines is, that a Bishop is officially superior to an elder. Of course a modern Bishop has under his charge the “inferior clergy;” for it is insisted that the “ordaining power,” and “the right to rule” belong to the Episcopal office. Those who adopt the Episcopal form of government believe that there are three orders in the ministry—namely, deacons, elders and bishops. The modern application of the term Bishop to a man who has under his charge a district of country, is very objectionable. It has almost banished from Christendom the idea originally attached to the term. In apostolic times, Bishop and Pastor were terms of equivalent import. The elders of the church of Ephesus are termed (Acts, xx, 24,) *overseers*—in the original *episcopos*—the word generally translated “bishop,” if, indeed, “bishop” may be called a translation. It is so

evident from the Scriptures that bishops and elders are identical that it is the wildest folly to call it in question. This, however, is not the place to enlarge on this topic.

Presbyterianism recognizes two classes of elders—*preaching* elders and *ruling* elders. The pastor and ruling elders of a congregation constitute what is called the “Session of the church.” The “Session” transacts the business of the church, receives, dismisses, excludes members, etc. From the decisions of a Session there is an appeal to Presbytery, which is composed of preaching and ruling elders. From the action of a Presbytery there lies an appeal to Synod; and from the adjudications of Synod there is an appeal to the General Assembly, whose decrees are both final and irresistible. These Presbyteries, Synods, and General Assemblies, are often termed “church courts,” the “judicatories of the church,” etc. The friends of Presbyterianism, no doubt, deem their form of government most expedient and satisfactory; but to believe it Scriptural, must be as difficult as to admit the substitution of baptism for circumcision. Where is it intimated, in the New Testament, that churches composed Presbyteries, and Presbyteries Synods, and Synods General Assemblies, and that there is an appeal from the lower to the higher “courts?” While Presbyterians, therefore, talk and write about the *expediency* of their form of government, they ought to say nothing of its *Scriptural*

*turality*. It is unquestionably a better government than the Episcopal; but it is not the government established by Jesus Christ. It will be readily seen that Episcopacy and Presbyterianism imply that many local congregations enter representatively into the composition of what is termed "the church." Hence we often hear of the "Episcopal Church of the United States of America," the "Presbyterian Church of the United States," etc. The local religious communities in all parts of the nation where Episcopacy prevails, are considered as constituting the "Episcopal Church." So of Presbyterianism. So of Methodism, North and South. The *Baptist Church of the United States* is a phrase which ought never to be used—which can never be used with propriety. There are thousands of Baptist churches in the United States, but they do not constitute one great Baptist Church of the United States. They differ materially and fundamentally from Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Methodist churches. They are all independent of one another, so far as the exercise of governmental power is concerned. Every local congregation, united in church fellowship, is as complete a church as ever existed, and is perfectly competent to do whatever a church can of right do. No one congregation is at liberty to interfere with the affairs of another. Every Baptist church is an independent and a pure democracy. The idea of independence should be earnestly cherished, while that of consolidation should

be as earnestly deprecated. Agreeably to the view now presented, we read in the New Testament of the *churches* of Judea, the *churches* of Galatia, the *churches* of Macedonia, the *churches* of Asia, etc., etc., but we never read of the *church* of Judea, the *church* of Galatia, etc. There is not the remotest reference to a *church* commensurate with a province, a kingdom, or an empire. This view of *church* extension and consolidation was *post-apostolic*, palpably so. There are no people who recognize more fully than Baptists the fact that the phrase, "kingdom of Christ," implies that he is King—he is Monarch—he is Autocrat. In ordaining the laws of his kingdom he did not allow the impertinent interference of men or angels. There is no human or angelic legislation in the kingdom of Christ. Churches organized according to the New Testament model are required to execute the laws of Christ. To do this they must of course first decide what the laws of Christ are; and they are so plain that there need be no misapprehension. It may be said, therefore, that the churches of Christ are invested with *judicial* and *executive* power, but they have no *legislative* power. Ecclesiastical legislation—such as is allowed in many Pedobaptist organizations—is perfectly abhorrent to the spirit of the gospel. Churches are executive democracies, organized to carry out the sovereign will of their Head. I cannot here resist my inclination to express my views in the language of my friend

and brother, Dr. J. M. Peck. Referring to Baptists, he says:

“Their theory of church government embraces two great and apparently opposite principles:

“*First.*—That the *kingdom of Christ*, in its visible form on earth, *is a pure monarchy*. Christ is King and Lawgiver. He needs not the aid of man, nor will he endure human legislation in any form. He has not merely given a few vague and general rules, and left his people to work out all the discordant plans of government that prevail at this moment in Christendom. Both by precept and in the inspired records of the primitive churches, there are examples for every class of cases that necessity ever requires. The *legislation* in his kingdom is all Divine.

“*Secondly.*—His kingdom, in its organized state of small communities, each managing its own affairs in its own vicinage, is a *pure democracy*. THE PEOPLE—THE WHOLE PEOPLE, in each community, choose their own officers—receive and expel members—conduct all business as a body politic—decide on all questions of discipline, and observe all the institutions of Christ. Were they to institute a *representative*, or any other form of government, they would depart from the law book, and soon be involved in as many difficulties as their neighbors.”\*

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\* Christian Repository, Vol. II, pp. 47, 48. The writer knows of no man better qualified to write a book on the “Distinctive Principles of Baptists” than Rev. J. M. Peck

CONGREGATIONALISM ANTAGONIZES WITH EPISCOPACY AND PRESBYTERIANISM, AND DISTINCTLY RECOGNIZES THESE TRUTHS :

1. *That the governmental power is in the hands of the people.*

It resides with the laity, in contradistinction from Bishops and Elders ; I mean to say that Bishops and Elders are incapable of doing anything without the concurrence of the laity.

2. *The right of a majority of the members of a church to rule.*

When the will of the majority is ascertained, it becomes the minority to submit.

3. *That the power of a church cannot be transferred or alienated, and that church action is final.*

The power of a church cannot be delegated. There may be messengers of a church, but there cannot be delegates. No church can empower any man, or body of men, to do anything which will impair its independency, or militate against its democratic sovereignty.

These are highly important principles, and while the existence of the Congregational form of church government depends upon their recognition and application, it is an inquiry of vital moment : Does the New Testament recognize these principles ? For if

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Such a volume from his pen is a desideratum, and it would doubtless have an extensive circulation. It is hoped that his attention will be directed to this subject.

't does not, whatever may be said in commendation of them, they possess no obligatory force. I refer to the New Testament, because it would be unjustifiable to go to the Old, to ascertain the form of government established for *Christian* churches. Jesus Christ, in instructing the apostles how to train the baptized disciples, says: "Teaching them *to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.*" He does not say, "all things that *Moses* commanded," but "all things whatsoever *I* have commanded." The apostles enjoyed his teachings during his ministry, and the "forty days" intervening between his resurrection and ascension, he employed in "speaking to them of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." It may be said that Paul was not with Christ during his ministry, and did not enjoy the advantage of the "forty days'" instruction. This is true, but his deficiencies, as compared with the other apostles, were evidently supplied by direct revelations from Heaven. It will be seen, therefore, that the apostles themselves, had no *discretionary* power. They were to teach an observance of "all things" their Lord and Master had "commanded"—no more, no less. Whatever they taught under the influence of inspiration, must have accorded with the teachings of the Savior. Whatever they did, as inspired men, may be considered as done by him.

Does the New Testament then inculcate the foundation-principle of Congregationalism; namely,



*that the governmental power of a church is with the people, the members?* Let us see :

*It was certainly the province of the apostolic churches to admit members into their communion.*

In Rom. xiv, 1, it is written: "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations." What is the meaning of the first clause of this verse? Its import is obviously this: Receive into your fellowship, and treat as a Christian, the man who is weak in faith." The paraphrase of Barnes is: "Admit to your society or fellowship; receive him kindly," etc. There is unquestionably a command—"RECEIVE YE." To whom is this command addressed? To Bishops? It is not. To the "Session of the Church," composed of the Pastor and "Ruling Elders?" No. To whom then? To the very persons to whom the Epistle was addressed, and it was written "to all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to the saints." No ingenuity can torture this language into a command given to the officers of the church in Rome. The members of the church, whose designation was "saints," were addressed and commanded to "receive the weak in faith." It was their business to decide who should be admitted into their religious community; and, Paul, under the impulses of inspiration, says: "Him that is weak in the faith, receive ye." It was, of course, their duty to withhold their fellowship from those who had no faith.

The right of the apostolic churches to exclude members from their fellowship, evidently implied their right to receive members into their fellowship. It is inconceivable that they had the right to exclude, and not the right to receive members.

*I now proceed to show that the New Testament churches had the right to exclude unworthy members, and that they exercised that right.*

In 1 Cor. v, 1—5, we read as follows: "It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."

It is worthy of remark, that while Paul "judged" that the incestuous man ought to be excluded from the church, *he* did not exclude him. There are those in these latter days, who are called ministers of Christ, who, if they had lived then, might have excluded him, if the Corinthian Church, knowing its

prerogative, had not protested against any infringement of its sovereignty, by so arbitrary an exercise of ministerial power. The apostle Paul, however, did not exclude the guilty man. He had no right to do so. He did not claim the right. Hence, when he said to the "Churches of Galatia," "I would they were cut off who trouble you," he did not cut them off, though he desired it to be done, and advised that it should be done.

It is worthy of notice, too, that the members of the Corinthian Church could not, in their *individual capacity*, exclude the incestuous man. It was necessary to their action in the premises, that they should be "gathered together." They must assemble as a church, and exemplify the spirit of a *pure democracy*. Thus assembling, "the power of our Lord Jesus Christ" was to be with them. They were to act by his authority, and execute his will; for he makes it incumbent on his churches to administer discipline. In the last verse of the chapter referred to, Paul says: "Put away from among yourselves that wicked person." Here is a command, given by an inspired man, requiring the exclusion of an unworthy member from the church, at Corinth. To whom was the command addressed? To the official members of the church? No, but "unto the *church* of God, which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints."

The right of a church to exclude from its communion, disorderly persons, is recognized 2 Thess. iii, 6, "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly," etc. This command was addressed "to the church of the Thessalonians." To "withdraw" from a "disorderly brother," is the same thing as to exclude him. There is a cessation of church fellowship.

I have not referred to Matthew, xviii, 17, because I shall notice it in another place. The reader will see, upon examination, that the passage clearly implies the power of "the church" to perform the act of excommunication, by which the member cut off, becomes as a "heathen man, and a publican."

*The apostolic churches had the power and the right to restore excluded members who gave satisfactory evidences of penitence.*

In 2 Cor. ii, 6-8, the "incestuous man" is again referred to, as follows: "Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such an one should be swallowed up without overmuch sorrow. Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him." The apostle manages this case with the greatest tenderness and delicacy. He refers to the excluded

member, without the least reference to the disgraceful offense for which he was excluded. "Sufficient," says he, "is this punishment," etc. That is, the object of the excommunication had been accomplished. The church had shown its determination not to connive at sin, and the excluded member had become penitent. But the point under consideration is, that the apostle advised the restoration of the penitent offender. Paul could no more restore him to the church than he could exclude him from it, in the first instance; but he says: "I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him." The power to restore was with the church, and Paul solicits an exercise of that power. The great apostle, in saying, "*I beseech you*," etc., bows to the majesty of democratic church sovereignty. He virtually admits that nothing could be done unless the church chose to act.

In this connection, one fact should be carefully observed: The power of the Corinthian church to restore this excluded member, is unquestionable. The fact which deserves notice, is that the power in the apostolic churches to restore excluded members, implies the power of receiving members, and also the power of excommunicating. Now, if the New Testament churches had the power and the right to do these three things, they must have had the power and the right to transact any other business coming before them. There surely can be nothing of more

vital importance to the existence and the interests of a church than the reception, exclusion, and restoration of members. There are no three acts whose influence on the organic structure of a church is so great, and these acts the apostolic churches undoubtedly performed. Here I might let the argument for the foundation principle of Congregationalism rest; but there is other proof of the New Testament recognition of that principle.

In the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles there is an account of the election of Matthias to the apostleship. He was to succeed Judas, the traitor. The most natural inference is that Matthias was chosen by the "one hundred and twenty disciples," mentioned verse 15. These disciples were, no doubt, the church to which the three thousand converts were added on the day of Pentecost. The laity must have been held in high estimation by Peter, if called on in conjunction with the apostles themselves to elect a successor to Judas.

In Acts, vi, there is reference to the circumstances which originated the deacon's office, and also to the manner in which the first deacons were appointed. We read as follows: "And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. Then the twelve called *the multitude of the disciples* unto them, and said, It is not reason

that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, *brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte of Antioch, whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.*"

I have *italicised* the words in these verses to which I call special attention. It will be seen that the apostles referred the matter of grievance to *the multitude of the disciples*—directed the *brethren to look out seven men*—that the saying pleased *the whole multitude*—that *they chose*, etc. The *democracy\** of the whole arrangement is as clear as the sun in heaven.

In Acts, xiv, 23, there is mention made of the ordination of elders in every church, as follows: "And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed." Tyndale's translation is decidedly better—comes much nearer to the meaning of the original. With the orthog-

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\* I use the terms *democracy, democratic, etc.*, in their literal sense, without any reference to their technical application to one of the political parties of our great nation.

raphy modernized it is as follows: "And when they had ordained them seniors *by election*, in every congregation," etc. The word in the original, here translated ordained in our common version, literally means "to stretch forth the hand," as is the custom in most Baptist churches when a vote is taken. Tyn-dale well puts in the words, "by election," for the churches doubtless elected their elders by the popular vote. He also states in his "Rights of the Church," as quoted by Coleman in his "Church without a Bishop," p. 63, that the Greek word referred to (*cheirotones*, from *cheir*, the hand, and *teino*, to extend or stretch forth) is interpreted (as he interprets it) by Erasmus, Beza, Diodati, and those who translated the Swiss, French, Italian, Belgic, and even English Bibles, *till the Episcopal correction, which leaves out the words by election, as well as the marginal notes, which affirm that the apostles did not thrust pastors into the church through a lordly superiority, but chose and placed them there by the voice of the congregation.*"

Every one can readily imagine why the "*Episcopal correction*" was made. A faithful translation would give the laity an influence which the "Episcopal clergy" are of course unwilling to allow. The word *cheirotones* is used but twice in the New Testament—in the passage under consideration, and in 2 Cor. viii, 19. In the latter it is translated "chosen"—that is, "by the churches."

The word in Acts xiv, 23, certainly means that



elders were chosen, appointed, not without, but by means of the suffrages of the churches. Barnes well remarks: "It is said, indeed, that Paul and Barnabas did this. But probably all that is meant by it is, that they presided in the assembly when the choice was made. It does not mean that they appointed them without consulting the church; but it evidently means that they appointed them in the usual way of appointing officers, by the suffrages of the people."

In view of all these facts, I argue that, according to the New Testament, the officers of a church are chosen by the church. No one church has the right to choose officers for another. No combination of churches has the right. Every church is as independent in its action as if it were the only church in the world. Every church is an *executive democracy*, whose business it is to carry out the will of her Divine Head.

In support of the fundamental principle of Congregationalism, the following facts are stated: The "whole church"—the "brethren"—are named in connection with the "apostles and elders." Acts, xv, 22, 23. "Then pleased it the apostles and elders, *with the whole church*, to send chosen men," etc. "And they wrote letters by them after this manner: The apostles, and elders, *and brethren*, send greeting," etc. The laity of the church at Jerusalem acted as well as the apostles and elders.

The churches of apostolic times sent forth minis-

ters on missionary tours. When Antioch received the word of God, the church at Jerusalem "sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch," etc. Acts, xi, 22. His labors were successful—"much people was added to the Lord"—and at a subsequent period the church in Antioch sent out Saul and Barnabas, who made a long journey—performed much labor—returned and reported to the church "all that God had done with them." Acts, xiii, 1-3; xiv, 26, 27. With what deferential respect did these ministers of the gospel treat the church that sent them forth! The apostles, so far from exercising lordship over the churches, did not control their charities. This is seen in Acts, v, 4; xi, 29, 30; 1 Cor. xvi, 1, 2; 2 Cor. ix, 7. The churches selected messengers to convey their charities. See 1 Cor. xvi, 3; 2 Cor. viii, 18, 19; Phil. ii, 25; iv, 18.

A second principle of Congregationalism, to which I have referred, is *the right of a majority of the members of a church to rule, in accordance with the laws of Christ*. In 2 Cor. ii, 6, it is written: "Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many." A literal translation of the words rendered "of many," would be "by the more"—that is, by the majority. McKnight's rendering is, "by the greater number." If, as has been shown, the governmental power of a church is with the members, it follows that a majority must rule. That is to say,

either the majority or minority must govern. But it is absurd to refer to the rule of the minority. That a majority must rule is so plain a principle of Congregationalism, and so plain a principle of common sense, that it is needless to dwell upon it.

A third truth, as already stated, recognized by the Congregational form of church government is, *that the power of a church cannot be transferred or alienated, and that church action is final.*

The church at Corinth could not transfer her authority to the church at Philippi, nor could the church at Antioch convey her power to the church of Ephesus. Neither could all the apostolic churches delegate their power to an association, or synod, conference or convention. The power of a church is manifestly inalienable; and if this be true, church action is final. That there is no tribunal higher than the church is evident from Matthew, xviii, 15-17. The Savior lays down a rule for the adjustment of private differences among brethren. "If thy brother shall trespass against thee," etc. If the offender, when told of his fault, does not give satisfaction, the offended party is to take with him "one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established." But, if the offender "shall neglect to hear them," what is to be done? "Tell it to the church." What church? The aggregate body of the redeemed? This is absurd. I ask again, What church? Evidently the

particular congregation to which the parties belong. If the offender does not hear the church, what then? Let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." But can there not be an appeal to an association, or presbytery, or conference? No. There is no appeal. Shall an association, or presbytery, or conference, put the offender back in church fellowship, when the church, by its action, classed him with heathens and publicans? This is too preposterous. What kind of fellowship would it be? A church, by excluding a member, declares that member unworthy of fellowship. Will it be asked, what is to be done if the action of a church does not give satisfaction to all concerned? I answer, do what is done when the action of a Presbyterian General Assembly, or Methodist General Conference, or an Episcopal General Convention, does not give satisfaction. There must be a stopping-place. There must be final action. Baptists say, with the New Testament before them, that the action of each local congregation of believers is final. Pedobaptists, with the exception of Independents and Congregationalists, deny the "*finality*" of church action. Who are right? Let those who oppose the Baptist form of church government show anywhere in the New Testament the remotest allusion to an appeal from the decision of a church to any other tribunal. It cannot be done. There were no tribunals in apostolic times analogous to modern presbyteries, synods,

general assemblies, conferences, etc. Let those who affirm that there were such tribunals adduce the proof. On them rests the burden of proof. But to furnish this proof is as difficult as for "a camel to go through the eye of a needle."

Baptists have ever regarded every church as complete in itself, independent, so far as its government is concerned, of every other church under heaven. They have watched with jealous eye all encroachments on church sovereignty. For their sentiments on baptism—its subjects and its action—and their views of church government, they have been persecuted, tortured, put to death. Their blood has flowed like water. From their ranks have been taken myriads of martyrs, who, having endured "much tribulation," are now before the throne of God. But the principles of the Baptists still live, and will live; for they are indestructible. Fire, sword, prisons, racks, gibbets! what say you? If these principles were destructible, would ye not have destroyed them long since, and have blotted out "their memorial" from under heaven? They are divinely vital principles: they will not, they cannot die.

The view which I have presented of the independence of the apostolic churches is so obviously in accordance with the facts in the case, that distinguished Pedobaptists have been forced to concede it. Hence, the learned Mosheim, a Lutheran, and a bitter

enemy of Baptists, speaking of the first century, says: "The churches, in those early times, were entirely independent, none of them being subject to any foreign jurisdiction, but each governed by its own rulers and its own laws; for, though the churches founded by the apostles had this particular deference shown to them, that they were consulted in difficult and doubtful cases, yet they had no juridical authority, no sort of supremacy over the others, nor the least right to enact laws for them."\*

Archbishop Whately, a dignitary of the Church of England, referring to the apostolic churches, says: "They were each a distinct, independent community *on earth*, united by the common principles on which they were founded, and by their mutual agreement, affection and respect; but not having any one recognized Head on earth, or acknowledging any sovereignty of one of these societies over others." Again: "A CHURCH and a DIOCESE seem to have been for a considerable time *co-extensive* and *identical*. And each church or diocese, (and consequently each superintendent,) though connected with the rest by ties of faith, and hope, and charity, seems to have been (as has been already observed) perfectly independent, as far as regards any power of control."†

This is strong testimony from a Lutheran and an

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\* Maclaine's Mosheim, Baltimore Edition, Vol. I, p. 39.

† Kingdom of Christ, Carter's Edition, pp. 36, 44.

Episcopalian. They would have given a different representation of the matter, if they could have done so consistently with truth. They virtually condemned their denominational organizations in writing what I have quoted. I might refer to Neander, Dr. Barrow, Dr. Burton, and I know not how many other Pedobaptists, who have expressed themselves, in substance, as Mosheim and Whately have done; but it is needless. I am not dependent on the testimony of church historians. I make my appeal to the New Testament of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. If all the church histories in the world said that the monarchical or aristocratic form of church government was maintained from the death of the apostle John onward, I would not be moved by it, as long as the New Testament represents every church as a democracy fully competent to transact its own business. "To the law and to the testimony."

Americans reject with scorn the idea of the divine right of kings. They indorse the doctrines of that sublimest of uninspired documents—the "Declaration of Independence." They say, "all men are created free and equal." One man has as much right to be King or President as another—that is, no one has the right till the people confer it. The people are the depositary of power. Now, if all men are created equal, can it be supposed that Jesus Christ, in giving his churches a form of government, contravened the great principle recognized in creation? Is

this supposition reasonable? Certainly it is not. What says Christ, (Matthew, xxiii, 8; Luke, xxii, 24, 25, 26,) “Be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.” “And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so.” The Redeemer suppressed all the risings of ambition in the minds of his disciples—assuring them that they were brethren—on an equality—and positively forbidding everything like the exercise of lordship and authority. Christianity reduces none of its votaries to ciphers. It teaches them all that they are immortal creatures—personally responsible to God. It attaches importance and dignity to man; for, while it deeply humbles him before God, it does not degrade him before his fellow-man. Far, very far from it. Those know little of the genius of Christianity who tamely submit to ministerial domination, whether among Papists or Protestants. But enough.

The view of church government given in the preceding pages I sincerely believe accords with the teachings of the New Testament. Baptists maintain this form of government. **THEREFORE I AM A BAPTIST.** I might give other reasons for being a Baptist, but in the discourse which has been expanded



into this treatise, I presented only the three on which I have now dwelt. I have chosen to confine myself to the points discussed in that discourse—namely, the subjects and the action of Baptism, and the form of church government. Whatever others may think of my Three Reasons for being a Baptist, they are, to my mind, amply satisfactory; and here I lay down my pen.

THE END.

