

# THE MODE AND SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM

by Milo P. Jewett

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*Jewett's work on baptism doctrine written by a former Presbyterian who converted to Baptist convictions, discussing his journey from pedobaptist tradition to adopting believer's baptism by immersion through personal study and conviction.*

8 Chapters

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## 00 - THE Mode and Subjectss of BAPTISM

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THE Mode and Subjects OF

BAPTISM BY

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## 01 - Introduction

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INTRODUCTION. THE history of this book and its author is somewhat remarkable. The author was born and raised in a Presbyterian home, graduated from a Presbyterian college, nurtured in a Presbyterian church, and was professor in a college under Presbyterian control. He received his faith concerning the ordinance of baptism, both as to action, or mode, and subjects, by tradition, and firmly held to the same for many years. He was ordained a minister of the Presbyterian Church, and as pastor he practiced the faith which he had been taught up to the crisis when he changed his faith on baptism he never had a conscious doubt or question as to the validity of, and Scriptural authority for, infant baptism, or sprinkling as the so-called mode. How he came to discard his inherited pedo-baptist faith and become a baptist is graphically narrated in a letter written a few days after his baptism, extracts of which are given following the Prefaces. His experience is a chapter of the same serious struggles through [3] which many others have passed into the clear conviction of the truth on this important subject. By a diligent, prayerful searching of the Scriptures he discovered that the facts did not sustain his faith, and he heroically accepted the facts and cast away his traditional faith. He found what all other students of the word have found, to-wit: That the sacred records show that believers only were baptized; that water is the element in baptism; that the candidates always went to the water, and down into it; that thus in the water they were baptized; that they were so baptized that it resembled and is called a burial and resurrection; that their bodies were washed in baptism, and that they were mature enough to have good consciences.

There are many believers in all the Churches who have come to the light in the same manner. In the earlier years of the churches of God large numbers who came out from other Churches were converted in a similar manner on the subject of baptism. And so clear and convincing and unanswerable is the testimony of the word that, notwithstanding the constant preaching and teaching of infant [4] baptism and sprinkling in pedo-baptist pulpits, a considerable percentage of their members believe that "John and Christ administered baptism by plunging the whole body beneath the water," John Calvin teaches in his Comment on John 3:23. Dr. Schaff, Reformed Church, points to the same facts we have given above to show that in New Testament times the "form of baptism was immersion," saying, this "is inferred from the analogy of John's baptism in the Jordan; from the Apostles' comparison of the sacred rite with the miraculous passage of the Red Sea; with the escape of the ark from the flood; with a cleansing and refreshing bath, and with burial and resurrection." Weiss, Lutheran, sees the same in John's baptism, for he says, "They went down, man by man, into the waters of Jordan, in order to emerge new born." A remarkable confession of like character was made by President Buchanan to his Attorney-General, Judge Black, member of the Disciple Church. In the early part of President Buchanan's administration, at the close of a Cabinet meeting, the President "took it into his head to catechize his [5] Secretaries about their religious faith." When it came Judge Black's turn to answer he said: "Mr. President, I do not claim any one of the Churches these gentlemen have named as my religious home. All these denominations are altogether of too late an origin. The most venerable of them were not born

more than four centuries ago, entirely too late to claim to be the original church of Christ. The church that I belong to was founded on the day of Pentecost, as you read in the second chapter of Acts, and has no human but a divine origin." At a small social gathering at the Soldiers' Home, the delightful Summer retreat of the President, the subject was resumed, and an amicable and courteous discussion resulted on the Communion and baptism as practiced by the Disciples. Judge Black was thoroughly versed in religious topics, an intelligent and devout Christian and a disputant of surpassing power. The President listened with evident interest to Judge Black's scriptural arguments, and at last he closed the discussion with these words: "Well, Judge, I appreciate fully all you have said, and the strength of your conviction, and [6] honor it. But for myself, I am satisfied with the religion of my fathers, who were all Presbyterians. Nevertheless, I have no doubt that in the primitive church penitent believers only were baptized, and that the ordinance was then performed by immersion. I think, however, that the church in the course of time was justified in baptizing its children, and that the quantity of water is not essential so long as the spiritual significance is retained." These words of the President excited Mrs. Black, and in a most amiable but also most earnest manner she said, "Mr. President, WE do not allow ourselves to reason in that way. We believe and teach that the only right and safe way in all these things is to accept and practice the ordinances of God just as they are given in the New Testament, without any attempt at change."

Mr. Jewett's argument is clear and strong from this point of view. He is not exhaustive in other lines of argument, and the present Editor has taken occasion to add further proof from Lexicons, Cyclopedias and the works of learned theologians and writers, all of whom were members of pedo-baptist [7] Churches. The proposition, that the immersion of believers is the scriptural baptism, is capable of conclusive proof, "our enemies themselves being judges."

We have stated above that the history of this book is remarkable, and as well as that of the author. The book was first published in 1839, after the author had been a pastor of a Presbyterian church about three years. In a very short time three successive editions were sold. Thirty years from the initial publication the "twelfth thousand" was placed on the market. Few books of this character have been so long in demand. It has been published simultaneously in Boston, New York and Cincinnati. The first edition was immediately taken, and a second and third editions speedily followed.

Additions made to the text, in the way of quotations and references, by the Editor, are placed within brackets. They are mainly taken from more recent authors, showing that the testimony is quite uniform all down the history of Christianity to the present. Much more might be added to the book, but the aim is to make it strong in the briefest [8] compass, so as to place it into the hands of a larger number. The generosity of the present publisher is matter for commendation. And it is our fervent hope and prayer that his liberality may be greatly blessed in promoting an intelligent conviction of the truth on the question of scriptural baptism.

C. H. FORNEY. [9]

[MSB 3-9]

## 02 - Preface

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### PREFACE

TO THE FIRST EDITION. THE following pages were originally prepared without any reference to publication. At the earnest solicitation of his brethren, the writer has consented to commit his views to the press. He has presented the reasonings on the subject, as they have passed before his own mind, freely availing himself of the labors of others, and endeavoring, with candor and fairness, to state and examine the arguments of those who have written on the other side. Having diligently studied, in the course of the investigation which resulted in his present convictions, numerous pedo-baptist writers,--critics, commentators, and divines,--and having also acquainted himself with the works of the more recent Baptist writers, the author ventures to hope these discourses will show the present state of the controversy in this country. The works to which the most frequent reference has been made in the preparation of these sermons are Ripley's Examination of Stuart, the Christian Review, the Treatise of Carson, Sermons of the late Dr. Davis, of [11] Hartford, Connecticut, Judson's sermon, Professor Stuart's article in the Biblical Repository, Dr. Bloomfield's Greek Testament with English Notes, Barnes's Notes, and Robinson's Lexicon of the New Testament. The Lexicon just named, being, in the main, a correct exposition of the text, will ever be regarded by the Baptist student of the original Greek as a standard work. The spirit exhibited in the treatise of Carson is not to be commended; his reasoning, however, is unanswerable. The author desires particularly to acknowledge his obligations to the Examination of Stuart, by Professor Ripley, and to the Christian Review, edited by Professor Sears. No one should read Professor Stuart's Essay without following it with the Examination--a work exhibiting a liberality of feeling, an acuteness of criticism, and a cogency of argument, which must inspire esteem and command respect, if they do not enforce conviction. From the Review the opinions of the German critics have been mostly derived, and the examination of the ancient Fathers is to be referred to the same source. This periodical is published under the auspices of the Baptist denomination, and its pages furnish conclusive proof of the learning and ability [12] of its conductors. It is destined to confer upon the denomination incalculable benefits, and should be possessed by all our members, both ministers and laity. In stating the ground on which the baptism of infants is supported, resort has usually been had to the lectures of the Rev. Leonard Woods, D. D., the writer's venerated and beloved instructor in theology.

It would be a source of deep regret to the writer should there be found in the spirit of these discourses any thing meriting condemnation. If he knows his own heart, he cherishes towards the brethren with whom he was formerly connected the warmest Christian affection. Having been uniformly happy in his church relations, and that happiness having suffered no interruption by his conscientious withdrawal from his pedo-baptist associates, the writer has yet to learn that an honest difference of opinion among Christians is incompatible with the charity inculcated by the gospel. With fervent prayers, that this humble effort may promote the cause of truth and piety, the author desires to commit it to the great Head of the church. [13]

## 03 - Preface to 3rd Edition

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### PREFACE

TO THE THIRD EDITION. THE kindness with which this humble tribute to the cause of truth has been received demands a thankful acknowledgment to the great Head of the church, and an expression of gratitude to the Christian community, through whose favor a third edition now appears.

Scarcely twelve months have elapsed since the work was first issued from the press. The first edition was immediately taken up, and a second was so soon called for that there was no opportunity for any alterations or additions, had any been deemed necessary.

Since the publishers have informed me that another edition is now required, I have been led to reconsider the arguments, facts and considerations of the original work. The writer hopes he is by no means insensible to the defects of the volume. The discussion of various topics treated of might be greatly extended, and new topics of grave importance might be noticed; but the introduction of much new matter would not comport with the design of the work, would increase its cost as well as its size, and thereby diminish its [15] usefulness as a popular treatise, intended for general circulation.

After carefully reviewing the whole subject, attentively considering the strictures of reviews, and of "Answers to Jewett," and seriously reflecting upon the numerous kind suggestions of pedo-baptist friends, I do not see that either truth or candor demands any important alterations. The study of the BIBLE more and more strongly convinces me that the reasonings are clearly drawn from the WORD OF GOD, and the conclusions urged are agreeable to the DIVINE WILL.

I have, therefore, made only one or two slight changes in the work, and have added such additional matter, only, as will increase its value, without materially increasing its bulk. With humility and devout gratitude, the author desires once more to commend this effort to HIM in whose hands are the hearts of all his saints.

M. P. J. [16]

## 04 - Extracts of Letters

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EXTRACTS OF LETTER.

EXTRACTS OF A LETTER FROM THE AUTHOR, GIVING AN ACCOUNT OF HIS CHANGE OF VIEWS, AND WRITTEN A FEW DAYS AFTER HIS BAPTISM.

MARIETTA COLLEGE, June 28, 1838.

\* \* \* \* "Perhaps you know I have preached for about two years past to a Presbyterian church in the country. Some eighteen months ago, an elder of that church became a Baptist. On the occasion of his baptism a sermon was preached by Rev. Hiram Gear, the Baptist minister in Marietta. This sermon disturbed several members of my church, and the session requested me to preach on baptism, in reply. I declined, saying, the best way to manage the excitement was totally to disregard it; pleading my duties in college, &c. Soon the session applied to me a second time, insisting that I must preach on the subject; several members of the church were in trouble, and a discourse must be delivered. Finding that the interest in the subject was not likely to die by neglect on my part, I told the church I would prepare a discourse as soon as practicable, and begged them to remain quiet till they should hear what I might have to say. [17]

"Thus compelled to write, I determined to go into an original investigation of the whole matter, proceeding just as if I had never heard or read any thing on either side, and endeavoring, with a spirit of candid and prayerful inquiry, to seek after the mind of Christ. I began my researches by reading Professor Stuart on baptizo, the ablest pedo-baptist work on the philology of the subject. The inquiry was, What does Christ mean when he commands his ministers to baptize? I was soon astonished to find, in Stuart's investigation, proof so strong that the word, in its literal, ordinary sense universally means to immerse, plunge, or dip. It looked as if, with this fact before him, the learned professor ought to have become a Baptist. I was alarmed, and would have given up the inquiry, but could not. I laid aside Stuart, and entered upon an investigation of the original Scriptures relative to the language used respecting the ordinance. I also examined Josephus, and the classics, so far as I had the means. The further I prosecuted my inquiries, the stronger was the evidence in favor of Baptist views. Thus passed some months. The people had become tired of asking after my sermon on Baptism, but my conscience would not now suffer me to abandon the investigation. I therefore continued to apply [18] to it, as other duties permitted, all my powers, till I was compelled to admit, as a philologist and interpreter of the Bible, that immersion, and that only, is the baptism which Christ enjoins.

"Afterwards I took up infant baptism; and here I found myself in clouds and darkness. I wandered about in the fogs with which writers have shrouded the Abrahamic covenant, the connection between the Old and the New Dispensations, the substitution of modern for ancient rites and ordinances, the obscure passages of ecclesiastical history, bewildered and perplexed--all, as I now believe, because I would not trust to the WORD OF GOD to guide me to GOD'S INSTITUTIONS. I conversed with my pedo-baptist friends, I prayed, and wept, and groaned. I

would lay down the subject for weeks, then resume it, till, some three or four months ago, I was obliged, in the fear of God, to conclude that none but believers in Jesus have a right to the ordinances of Jesus.

\* \* \* \* \* "I lay no claim to infallibility; but if I am wrong, I am conscientiously so--I am so after a most laborious and protracted search for truth. I have acted also in opposition to all the prejudices of early years--of classical and theological study-- [19] prejudices confirmed by twelve years' connection with a pedo-baptist church, during six of which I acted as a minister of Christ. And not only my church relations, but all my literary associations, my family connections, and my temporal interests have combined to withhold me from the result to which I have come. These I cheerfully sacrifice to my convictions of truth and duty."

\* \* \* \* \* "Yours, &c." [20]

## 05 - About Electronic Edition

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ABOUT THE ELECTRONIC EDITION This electronic edition of this book has been transcribed from a copy of the third edition. Thanks to Pastor Charles T. Carl for lending me his copy of the book for this purpose. The composition of the electronic edition differs from the printed edition in the following respects: (1) Greek and Latin words have been set in boldface italics. (2) Lower case roman numerals used in Scripture citations have been changed to arabic numbers. (3) The abbreviations i.e., e.g. and viz. have been given as their English equivalents, "that is," "for example," and "namely," respectively. (4) Personal pronouns having Deity as their referent have been capitalized. (5) Current rules of American English have been followed in dealing with marks of punctuation. (6) Scripture references occurring in footnotes have been placed within parentheses in the body of the text. (7) Page numbers have been placed within square brackets, following the last complete word on the printed page. The range of pages in a chapter or section has been placed at the end of each file. (8) Where citations were not provided for quotations in the printed text, Scripture references have been given within square brackets. (9) In the printed text, the names of Bible books are sometimes given in abbreviated form, and at other times in full; the latter has been preferred in the electronic edition. In addition, the following changes from the printed to the electronic editions have been adopted:

Printed Edition [ Electronic Edition ----- p. 27: signify to dip, [ signify to dip, the word means to dip, plunge, immerse, [ the word means "to dip, plunge, immerse," means to sprinkle. [ means "to sprinkle." this he [ this, he p. 28: color, or tinge; [ color, or tinge; plunge, or immerse. [ plunge, or immerse. with debts" [ with debts" p. 32: of immersion. [ of immersion." p. 34: agreed;" [ agreed"; p. 37: proposition [ preposition p. 41: 1833;) [ 1833); p. 45: affliction;" [ affliction"; p. 54: 1300 [ thirteen hundred p. 60: 300 [ three hundred p. 61: 1300 [ thirteen hundred p. 64: occurrence; [ occurrence; p. 66: wash," [ wash,' p. 67: to immerse in fire, [ to immerse in fire, p. 70: or washing? [ of washing?

3,000 [ three thousand p. 71: 16th [ sixteenth p. 80: whatsoever [ whatsoever p. 96: (Acts xv.) [ (Acts 15:1-29) p. 98: all Jewish children it [ all Jewish children; it p. 100: The "London Baptist" [ The London Baptist p. 101: the "London Baptist" [ the London Baptist p. 108: ----- [ \* \* \* \* \* p. 126: uncircumcism, [ uncircumcision, p. 131: 18 to 45 [ eighteen to forty-five p. 132: 5,000 [ five thousand p. 142: by brethren, [ my brethren, p. 146: "The Baptized Child. [ "The Baptized Child." p. 148: Testament?" [ Testament"? about it?" [ about it"? p. 149: age?" [ age"? p. 154: matters?" [ matters"? rite?" [ rite"? p. 156: mean to sprinkle, to pour, to moisten, to dye. [ "to sprinkle, to pour, to moisten, to dye." means to immerse. [ means "to immerse." p. 157: means to sprinkle, or pour. [ means "to sprinkle, or pour."

Addenda and corrigenda are earnestly solicited.

Ernie Stefanik

Derry, PA Created 8 October 1996.

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## 06 - Baptism: Its Mode

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### BAPTISM THE MODE.

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.-- Matthew 28:19. WHEN the Lord Jesus Christ had finished the work assigned him on the earth, and was about to ascend to the right hand of the Majesty on high, he addressed the Apostles in the words of the text,--thus charging them with the great duty of making disciples of all nations, and of introducing them into the visible church by the ordinance of baptism. "Go, teach,"--or, more in conformity with the original, make disciples or Christians of--"all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father," &c.--that is, into subjection and obedience to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. This is the GRAND COMMISSION, under which the ministers of Christ in every age have gone forth preaching the glad tidings of salvation. This is [23] the great LAW of the church, as Baxter calls it, under which the heralds of the cross are every where, and throughout all generations, to organize the churches of Christ, and receive men to the privileges of the Christian communion. This being the case, we should naturally expect to find the words of the Commission clear and decisive, both as to the persons who should be enrolled among; Christians, and as to the manner in which they should be initiated into the company of the disciples. On both these points we should expect the will of the Founder of Christianity to be clearly made known; and we should anticipate that the instructions given by the Divine Author of the Christian system for the organization of the church would be so plain, and so precise, that his ministers, acting as his agents and representatives, could not easily mistake their duty. But, unhappily, however intelligible may have been the directions of our Savior in the estimation of those to whom the language of the Commission was originally addressed, and however uniform their practice, there has existed for many centuries a diversity of sentiment in this matter. Some maintain that the baptized infant children of believers are proper [24] members of the church of Christ, and that the ordinance of baptism is duly observed by the application of water in any manner, and to any extent, however limited; while others believe, that the Scriptures represent the immersion of a professed believer in the name of the Trinity, and that only, to be Christian baptism.

Having, after a protracted and, I trust, prayerful and impartial examination of the whole subject, been led to embrace the latter view, I proceed to give some reasons for believing it agreeable to the Scriptures of truth. The first question which presents itself to our consideration is, WHAT IS CHRISTIAN BAPTISM? Observe, the question does not relate to any mode of baptism. It is not, whether baptism may, or may not, be performed in this or that manner. The question is, What is baptism itself? The position which I shall endeavor to sustain in this discourse is this: the immersion of the subject in water is ESSENTIAL to the ordinance.

I. This is evident, in the first place, FROM THE MEANING OF THE TERMS which Christ uses when he enjoins the rite of baptism. [25] "Go, teach all nations, BAPTIZING them," &c. The Greek for baptizing is baptizontes, a participle of the verb baptizo. This word is derived from bapto, which primarily means to dip, plunge, or immerse into anything liquid. For its secondary signification

bapto has to dye, a signification growing out of the primary idea, inasmuch as dyeing was originally performed by dipping the thing to be dyed into the coloring matter. Hence, the word in the first instance was used to designate dyeing by DIPPING, and afterwards the signification was extended so as to denote dyeing in any manner. But it is only the primary signification of bapto, to dip, plunge, immerse, which I am to notice, because it is in this signification only that it modifies baptizo. This is apparent from the facts, that bapto is never applied to the ordinance of baptism, and baptizo never signifies to dye. Bapto, then, has two meanings--the primary, to dip; the secondary, to dye. Baptizo in the whole history of the Greek language has but one meaning. It signifies to dip or immerse, and never has any other meaning. "Each of these words, therefore, has a specific province, into which the other cannot enter; while there is a common [26] province which either of them may serve. Either of them may signify to dip, generally; but the primitive cannot specifically express that ordinance to which the derivative has been appropriated; and the derivative cannot signify to dye, which is a part of the province of the primitive." That both of these words mean to dip, plunge, immerse, "ALL LEXICOGRAPHERS AND CRITICS OF ANY NOTE ARE AGREED," says Prof. Stuart. [In "A Manual of Baptism," by G. S. Bailey, are given the definitions of thirty-two Greek Lexicons, to which others can be added, of the word baptizo, all of which unite in saying the word means "to dip, plunge, immerse," and not one of which says that it means "to sprinkle." The only one which ever gave "pour" as a definition has himself expunged it as untrue. So that the whole array of Greek Lexicons is a unit in saying that it means immerse, and not one that contradicts this testimony.--EDITOR.] If any person is disposed to question this, he can satisfy himself by examining places in which the words occur in the Greek. In about two hundred passages, taken at random, where these words are employed in their primary and proper sense, the idea is, in [27] every instance, to dip, plunge, or immerse. I have already remarked, that, in addition to these significations, bapto means to dye, color, or tinge; and baptizo signifies only to immerse, dip, or plunge. I here repeat the remark, that, in its literal and proper sense, baptizo never means any thing but to immerse, dip, or plunge; and when used in a figurative application, the figure entirely depends for its force and beauty on the primary idea of immersion or plunging. If erroneous, these positions can easily be disproved by a reference to the original classics. But, adding my own labors to those of the writers whose works I have examined, I have never been able to discover a single passage which authorizes me to abandon the ground just taken. The following passages may serve as specimens of the use of baptizo in the classics:-- Diodorus Siculus. "The admiral's ship being SUNK" (baptistheises).

Lucian, in Timon, the Man-hater, makes him say: "If I should see any one floating toward me upon the rapid torrent, and he should, with out-stretched hands, beseech me [28] to assist him, I would thrust him from me, BAPTIZING (baptizonta) him, until he would rise no more."

Josephus, Ant. IX. 10, speaking of the ship in which Jonah was, says: "The ship being about to SINK" (baptizesthai).

Strabo, Lib. 6, speaking of a lake near Agrigentum, says: "Things that elsewhere cannot float, DO NOT SINK" here (baptizesthai). In Lib. 12, of a certain river he says: "If one shoots an arrow into it, the force of the water resists it so much that it will scarcely SINK" (baptizesthai).

[Strabo has another passage in which by contrast the meaning of baptizo is more forcibly brought out. He says: "The bitumen floats atop (of the waters of lake Sirbon) because the nature of the

water, which admits no diving; for if a man goes into it he cannot sink, or be dipped (baptizo), but is forcibly kept above." So in his geography, speaking of Lake Tatta in Phrygia (which he calls a natural salt-pit), he says: "The water solidifies so readily around everything that is immersed (baptizo) into it, that they draw up salt-crowns when they let down a circle of the rushes." Epictetus says: "As you would not wish, sailing in a large ship [29] adorned abounding with gold, to be sunk or submerged" (baptizo). These are classical uses of the word, and like quotations could be given from Pindar, Hippocrates, Aristotle, Heliodorus and others. No classical author uses the word in any other primary and unfigurative sense.--EDITOR].

Heraclides Ponticus says: "When a piece of iron is taken red hot from the fire, and PLUNGED (baptizetai) into the water." The Scholiast on Pindar, Pyth. II. 139. "Like the cork of a net in the sea, I am not PLUNGED, or SUNK (baptizomai).

Plutarch, Vol. X, p. 18. "Then PLUNGING (baptizoun) himself into the Lake Copais."

Josephus, in the History of his own Life, speaking of a ship which foundered at sea: "One ship being IMMERSSED (baptisthenteis) in the midst of the Adriatic." The same author, Bell. Jud. I., speaking of Aristobulus, who was drowned by command of Herod: "The boy was sent to Jericho, and there being IMMERSSED (baptizomeno) in a pond, he perished."

Baptizo always denotes the ENTIRE immersion of the person or thing immersed, unless there is an express limitation to a part.

Polybius, III. 72. "The foot soldiers passed [30] through [the water], scarcely IMMERSSED to the paps."

Figurative use of baptizo clearly referring to the literal meaning, to plunge, dip, immerse.

Heliodorus, VI. 4. "When midnight had PLUNGED (ebaptizon) the city in sleep."

Lucian, III. p. 81. "He is like one dizzy and BAPTIZED or SUNK (bebaptismeno), namely: into insensibility by drinking."

Justin Martyr. "OVERWHELMED with sins" (bebaptismenos).

Plutarch. "OVERWHELMED with debts (bebaptizmenon).

Chrysostom. "OVERWHELMED (baptizomenos) with innumerable cares." The same author: "OVERWHELMED (baptizomenoi) on all sides by the many waves of business."

SPRINKLED with "wine," with "sin," with "debts," with "business," with "cares," would give a very faint idea of the true meaning and force of the above expressions. That the above view is correct beyond debate will appear from the fact, that many learned men among the pedo-baptists themselves have been compelled to acknowledge [31] that immersion is the exclusive signification of baptizo.

Buddaeus. "The word baptizein is always to be interpreted of immersion."

Alstidius. "Baptizein signifies only to immerse."

Altingius. "For baptism is immersion, when the whole body is immersed; but the term 'baptism' is never used with respect to sprinkling."

Beza. "Christ commanded us to baptize, by which word it is certain immersion is signified. To be baptized in water signifies no other than to be immersed in water.

Martin Luther. Speaking of children, he says, "They ought to be completely immersed, for the etymology of the word (baptism) evidently requires it."

Casaubon. "This was the rite of baptizing, that persons were plunged into the water; which the very word baptize insufficiently declares."

Dr. George Campbell, a Scotch Presbyterian, who has given us a valuable translation of the Gospels, with learned critical notes. The word baptizein, both in sacred authors and in classical, signifies to dip, to plunge, to immerse. It is always construed suitably to this meaning." [32] Stourdza, a native Greek. "Bapto has but one signification. It signifies literally and invariably to plunge."

Buttmann, in his Larger Grammar, simply puts down, bapto, to immerse."

Augusti. "The word baptism, according to etymology and usage, signifies to immerse, submerge, &c., and the choice of the word betrays an age in which the later custom of sprinkling had not been introduced."

Bretschneider. "An entire immersion belongs to the nature of baptism. This is the meaning of the word." This writer is confessedly the most critical lexicographer of the New Testament.

Having thus shown that baptizo means, in its proper sense, ONLY to dip, plunge, or immerse, I can by no means escape the conclusion, that the Lord Jesus Christ in giving his Commission INTENDED to make IMMERSION ESSENTIAL to baptism. But there are individuals who are not convinced by the proof already adduced. In spite of the authority of lexicons, in opposition to the evidence of numberless examples cited from the original Greek, and notwithstanding the concessions of the most eminent critics, and even of learned and candid pedo-baptists [33] themselves, many persons insist, that the significations above given to baptizo are not the exclusive meanings of the word. They admit that the native and ordinary force of the word points us to immersion as its general meaning, but they suppose it is sometimes used in other senses. Now, although I believe these individuals confound the original and proper meaning of the term with various figurative applications of it, yet I am willing to meet them on their own ground; for I contend that, even on their own principles, immersion is necessary to Christian baptism. Well may our brethren admit, that in its primary and general acceptation the term in question designates immersion, for in this, as Prof. Stuart says, "all lexicographers and critics of any note are agreed"; and no Greek scholar will hazard his reputation so far as to deny it. This, then, being admitted, the question is, did Christ, in the words of the Commission, employ this term in its usual and proper sense? Is there any thing in the sacred record to suggest the idea of the slightest departure from that sense? No man will pretend to assert it. The Commission is in the style of plain, narrative discourse, and there is no more reason for supposing [34] the word translated "baptize" to be used out of its ordinary sense than for conjecturing that the word translated "teach" is turned aside from its customary meaning. If our Savior, then, employed words in their usual sense he did say, "Go,

make disciples of all nations, IMMERSING them in the name of the Father," &c. What right, then, has any man to call any thing besides immersion baptism? What right has he to presume that any application of water will be acceptable to the Divine Author of this ordinance? Where does he find liberty to suppose immersion is not the thing enjoined in the Commission, but only one of various modes of doing the thing? If words have any meaning, and if our Savior employed the words of the Commission, in their ordinary and proper sense, then, on their own principles, my brethren must acknowledge that nothing but immersion is Christian baptism.

Here I might stop, and require those who dissent from the above conclusions to show that there is something in some passage of Scripture, something in the practice of Christ, or of the Apostles, which evidently compels us to depart from the ordinary signification of the word under consideration. Having [35] clearly ascertained the meaning of that word, and having every reason to believe Christ used it in its appropriate sense, we are not at liberty in any case to depart from that sense, unless it is evidently impossible that in that case it should have its usual signification. As the principle of interpretation here involved is of great importance, I may be allowed to illustrate it by a familiar example. I give to A. B. a promissory note, payable "on demand." Now, I am bound to pay the note whenever presented; and I cannot plead that the words "on demand" should be liberally construed; that certain circumstances make it probable they are not used in their ordinary sense. The holder will justly urge that these words have a definite and well-ascertained meaning, and I must satisfy his claim forthwith, unless I can show it is impossible that in my case the phrase should be understood according to its usual signification. The burden of proof lies on me, and I must make it evident beyond dispute, that the terms cannot possibly have the customary sense, or I shall be obliged to liquidate the debt. So in the case before us. It is not [36] enough that there are apparent improbabilities opposed to the customary use of the term in question; the ordinary force of it must be plainly impossible, or we must retain its usual sense. But no such impossibility exists. On the contrary, the circumstances under which the word is employed in the Scriptures, the figurative applications of the term, and the practice of the entire church for several centuries after the Christian era, afford confirmation strong, that immersion is the baptism prescribed by the great Head of the church. I proceed, therefore, to remark,--

II. THAT THE PLACES SELECTED FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE ORDINANCE, AND THE CIRCUMSTANCES CONNECTED WITH THE INSTANCES IN WHICH IT IS PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED, clearly indicate immersion.

"John the Baptist did baptize in the wilderness, \* \* \* \* and there went out unto him all the land of Judea, \* \* \* \* and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan." Here it is expressly asserted, that those who resorted to John were baptized by him in the river Jordan. Now, even if, as some contend, the preposition en (in) may be rendered at, yet why should John go to the river at all, "excepting that immersion was [37] practiced?"<sup>b</sup> But Prof. Robinson, a pedo-baptist, and the learned author of the Lexicon of the New Testament, translates the Greek particle in or into, in all the instances in which John's baptism is spoken of. Christ was baptized in Jordan; or, as Prof. Robinson translates, "INTO the river Jordan."<sup>c</sup>

[Lange, Dr. J. P., Lutheran, Professor of Theology in the University of Bonn, Germany, speaking of John's baptism, Matthew 3:1 : "This baptism was administered by immersion; the confession of sins preceded the immersion." And verse 6: "'And were baptized,' immersed in the Jordan." And

so Jesus was immersed. Bishop Jeremy Taylor, Episcopalian, says of the baptism of Jesus: "Straightway Jesus went up out of the water. Behold an immersion, not an aspersion."--EDITOR.] When John was baptizing in Enon, it is expressly stated, that he chose that place on account of the facilities there found for baptizing. John 3:23 : "And John also was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, because there was much water there; and they came and were baptized." The sense of the passage is plain and [38] obvious, and, controversy out of the question, no difficulty could have been raised on it. But it has been asserted that the Greek words rendered "much water," being in the plural, should be translated many waters, and then the meaning would be, John resorted to this place because there were there many streams or rivulets, which would accommodate the people and their animals. Suppose it were admitted that the words should be so rendered, yet it would still remain true, that John baptized in Enon, because there were many streams there, and the people came and were baptized--not were accommodated. But the translation in our version is correct, and not to be discarded. See Jeremiah 41:12, compared; with 2 Samuel 2:12-14. On which read Robinson's Calmet, under the word GIBEON. Also, consult Revelation 1:5; Revelation 19:6, where the same words are used to designate the ocean. The passage which next claims our attention under this head, is found in Acts 8:36-39. It relates to the baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch by Philip. "As they went on their way, they came unto a certain [39] water, \* \* \* 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, the spirit of the Lord caught away Philip."

Now, here I ask, as before, Why did Philip and the eunuch go down both into the water, if it were not that he might immerse him? But it is said, the preposition here rendered into is often translated to, and it may be read, they went down both to the water. But I ask again, Why did they even go to the water, if an immersion were not to be performed? It is customary in Eastern countries for travelers to carry supplies of water with them. Especially would this be true of a person of rank, like the eunuch, who would doubtless have a train of attendants, and would be furnished with water abundantly sufficient for sprinkling or pouring. Why, then, did the eunuch wait, as they rode along, till they came unto a certain water? And why, when arrived at that body of water, did they alight from the chariot, and go down both into, or even to, the water? It is difficult to answer these questions except by admitting immersion in this case. But the criticism on the Greek [40] preposition is destitute of foundation. The verb here translated went down, when followed by the preposition used in this passage, includes, almost uniformly in the New Testament, the idea of entrance into the place mentioned; for example, "Jesus went down to Capernaum." Is it not clearly implied, he went into Capernaum? "Jacob went down to Egypt." Is it not meant, he went into Egypt, and not merely to the borders of it? So, in common discourse, we say of a man, he has gone to New York, meaning he has gone into to the city to buy goods. The above passages very clearly show how the language of Christ respecting baptism was understood, and strongly support the sentiment that immersion only was to be regarded as Christian baptism.

III. VARIOUS ALLUSIONS TO THE ORDINANCE IN THE SCRIPTURES, AND THE FIGURATIVE APPLICATIONS OF THE WORD BAPTISM, confirm the justness of the position assumed. [41] The first passage I notice is 1 Corinthians 10:2. "And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." The language is here figurative, and is intended to represent the Israelites, not as being literally baptized, but as submitting themselves to the special authority and guidance of Moses, as Christians, when baptized, submit themselves avowedly to Christ. By baptism

Christians avow their confidence in Christ, their choice of Him, and their subjection to Him, in all the offices which He sustains. Now, as Christians, in making their profession of allegiance to Christ, are surrounded with water, so the Israelites, when signally showing their allegiance to Moses, by passing through the Red Sea, were surrounded with water. The language is figurative, and can be explained only on the principle that baptism was performed by immersion. Archbishop Newcome remarks, "They were figuratively and typically baptized; they were led to acknowledge the divine mission of Moses, through these miracles expressive of baptism." Dr. Bloomfield adds, "The material of the cloud and sea, being nothing but water, was well adapted to express this typical representation of baptism." And Prof. Stuart [42] admits that it has a reference to "surrounding." Well may this admission be made, the sea being on each side, and the cloud above them. Thus the cloud hung over their heads, as the water is over those that are immersed; and the sea encircled them on every side, as the water is around those who are baptized.

[Before the reader passes on to these examples of the figurative use of baptizo he should impress his mind with the fact that the literal use of any word must guide all its figurative applications. The explanation of the figure, says Carson, must conform to the literal meaning, but the literal meaning never can bend to the figurative. When the former has been ascertained, the latter must be explained in accordance therewith. But as the literal meaning of baptizo has been clearly ascertained to be that of immersion, all these figurative uses could be dismissed, for they can not weaken, much less change, the literal meaning.--EDITOR.] In 1 Peter 3:20-21, we read, \* \* \* \* "when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a-preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save [43] us \* \* \* \* by the resurrection of Christ." Bloomfield gives the sense of the latter part of the passage thus: "The antitype to which thing (namely, what corresponds to, and was figured by, the preservation of Noah and his family in the ark) doth now save us [place us in a state of salvation] through the resurrection of Christ, as the ark did them. I mean baptism." Here the situation of Noah and his family, shut up in the ark, floating on the waters of the great deep, and drenched by the mighty torrents which fell when the windows of heaven were opened, is mentioned by the Apostle as an emblem of baptism. This allusion cannot be satisfactorily explained, unless the reference in the passage is to immersion.

Another figurative application of the term is found in the words of our Savior, Luke 12:50. "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished?" The sense is, "I am about to be overwhelmed with sufferings, and I am greatly distressed with the prospect of them."f So in Mark 10:38-39. "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I must drink, and to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" The sense is the same as in the last passage: [44] "Can ye indeed take upon you to undergo, patiently and submissively, sufferings like to mine--sufferings of an overwhelming and dreadful nature?"g The intense and overwhelming sufferings endured by the Savior in Gethsemane, and on the cross, point us at once to the radical meaning of the word he employed. It is a word strongly expressive of the greatness and abundance of the agonies he endured. We see the Redeemer "sunk in deep waters of affliction"; "the waves and billows of anguish roll over him," and any idea short of a complete immersion is tame and insipid. Hence Campbell translates, "I have an immersion to undergo, and how I am pained till it be accomplished!" And Doddridge: "I have a baptism to be baptized with, that is, I shall shortly, as it were, be bathed in blood, and plunged in the most overwhelming distress." The last passage

which I shall refer to under the present head, is found in Romans 6:3, 4: "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 [45] of life." This passage has always been supposed to have an important bearing on the subject before us, and no wonder, when it is conceded by eminent pedo-baptists themselves, that "the mass of unprejudiced readers" would perceive in it "an allusion to the practice of baptizing by immersion."h Believing it to be decisive in its character, I shall endeavor fully to illustrate its meaning and force.

"The expressions baptized into Jesus Christ, and baptized into his death, require explanation. The first, baptized into Jesus Christ, means to be baptized into an acknowledgment of Jesus Christ, with an implication of subjection, or discipleship, to him. So to be baptized into the death of Christ is to be baptized into an acknowledgment of his death, and into an acknowledgment, of the obligations resulting from that death."

"The design of the Apostle in the first part of the chapter was to meet an objection which might be raised against the statements of the preceding chapter. In that chapter he had largely shown that the grace of God vastly superabounding over the sins of men, and that the abounding of sin had proved an occasion of the superabounding of divine grace. If this be the case, some one might say, May we not still go [46] on to sin, so that God's grace may be still more abundantly exhibited? The Apostle's reply is very simple. It consists of two parts--1. The internal character of Christians forbids such an objection: they are dead to the influence of sin. 2. Their external profession of Christianity opposes it: by their very baptism they have, as being dead to sin, symbolically been buried and raised up again, thus making an acknowledgment that, as Christ was buried and rose again to a heavenly life, so they, as his followers, having by baptism been buried and raised again, were bound to lead a new, a spiritual life."

"It is contended that the burying ground mentioned by the apostle is not an external one, but an internal, a moral burying. This opinion seems effectually opposed by the circumstance, that the burying is performed by baptism, an external rite. The preposition which is here employed in the original, leads us to this view. It is [dia tou baptismatos] BY baptism, that we are buried, not AT our baptism. It is not that baptism merely furnished a suitable occasion for showing our being wholly disinclined to sin, so that, when we professed Christianity, we might be said to be buried with respect to sin; but baptism is here represented as the very thing, the very instrument, or more properly the very [47] act, BY which or BY MEANS OF which, we were buried. The Apostle seems to present two things, a death and a burial, which are clearly kept distinct; and the burial is an external thing, consisting in the fact, that we have been baptized into an acknowledgment of Christ's death. To continue in sin, then, would be inconsistent with our character and our religious profession. The Apostle says that, besides have become dead to sin (namely, at our conversion), we have also been buried by baptism into an acknowledgment of Christ's death. If the apostle had merely said, we are dead and buried in respect to sin, omitting the words BY BAPTISM, his language would require a different interpretation. But the Apostle himself explains what he means by burying, when he adds, by baptism."i So Prof. Chase, "Buried with him by baptism. Buried with him--how? By baptism, the Apostle answers. In or by baptism, then, Paul, and the Christians whom he addresses, were buried. To be crucified to the world, or dead to sin, is the character of the Christian; but to be buried with Christ by baptism is the appointed emblematical profession of

that character. The Apostle does not teach that believers are crucified with Christ, or are dead with him, or possess a [48] mortified temper, by baptism. To have such a state of soul, to be dead in respect to sin, is one thing; and to be buried with Christ by baptism is quite a different thing; for this is external, whereas the other is internal. The one is a sign; the other, the thing signified."j To sustain the interpretation given above, the opinions of several distinguished pedo-baptist writers may be cited.

Rosenmueller, on the passage. "Immersion in the water of baptism, and coming forth out of it, was a symbol of a person s renouncing his former life, and, on the contrary, beginning a new one. The learned have rightly reminded us that, on account of this emblematical meaning of baptism, the rite of immersion ought to have e been retained in the Christian church."

Martin Luther, after speaking of baptism as a symbol of death and resurrection,, says: "On this account, I could wish that such as are to be baptized should be completely immersed into water, according to the meaning of the word, and the signification of the ordinance; AS ALSO WITHOUT DOUBT, IT WAS INSTITUTED BY CHRIST."

Dr. Knapp, an eminent and pious German divine, whose works are recommended by Dr. [49] Woods, speaking of the passage in question, thus expresses the Apostle's idea: "We are, like Christ, buried as dead persons, by baptism, and should arise, like him, to a new life." He adds, "The image is taken here from baptized persons, as they were immerged, (buried), and as they emerged (rose again)."

Dr. Bloomfield, one of the most profound living Biblical scholars of Great Britain, and highly commended by Prof. Stuart as a learned and judicious critic, gives this paraphrase of the words "buried with him by baptism:" We have been thus buried in the waters of baptism." He adds, "There is a plain allusion to the ancient custom of baptism by immersion."

[Wesley in his Notes on New Testament, Romans 6:4, says: "Alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion." Whitefield on the same text says: "It is certain, that in the words of our text there is an allusion to the manner of immersion, which our own Church allows." Zwingli, prime mover in the Reformation in Switzerland, says, writing in his Annotations on the same passage: "When ye were immersed into the water of baptism, ye were engrafted into the death of Christ; that is, the immersion of your body into water was a sign that ye ought to be engrafted into [50] Christ and his death, that as Christ died and was buried, ye also may be dead to the flesh and the old man, that is, to yourselves."--EDITOR.]

Coincident with these views is the unanimous testimony of learned men, and the universal belief of private Christians, in all countries and in every age, from the time of Paul to the present day. The notion of a "moral burying" is a modern invention, adopted by very few interpreters; an expedient which would seem to be suggested by despair, with the hope of getting rid of the irresistible evidence furnished by this passage in favor of immersion. And here the reflections of another are truly important. This passage, in connection with the parallel text, Colossians 2:12, may be said to contain God's own explanation of his own ordinance. And here we may admire the divine wisdom and goodness. The mass of readers do not understand the original, and translators of the Bible, by adopting, not translating, the Greek words baptize and baptism, have hidden the meaning from the multitude. But the evidence from these passages cannot be hid--it is obvious to the most

unlearned, and the words, "BURIED WITH CHRIST BY BAPTISM," may continue to make, as a pedo-baptist writer says they have heretofore made, [51] "more baptists than any other passage in the Bible." The Spirit of God, through this commentary of the great Apostle, enables all men to judge for themselves in this matter. While the learned are contending about the meaning of baptizo, and the force of certain Greek prepositions, let those who are unacquainted with the original turn to these allusions to the ordinance, and they will here see the definition which the Holy Ghost himself has given to the words in debate.

IV. Finally, we find a strong confirmation of the position originally taken in the fact, that THE EARLY CHRISTIANS UNDERSTOOD THE WORDS OF THE SAVIOR TO REQUIRE IMMERSION, AND THEY PRACTICED ACCORDINGLY.

I will here make a remark on the nature and value of the argument from church history. We by no means place our chief dependence on this. We regard the BIBLE as our ONLY and SUFFICIENT rule of faith and practice; and, as before stated, to our own minds the directions of the word of God on this subject are perfectly clear. But the practice of the Christians who immediately succeeded the Apostles shows how they understood the instructions of the Apostles themselves, who regulated their practice by the teachings of their Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. [52]

Barnabas, the companion of Paul (Acts 13:2), says in his Epistle, speaking of baptism, "We descend into the water, and come out of it." In the Pastor of Hermas, saluted by Paul (Romans 16:14), we read, "Men descend into the water, bound to death; but ascend out of it, sealed to life."

Justin Martyr. "Those who believe are led to some place where there is water, and then bathe in the water." In another place, he says: "We represent our Lord's sufferings and resurrection by baptism in a pool."

Tertullian. "We are immersed in water,"--"let down into the water and dipped,"--"Peter immersed in the Tiber."

Dionysius Areopagite. "The total concealment in water fitly represents Christ's death and burial."

Apostolic Constitutions, (probably written in the fourth century). "Baptism relates to the death of Christ: the water answers to the grave; the immersion represents our dying with him [Christ]; the emersion our rising with him."

Photius. "The three immersions and emersions of baptism signify death and resurrection."

Chrysostom. "We, as in a sepulchre, immersing our heads in water, the old man is buried [53] and sinking down; the whole is concealed at once; then, as we emerge, the new man again rises."

Jerome. "Three times we are immersed," etc.

Augustine. "Rightly are ye immersed three times, who have received baptism in the name of Christ." In short, from the days of the Apostles downwards, for thirteen hundred years, we have an unbroken chain of evidence, showing that baptism was performed by immersion, and by immersion only. To this there is only one apparent exception, namely, in case of extreme sickness and danger of death. In this case, immersion being impracticable, persons received a substitute for baptism, by pouring or sprinkling. Yet this was never regarded as regular baptism; but as

baptism was then supposed to be essential to salvation, the sprinkling or pouring of water was permitted as a substitute for the gospel ordinance, and it was hoped that, by the indulgence of God, it would be accepted, and the soul of the person poured upon or sprinkled would be saved. This practice, however, in the early ages of the church, was never defended on the ground of tradition or of apostolic usage. It was considered as wholly without authority from the Head of the church, and resorted to only [54] from the exigency of the case, baptism being regarded as necessary to salvation.

These opinions are supported by the modern critics of Germany. The testimony of these illustrious men deserves the most serious attention, not only on account of their impartiality, as they have no interest in the controversy, but also from the fact that they are of the very highest authority in language and antiquities.

Neander. "Baptism was originally by immersion. To this form various comparisons of the Apostle Paul allude."

Tholuck, on Romans 6:4. "In order to understand the figurative use of baptism, we must bear in mind the well-known fact, that the candidate in the primitive church was immersed in water, and raised out of it again."

Winer. "In the apostolic age, baptism was by immersion.

Bretschneider. "The apostolic church baptized only by immersion."

Schleusner, Wahl, and Bretschneider, the three great New Testament lexicographers of Germany, limit baptism, as a sacred ordinance, to immersion..

Hahn. "According to apostolical instruction and example, baptism was performed by immersing the whole body." [55]

Prof. Lange. "Baptism, in the apostolic age, was a proper baptism--the immersion of the whole body in water. Plunging under the water represents death, and rising out of it, the resurrection to a new life."

Fritsch. "With infant baptism, still another change in the outward form of baptism was introduced--that of sprinkling with water, instead of the former practice of immersion."

[Prof. J. H. Thayer, Professor of New Testament Criticism and Interpretation in the Divinity School of Harvard University, says, "Baptizo . . . is used particularly of the rite of sacred ablution, first instituted by John the Baptist, afterward by Christ's command received by Christians and adjusted to the nature and contents of their religion, namely: an immersion in water." Bishop Henry C. Potter and Bishop A. Cleveland Coxe, both living Bishops of the Episcopal Church, both insist that the word baptizo "means to dip, plunge, immerse, or whatever word you want to strengthen your position," and that immersion was the practice of the primitive church. Dean Stanley, Church of England, and the greatest and most distinguished among all the Westminster deans of ancient or modern times, says: "There can be no question that the original form of baptism--the very meaning of [56] the word--was complete immersion in the deep baptismal waters; and that for at least four centuries any other form was unknown, or regarded, except in the case of dangerous illness, as an exceptional, almost a monstrous case. To this form the Eastern Church still rigidly adheres, and

the most illustrious and venerable portion of it, that of the Byzantine Empire, absolutely repudiates and ignores any other mode of administration as essentially invalid." The Dean also well knows that in its earlier history his own Church immersed infants.--EDITOR.]

After these testimonies, you will be prepared to appreciate the concession of Prof. Stuart, who, quoting Augusti, says: "It is a thing made out," namely, the ancient practice of immersion. "I know," continues Prof. Stuart, "of no one usage which seems to be more clearly and certainly made out. I cannot see how it is possible for any candid man, who examines this subject, to deny this."

[But Mr. Jewett does not exhaust the list of German critics who testify positively in favor of immersion. Luther's strong words are known to many: "The term 'baptism' is a Greek word. It may be rendered into Latin by *mersio*, as when we immerse anything in water, that it may be entirely covered with water. And though that [57] custom be quite abolished among the generality, nevertheless they ought to be wholly immersed, for the etymology of the word seems to require it."

Dr. Bernhard Weiss, German Lutheran, Professor of Theology in Berlin University, says: "Baptism--the rite of immersion." "Paul, grasping the sense of baptism more deeply, sees in it a being immersed into Christ" (Romans 4:3). Again, on same page: "And as the rite of immersion as such undoubtedly had a symbolical signification." The importance of baptism could not be changed either when the church substituted in the application of the rite sprinkling instead of immersion."

Dr. Willibald Beyschlag, Professor at Halle, Germany, says: "Through baptism, in John's form of immersion, a man separated himself from the unbelieving Israel." "Fellowship of Christ takes place in baptism, which in the form of immersion then practiced symbolized the dying with Christ, or being buried with him." Indeed, the testimony to the primitive practice of immersion amounts to a demonstration.--EDITOR.]

It may be added that the inhabitants of Greece, who certainly ought to understand their own language, from the first introduction of the gospel into that country to the present time, [58] have uniformly baptized by immersion. Indeed, all the Christians in Asia, all in Africa, and about one-third part of Europe, still retain the rite as observed by the Apostles and early Christians. Nay more, the whole Christian world, for the space of thirteen hundred years, practised immersion as the only real baptism. Never, by any Christians, in any age, was sprinkling or pouring allowed, in ordinary cases, until the meeting of the council of Ravenna, assembled by the Pope in 1311. These substitutions for the gospel ordinance were not admitted into England till the middle of the seventeenth century.

If we would know how sprinkling was introduced, we are informed by the celebrated Dr. Wall (a pedo-baptist), in his History of Infant Baptism. He says: "France seems to have been the first country in the world where baptism by effusion was used ordinarily to persons in health, and in the public way of administering it. In the Church of England, it being allowed to weak children (in the reign of Queen Elizabeth) to be baptized by effusion, many fond ladies and gentlewomen first, and afterwards, 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 [59] in the water. As for sprinkling, properly called, it seems it was, at 1645, just then beginning, and used by very few. They (the Westminster Assembly of divines) 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 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 been formerly, owned, have left off dipping children in the font; but that all other countries in the world which had never regarded his authority do still use it."

Thus we see that sprinkling was originally introduced in France in 1311, by the Catholics, under the direction of a Popish council; yet immersion was retained in England for more than three hundred years longer; till, in the progress of the Reformation there, the Protestants, supposing the fonts in the churches, and the practice of immersion, to be usages of Popery, decided that "dipping of the person in water is not necessary."

I have now finished the view proposed to be [60] taken, for the purpose of establishing the position, that IMMERSION IS ESSENTIAL TO CHRISTIAN BAPTISM. It has been shown that the word employed by the Savior in the Commission signifies, in its usual and proper sense, only to immerse, dip, or plunge; it appears from the places selected for the administration of the ordinance, and from attending circumstances, that immersion was always practiced by those who baptized under the direction of Christ; it is also apparent, from the figurative uses of the word baptism, and from various allusions by the writers of the New Testament, that they considered immersion as belonging to the nature of baptism; and finally, the correctness of this view is most strikingly confirmed by the fact, that the entire church of Christ, during a period of thirteen hundred years, did practise immersion. Are we, then, at liberty to substitute any thing else for the rite enjoined on us by the Lord Jesus? But it is said this view of the subject is incomplete; there are certain places in the Scriptures in which some form of the word baptize is mentioned, and others where the ordinance is named, which make it very improbable that an immersion was either positively enjoined or invariably practiced. A notice of these may be introduced by a single remark. Remembering [61] the evidence which has been adduced to show that the word in question must mean immersion, we are not permitted to assign to it any other meaning unless in a given case, immersion be impossible. "When a thing is proved by sufficient evidence, no objection from difficulties can be admitted as decisive, except they involve an impossibility." Those, then, who would render the term in debate washing, or pouring, or sprinkling, must prove not only that the idea of immersion is improbable, but that it is manifestly IMPOSSIBLE. But this cannot be shown respecting a single instance in which the word occurs. The passages generally brought forward as unfavorable to the idea of immersion are the following:-- Hebrews 9:10. "Only in meats, and drinks, and divers washings." That the word here translated "washings" should have been rendered immersions is evident from the conclusions established under the first head of the former part of this discourse. Immersions were frequent among the Jews, in accordance with the Mosaic ritual. If the word in the original refers to various purifications of things only, then, by a well-known rhetorical figure, taking a part for the whole, immersions may be used for the several kinds of ablutions [62] required by the law. Thus the primary meaning is clearly NOT IMPOSSIBLE in this case. Prof. Robinson translates the word "washings," but refers to Leviticus 11:32, where various things were to be cleansed by being "PUT INTO WATER." This shows that the learned professor supposed immersions to be meant by the Apostle. Others explain the term divers baptisms as being "of men and of things." If this be the sense, no one will object to the idea of immersion.

Mark 7:4. "The washings of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels, and tables" (couches).

It is supposed to be altogether unlikely that the couches (for so the word rendered "tables" should be translated), on which they reclined at meals, should be immersed. But Prof. Robinson gives his views of the mode of washing by quoting, as before, Leviticus 11:32,-- showing that he understands all these articles were "put into water.." Things which had been defiled by the touch of a dead body were required by the Levitical law to be cleansed "by being put into water;" and how easily might the superstitious Jews extend the practice to things not included in the requisition! The rules in force among the Jews are precise in requiring such articles as the above to be cleansed by being covered in water; and the regulations are exceedingly [63] strict with respect to this washing, so that, should there be any thing adhering to these articles, such as pitch, which might prevent the water from touching the wood in a particular spot, the washing would not be duly performed. The same Jewish authority requires even beds to be cleansed by immersion, when they have become defiled. It is not, then, even "improbable" that the couches were immersed.

Mark 7:3-4. "For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not." The latter of the two words rendered "wash" is in the original from baptizo; the former is not.

It is asked, Does not the word here mean wash? I answer, Is it not possible that it may mean immerse? If so, this is all I am bound to prove. Let us examine the passage. "Here are two instances of washing (so called); the first, a matter of constant occurrence; the second, an observance performed after returning from the market. Did these two washings differ from one another in any respect? It is evident that they did. For, first, one was a washing which commonly occurred before a meal, without regard to the employment which had preceded [64] it; so that, even if a person had remained at home, still, before taking his meal, he would wash his hands. The other was a ceremony performed after having been exposed to the various occasions of defilement, which would be connected with his attendance at market. Such was the variety of persons and things with which he might come in contact, that a more formal and thorough ablution would naturally be performed. In examining the whole passage, the attentive reader will perceive an advance in the thought. If ordinarily the hands were washed before eating, the reader is prepared to hear that, after returning from a mixed crowd of people, something different from, or additional to, this washing was performed.

"In the second place, two different Greek words are employed to express the washing in the two different cases. The former is the word usually employed when only a washing of a part of the body, as the hands, face, or feet, is performed; the latter is used to denote the washing of the whole body by immersion. The passage should be thus translated: 'For the [65] Pharisees and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not; and when they come from the market, except they BATHE themselves, they eat not.' This was the opinion of Vatablus, a distinguished professor of Hebrew at Paris. He says, on this passage, 'They cleansed themselves more carefully from defilement contracted at the market, to wit, by not only washing their hands, but even by immersing their body.' [Adam Clarke, Methodist, has these words of explanation in his Commentary on Mark 7:4; "'Except they wash,' or dip, for baptizoontai may mean either." And Dr. Lyman Abbott, Congregationalist, says: "And coming from the market except they plunge, literally baptize."--EDITOR.] For these numerous immersions, the Jews had the most convenient

arrangements, and their mode of dress would render the practice less burdensome than it would be with us." [66] Luke 11:38. "And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner."

After what has been said above, this passage will present no difficulty. By the preceding part of the chapter it appears that our Lord and his host had been exposed to a great mixture of company, and therefore needed, in the judgment of the Pharisee, the more formal and thorough sort of washing. Bruce, the celebrated traveler, informs us that, in Abyssinia, the sect called Kemmont "wash themselves from head to foot after coming from the market, or any public place, where they may have touched any one of a different sect from their own, deeming all such unclean." Is it strange, then, to find the superstitious and self-righteous Pharisees immersing their couches for purification, or themselves, after mingling in a crowd at the market or elsewhere?

Matthew 3:11. "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire."

It is thought baptizo in the latter part of this verse, and in the parallel passages, cannot with propriety be translated immerse. But the [67] difficulty is imaginary, and the word immerse ought to have been used by our translators. The Greek preposition, translated in the common version "with," is en, "in," and should have been so rendered. Thus Prof. Robinson translates: "He shall baptize [immerse] you in the Holy Ghost and in fire." The meaning of the phrase is, "He shall overwhelm, or richly furnish, you with spiritual gifts, or overwhelm with fire everlasting." Now, immerse is the only English word that can properly be employed here to express the copiousness of the communication of divine influences, and the severity of punishment. To immerse in the influences of the Holy Spirit, and to immerse in fire, is correct and intelligible language; but to pour in the Holy Ghost, and to sprinkle in the Holy Ghost and in fire, is both incorrect and unintelligible. Notice, also, Christ's language, Luke 12:50, already quoted: "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished?" That is, I have an immersion in sufferings to undergo, and how am I pained till it be ended? Exactly so, we say, to immerse in cares; he is immersed in pleasure, etc.

Acts 10:47. "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized?"

It is asked, May not this mean, Can any man [68] forbid water to be brought in, etc.? I reply, the import of the question is simply this: Can any one forbid the baptism of these persons, "who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" The word "baptized," then, must in this place have its usual sense, immersed.

Acts 16:33, the case of the jailer. Prof. Stuart allows the "possibility" of there having been a "bath" in the jail, in which the keeper's family were immersed. This "possibility" is all that need be asked. But this narrative not only does not present any objection to the idea of immersion; it furnishes positive evidence in its favor. The following appears to have been the order of events: Paul and Silas were thrust into the inner prison; an earthquake occurred; the jailer sprang in, and fell down before Paul and Silas; he brought them out [of the prison]; they speak to him and to all that were in his house; he then washed their stripes; baptism was next performed; and after baptism, the company returned to the house (v. 34). After instruction, then, had been given in the house,

baptism was performed; and after baptism, the company returned to the house. Did they not leave the house in order that baptism might be administered? And why did the administration of baptism require them to leave the house, if it [69] were not that they might go to a bath or other place convenient for immersion?

Acts 12:16. \* \* \* "arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins." Is not baptism here called the washing away of sin? And may not baptize, then, mean wash? I answer, Not at all. The address of Ananias to Paul was, "Arise, and be immersed." Immersion in pure water would have the effect of washing. So that here we are not at liberty to depart from the ordinary meaning of the word.

Acts 2:1-47. Great stress is laid on the baptism of the three thousand as offering an insuperable objection to the idea of immersion. But, be it remembered, the burden of proof lies on those who object to immersion. Can they prove that immersion could not possibly be practised in this case? Hear the language of Prof. Stuart: "It is true, we do not know that baptism was performed by the Apostles only, nor that all the three thousand were baptized before the going down of the sun. The work may have extended into the evening; and so, many being engaged in it, and more time being given, there was a possibility that the work should be performed, although immersion was practiced."

Furthermore, let it be observed, it is nowhere [70] asserted in the Scriptures, that three thousand were either converted or baptized on this day (the day of Pentecost). We are not informed whether fifty, or five hundred, or more, were baptized on this occasion. We are simply told, in reference to those who were then "pricked in their hearts," who gladly received the Apostle's word, that they were baptized. "And," we are further informed, "the same day there were added--not were baptized--'about three thousand souls.' The Scriptures also warrant us in saying that the Apostles and the one hundred and twenty disciples, mentioned in the preceding chapter, were all present, and as many others in Jerusalem, and in that region, as could conveniently be at the feast of Pentecost."m But there are FACTS on record in the history of the church which remove every difficulty in the way of the immersion of the entire three thousand. On the great Sabbath of the Easter festival, the sixteenth day of April, A. D. 404, Chrysostom, with the assistance of the clergy of his own church, baptized by immersion three thousand persons. Yes, one man, assisted only by his presbyters, in one day and in one place, immersed three thousand persons; and that, too, notwithstanding the [71] Christians were twice attacked by furious soldiers; the enemies of Chrysostom. So in 496, Remigius, bishop of Rheims, baptized in the same day, by immersion, Clovis, king of France, and three thousand of his subjects.

I will only remark, in relation to the above historical facts, that the baptisms referred to were administered on Easter-day to commemorate the resurrection of Christ; and it was common to reserve all the baptisms of the year for that day. Hence the number of candidates who came forward at the same time.n In view of the above examination of alleged improbabilities, I ask again, How can we feel ourselves at liberty to depart from the observance of the rite of baptism, as prescribed by the great Head of the church? But there are objections to immersion, which are supposed by the advocates of sprinkling to merit attention.

1. "Christ intended his people should be free from inconvenient and burdensome rites; but immersion would often be inconvenient, and sometimes impracticable."

True, the almost innumerable rites and ceremonies of the ancient dispensation, with the [72] time and trouble, the expense and toil demanded by them, are abolished. As to the "inconveniences" attending the scriptural mode of baptism, those who practice this mode smile at the mention of them, knowing they exist only in the imagination of those who have never tested the value of their objection by experiment. In regard to the allegation, that immersion must ever be in some countries, and, in certain circumstances, in all countries, "impracticable," a moment's reflection will satisfy a candid mind that little importance should be attached to it. As a matter of fact, immersion is practiced, at this day, in some of the hot countries of Asia and Africa, in the frozen regions of Russia, and amid the perpetual snows of Siberia. And whenever, in any case, the administration of the ordinance would endanger life or health, it must be postponed, or altogether omitted. The deprivation of the privilege must be referred to the providence of God, and a spiritual mind will devoutly submit itself to that providence. God will accept "a willing mind," in the absence of physical ability, or of opportunity to observe His ordinance. And the hardship is no greater in this instance than in numerous cases where Christians are detained for years from the [73] public worship of the sanctuary; or where they are prevented, by the loss of sight, from obeying the command, to "search the Scriptures."

"But," it is asked, "should a person on the bed of death give evidence of conversion, and desire to be received into the company of believers before his departure, what could be done, excessive debility forbidding his immersion?" To this I reply, first, that not one among millions is converted in so weak a state that an immersion could not be performed, in a bath, at his bedside; and, secondly, this case is met by the preceding remarks. The individual would suffer this loss in common with the loss of the privilege of Christian fellowship, and of opportunities to labor for the conversion of sinners, which he would have enjoyed, if he had turned from his sins, and connected himself with the people of God, while in health. Humbled under the consciousness of guilt incurred by so long a course of sin, so late repented of, he will rejoice in the goodness of God which prepares him, though deprived of a connection with the church militant, for glory, honor and immortality, with the church triumphant.

[2. Another objection urged against immersion is, that it is inconvenient, and often impracticable, and in the case of infants [74] seriously objectionable. The latter part of this objection, (1) Assumes what we deny and what is impossible of scriptural proof, namely: That infant baptism is of divine institution. That it is not, the subsequent pages of this book will prove. (2) It overlooks the fact that the Greek Church in Greece, Turkey and Russia immerses infants. Even the Czar's heir was immersed. Also the further fact that Luther, speaking of the baptism of children, says: "They ought to be wholly immersed, and immediately to be drawn out again, for the etymology of the word (baptizo) seems to require it." The other part of this objection refers to such difficulties as the scarcity or total want of sufficient water, or the extreme cold in certain countries. But the question to be answered is, what did Christ command when he said, "Baptizing them?" His words must determine. When John baptized, he immersed. When Christ baptized, He immersed. When the Apostles baptized, they immersed. Calvin says: "Baptism was administered by John and Christ by plunging the whole body in water. Here we perceive how baptism was administered by the ancients, for they immersed the whole body in water" (Calvin on John 3:23). Adam Clarke says: "The baptism of John was by plunging the body after this same manner as the [75] washing of unclean persons was." Bishop Jeremy Taylor, Episcopalian, says of the baptism of Christ, "Behold

an immersion, not an aspersion" (sprinkling). Wesley says: "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." But the answer of Dr. Alexander Carson is conclusive on this subject. He lays down this "canon" as of general application: "When a thing is proved by sufficient evidence, no objection from difficulties can be admitted as decisive, except they involve an impossibility." He adds by way of enforcement of this canon: "This is self-evident, for otherwise nothing could be proved. If every man's view of abstract probability were allowed to outweigh evidence, no truth would stand the test. The existence of God could not be proved. The Scriptures themselves could not abide such a trial. If my canon is not self-evident, let no man receive it; but if it is just, it overturns not only this objection, but almost all the objections that have been alleged against immersion in baptism." Dr. Carson was, like Mr. Jewett, raised in the Presbyterian faith, and was ordained to the ministry of said Church, becoming pastor of a Presbyterian church at Tubbermore, Ireland. It was the discovery of the [76] fact so innocently stated by the six-year-old son of a minister after the sprinkling of an infant: "Father, I have read the whole of the New Testament, and I find that all who were baptized believed," which led to the abandoning of infant baptism by the father, and finally to Mr. Carson's change of views.--EDITOR.]

3. "Immersion is unfavorable to collected, serious thought in the person who submits to it, and makes on the spectators an impression adverse to religion." In respect of the first part of the objection, the multitudes who have been buried with Christ by baptism will testify to the serene composure, and the tender solemnity of their feelings. Numbers of timid and delicate females, with placid brow and unwavering step, have gone "down into the water," in happy obedience to the Savior they love. The ordinance, so significant, so full of rich and precious instruction, has a sustaining, elevating power, which makes its subjects superior to the infirmities which might, in other circumstances, disarm and overpower them. With reference to the "impression" alluded to in the latter part of the objection, it deserves to be recollected that, on all subjects, our impressions, whether right or wrong, are very liable to [77] take their color from our early associations. In the case before us, facts demonstrate that, in numerous instances, all the impressions connected with the scene are of the most solemn and sacred character. The venerated Andrew Fuller states, in his own account of his life, that the impressions he received on first seeing a person baptized by immersion exerted a powerful influence over his religious faith, and his subsequent religious course. His words are as follows:

"In March, 1770, I witnessed the baptism of two young persons, having never seen that ordinance administered before, and was considerably affected by what I saw and heard. The solemn immersion of a person on a profession of faith in Christ carried such a conviction with it, that I wept like a child on the occasion. The words of the Psalmist, Psalms 111:10, 'A good understanding have all they that do his commandments,' left a deep and abiding impression on my mind. I was fully persuaded that this was the primitive way of baptizing, and that every Christian was bound to attend to this institution of our blessed Lord."

Thousands, also, by the same means, have been converted, and have been led to embrace the Savior, who is thus set forth before their [78] eyes as "buried and risen again" for their redemption. Says a gentleman of high standing in Cincinnati, Ohio, recently a Unitarian, "My first serious impressions were produced on Sunday, on seeing my wife receive the ordinance of baptism, and make a public profession of religion, before a large congregation."

Some have even gone so far as to speak of the administration of the ordinance by immersion as "indecent." It may be well for such to reflect that, if there had been no departure from the baptism confessedly practised, as a general thing, by the Apostles and primitive Christians, such a sentiment as this could never have found place in the bosom of any follower of Christ. Let them also remember that, in urging this sentiment, they may stigmatize an ordinance of the Holy Savior with indecency.

4. "There is no express command in the New Testament limiting us to immersion; and if Christ intended his people should confine themselves to this mode of administration, why did he not so plainly make known his will that there could be no mistake?" This objection can have no force except with those who dissent from the conclusions which have been established in this discourse, respecting the meaning of baptize. If the meaning of [79] language can be ascertained; if Christ did not intend to mislead us by using words out of their proper signification, then it is certain that when the Savior said, "Go, teach, baptizing," etc. [Matthew 28:19], he commanded his ministers to practice immersion. The command is contained in the word BAPTIZE, and we are no more at liberty to require a clearer injunction than the jailer would have been when he was directed to "believe in the Lord Jesus Christ" [Acts 16:31]. The direction of the Commission to immerse is as plain as the direction "to teach" (make disciples or Christians); or as the direction which follows, "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded" [Matthew 28:20]--To say that baptize may mean to apply water in any manner to the person is as destitute of support as for one to affirm, that the word "eat," in the following sentence, may mean to destroy in any manner. 'Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body" [Matthew 26:26]. Suppose a sect of religionists should arise, holding that we are not required to "eat" the bread in the sacred supper, but may destroy it in any other manner, which may seem to be more convenient or agreeable. A member of this sect might argue thus: It is admitted that the ordinary and proper [80] sense of "to eat" is "to chew and swallow as food"; but it also means "to corrode; to wear away; to separate parts of a thing gradually; to consume; to destroy." The idea of destroying seems to lie at the foundation of all these definitions. Why may we not, then, suppose Christ did not intend to confine us to taking into the mouth and swallowing the consecrated element, but has left us the liberty to take it and DESTROY it in any manner? The bread is often unpalatable, and it is very difficult, perhaps dangerous, for some, through their infirmities, "to chew and swallow" it as food. Would the Savior impose such a "burden" on the aged and the sick, as to limit them to this mode of taking bread? May we not crumble it in the hand, or rub it into minute particles on the floor; and, seriously watching the progress of destruction, may we not so be as truly reminded of the broken body of the Lord Jesus, as if we were "to chew and swallow" it, according to the primary and proper meaning of the word "eat?" To a pious mind this seems almost like irreverent trifling; but it is by precisely similar reasoning that it is attempted to evade the force of the argument drawn from the acknowledged sense of the word baptize. And why does our "reverence" receive no shock when the [81] reasoning is applied to the ordinance of baptism? We must look to the power of long-cherished prejudices for a reply. The sum of the matter is this: In instituting the Lord's Supper, the command of the Savior is, "Take, eat;" in instituting baptism, he says, immerse. The word employed by Christ is as intelligible, specific and definite in the latter case as in the former; and if Christ has made it ESSENTIAL to "EAT" bread, in the ordinance of the Supper, he has also made it ESSENTIAL to IMMERSE the person in the ordinance of baptism. In replying to the above objections, the design has been to meet the main

difficulties which are supposed to be connected with immersion. I leave this branch of the subject with three or four additional remarks.

1. The objections just considered are all founded on a false and dangerous principle, namely, that we may determine what is, or what is not, a Christian ordinance by our views of what is fit and proper, what is safe and convenient, expedient and useful. This is an error fraught with ruinous consequences. It is on this principle that the Roman Catholic justifies the unscriptural, foolish and pernicious opinions and observances which are sanctioned by his Church. In endeavoring to ascertain what is an [82] ordinance of Christ, we must consult the Scriptures; TO THE LAW AND TO THE TESTIMONY must we resort, and there must we obtain a verdict from which there shall be no appeal.

2. It is a canon laid down by a distinguished teacher in theology, that "A doctrine proved by sufficient evidence is not to be rejected on any account whatever."o This rule will apply to the case in hand. Has not the position, that immersion is essential to baptism, been proved by sufficient evidence? If so, then we must not reject this truth, even if there were objections to it which might seem to present to us insurmountable difficulties. But no such difficulties are connected with this subject.

3. Had the translators of our version possessed the light which the labors of eminent philologists during the last fifty years have thrown over this subject, they would have found themselves obliged, in conscience, to translate the word baptizoimmerse, in all cases; and they would not have consented to adopt it, instead of translating it, thus concealing the mind of the Spirit. Nay, more; had not King James, under the advice of the bishops, virtually ordered the translators not to translate the words relating to baptism, I believe it morally certain that that [83] learned and pious assembly, acting even under the inferior light which they enjoyed, would have rendered the word, in every instance, in accordance with the views maintained in this discourse.

4. If the word rendered baptize does not specifically and necessarily convey the idea of immersion, then the Greek language, the most copious of all languages, has no word for communicating that idea--an idea with which the Greeks were familiar, and which they had occasion often to express. But if this word does express that idea, and there is no word in the Greek language which more clearly expresses it, then the language of the Commission has, in the plainest terms, made immersion essential to baptism.

Again; Christ either intended to confine his people to immersion or he did not. If he did intend to confine them to immersion, the very word is used which an intelligent Greek would have used for the same purpose; if He did not intend to confine His people to immersion, then the use of such a word by His inspired Apostles is calculated to deceive and mislead His people.

5. In conclusion, I desire to record my deliberate and most serious conviction, that, could all our prepossessions and prejudices be laid [84] aside, we should never, for one moment, doubt that immersion is prescribed by Christ as essential to the nature of gospel baptism. We should find an undeniable exposition of our duty in the practice of the Apostles, and in allusions to the ordinance; and no question would ever be started respecting the will of the King of saints, or the obligations of his subjects. The Lord hasten the day, when all his children shall submit their opinions to the decisions of his WORD, and subject their practice to the dictation of his COMMANDMENTS! [85] a

"The lake was tinged with his blood." Homer's Battle of the Frogs,--where bapto, not baptizo, is used.

b Prof. Stuart.

c Vide Lex on the word baptizo, 2, (a). So Bloomfield, note upon the passage.

d So Olshausen, De Wette, Kuinoel, Grotius, Bloomfield, and others.

e Consult Ripley's Examination of Stuart, (Boston, 1833); also Robinson's Lexicon, Katabaino (a), Anabaino (a); likewise Doddridge, on the passage. [Thayer's New Testament Lexicon confines Katabaino: "To go down, come down, descend." He fines: "To go up, move to a higher place, ascend." It is the opposite of Katabaino--EDITOR.]

f Prof. Stuart.

g Prof. Stuart.

h Barnes's note.

i Ripley's Examination.

j Sermon before the Boston Association, 1828.

k Robinson's Lex. baptizo, I; defin. 2: remark. Comp. Nipto. [Thayer in his New Testament Lexicon defines baptizo: Properly, to dip, immerge, submerge. In the New Testament, an immersion in water. And nipto he defines: To wash one's self, to wash one's hands. Trench, in his "Synonyms of the New Testament," says of plunein, niptein and lowein, that we have only one English word, 'to wash,' with which to render these three Greek words. Plunein is always to wash inanimate things, as distinguished from living objects or persons. Niptein and lonein, on the other hand, express the washing of living persons, although with this difference, that niptein almost always expresses the washing of a part of the body--the hands, the feet, the face, the eyes, the back, the shoulders--while lowein, which is not so much to wash as to bathe,.... implies always, not the bathing of a part of the body, but of the whole.--EDITOR.]

l Ripley.

m Fuller on Communion; note, p. 71. Bloomfield says, "We need not suppose all [of the three thousand] were baptized."

n Christian Review, Vol. III. pp. 91, 92.

o Manuscript Lectures of Rev. Dr. Woods, on the "Incomprehensibility of Revelation."

[MSB 23-85]

## 07 - Baptism: Its Subjects

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### BAPTISM ITS SUBJECTS.

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.-- Matthew 28:19-20.

HAVING considered what is baptism, I am now to inquire, To whom is this ordinance to be administered?

It may be regarded as certain, that a simpleminded reader of the New Testament, uninfluenced by previous instruction, or by any early associations, would never suspect that any other persons than those who believe are to be baptized. In accordance with this sentiment are the concessions of the advocates of the baptism of infants, many of whom admit, with Dr. Woods, that "we have no express precept, or example, for infant baptism, in all our holy writings." "Commands, or plain and certain examples, in the New Testament, relative to it" (infant baptism), says Prof. Stuart, "I do not find." [89] Martin Luther says, "It cannot be proved by the Sacred Scriptures, that infant baptism was instituted by Christ, or begun by the first Christians after the Apostles." Neander says, "That CHRIST did not establish infant baptism, is certain." Rosenmuller, Tholuck, Winer, De Wette, and others, while they assert that the primitive baptism was immersion, declare, with equal decisiveness, that infant baptism was unknown in the age of the Apostles.

Such being the state of the case, the burden of proof rests on those who maintain that infant baptism ought to be practiced. As the practice is now extensively adopted, a claim might indeed be set up in its favor, as "an existing institution"; but any presumption which might be urged in its behalf, on this ground, is rebutted by the stronger presumption that, had Christ intended so important an ordinance as the rite initiating its recipients into the Christian church, should be extended to infants, He would have left, in the inspired writings, some distinct intimation, at least, of his will. But not one such can be found. Those, therefore, who contend that all Christian parents should apply this ordinance to their infant children, must prove it to be a duty binding on the churches. Those who reject infant baptism [90] are not called on to state one objection against it: they may act only on the defensive, while their brethren are bound to advance good reasons for supposing the practice to be obligatory. Accordingly, pedo-baptist writers usually proceed at once by argument to defend and support the practice. The arguments generally produced I shall now examine.

1. "The New Testament does not forbid the baptism of infants." Nor does it forbid the admission of infants to the Lord's Supper, nor the invocation of saints, nor prayers for the dead, nor the use of holy water. But does this silence prove that these superstitions are lawful, and should be observed?

2. "The want of an express divine precept requiring infant baptism affords no valid objection against it."

I was myself once satisfied to adopt this sentiment; but a more careful examination has convinced me of my error. Why ought we not to be guided by the New Testament on the question, To whom is Christian baptism to be administered? as well as on the question, To whom is the Lord's Supper to be administered? And if infant baptism ought to be practiced, although there is no divine precept in the word [91] of God respecting it, why may not infant communion be binding on the churches? Why is not the Bible a sufficient directory on this subject? Is a man who has hitherto been ignorant of Christianity, and who has no views respecting it, but who has now received the whole Bible, and is left to its guidance alone, is he not in a capacity fully to decide the question of duty as to the scriptural subjects of baptism? And where, in the whole Bible, is the passage, or the combination of passages, that would suggest to such a man the duty of infant baptism? But it is said, We have no express divine precept respecting the observance of the Lord's day as the Christian Sabbath, or respecting "female communion." But we have the practice of the Apostles to justify us for keeping the first day of the week as the Sabbath. Let us have as good a warrant for the baptism of infants, and we will be satisfied. And in relation to the communion of females, the command of Christ, addressed "originally to the Apostles," was not given to them as Apostles, nor as men; but the practice was enjoined on them as believers, disciples. All persons, therefore, whether male or female, being believers, disciples, members of the church, are bound to celebrate the Lord's Supper. It is also clear, from various [92] passages of the New Testament, that women did partake of the supper. (Compare Acts 18:2, Acts 18:18, Acts 18:26; Romans 16:3; 1 Corinthians 1:2; and 1 Corinthians 11:1-2, 1 Corinthians 11:20-33.) Can we find in the New Testament as satisfactory evidence in favor of infant baptism? I will only add, that we do not reject the baptism of infants merely because there is "no express divine precept" requiring it; but because there is neither command, nor example, nor fair inference in its favor, in a single passage in the word of God.

3. Authority for infant baptism is supposed to be derived "from the Abrahamic covenant, baptism being regarded as a substitute for circumcision." The covenant made with Abraham we find in Genesis 17:1-14 --

"And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face; and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram; but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee; and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting [93] covenant; to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, and the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.

"And God said unto Abraham, thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed alter thee, in their generations. This is my covenant which ye shall keep between me and you, and thy seed after thee: Every man child among you shall he circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you; and he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations; he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. He that is born

in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised; and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. And the uncircumcised man child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant." This covenant may be considered as having a letter and a spirit. It contains three promises to Abraham: First, a numerous posterity, which was fulfilled in the letter in the nation of Israel. It was fulfilled in the spirit by the divine constitution that makes all believers the children of Abraham. Secondly, the next promise was, to be a God to him and his seed, which was fulfilled in the letter by his protection of Israel in Egypt; his delivering [94] them from bondage; his taking them into covenant at Sinai; and all his subsequent dealings with them, till they were cast off by their rejection of Christ. This promise was fulfilled in the spirit by God's being a God to all believers, and to them alone, in a higher sense than he was to Israel. The third promise was of the land of Canaan, fulfilled in the letter to Israel, and in the spirit fulfilled to the true Israel, in the possession of the heavenly inheritance. Now, be it remembered, it belongs to those who urge the practice of infant baptism to prove, from this covenant, that all Christians are under obligations to adopt this practice. But can any Christian feel that this is the covenant which God has made with him? Christian parent, has God covenanted to give you these blessings? Though he may have covenanted to give you some of these blessings, together with many others, the question must be repeated, Is this the very covenant which God has made with you? If it is, then you are under obligations to perform the rite of circumcision on every man child in your house--and that, too, on the eighth day--neither before nor after that period. But it is said, "Baptism has come in the place of circumcision." Where is the proof of this? You assert it, and you must prove it. [95] If we are yet under "the covenant of circumcision," only baptism having taken the place of the ancient rite, why has not the Bible informed us of the fact? Which some, who had embraced the religion of Jesus (Acts 15:1-29), insisted that the Christian converts should be circumcised, why did not the great council of the Apostles and elders, who decided that circumcision was abolished, satisfy those who were jealous of the law, by reminding them, that the baptism of infants was to be practiced as a substitute for circumcision? And when Paul wrote to the Galatians, in opposition to the Judaizing teachers, who held to circumcision [Galatians 3:1-5], why do we find in his Epistles not a single hint of the same fact? And if circumcision and baptism were the same thing, why was baptism administered to persons who had been previously circumcised? And, again, if baptism be a substitute for circumcision, will it not, of necessity, follow, that ALL SERVANTS, whether "born in the house, or bought with money," must be baptized on the faith of the master? But I need not pursue these inquiries. The most eminent biblical scholars of the age agree with Prof. Stuart in the opinion, that "the Abrahamic covenant furnishes no ground for infant baptism." The [96] Scriptures themselves have decided who are entitled to the spiritual blessings of this covenant, namely, the spiritual seed of Abraham. But only "they that are of faith are the children of Abraham." Galatians 3:7, and 5:29, "If ye be CHRIST'S, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." So, then, believing Gentiles are the spiritual seed of Abraham, and they only. The children of believers are in no sense his seed. They can become such only by believing in Jesus Christ. When they exercise faith in Christ, then, and not till then, will they be parties to the covenant, and members of the church. Having become "CHRIST'S, they will be Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." For my own part, I zealously and laboriously endeavored, for months, to satisfy myself that the practice might be defended from this covenant, but was obliged to abandon the attempt in despair.

4. It is said, "The Jewish church was the same with the Christian, and as children were connected with their parents by a religious rite, under the old dispensation, this relation may with propriety be marked by a religious rite, under the new dispensation." In this statement are two errors. First, it is assumed that the two churches bear such a [97] resemblance to each other, as to affect the point in debate; but this is the very thing to be proved. No matter how extensive may be the similarity between the ancient and the Christian dispensations, provided they are not similar in respect of their members and ordinances. There is no such sameness as this. The one, by its constitution, included carnal members; the other, by its constitution, admits spiritual members only. The one was a national establishment, into which its members were introduced by birth; the other, a spiritual organization, composed of those who have received the renewing of the Holy Ghost. Secondly, another error of the statement is, it supposes circumcision was designed to mark some "peculiar spiritual relation" between the parent and the child. But where is the proof of this? Not a particle of evidence to sustain such a position can be brought from the word of God. On the contrary, circumcision was a mark of national distinction, intended to separate the people of Israel from surrounding nations, and to bind them together as one people. Circumcision, of itself, secured to the circumcised person no blessing; it was enforced by the penalty of death; it was not enjoined on all Jewish children; it was not enjoined on believers in other nations; [98] it could not, therefore, be a spiritual privilege to individuals. From this it is apparent that there is no room for the allegation that, "if children are not baptized, they do not enjoy such privileges as Jewish children had." Even admitting that circumcision was designed to stand connected with peculiar blessings, still the child of the Christian believer has great advantages over the offspring of the Israelite. Unto him are committed the oracles of God [Romans 3:2]; like Timothy, he is made to know the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make him wise unto salvation [2 Timothy 3:15]; from infancy, he is the subject of Christian sympathy and care; from his birth he is consecrated to God by supplication; and on his expanding character are sweetly shed the influences of holy example, of religious education, and a peaceful home. This peculiarity in the condition of a believer's child is recognized by the Apostle, when he bids Christian parents bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord [Ephesians 6:4]; recognized in all the promises of a divine blessing on parental fidelity; recognized in the promiscuous application of the Spirit's power to the hearts of children thus trained up, whether they have had the sign of the cross marked on their brow, or had water sprinkled [99] upon their face, or have never approached a baptismal altar.

5. It is contended that "the Jews had been accustomed to baptize the children of proselytes to their faith, and therefore the Apostles must have understood the direction, 'baptizing all nations,' to include children." This argument depends, for all its force, on the fact assumed, that proselyte baptism was practiced among the Jews in the time of Christ. But this assertion is destitute of proof. Prof. Stuart, after an elaborate examination, has come to the conclusion that "such baptism was practised at, or not long after, the time when the second Temple was destroyed," seventy years after Christ. This conclusion accords with the opinions of the great critics of Germany. The foundation, then, of the above argument being removed, the argument itself falls to the ground.

[The London Baptist states, that there is no evidence that proselyte baptism was practised even as early as Prof. Stuart concedes. It says:

"1. There is no mention of it in the Old Testament."

"2. There is no allusion to it in the [Old Testament] Apocrypha."

"3. It is not mentioned in the New Testament." [100] "4. It is not referred to in Jewish writers of the apostolic age."

"5. There is no reference to it in the Jewish Mishna"--a collection of all the Jewish traditions which had been handed down from one age to the other, and written about the middle of the second century, or the beginning of the third, to preserve the traditions from being lost.

"6. There is no allusion to it in the Christian fathers for the first four centuries." This is confirmed by Dr. P. Schaff and Dr. Meyer, who also place it after the destruction of the Temple. Philo and Josephus are "profoundly silent" on the subject. Dr. Marriott, of Eton College, formerly of Exeter, Oxford, concedes that "among Continental scholars at the present time the prevailing opinion" is in harmony with the views of the London Baptist. Dr. Laurens P. Hickok, in his "Humanity Immortal," explains the conflict of opinions on this subject in these words: "A mode of purification was established in connection with the rite of circumcision, and which became a formal application of water, and known in the tradition of the elders as proselyte baptism. It is sufficient to say, that John's baptism was quite different from proselyte baptism."--EDITOR.] [101]

6. The friends of infant baptism place great reliance on the fact that "baptism was applied to infants in the early ages of the church." The argument from the history of the church might be allowed to have great weight, if the practice under consideration could be traced back to the Apostles; but this cannot be done. While we find Barnabas and Hermas, the friends of the Apostle Paul, together with an uninterrupted succession of writers from their time downwards, frequently speaking of the immersion of believers, we find no mention whatever of infant baptism till the time of Tertullian, two hundred years after Christ! I am aware that distinguished pedo-baptist writers have quoted Justin Martyr and Irenæus, Christian fathers who lived before Tertullian. But a careful examination of the passages referred to will satisfy a candid inquirer that these fathers have been misunderstood.

Justin Martyr says, "Among those who were members of the church, there were many of both sexes, some sixty and some seventy years old, who were made disciples to Christ from their infancy." It is contended that the last clause must refer to the baptism of infants. The Greek verb here employed is the same as that rendered "teach" in the Commission. The [102] simplest and most natural rendering of the passage, is, they were instructed from their childhood.

Matthies, commenting on this passage, says, "These words mean simply that 'FROM THEIR CHILDHOOD THEY WERE INSTRUCTED IN RELIGION,'; for, in another place, speaking of the order and manner of baptism, Justin Martyr says that 'only those who believed what they were taught were baptized].' From which it appears that, in Justin's view, baptism was to be given subsequently to faith."

Starck says, "The defenders of infant baptism attempt to prove it from Justin Martyr and Irenæus, but neither of them says what is attributed to him."

Neander, Winer, Rheinhard, and Munscher, Hahn, Lange, and nearly all of the German critics, are directly opposed to the pedo-baptist view of this passage. The passage from Irenæus is as follows: "Christ came to save all through himself; all, I say, who through him are regenerated [renascuntur],

to God, infants, and little ones, and children, and youths, and the aged. Therefore he passed through every age respectively, sanctifying infants by becoming an infant to them," etc. Everything here turns on the meaning of the word translated regenerated. If it means [103] they were regenerated, then it has nothing to do with our subject; if it means they were baptized, then it proves the existence of infant baptism in the time of Irenæus. An examination of Irenæus' manner of speaking will make it plain that the word in debate must have assigned to it the former meaning, they were regenerated. So, many eminent critics.

Baumgarten Crusius. "The celebrated passage in Irenæus is not to be applied to infant baptism, for the phrase *renascuntur*, etc., evidently means the participation of all in his divine and holy nature, in which he became a substitute for all."

Winer. "Tertullian is the first that mentions infant baptism. Irenæus does not mention it, as has been supposed." So Rossler, Munscher, Von Coln, etc.

Hence it appears that Tertullian, about A. D. 200, is the very first writer who mentions infant baptism; and he opposed it--"a proof," says Neander, "that it was not yet customary to regard this as an apostolic institution; for had it been so, he would hardly have ventured to oppose it so warmly." Again, Neander says, "Tertullian declared against infant baptism, which, at that time, was certainly not a generally prevailing practice--was not yet regarded [104] as an apostolic institution. On the contrary, as the assertions of Tertullian render in the highest degree probable, it had just begun to spread, and was therefore regarded by many as an innovation." It must be remembered that Neander is the most eminent ecclesiastical historian of the present age. With him, in this view, the great body of living German critics are united.

Great stress is laid on the testimony of Origen (who flourished about the year of our Lord 220), and of Augustine (about A. D. 400), who testified to an apostolic tradition for infant baptism. In regard to the former, Neander says, "His words in that age cannot have much weight; for whatever was regarded as important was alleged to be from the Apostles. Besides, many walls of partition intervened between this age and that of the Apostles, to intercept the view."

Augustine says, "Infant baptism is believed to be established not without apostolical authority." Living at so remote an age from the Apostles, being deeply engaged in the controversy as a violent party man, and catching at slight evidence with too great avidity, we can scarcely regard him as an historical witness. In the year of our Lord 253, Fidus, a [105] country bishop, submitted to a council, sitting at Carthage, the question, "whether infants might be baptized before they were eight days old." It is said, "There was no doubt respecting the propriety of infant baptism; that was admitted on all hands. And this shows the practice to be general in that age." In reply, I remark, we have already seen Tertullian, who flourished only some fifty years before this, opposing infant baptism "as an innovation." The practice, introduced about his time, had spread indeed; but so late as the time when the council assembled, it was still a question whether it was proper to baptize infants before the eighth day. Now, to my mind, it is plain, that had infants been baptized from the days of the Apostles down to the session of the council, this question could never have been started. The usage in the case would have been settled long before that day; and the fact, that such a point was unsettled in the mind of a bishop, shows that infant baptism was not, even at that period, a general practice.

Before leaving the argument for infant baptism from ecclesiastical history,--an argument on which the very greatest dependence is placed,--one or two comments may be admissible. While the chain of evidence in favor of immersion is [106] unbroken, from the very days of Paul and Barnabas downwards, all the links which should connect the later practice of the church, in regard to infants, with the time of the Apostles, ARE MISSING! We hear not a syllable of the baptism of infants till two hundred years after Christ. It is admitted, however, that the practice was commenced near the close of the second century, and gradually gained ground in the third; and it may be asked, How could the change from adult to infant baptism be introduced? In reply, it is enough to ask, How could episcopacy, and the use of sponsors, the sign of the cross on the forehead, the dressing in white, and a multitude of usages and ceremonies, be introduced, all "without a whisper of opposition?" Especially, I ask, how could infant communion become universal in the church, without a single note of remonstrance? There is the same evidence from antiquity in favor of this as in favor of infant baptism; and if you adopt the one practice on the ground of the usage of the ancient church, you must also adopt the other. The truth unquestionably is, infant baptism was introduced into the church contemporaneously with the notion, that baptism is essential to salvation. When this idea prevailed, baptism of course must be [107] administered to infants, or they were doomed to perdition. But I pass to another topic.

7. Household baptism. It is argued that "the Apostles baptized certain households, and it is probable these households contained infant children." "Probable" they contained infants! But my brethren must make it certain--the burden of proof rests on them. They cannot use the "households" as an argument in their favor till they PROVE, not only that they might contain, but that they actually did contain, infants. This will scarcely be attempted, for the Holy Ghost has left on record facts concerning two of these cases which demonstrate that they contained only those who believed. In the case of the jailer, it is said, "Paul and Silas spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house [Acts 16:32]." "And he rejoiced, believing in God with all his house" [Acts 16:34]

Dr. Macknight, a pedo-baptist, remarks, "The house of the jailer, it seems, were equally impressed with Paul's sermon, as the jailer himself was."

Calvin. \* \* \* \* \* "in which the grace of God illustriously appeared, because it suddenly brought the whole family to a pious consent."

Bloomfield. "It is taken for granted, his family became Christians as well as himself." [108]

Concerning the household of Stephanas, Paul writes, "It is the first-fruits of Achaia, and they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints" [1 Corinthians 16:15]; on which Dr. Macknight remarks, "The family of Stephanas seem all to have been adults when they were baptized, as they are said to have devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints." With reference to the case of Lydia [Acts 16:14-15], it appears she was a stranger from Thyatira, residing in Philippi, nearly three hundred miles from home, for the purposes of trade. It is not in evidence that she had a husband or children. Probably her household was composed of assistants in her business, who, following her example, believed and were baptized; for we are informed that, when Paul and Silas left the city, they entered into the house of Lydia, and saw and comforted the brethren. [Acts 16:40]

Thus we find in the New Testament baptized households just so often as we find believing households. So now, in the church, Baptist ministers are frequently permitted to baptize whole families, on a profession of their faith; and within a recent period, the missionaries in Burmah speak of baptizing eight entire households of believers.

[A few additional testimonies on the subject [109] of "household baptism" may be given. Olshausen, German Lutheran, says: "For infant baptism nothing is to be deduced from the word 'house,' for the adult members of the family, or the slaves likewise, might be signified by it."

Neander, German Lutheran, "We can not infer the existence of infant baptism from the instance of the baptism of whole families, for the passage in 1 Corinthians 16:15 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."

One of the most important witnesses on this subject is Dr. Willibald Beyschlag, German Lutheran, who wrote his New Testament Theology in 1899. He says: "Baptism was only administered to adults. All that has been read into the Acts of the Apostles about the baptism of children is pure fancy." "There is no mention in his [Paul's] writings, or in any part of the New Testament, of a baptism of children." "Appeal has been made to the repeated statement: 'He was baptized with his whole house.' But who is to tell us that infant children belonged to this house? The possibility of an apostolic baptism of children is destroyed by the reasoning of Paul (1 Corinthians 7:14), where he places the children of Christian parents on [110] the same level with non-Christian husbands and wives, and calls them 'hagia' [holy] because of their life connection with Christian parents, and not because of having received baptism. But still more convincing is the argument, that if there had been a tradition of apostolic baptism of children, the wavering of the church on the subject even so late as Tertullian and Augustine would have been impossible."--EDITOR.]

8. Infant baptism is enforced from "the nature and fitness of things," and "because it is agreeable to the feelings of parents." The feelings which prompt pious parents to present their infant offspring for baptism are often deserving of great respect. Indeed, they are frequently deemed sacred, and no profane eye should look upon them with unhallowed gaze. But when, influenced by these "feelings," men would impose on the churches, as a divine institution, an uncommanded ceremony, and thus set aside an ordinance of Christ, it becomes us to examine the strength of the argument. The principle on which the reasoning proceeds is this: whatever observance is pleasant to the feelings of good men ought to be regarded as an institution of God! There are, doubtless, pious men in the Roman Catholic Church, and the unscriptural ceremonies of Popery "are [111] agreeable to their feelings." Is this any reason for supposing these ceremonies binding on all the disciples of the Savior? Prayer for the repose of departed spirits, supplications to the Virgin Mary and to the saints, and the worship of images, are pleasant to the "feelings" of those who offer them; but is this a sufficient proof that all the followers of Christ ought to adopt the views of the Catholics, in these matters? If the advocates of infant baptism have no better reason than this for their practice, I do not see how they can require others to conform to them. The fact is, parents usually think of the baptism of their children as an act of dedication to God, and it is in this that their feelings are interested. They desire to consecrate them to the Savior, and they take it for granted, that they may make the consecration "by baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Under the impulse of their affectionate "feelings" they forget to

ask whether their proposed course will be agreeable to the great Head of the church. This should not be. Men must not set up their "feelings" as the standard, and bring God's law to bend to them. We must first ascertain the will of God, as revealed in the Scriptures, and then endeavor to [112] bring our feelings cheerfully to accord with that will. Infant dedication is eminently proper, but let it be performed so as not to violate a law of Christ's kingdom. Let the fond parent take the child of his affections into his closet, and there, in secret, solemnly consecrate it to the service of his Father who seeth in secret. Let his solemn vows of consecration be followed by appropriate efforts, and he may expect the blessing of the God of heaven upon his offspring. But an argument in favor of infant baptism is founded upon "the nature and fitness of things." This argument entirely overlooks the distinction between positive institutions and moral duties. These last, such as repentance, faith, justice, benevolence, praise, prayer, may be deduced "from the nature and fitness of things." Not so with positive institutions. These depend for their authority on the will of the founder, and unless that will has been clearly expressed, they cannot be binding. To attempt to establish the claims of a religious ceremony, by reasoning "from the nature of things," is essentially absurd and fearfully dangerous. Not a ceremony was ever honored with a place in the Romish ritual for which some such reason could not be assigned. To endeavor, then, by reasoning [113] "from the nature and fitness of things," to fasten on the churches a ceremony which is neither commanded of God nor countenanced by scriptural example, is illogical, absurd, and fraught with the most pernicious consequences.

9. Although it is conceded that there are no commands or certain examples, in the New Testament, in favor of infant baptism, yet it has been supposed indirectly to find support from several passages of Scripture, which I now notice.

Matthew 19:13-14. "Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." It is said, the phrase, "for of such is the kingdom of heaven," means, for to such the kingdom of heaven belongs: they have a right to its blessings. In support of this rendering, Matthew 5:3, is quoted: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." But there is a marked difference between the two passages, in the Greek, as well as in our own version. Respecting the poor in spirit, it is said, of them, or of these, is the kingdom of heaven; the kingdom of heaven is made up of these. [114] These, the poor in spirit, these only, are the subjects of the kingdom of heaven. In relation to the children, it is said, of such is the kingdom of heaven; not, of these, but of such as these, of persons like these children. [See an account of the same transactions, Mark 10:13-16; Luke 8:15-17.] The English edition of the Polyglot Testament (New York, 1832) gives the true sense. "Of such is the kingdom of heaven"; that is, "of persons resembling children in disposition; having their innocence, simplicity, humility, teachableness." So Barnes, in his note on the place: "The kingdom of heaven evidently means here the church. Whosoever shall not be humble, unambitious, and docile, shall not be a true follower of Christ, or a member of his kingdom. 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 resemble them, or were like them in temper, was the kingdom of heaven made up." So Kuinoel, Rosenmueller, and Bloomfield.

Acts 2:39. "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."

What "promise"? Certainly not any promise [115]

found in the covenant with Abraham; for the

matters therein contained have nothing to do

with the subjects of which he is speaking, namely,

the influences of the Holy Spirit. But he

refers to the promise recorded Joel 2:28, which

had already been adduced in the seventeenth

verse. " children." In Joel, to their "sons and daughters," who should be old enough to prophesy. The word "children" here denotes descendants, posterity, and has no reference to children as children. [See Barnes and Bloomfield.]

1 Corinthians 7:14. "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean, but now are they holy."

It is said that the children, being "HOLY," are to be considered "as belonging to the Christian community--are to be treated as CHRISTIAN children." Admit that the children are to be reckoned, in some sense, with the Christian community, it does not follow that they are connected with it in such a sense as to require them to be baptized: admit that they are to be treated as Christian children, the question arises, How are Christian children to be treated? We are not, by any means, here informed that such children are to be considered proper [116] subjects of Christian baptism. If they are to be so considered, let it be proved from other parts of the word of God, and then it will be conceded, that the children of parents, one of whom is an unbeliever, must be baptized. A slight examination will show that the passage affords no support for the practice of infant baptism. The Corinthians had inquired of Paul, whether the marriage connection between a Christian and an unbeliever ought to be dissolved. Paul answers in the negative. In the verse quoted, he gives a reason why diversity of religion should not authorize a separation, and in assigning this, he anticipates the objection, "Shall I not be polluted by such close union with a profane and polluted person?" To which the answer is, "No: the believing wife is not polluted by the unbelieving husband, but rather the unbelieving is sanctified (made ceremonially clean. or holy), by the believing." For otherwise (namely, if the unbelieving party be not thus clean) your children would be considered impure and unclean. But you believe they are not unclean; therefore you may be satisfied that your connection is lawful and proper. Or thus: As the man and wife are one, they [117] are ceremonially clean (holy), so that they are not to be separated. If this were not so, your children would be unclean (ceremonially, not civilly), and the pious parent could lawfully have no intercourse with them, must not even touch them; but "now," since the unbelieving parent is thus affected by the believing, your children are clean, ceremonially pure, "holy," and the marriage-bond must not be broken. The whole case may be decided by a single consideration: the holiness here spoken of is ascribed to the unbelieving parent, as well as to the children; and if the children are so far affected by the piety of the believer as to be entitled to the ordinances of the church, the unbelieving parent is affected to the same extent, and must be entitled to the same privileges.

Prof. Stuart remarks on this passage, "It cannot mean that the children are made the proper subjects of baptism; for if this were the case, then the unbelieving husband or wife would be made so by the believing party. Further, such a sense would be inapposite to the course of the reasoning."q

Barnes, in the course of an exposition of the passage, agreeing in the main with the above. [118] remarks, "There is not one word about baptism here; not an allusion to it; nor does the argument, in the remotest degree, bear upon it."

Romans 11:1-36. The argument from this chapter is the same as that already noticed under the fourth head of this discourse. I will here observe, there is not a word in the whole chapter to show that the Apostle had a single thought respecting any external rite or ordinance whatever. It may be inferred from his representations, that the Jewish and the Christian dispensations are similar, so far as the spiritual and essential nature of religion is concerned; nothing more than this can be logically deduced from the chapter. So Barnes, Stuart and Bloomfield, who avail themselves of every passage which promises the slightest support to pedo-baptist views, have never thought of deriving proof from this chapter. The arguments which are usually employed, by the ablest writers in favor of infant baptism, have now been presented and examined. Do these arguments prove it to be an ordinance of the great Head of the church, appointed by the Lord Jesus Christ, and binding on all the churches? If proved, whence is the proof derived? From the passages of Scripture just examined? They "do not hills at the subject." [119] "From the nature and fitness of things?" This argument cannot be applied to positive institutions. They are obligatory only because they are commanded; but it is granted that infant baptism is nowhere commanded in the word of God. From its being "agreeable to the feelings of parents?" But this is a question of fact, not of feeling; of duty, not of desire. We must not by our "feelings" decide what ought to be God's word, but must submit our feelings to whatever is God's word. From "the baptism of households?" It is not proved there was a single infant in those households; and if there were many, the Holy Ghost has added circumstances which clearly show that "the narrative speaks only of adults or intelligent agents."r Is infant baptism proved "from church history?" But while, from the earliest period, the baptism of believers appears on every page of history, her voice is dumb respecting infant baptism for two hundred years after Christ. Throughout the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles, and all the writings of the fathers, down to Tertullian, there is not even an allusion to this subject. Nothing is said in the New Testament, nothing in the fathers, concerning children who had received "the seal of the [120] covenant." Though often addressed, the children of believers are never reminded of the obligations which this covenant, made by their parents on their behalf, imposes. Parents also, although admonished to "train up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," are never called on to "remember the covenant" in which they gave their children to God at their baptism. In short, we have no hint at the baptism of infants, till the ordinance was considered essential to salvation. Is the practice argued from "proselyte baptism?" It is settled by the decision of modern critics, that the baptism of proselytes was not known among the Jews till after the destruction of the second Temple, A. D. 70. Is the duty enforced from "the Abrahamic covenant, and the substitution of circumcision?" But we have seen, that the covenant with Abraham is not the covenant with believers. The token of this covenant, as applicable to the Gentiles, was solemnly disavowed, at a convention of the Apostles and elders in Jerusalem. Nor was a syllable uttered respecting baptism as a substitute for the disavowed token. Besides, if we say

circumcision was a type of baptism, we violate a great principle of interpretation, namely, nothing in the New Testament is to be [121] considered as typified by the Old, unless clearly so regarded by the sacred writers themselves. If we depart from this canon, we open the door to a deluge of allegorical absurdities. We must agree, then, with

Starck. "The connection of circumcision with infant baptism deserves no consideration, since there were physical reasons for circumcision in infancy."

Augusti. "The parallel between circumcision and baptism is altogether foreign to the New Testament."

Prof. Lange. "This comparison [of baptism with circumcision] is without foundation because the only circumcision of the gospel dispensation is, according to Paul, the circumcision of the heart" [Romans 2:29].

Rheinhard, Morus, and Doederlein say, "Infant baptism is not to be found in the Bible."

Gesenius, the celebrated Hebrew lexicographer, being informed that the Baptists of America practise immersion, and reject the baptism of infants, remarked, They do right--that is, accord to the Bible."

[Beyschlag, quoted before, says: "The Abrahamic and Mosaic circumcision had no further relation to Christian baptism than that the former was the sign and seal of the old [122] covenant, and the latter the sign and seal of the new covenant. No conclusion can be drawn from this similarity for infant baptism; for it is a very different thing to enter by birth into an allied people as the Israelite boy, and to enter by personal faith a community of believers."

Godet, Presbyterian: "In a discussion on baptism, I would not use the argument of circumcision; for one might always retort that, in the old dispensation, free adhesion was not required, whereas it is in the new."

Pressense, French Protestant: "Regarded from the Apostolic point of view, baptism cannot be connected either with circumcision or with the baptism administered to proselytes to Judaism. Between it and circumcision there is all the difference which exists between the theocracy to which admission was by birth, and the church which is entered only by conversion. It [baptism] is in direct connection with faith; that is, with the most free and most individual action of the human soul."--EDITOR.] But to proceed. Is the obligation to baptize infant children made out "from the identity of the church?" We have seen that this identity is nothing to the purpose, so long as the Christian dispensation differs from the Jewish in its [123] rites and its subjects. The resemblance in the case is internal and spiritual, not external and ritual.

Finally, is "the silence of the New Testament concerning infant baptism" a proof that Christians are bound to observe it as a divine institution? Can silence establish a positive institution, or a blank give us specific and definite instructions?

I repeat, do the foregoing arguments, separate or combined, PROVE infant baptism to be a divine ordinance, and binding on the followers of Christ? In the New Testament, faith and baptism are always joined together; not a whisper is heard concerning the application of the ordinance to infants till six or eight generations of Christians, after Christ, had gone to the mansions of rest. If,

therefore, this practice is to be regarded as a requisition of the Savior, the labor of proving it to be such assuredly rests on those who would lay the obligation on the churches. As the proof is not made out from the arguments above noticed, I might here pause. I am not bound to advance a single consideration against infant baptism, or in favor of believers' baptism. This latter stands as the baptism, the only baptism recognized in the gospel, till proof, full and decisive proof, is [124] adduced, showing that infant baptism is also enjoined. No man is at liberty to apply the sacred rite of baptism to any other subject than a believer, till he can show, beyond all reasonable doubt, that such an application is required by the Founder of the Christian system. It is not enough that the practice in question be innocent, or even appears to be useful; it must be required. But although, according to every rule of fair, logical reasoning, it cannot be demanded, yet I am willing, as a gratuity, to suggest some reasons for thinking THE BAPTISM OF BELIEVERS TO BE THE ONLY GOSPEL BAPTISM.

1. This is evident, in the first place, from THE SPIRITUAL NATURE OF THE CHRISTIAN DISPENSATION.

"The great characteristic which distinguishes the present economy from that which has vanished away is its spirituality. The ecclesiastical constitution which commenced in the family of Abraham, and was fully organized by the ministry of Moses, was not only religious, but political. Church and state were then one; for the civil government was then a theocracy. It embraced all who were natives of Judea. To be a member of the Jewish church, and a subject of the civil government, was the same thing; [125] for to the church God held a political relation; but to the Christian church God holds no political relation. Though the Son is King in Zion, and wields a mighty scepter, yet he rules by a spiritual, not a civil, sway. If, then the kingdom of Christ is strictly spiritual; if the subjects of it 'are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God' [John 1:13]; if they are not to say within themselves, 'We have Abraham to our father, because God is able of the very stones to raise up children unto Abraham' [Matthew 3:9; Luke 3:8]--then, how incongruous is it with the nature of that kingdom, to give one of its sealing rites to those who can furnish no evidence of a spiritual regeneration, and who are connected with the subjects of it only by ties of natural or civil relationship! What a confounding is this of the relations of nature and of grace, of the claims of the flesh and of the spirit, of the immunities of the church and of the world! But if true Christians 'are all children of God by faith in Christ Jesus' [Galatians 3:26]; if as many as have been baptized into Christ 'have put on Christ' [Galatians 3:27]; if, in his kingdom, 'there is neither circumcision nor uncircumcision, neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, neither, male nor female,' but 'all are one in him' [Colossians 3:11; Galatians 3:28]--then how fitting, how becoming it is, that all such, and only [126] such, should show forth their 'peculiar relation to him,' by being baptized into his name!"s

II. THE SIGNIFICANCY OF BAPTISM, AND THE OBLIGATIONS UNDER WHICH ITS RECEPTION LAYS ITS SUBJECTS, afford conclusive proof that it should tee applied only to believers. On examining the Acts of the Apostles, we find baptism every where regarded a public profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Those "who gladly received the word were baptized" [Acts 2:41]. So "Crispus" and many of the Corinthians, hearing, "believed and were baptized" [Acts 18:8]. As soon as a person was baptized, he was called a "saint," a "disciple," a "believer." So, by baptism, we sacredly bind ourselves to believe the doctrines of the Savior, to obey his precepts, to lead pious, godly lives, after his example. Paul says, "As many of you as have been baptized into

Christ, have put on Christ" [Galatians 3:27]; that is, are Christians, and are therefore bound to confess him for your Lord and Master, to obey him, and to follow his example. Peter calls baptism "the answer of a good conscience toward d God" [1 Peter 3:21]. The meaning of the [Greek] word [eperotema] here rendered "answer," is, engagement, pledge, or promise, and so denotes any solemn obligation which one assumes before God. The idea of the Apostle is, By baptism we [127] take upon ourselves the sacred obligation, in the presence of God, to maintain a good conscience, to be watchful against sin, and to strive after holiness. As the Israelites, being baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, submitted themselves to his authority and guidance, so baptism into the name of Christ is an oath of allegiance to him, as a sovereign; it is a "devotement" to him, an oath of entire consecration to him, a voluntary yielding up of the whole body and spirit a "living sacrifice" to his glory. It gives a beautiful and strong expression to the feelings of the Christian, who can say--

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,

That were a present far too small;

Love, so amazing, so divine,

Demands my soul, my life, my all." But nothing but the baptism of the believer can meet the representations here given. Infants cannot profess their faith, or put on Christ, or acknowledge their obligations to maintain the answer of a good conscience, or practice the self-devotement which is required of the baptized. And yet all these are exhibited in the New Testament as essential to the nature of baptism. The New Testament also represents baptism [128] to be emblematical of the death and resurrection of Christ. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his DEATH?" [Romans 6:3]--or did, by our baptism, acknowledge his death as declared in the gospel? "Buried with him in baptism, wherein" (in which emblem) "also ye are risen with him, through faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead" [Colossians 2:12]. Here the Apostle associates our being quickened, or rising to a holy life, with Christ's rising from the grave. And he reminds us of the source of all our hopes ("having forgiven your trespasses" [Colossians 2:13]), by reminding us of the significant and solemn act by which we publicly devote ourselves to the Savior, "being buried with him in baptism."

Baptism is also significant of the belief of the subject of it in the resurrection of the body. "Else, what shall they do who are baptized for the dead? If the dead rise not, why are they then baptized for the dead?" (1 Corinthians 15:29). That is, if there shall be no resurrection, why do the followers of Christ, by their very baptism, profess their belief in the doctrine of the resurrection? And why is baptism so significant a sign of our dying, and rising again? But what avails all this fullness of meaning, [129] this richness and preciousness of instruction in the gospel ordinance, if it is to be thrown away upon unconscious infancy? But if only those who believe are proper recipients of the ordinance, then indeed can we perceive it to be instructive, impressive and delightful.

III. We have seen, from the spiritual nature of Christianity, and from the significancy and uses of the ordinance, that baptism is, in its nature, adapted to believers only. If any doubt yet remains, as to the duty of confining it to believers, all uncertainty will be removed by considering the bearing of THE APOSTOLICAL COMMISSION on this subject: "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" [Matthew 28:19-20]. This is the LAW under which the ministers of Christ are instructed to go forth, as the agents and representatives of the Lord Jesus, and, by their instrumentality, convert men, receive them into the church, baptize them on a profession of their faith, and afterwards instruct them into the knowledge of Christ's commandments; this is the law, established by the King in Zion for the forming and organizing of [130] churches. The words of a law should always be precise and readily understood. If the legislature order the raising of an army, they describe the class of men who shall be enrolled (say, able-bodied men from eighteen to forty-five years of age), and the manner in which the enrollment shall be made. So the law of Christ under consideration. There are three things which our Lord distinctly enjoins, namely, to make disciples or Christians; to introduce the disciples (Mark 16:16), called believers, into the church by baptism; and to instruct the baptized into all the duties of the Christian life. Can any thing be plainer, than that this law authorizes the baptism of believers only? But it said, the directions of Christ here refer only to "those who are capable of believing," and the language "does not forbid" the baptism of infants. True, these directions command none but believers to be baptized; and we see good reason for this in the considerations, heretofore suggested, relative to the import and effects of baptism. But further,--the terms of the Commission, while they enjoin the baptism of believers, do, most certainly, exclude the baptism of any but believers. 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 buys [131] 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 you had no authority to buy small books; you have done it at your risk." You are about to engage in the cultivation of silk, and you send a commission to a friend, requesting him to purchase for you five thousand mulberry-trees, two years old. In answering your order, he sends you five thousand of the age prescribed, and five thousand more of only one year's growth. You remonstrate. Your friend replies, "The words of the commission referred only to buying five thousand which were two years old--you did not direct me not to buy five thousand more, the growth of the present year." "Nor was it necessary," you rejoin. "When you received a commission to purchase mulberry trees of a, certain description, you were as really prohibited to purchase any others, on my account, as if I had said, in so many words, 'Buy five thousand mulberry-trees two years old, and do not buy any others.' You might as well have procured for me five thousand hickory--trees, and [132] urged that the words of your commission do not forbid it! In doing as you have done, you have not only acted without authority, but also against my instructions, and you must abide the consequences."--So the commission granted by our Lord directs his ministers to baptize believers, and them only. Mentioning none but believers, it virtually excludes all others. To administer the ordinance to any others, is to act without the authority of Christ, and against his instructions. Yea, more: "Not only does this commission exclude infants from the baptism it enjoins; if there were even another commission requiring the baptism of infants,--when these infants who have been baptized, according to this supposed second commission, come to believe the gospel, they must be baptised according to the commission now under consideration, without any regard to their baptism in infancy. The commission commands all men to be baptized, on believing the gospel.

Had there been even a divinely-appointed baptism for them in infancy, it cannot interfere with this baptism, nor excuse men from obedience to the command that enjoins believers to be baptized. The command of Jesus to every believer to be baptized, stands engraven in indelible characters in this commission. It cannot be effaced; and I call on all [133] believers, on their allegiance to the Son of God, to submit to this ordinance of his kingdom."

"But," it will be said, the reply to this is simple and satisfactory. Suppose the ordinance of circumcision had been to continue, and the command had run in these terms: 'Go ye, therefore, and disciple all nations, circumcising them, in the name of the Father,' etc. Had such language been used, we should have known that children were to be the subjects of the rite, as well as their parents; the previously existing practice would have ascertained this." This is specious, but by no means conclusive. Had such a commission been given to circumcise, it would have utterly excluded infants. Could a command to circumcise believers include a command to circumcise unbelievers? Impossible. No matter what was the former practice with respect to circumcision. If the Apostles are commanded to circumcise believers, they cannot, in virtue of that commission, circumcise any but believers."

"With reference to Mark 16:16,--'He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; he that believeth not, shall be damned,'--it is said, "If we infer that a person must actually believe, else he cannot be baptized, we must also infer that he must actually believe, else he cannot be [134] saved; hence infants cannot be saved. Certainly, if there were no way of saving infants but by [believing] the gospel, this conclusion is inevitable. The gospel saves none but by faith. But the gospel [as requiring belief] has nothing to do with infants, nor have gospel ordinances any respect to them. The gospel has to do with those who hear it. It is good news; but to infants it is no news at all. They know nothing of it. The salvation of the gospel is as much confined to believers, as the baptism of the gospel is. None shall ever be saved by the gospel who do not believe it. Consequently, by the gospel no infant can be saved. Infants are saved by the death of Christ, but not by [believing] the gospel, not by faith. They are to be regenerated, but not by the gospel; they must be sanctified for heaven, but not through the truth revealed to man. The position is therefore good; none can be saved by the gospel, but such as believe the gospel. None can be baptized with the baptism of the gospel, but such as believe the gospel. There is no exception in either case."t

If any thing more were necessary to satisfy us respecting the commission, we have it in the formula employed in administering the ordinance: [135] "Baptizing them in (into) the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Barnes gives the meaning thus: "Baptizing them into the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, by a solemn profession of the only true religion, and by a solemn devotion to the service of the sacred Trinity." But surely none but believers can make this "solemn profession," and this "solemn devotion" of themselves to the Trinity. To pronounce these words over infants, is to use the sacred names of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, without meaning, or with a meaning which is wholly unauthorized by the commission of our Lord. That none but believers are entitled to baptism, is also evident from the concluding direction of the commission, "teaching them," etc. The candidate is supposed to be old enough to be taught the other institutions of the gospel. Unconscious babes are of course excluded. This is agreeable to the views of many learned and pious men, who were not Baptists.

Grotius. "Christ properly requires teaching the first elements of Christianity as preceding baptism; which also was always used in the church previous to that ordinance."

Jerome, the most learned of all the Latin father, says, "They first teach all nations; [136] then, when are taught, they baptize them with water; for it cannot be that the body should receive the sacrament of baptism, unless the soul has before received true faith."

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

Baxter, speaking of the Commission: "This is not like some occasional, historical mention of baptism; but it is the very commission of Christ to his Apostles for preaching and baptizing, and purposely expresseth their several works in their teaching, to make disciples, which by Mark are called believers. The second work is to baptize them. The third work is to teach them all other things, which are afterwards to be learned from the school of Christ. To condemn this order is to renounce all rules of order; for where can we expect to find it, if not here? I profess my conscience is fully satisfied that there is one sort of faith, even saving, that must go before baptism."

It is unnecessary, by way of further confirmation, to refer to the instances of baptism recorded in the New Testament. In all cases, we find only those who believe permitted to receive the ordinance. So the description of [137] those who composed the churches in the time of the Apostles, shows that none but those who gave credible evidence of piety had received the rite of initiation into the church. They are said to be "not of the world" [John 15:19; John 17:14, John 17:16]; to have "put on Christ"; to be "saints" [Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; etc.]; to be "the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty" [Galatians 3:27]; to be "the elect of God" [Colossians 3:12] "through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth" [2 Thessalonians 2:13]; to be "the faithful in Christ Jesus" [Ephesians 1:1]. And there is not the slightest intimation concerning the membership of baptized infant children. In the progress of these discourses, it has been shown, it is hoped, that immersion is essential to Christian baptism; that infant baptism cannot be defended, either from the Scriptures of the New Testament, or from analogy, or from antiquity; while the baptism of believers only is demanded by the spirituality of the gospel dispensation, by the design of the ordinance, and, especially and absolutely, by the terms of Christ's commission.--I conclude with some practical observations.

And, in the first place, let me address those who have already submitted themselves to the ordinance of baptism, according to Christ's appointment.

"It is our happiness, my brethren, to feel an [138] unshaken confidence, that we are standing on scriptural ground. We have known our Master's will, and we have been baptized. We have found that his yoke is easy, and his burden is light [Matthew 11:30]. In obeying, we have had a sweet consciousness of his approbation. And when, from time to time, we have had occasion to gather around the baptismal waters, we have had some awakening of salutary recollections, some renewing of solemn vows, some increase of faith, some foretaste of the glory that shall be revealed. Happy, thrice happy would it be for our own souls, for the church of Christ, for the honor of our Lord in this ordinance, and for a perishing world, were we to recur constantly to first principles, and always bear in mind the obligations of the baptized."

"Did I say, we have known our Master's will? Yes, brethren, we have known it. We have been convinced, that we, being dead to sin, as he died a sacrifice for sin, should, in our baptism, acknowledge ourselves obligated to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost; to rise to a new and holy life, as he, to whose sufferings we owe our deliverance from sin and condemnation, rose from the dead, and as we hope for a glorious resurrection, when the trumpet of the archangel shall sound. We have acknowledged our obligations. Heaven and earth have [139] witnessed. Christians living in error on this subject, and attached, as men naturally are, to what has been handed down from their fathers, have marked us, and the men of the world have marked us. They have observed our lives. And have we never heard the keen reproach, What do ye more than others? Ah, my brethren! if it were only a slander, we could bear it. He who has loved us, and died for us, has taught us to endure patiently the unfavorable opinions and representations of men. 'Blessed are ye when men shall say all manner of evil against you, falsely, for my sake' [Matthew 5:11]. But when he himself, our Lord and Master, into whose death we have been baptized, casts on us the grieved and piercing look which he cast on Peter, when he denied him, and asks, What do ye more than others?--we can only go out and weep bitterly."

"From his throne on high he looks down this day on all the baptized; he looks down on us, and seems to say, 'I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore' [Revelation 1:18] To you I have given to know my will, and to hope for eternal life through my death. Into my death ye have been baptized. Created anew, ye have been set forth as alive from the dead. From the waters of baptism ye have come forth, as citizens of heaven, to sojourn awhile on earth, that [140] ye may show to all the purity and power of my gospel, being yourselves examples of all that is lovely and of good report, in all the relations and conditions of life. It is yours to endure, as seeing him who is invisible; and to shed around you an influence that shall continually evince your heavenly birth. To you I have looked to be first and foremost in promoting the interests of my kingdom. Where are ye, at this eventful period? Are ye duly mindful of what is implied in your baptism? Are ye truly and faithfully doing your utmost for that cause for which I became poor, and suffered unto death, even the death of the cross [Php 2:8]? Are ye dead to sin? Are ye living and laboring, not for yourselves, but for me; for the riches and honors, not of earth, but of heaven? 'Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing' [Matthew 24:46 Luke 12:43]. To you I have intrusted the vindicating of my wisdom and goodness in the institution of baptism, by exemplifying in your lives its holy tendency. Vain are all other vindications, without this. My command will not be obeyed. Men will misunderstand and neglect baptism, and cling to their own substitutions and traditions. 'Neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead' [Luke 16:31]. Ye that have been baptized [141] into my death, must rise from the dead in a better than the literal sense of the words. Wherever ye are, ye must stand forth, witnesses alive indeed from the dead, walking in newness of life, and presenting, every day and every hour, a lovely, practical demonstration of the import and utility of baptism, of the baptism which I have commanded. Ye must, every one of you, become a book, of unanswerable arguments and eloquent expostulations; a living epistle from my own hand, known and read of all men. So will ye honor me and my command. So will baptism be restored to the place and the purposes for which I ordained it, as the initiatory rite, marking the boundary between the world dead in sin and the church alive to God, ascribing the spiritual life of the believer to my death; and whenever it is administered, proclaiming to all, by an emblem more expressive than words, that 'I am the way, the truth, and the life' [John 14:6]"u With regard to those of my hearers, who hope they love the

Savior, and desire to keep his commandments, but have never been buried with their Lord in baptism, let me ask, What doth hinder you, my brethren, to arise and be baptized? If any dependence can be placed on [142] our investigations into the meaning of language, and if the language of the Bible is to be understood according to the universal laws of interpretation, has it not been made evident, beyond reasonable doubt, that the religious immersion of a believer, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, AND THAT ONLY, is the baptism prescribed by Christ to his followers? Why, then, will you not keep his commandments? Are you still unsatisfied? Have you not, then, reason to fear for yourselves that you are under the influence of unhappy prejudices? I, too, have felt their power. I have writhed under the agony of the stricture with which they bound me. When the providence of God compelled me to enter on the inquiries which resulted in a change of views, I was wrapped in prepossessions against immersion, strong as armor of triple brass. I cherished a spirit of proud indifference, not to say contempt, totally opposed to the temper of the candid inquirer after the will of Christ. Possibly, my friends, a similar spirit may have possessed you. But the demon must be cast out, or the Savior will not smile on your search after truth.

Again, do you urge, "Why trouble one's self so much about a question of much water or [143] little water?" It is not "a question of much water or of little water." The controversy on this subject relates to what is Christian baptism, and to whom is the ordinance to be administered. Suppose we could see no reason for having "much" water, rather than "little," still we should not be at liberty, from mere personal considerations, without reference to the will of Christ, to substitute sprinkling for immersion. But there is good reason for employing so "much" water as to immerse the body. This we have seen in remarking upon the meaning and significance of the rite. If baptism were designed to intimate only the necessity of the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, then, indeed, a smaller quantity of water might be emblematical of this truth. Even in this case, however, if the Christian felt his entire depravity, his utter defilement from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head, and desired to be "thoroughly washed" from his iniquity, he might crave the entire immersion of the person in the waters of baptism, as symbolical of the universal cleansing which he sought by the influences of the Holy Ghost. And when we find that, in addition to the idea of internal purity, the Holy Scriptures represent baptism [144] as an emblem of the burial and resurrection of Christ, and of our own resurrection, both literal and figurative, we cannot but feel, that immersion belongs essentially to the nature of the ordinance, and when men sprinkle a "little" water upon the face, they practice an unwarranted substitution.

I repeat, it is not "a question of much water or little water." It is a question relating to the proper subjects of baptism. If the views exhibited in these discourses are correct, it follows that those who practice the sprinkling of infants, not only strip the ordinance of baptism of the meaning and instruction which its divine Author has connected with it, but they act on a principle which would banish believers' baptism out of the world. Is it a matter of no importance that the traditions of men should make void an ordinance of God?

It is not "a question of much or of little water." The New Testament every where treats men as acting for themselves in matters of religion, and as responsible for their own acts. One man cannot repent for another, or believe for another. The language of the Scriptures to each son and daughter of Adam is, Repent thou, believe thou; and, Believe thou and be baptized. The religion of the son cannot save the [145] father, nor can the religion of the father save the son. Every person

must engage for himself to serve the Lord--every one must act for himself. But the language of infant baptism is diametrically opposite to this language of Scripture. It says, the father can covenant for the child, the father can act for him. The act of the parent shall answer for his offspring--the faith of the parent shall save the child! Says an eminent pedo-baptist minister, a Christian parent, who uses the ordinance of infant baptism aright, "may be sure that the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls has written the name of that child before him, in letters which his infinite forbearance and mercy will long keep from being blotted out, though the child should perversely break his father's covenant." "If the parents die while the child is young, the remembrance of its dedication to God, and the confident belief that it was received into his covenant, will help them to look at it from the dying pillow with peace."v As exhibited in these extracts, is not infant baptism manifestly at war with the great doctrine of JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH? This teaches that faith, one's own faith, not another's--faith,, [146] not works, either his own or another's,--shall save a man. Shall the immersionists be charged with bigotry for endeavoring to uphold a doctrine on which the great Apostle of the Gentiles has so strenuously insisted, as fundamental to the Christian system?

I need say nothing of the fatal influence of the views I am examining on multitudes of careless adults, who are encouraged in a life of impenitence by complacently dwelling on the covenant made with God on their behalf, when their parents presented them for baptism. From their infancy, they have been accustomed to reflect that they have received "the seal of the covenant," have been "made members of Christ" [1 Corinthians 6:15], and "children of God" [Romans 8:16; Galatians 3:26] having been "regenerated with the Holy Spirit" [Acts 1:5]. Is it strange that such persons should feel themselves safe, and at liberty to continue in sin?

It is not, then, I reiterate, a question "of much water, or of little water." It is a question whether men shall lay unhallowed hands on an ordinance of the great Head of the church, and profanely strip it of its significance and its teachings,--whether they shall strike down, in the temple of gospel truth, the noble pillar of justifying faith,--whether they shall lift from the sinner's conscience a [147] weight of personal responsibility, laid there by the Lord Jesus himself,--whether they shall abrogate a law of the King of saints;--or whether they shall keep the ordinances, as they have been delivered in the Statute-Book of Heaven, revering the will of the Sovereign, and observing all things whatsoever he hath commanded, exactly as he hath commanded. Is it suggested that "immersionists do not believe in the divine authority of the Old Testament"? This allegation is the offspring of an ignorance that demands our pity. For a refutation, consult the writings of Andrew Fuller, and other eminent divines of the denomination. Their ministers also select texts indiscriminately from the Old Testament and the New. But do you plead that "immersionists attach too much importance to the ordinance of baptism?" I might reply, pedo-baptists attach too little importance to it. When individuals are led to inquire respecting the mind of Christ, do not even ministers endeavor to quiet their uneasiness, by telling them, "the subject is of no consequence"--"it is a mere external ceremony"--"it is not worth while to trouble one's self about it"? When young converts are seeking to know the will of their Lord respecting the ordinances of his church, do not their spiritual [148] guides often ply them with "dissuasives" from investigation? Do not parents endeavor to restrain their children from examination, because it is pleasant to have all the children in the same church with the parents? Are there not members who will not listen to a sermon on the subject? And do not even theological students, while pursuing their studies, content

themselves with a partial view of the matter, forming their conclusions without reading a single immersionist author? And how happens it that the scriptural mode of administration is, in many places, fallen into disrepute? How happens it that immersion, confessedly practiced by the Apostles, and by the entire church for many centuries, is now covered with obloquy, "as unsuited to the manners of a polished age"? Do not all these things show that many pedo-baptists attach too little importance to this Christian ordinance? And, if this state of things continues, may it not soon be true with regard to baptism, as it now is of the Lord's Supper, that multitudes of adults will be admitted to the ordinance without any pretensions to piety?

But, let me ask, how important do immersionists believe this rite to be? I answer, they do not consider it a saving ordinance. With other Christians, they believe that all the waters [149] of Jordan, all the waves of the ocean, are unavailing to wash away sin. Except a man be born of God, his baptism will profit him nothing as a passport to heaven. But while they do not regard the ordinance as essential to salvation, they do believe it to be essential to obedience to the law of Christ respecting the introduction of members into the visible church. They believe the ordinance of baptism should be observed in the way of Christ's appointment. True, it is only an external rite; but it is a rite enjoined by Christ himself--it is a rite full of meaning. And as any rite is but a form, if we do not preserve the form, we do not practice the rite. Hence immersion is essential to baptism. Hence baptism by immersion is essential to obedience to Christ; essential to the highest instruction and comfort of believers; essential to the best moral impression on unbelievers; essential to the purity and stability of the church of Christ.

But, as we are supposed to lay an unwarrantable stress on baptism, let us see what importance is attached to the ordinance by others.

Mr. Barnes, Note on Mark 16:16. "It is worthy of remark that Jesus has made baptism of so much importance. He did not say, indeed, that a man could not be saved without [150] baptism; but he has strongly implied that, where this is neglected, knowing it to be a command of the Savior, it endangers the salvation of the soul. Faith and baptism are the beginnings of the Christian life; the one, the beginning of piety in the soul; the other, of its manifestation before men, or of a profession of religion. And no man can tell how much he endangers his eternal interests by being ashamed of Christ before men." Does the objection come from Episcopalians? And what stress do they lay upon baptism? In their catechism, to the question, "How many sacraments hath Christ ordained in his church?"--they answer, "Two only, as generally necessary to salvation--that is to say, baptism and the Supper of the Lord." After the baptism of an infant, the minister is instructed to say, "Seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that this child is regenerate, and grafted into the body of Christ's church, let us give thanks unto Almighty God for these benefits." And then follows a part of the thanksgiving: "We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this infant with thy Holy Spirit, to receive him for thine own child by adoption, and to incorporate him into thy holy church." Before confirmation, the [151] baptized child is required to learn a catechism. The following question and answer will show that he is taught to regard baptism in the same important light.

"Who gave you this name?" "My sponsors in baptism; wherein I was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." Does the charge come from the Presbyterians? And what stress do they place upon baptism? In their confession of faith, they say,

"Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, not only as a solemn admission of the party baptized into the visible church, but also to be unto him a sign and SEAL of the covenant of grace, of his ingrafting into Christ, of regeneration, of remission of sins." Does the objection proceed from Congregationalists? And what stress do they lay on the ordinance? Hear Dr. Dwight. "When children die in infancy, and are scripturally dedicated to God in baptism, there is much and very consoling reason to believe that they are accepted beyond the grave." He further says, "There is, I think, reason to hope well concerning other children dying in infancy; but there is certainly peculiar reason [152] for Christian parents to entertain strong consolation with regard to their offspring." Here Dr. Dwight evidently supposes baptism powerfully to contribute to the salvation of infants. For language still more remarkable, refer to the extract from "the Baptized Child," given on a preceding page. Is the objection made by Methodists? And what stress is placed upon the institution by them? Hear the celebrated John Wesley, the founder of Methodism. "By baptism, we, who were the children of wrath, are made the children of God. And this regeneration, which our church in so many places ascribes to baptism, is more than barely being admitted into the church, though commonly connected therewith. Being grafted into the body of Christ's church, we are made the children of God by adoption and grace. By water, as the means, the water of baptism, we are regenerated, or born again; whence it is called, by the Apostles, the washing of regeneration. In all ages, the outward baptism is a means of the inward. Herein we receive a title to, and an earnest of, a kingdom which cannot be moved. In the ordinary way, there is no other means of entering into the church, or into heaven. If infants are guilty of original sin, then they are [153] proper subjects of baptism, seeing, in the ordinary way, they cannot be saved, unless this be washed away by baptism."

After these quotations, can any one charge the immersionists with attaching too much importance to the ordinance of baptism? Whatever the language employed in these extracts may mean, I have never met, in any Baptist writer, expressions so extravagant. But do you fear that a change of views, on account of baptism, will expose you to the imputation of "thinking more of external rites than of internal holiness; of paying tithes of mint, anise, and cummin, while you neglect weightier matters"? But is it true, as a matter of fact, that immersionists esteem the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, and the indispensable duties of piety, less than those who differ from them? Are they not equally attached to the doctrines of the entire depravity of the natural heart, the necessity of the influences of the Holy Spirit in regeneration, the atonement by the blood of Christ? And may not a Christian be desirous to keep the ordinances of the Lord blameless, and, at the same time, earnestly long after inward conformity to the Savior? What if baptism is an "external rite"? Is it not enjoined by him who says, [154] "If ye love me, keep my commandments?" [John 14:15]. And is not every command of Christ of equal authority? May you select certain of his commands, and yield them obedience, while you neglect others? Or must you keep all his statutes? What if baptism be "not essential to salvation?" Will you observe only those precepts, the neglect of which would ruin your soul? Can you not act from love to the Savior? and will you do nothing in obedience to him, unless you are certain disobedience will be punished with everlasting destruction? Admit that, in comparison with faith and repentance, baptism is as the mint, anise, and cummin, compared with the weightier matters of the law [Matthew 23:23]; yet it deserves to be remembered that the tithes of these small herbs must be paid as truly as the tenths of the larger; and under the old dispensation, the wilful omission to present these before the Lord would have been visited with the divine judgments. "BRING," then, my brethren, "BRING ALL THE TITHES

INTO THE STOREHOUSE" [Malachi 3:10], and see what God will do for your souls. And now, "Who is on the Lord's side?"

"Arise and be baptized for the remission of sins." But do you still plead, "I am too far [155] advanced in years to trouble myself respecting this matter?" Too old to obey your Savior? Many venerable men, and women too, have not thought themselves too old to be tortured on the rack, or to be burnt at the stake, rather than break the commandments of the Savior they loved.

"I should dishonor the memory of my parents, if I were to renounce the baptism of my infancy." If you are satisfied that the direction of our Savior is to all, "Believe and be baptized," you are now dishonoring HIM by refusing publicly to avow your attachment to him, according to the methods prescribed in his word. "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me" [Matthew 10:37]. "And he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me" [Matthew 10:38].

[And now, in reviewing the argument as a whole for the immersion of a believer as the only scriptural baptism, attention is called to the following facts:

1. That to baptize is to immerse. This is the very word used in the New Testament. It is a Greek word with an English ending. It never literally means "to sprinkle, to pour, to moisten, to dye." It means only "to immerse."
2. This word is so defined by all [156] lexicographers and learned men. No one ever affirms that it means "to sprinkle, or pour."
3. It is translated in the Bible to dip.
4. Greek authors use it in this sense, and never in the sense of sprinkle.
5. The grammatical construction of every sentence of its known use requires immersion.
6. The practice of Greek-speaking Churches has always been immersion.
- 7 The places selected for baptism and the whole narratives as found in the New Testament require immersion.
7. The figurative uses of baptizo indicate immersion to be its meaning.
8. All these facts are admitted by pedo-baptist writers of the highest scholarship.
9. The history of the church for centuries proves immersion to have been the mode or action of baptism, according to the testimony of pedo-baptist writers of unquestioned authority.
10. The requirement of faith as a condition previous to baptism is clear evidence that infants were not baptized.
11. There is no evidence in the New Testament that any other persons than believers were baptized.
12. The alleged baptism of the children of [157] proselytes, and proselyte baptism itself, are incapable of proof.

13. Pede-baptist writers admit that in the so-called baptism of households there is no proof of infant baptism.

14. There is no intimation in the Scriptures that baptism was instituted to take the place of circumcision under the old covenant.

15. The symbolic significance of baptism is proof that it is an ordinance only for believers.

16. The Commission clearly indicates that the subjects of baptism are those who had been taught, been made disciples, heard the preaching of the gospel and believed.

17. The practice of the Apostles was to baptize only such.

18. The objections to the immersion of believers as Christian baptism can not be sustained as against the practice in the time of Christ and the Apostles.

19. No objection can now stand against apostolic practice under the great Communion. If Christ was immersed, as must be conceded, and if his baptism was immersion, and if the Apostles immersed believers, the conclusion is incontrovertible that immersion of believers only. is scriptural baptism.--EDITOR.] [158] p Manuscript Lectures on Galatians iii.

q Manuscript Lectures.

r Neander.

s Christian Review.

t Carson.

u Prof. Chase's Sermon.

v "The Baptized Child." By Nehemiah Adams, Pastor of Essex Street Church, Boston, 1836.

[MSB 89-158]

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