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SCRIPTURAL REASONS
FOR GIVING UP THE
SPRINKLING OF INFANTS,
AND ADOPTING THE
IMMERSION OF BELIEVERS,
AS
THE ONLY CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

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INTRODUCTION.

As I have preached two or three times on the subject of Baptism since I embraced the views unfolded in these pages, and have been repeatedly solicited both in Liverpool and elsewhere, to furnish serious inquirers with a list of texts quoted in the sermons, I have taken the hint as a reason for printing them, and such illustrations as were offered by way of exposition; together with my *reasons* for abandoning Infant Sprinkling, and adopting Believers' Immersion.

Should I be asked, Which book is most likely to rectify the mis-conceptions of Christians on this subject? I reply, without hesitation, The Bible! It was by reading that blessed book that I reached my present convictions.

Should I be asked again, "Why do you write on the subject?" My answer is, that I found great assistance in a Concordance which many do not possess, and which others are not in the habit of using. Therefore, in some degree to supply these defects, and lead the mind at once to the fountain of light, I write. May the Lord prosper the design.

I was "buried with Christ by baptism (immersion)," 4 mo. 10th, 1839, in Soho Street Chapel, Liverpool. For several years after my conversion, I scarcely ever called in question the propriety of Pædo-baptism. There was no Baptist Church, or members, for many miles round the place of my nativity, the neighbourhood of Middleham, in Yorkshire. About five or six years ago I began to entertain serious scruples about the propriety of sprinkling infants, and for some few days hesitated as to its scriptural nature. I read all the works which I could meet with on both sides of the question, and regarded myself ever since that time until the 10th of 3rd mo. as standing upon an immoveable rock in baptizing infants. It may be interesting to state, in the first place,

CHAPTER I.

Reasons for having regarded INFANT SPRINKLING as Scriptural Baptism, and why it has been given up.

I.—I considered *Sprinkling to be Baptism*, because I read, that the children of Israel “were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea.”—1 Cor. x. 1, 2. While I admitted that immersion was baptism, I claimed from this solitary passage, the same honour for sprinkling. A reference to Exodus xiv. 29, 31, will show how far I, and thousands more, have been mistaken. “The children of Israel went into the midst of the sea, upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand and on their left.” “A strong east wind made the sea dry,” so that from the sea there was neither a real sprinkling, nor a real immersion, as little was there either from the bright and shining cloud which “gave light by night.” Dr. Whitby, though not a Baptist, has candidly given the following satisfactory note:—“They were covered with the sea on both sides, so that both the cloud and the sea had some resemblance to our being covered with water in baptism: their going into the sea resembled the ancient rite of going into the water, and their coming out of it their rising up out of the water.” As this is the only text to which I have appealed, for several years, in favour of sprinkling, and as I now concur entirely in Dr. Whitby’s view, I am compelled to give up the passage, as an authority, and sprinkling together.

II.—My next argument for Infant Baptism, was founded upon the *households* mentioned in the Scriptures.

It was chiefly by reading Wardlaw on Infant Baptism, that my scruples were set aside five or six years ago. He stated, I remember, for I quote from memory, that the Baptist missionaries, in their reports, never say, such a man and his household were baptized, from which he inferred a difference between their practice and that of the Apostles. This appeared very plausible. I have since learned that Baptist ministers often do immerse whole households; and that a household has been immersed by a minister in this town.* Besides, if what Dr. Wardlaw says about Baptist missionaries be true, it is not conclusive, since it is contrasted with an age in which the gospel had unparalleled success. Let us examine all the baptized households mentioned in the New Testament.

1. “Lydia was baptized, and her household,” she “was a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira,” she “heard” the gospel, “worshipped God, and attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.”—Acts xvi. 14, 15. Before it can be proved that Lydia’s household comprehended infants, it must

* Since this was written I have baptized more households than one.

he proved *first*, that she had been *married*; *secondly*, that she was a *mother*; *thirdly*, that some of her children were *infants*; and *fourthly*, that if she had young children, they had *accompanied her* all the way from Thyatira to Philippi, a distance of 300 miles, in her trading excursion to sell purple. Not one of these propositions can be proved from the text, consequently there is no proof that Lydia's household contained a single infant. There are strong presumptions against it. Paul and Silas "went out of the prison, and entered into *the house* of Lydia; and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them and departed."—Acts xvi. 40. Is it not probable that the "brethren in the house of Lydia," were her baptized household?

2dly. The Jailer's household merits notice. The Jailer had said to Paul and Silas, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed *their* stripes; and was baptized (immersed), he and all his straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house."—Acts xvi. 30—34. There are the following evidences that this household contained no unreasoning children. 1st. Paul and Silas, "Spake the word of the Lord unto all that were in his house." This shows that they were capable of hearing and understanding the word of the Lord, of which infants are not. 2dly, All his house believed; now infants cannot believe; therefore the Jailer's house contained no infants.

3dly. Paul says, "I baptized (immersed) also the household of Stephanas."—1 Cor. i. 16. The Holy Spirit has provided in a singular manner, in the Scriptures themselves, that we might not err in reference to these three households. Hear what he says: "Ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the first-fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints."—1 Cor. xvi. 15. It would be absurd to call infants *ministers* or *servants* to the saints, or to say that they had "addicted, or devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints," since they can devote themselves to nothing that requires reason or strength. The argument from households, I therefore consider sustains rather the baptism of persons taught, believing, and capable of serving, than the sprinkling of infants.

III.—My last argument for Infant Sprinkling, I derived from the *history of the church*, in which I saw indeed, from the testimony of all parties, Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Independents, that *immersion* was almost universally practised by all churches, in all places, for many centuries; but I also learned that infants were early immer-

ed. Why do I abandon this argument now? *First*, because the Scriptures are my only authority, and whatever is not founded upon them, I am neither required to *believe*, nor *do*. *Secondly*, as I believe in revelation, I reject tradition; and as the first churches very early became corrupt, it would be exceedingly dangerous to take them as models of practice.*

There are some other arguments adduced by the advocates of Infant Baptism, but as they had never great weight with me, I shall only just glance at them:

1st. Christ said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."—Mark x. 14. But Christ did not say, Suffer little children to be baptized: he said nothing about their baptism. "What did they come to Christ for?" said a Wesleyan leader, to me, a few days ago, "if not for baptism?" I replied, "Whatever they came to Christ for, it could not be for baptism," for "Jesus himself baptized (immersed) not, but his disciples."—John iv. 2.

2dly. "But the Jews circumcised their male children in infancy, and baptism stands for circumcision, therefore children should be baptized." I was never able to see that connexion which some have affirmed to exist between the two institutions. (1.) Circumcision was a national rite of distinction, and was admitted irrespective of character. Ought then, the children, legitimate or illegitimate, of all, however immoral, to be sprinkled? (2.) Repentance and faith are required in order to baptism; neither were essential to circumcision.

3dly. "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."—1 Cor. vii. 14. If it is contended that because the children are "holy," they should be baptized; surely it ought to be contended, that as the "unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife," that he ought to be baptized, which would contradict the Scriptures, since they require faith in order to baptism. But as the passage says nothing about baptism, it may be easily passed over.

Then, as I see no evidence whatever, in Holy Scripture, that ever a believer was received into the church by sprinkling, or that ever an infant was baptized at all, during the lives of the Apostles, I have been led to reject infant sprinkling, and to adopt *Believers' Immersion*, as the only scriptural baptism.

* If I adopt the practice of Infant Immersion from the early Christians, I must also adopt the *opinion of Infant Regeneration*, and many other erroneous views, such as infants taking the *Lord's Supper*, equally as unscriptural and absurd, which they held, and by which their testimony is greatly vitiated.

CHAPTER II.

REASONS for receiving the IMMERSION OF BELIEVERS as the only Scriptural Baptism.

On Lord's day morning, 3d mo. 10, I preached On the Day of Pentecost, and was a little puzzled, as I had often been before, at the connexion between repentance and baptism. After the evening sermon, one of the members, who has inclined to immersion for several years, mentioned the subject. When I got home, I took down the Concordance and the Bible, resolving in the fear of God, to be guided, *this time*, on this great subject, by the Scriptures only. I looked for the words *baptism*, *baptize*, *baptized*, &c., and examined their connexion. The following reasons for changing my view will tell the result :—

1. "Then went out to him (John) Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized (immersed) of him in Jordan, confessing their sins."—Mat. iii. 5—6. I saw that confessing sins was an exercise which could not be predicated of infants.

2. "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized (immersed) of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized (immersed) of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him." Here I saw John baptizing in a *river*. I had never required a river, however many I had sprinkled; nor did I ever hear of a Pædo-baptist minister baptizing in a river. But I had often known baptists to immerse in rivers as well as baths; consequently, I concluded that there must be a great difference between the Pædo-baptist's manner of baptizing and that recorded in the Scriptures.

Again; I discovered that Jesus was not baptized while an *infant*, but "when he began to be about thirty years of age."—Luke iii. 23. I was very much impressed with Christ's reason for submitting to be baptized by John. He said, "Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness," evidently showing that HE regarded baptism as an important part of righteousness, or obedience to his Father's will.

"Jesus, when he was baptized (immersed), WENT UP STRAIGHTWAY OUT OF THE WATER; and lo the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."—Matt. iii. 13—17. Here, when I considered the meaning of βαπτω and βαπτίζω, and saw that Christ went "up out of the water," I doubted not but that he was *immersed of John in Jordan*, the Holy Spirit testifying his *approbation* of the Saviour's obedience by descending under the

mild symbol of a dove, to express the *meek, innocent, and peaceful* nature of Christ's religion.

And may we not learn from this illustrious example, that all those who are immersed in faith will have an increase of communion with the Holy Spirit. The Father bore the testimony of his high approbation to Christ's obedience by declaring, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." And every Christian should feel that in proportion as he copies that only perfect model of moral excellency, the example of Jesus, will he have the satisfaction of knowing that God is well pleased.

After reading this passage, I pondered and pondered it again. Ten years ago, I resolved to follow the Scriptures whithersoever they might lead me, and whatever this line of conduct might *cost*. At Jordan I now beheld Christ setting me an example that I might tread in his steps. I had resolved to follow the Lamb whithersoever he might go. *Could I refuse to follow him into the water?* No. As a Christian let me glory in resembling Jesus Christ.

3. "And John also was baptizing (immersing, how would sprinkling read?) in Ænon, near to Salim, because there was much water there; and they came and were baptized (immersed)."—John iii. 23. When I commenced this investigation, I was aware, that I might safely trust, that our translators would not give any view of the original which would be too favourable to the Baptists; and I was aware, that the original in this passage was much stronger than their translation; but taking the passage as it stands, what Pædo-baptist would ever think of repairing to a place to sprinkle where there is "much water," when a small quantity in a basin would at any time serve his purpose?

4. "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized (immersed) into Jesus Christ were baptized (immersed) into his death. Therefore we are buried with him by baptism (immersion) into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."—Rom. vi. 3, 4. Also, Col. ii. 12. "Buried with him in baptism (immersion) wherein also ye are risen with *him*, through the faith of the operation of God." These two passages alone ought to decide us as to the *mode* of baptism. Whether does sprinkling a few drops of water on the face of a child, or the plunging of the body of the believing adult beneath the water, better represent the *death and burial* of Jesus Christ? In immersion when we go into the water, we behold a beautiful illustration of the death and burial of Jesus Christ, and are forcibly reminded when we rise up out of the water, of his glorious resurrection. In like manner we receive an apt view of our own death and resurrection, for we shall not only follow Christ out of the water, but out of the grave, and thus be for ever with the Lord. The great

and glorious doctrine of the *resurrection* is entirely lost sight of in sprinkling, and as entirely set before us in immersion. Then, as we wish to cherish a grateful recollection of the love of our dying Saviour, let us carefully observe, in its primitive simplicity, the ordinance of immersion.

5. *The Nature of Baptism* is a reason why I reject my former views, and adopt those of Believers' Immersion.

WHAT IS BAPTISM DESIGNED TO TEACH ?

(1.) The doctrine of *human depravity*. Washing with water is nearly the universal mode of cleansing the body from its impurities. "Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for her; that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her with a bath of water, and with the word."—*Macknight's Translation*.—Eph. v. 26. Now just as it must be admitted that the sprinkling of a few drops of water upon the face, is not as likely to remove impurity from the whole body, as the dipping of the body in water, so it ought to be admitted that the latter is inexpressibly better calculated to impress mankind with a sense of depravity, than the former.

(2.) The doctrine of *Divine agency*, in regeneration, of which immersion is an expressive symbol. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and (even the) renewing of the Holy Ghost."—Tit. iii. 5. This, compared with John iii. 5, where we read of being "born of water," shews us that baptism is a sign or symbol of regeneration. And if sprinkling expresses any thing, it is the *scarcity* of Divine influence—immersion its *plentitude*.

(3.) Baptism teaches the *doctrine of sanctification* or holiness. "Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."—Heb x. 22. How could the Apostle refer to their having their bodies washed with pure water, if only a *sprinkling* had been used? St. Peter says, "Eight souls were saved by water, to which water, the antitype baptism, (immersion) not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God, now saveth us also through the resurrection of Jesus Christ."—*Macknight's Translation*.—1 Peter iii. 21. The answer of a good and pure conscience toward God, is set forth by this ordinance.

(4.) Baptism is intended to be a sign to friends and foes, that we *publicly profess* the religion of Jesus Christ.

"All societies require some mark of distinction, some mode by which the respective members shall be known to each other; so that each individual shall feel that he himself is required, and all others who unite with him, to perform the duties incumbent upon all the members of the fraternity." What a slight matter unites a man to a church in some denom-

inations. He goes to a class meeting for a few times, professes a desire to flee from the wrath to come, abstains from outward immorality, and is admitted as a member, only the ministers and a few leaders or members being aware that he is a brother, while the great majority of the church and the world know nothing of the matter. In congregational churches a man is admitted as a member by the whole body, yet as the world is ignorant of the fact, a public baptism, making him known as a disciple to the world and to the church is desirable. "It is a truth known to all men that the objects of our senses make an impression on our minds far more striking, influential, and enduring, than those of the understanding."—DWIGHT. How impressive for instance, is the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. Now, when an adult is immersed, and his understanding is exercised to consider the nature of the dedication that he makes of himself to God, and when in like manner observers meditate on the nature of the ordinance, much more good is likely to be effected than by mere infant sprinkling. "When, therefore, the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized (immersed) more disciples than John (though Jesus himself baptized [immersed] not, but his disciples.)"—John iv. 1, 2. From this text, it is evident that when Jesus made disciples, they professed his religion publicly by baptism or immersion, so that the Pharisees heard of the circumstance. Disciples are made by teaching and baptism.

6. The *commission* which our blessed Lord gave to his disciples, shows both the *nature* and *perpetuity* of the ordinance. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing (immersing) them in (into) 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."—Mat. xxviii. 19, 20. There is a *beauty* and a *sublimity* in this passage, which may be felt by an adult, when he is baptized *into* the Father, and takes him as his *God* and *Father*; *into* "the Son," and confides in him as his *Saviour*; into the "Holy Spirit," and has fellowship with him as his helper and *guide*. It is highly interesting and instructive, to behold Peter, on the Pentecost day, and to see how he acted on this commission. He first *taught* the people, till deep conviction agonized their hearts. Then he said to them, "Repent and be baptized, (immersed) every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for (or at)* the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." This is Peter's view of his Master's command on the question before us. How did the people understand Peter's command? Let their conduct reply. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized, (immersed) and the

* *Et*; is often rendered "at," in our version, as in Acts iv. 6. also, xviii. 22, and xx. 14, 15. Sometimes "on," Acts xiii 9; also xix. 4; sometimes "upon," Acts xi. 6. also xxii. 13. The Mormonites and the followers of Alex. Campbell should be taught this.

same day there were added *unto them*, about three thousand souls.”—Acts ii. 37—41. *Believers were received into the church by baptism. Infants are incapable of being taught, are incapable of repentance, of remission of sins, and of gladly receiving the word, therefore they are incapable of receiving baptism.*

Those who delay baptism, for a long time, are reproved by this passage. Obedience should never be delayed.

7. The baptism of John gives no countenance to the *Sprinkling of Children*. “John did baptize (immerse) in the wilderness, and preach the baptism (immersion) of repentance, for the remission of sins. And there went out unto him, all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all BAPTIZED (immersed) OF HIM IN THE RIVER OF JORDAN, confessing their sins.”—Mark i. 4, 5. If “repentance” and “confessing of sins” were requisite in order to John’s baptism, who can dispense with them in Christ’s? This passage shows that “remission of sins is *symbolically* set forth by baptism and *really* obtained on ‘repentance.’” Ananias, while addressing the humbled SAUL kept up the view of the connexion between baptism and absolution. “Arise,” said he, “and be baptized, (immersed) and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”—Acts xxii. 16, also Acts ix. 17, 18. How improper would such an address be to an Infant!

8. The next passage in order is, Luke xii. 50. “I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!”* Let any candid believer, and all believers should be candid, ask himself whether a *sprinkling* or an *immersion* better expressess those waves of sorrow which overwhelmed the very soul of the dying Redeemer?

9. In John iii. 5, Christ affirms, “Except a man be born of water, and (even)† of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” The Quakers or Friends should study this passage. It shows, that to be *born of water* is necessary. They say “the great matter is the *Spirit’s baptism*, and those who have it, need no other.” The penitents, on the day of Pentecost, had the Spirit’s baptism, but according to Peter they needed another; also in the house of Cornelius, there “was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.” And Peter said, “can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, (immersed) which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized (immersed) in the name of the Lord.”—Acts x. 46, 48. These passages ought to silence both Quakers, and all others, who affirm that the baptism of the Holy Ghost supersedes that of

* “I have an immersion to undergo, and how am I pained till it be accomplished.”—*Dr. Campbell’s Translation.*

† That *Kai* often signifies “even,” is proved by our Translators in Mat. viii. 27. Also, Mat. xxv. 29. Mark vi. 2. Luke xii. 7. Acts v. 39. Rom. v. 7. Heb. xi. 10. Jesus Christ is speaking here in John iii. 5, of being born of the Spirit.

water. It is so far from superseding water baptism, in the estimation of inspiration, that it furnishes the strongest reasons for immersion.

10. The baptism of the *Ethiopian eunuch*, by Philip, is a beautiful illustration of Believers' Immersion. "And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the Eunuch said, see, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized (immersed)? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." (What a practical and impressive commentary is this on our Lord's command? "Preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, (immersed) shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark xvi. 16.) "And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still; AND THEY WENT DOWN BOTH INTO THE WATER, both Philip and the Eunuch, and he baptized (immersed) him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the Eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing."—Acts viii. 36—39.

If a candidate for baptism must understand what he reads, and believe with all his heart, then little children are not proper subjects for this great institution. Let all true believers see the effect which followed its observance, in this highly interesting case, and be encouraged to copy the Ethiopian's noble example, then they may expect to "go on their way rejoicing."*

11. The following passage has often been quoted to evince the non-essential nature of baptism, and the very little regard which it ought to command.—1 Cor. i. 13—17. "Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? or were you baptized (immersed) in the name of Paul?" Thus he rebuked the dividers of the church, who pretended a superior regard to Paul! "I thank God," said he, "that I baptized (immersed) none but Crispus and Gaius." Is it probable that Paul would have used this language had *baptism*, and *regeneration*, or *remission of sins* been synonymous and convertible terms? Would he, whose entire soul was absorbed in leading others to salvation, have said, "I thank God, I *regenerated* none of you? For Christ sent me not to baptize, [immerse] (that is, not to baptize *exclusively* or *principally*, for he did baptize some of the Corinthians, not certainly, without authority,) but to preach the gospel." Now as Christ did send Paul to "turn men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God;" or in other words, to regenerate them, had he believed in *baptismal re-*

* Acts viii. 12. "But when they (the Samaritans) believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, in the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, (immersed) both men and women." Why not children? Because neither in this nor in any other passage of Scripture have we any evidence that a single infant was baptized by the early disciples or Christ.

generation, would he not have baptised all that he could persuade to submit to the ordinance.

12. Baptism is expressive of the *unity and concord* of the whole christian family. “For by one Spirit are we all baptised (immersed) into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.”—1 Cor. xii. 13. It is probably to express the unity of the church, that St. Paul says, there is “one baptism” (immersion).—Eph. iv. 5. Not two baptisms, but one baptism, or one *immersion*. All, then, who are “baptized into one body,” should take care to be one church, and to put away even the appearance of division, or a divisive spirit. The “one spirit,” into which we should deeply “drink,” is the Spirit of Christ, the spirit of Love.

13. *Baptism not only points us to the death of Christ, but also to the resurrection.* “Else what shall they do which are baptised (immersed) for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptised (immersed) for the dead?”—1 Cor. xv. 29. In the early history of the church hundreds of the christian army were slain by the enemies of the cross. Many observers saw them fall, triumphing over death and the grave, and stimulated by the fire of their holy heroism, came over to Christ, and, by baptism, publicly entered into the very places of the martyrs, expecting soon to meet a similar end; but cheered by the hope of reward at the general resurrection, they boldly professed their faith in the Gospel. Dr. Adam Clarke has the following note on this passage: “But as they receive baptism as an emblem of *death*, voluntarily going under the water, so they receive it as an emblem of the *resurrection* unto eternal life, in coming up out of the water.” Who can read this passage without concluding that the learned Commentator believed that the first Corinthians were baptised by going into the water?

14. Children, or infants, are not *capable of putting on Christ*; but Paul says, “For as many of you as have been baptized (immersed) into Christ have put on Christ.”—Gal. iii. 27. To put on Christ, or to be clothed with Christ, is to assume, or be like, the *person and character* of Christ—to be conformed to him; but an infant can *assume nothing of which it knows nothing*; therefore infants were not baptized among the Galatians, for “as many” as were baptized into Christ, had “put on Christ.”

Some treat this solemn institution with *profane levity, scorn, and derision*. From the world such conduct would excite no surprise; but when the professed disciples of the self-denying religion of the cross treat the only scriptural baptism with careless indifference or supercilious contempt, it argues a state of mind which every devoted man ought to deplore with tears, and every real Christian prayerfully shun.

When the subject is mentioned it is common to hear such

remarks as the following : “ Oh ! if you want a dipping you may go to the river any time.” “ It is only a form, and what good can it do to the soul.” I thank God that I never could treat this ordinance with levity, even when I believed the immersers of none but adults to be in error. I was aware that they regarded their line of proceeding as more scriptural than mine, and I concluded, that instead of meriting rebuke, they deserved respect, and I envy not *the Christian* that can trifle with his brother’s feelings and the religion of Christ.

Why do they not speak as flippantly of the Lord’s Supper? and say, “ Oh ! it is only eating a little bread, and drinking a little wine, you need not go to the chapel to take it, you may observe it in your own room at any time.” The Lord’s Supper is seldom or never ridiculed in this manner, then why should baptism?

“ It is only a form?” Why the same may be said of infant sprinkling, only the former is prescribed by God, the latter a perversion of God’s ordinance by the contrivance of man.

Praying, hearing, reading, and communicating are forms, are they therefore to be abolished? The means of grace must be used if we would be rich in grace; and God, not man, is the author of these means, and he will impart his benediction to all who obediently observe them.

But some say, “ The ordinance of Believers’ Immersion is scriptural, but we need not observe it, because it is non-essential.” I have met with several of this opinion since I preached on this subject. This is also a matter of lamentation. While I readily allow, that if I had been called into eternity since my conversion and before my baptism, I should have gone to heaven; I cannot admit, that if I had *refused*, from any worldly consideration to observe the ordinance, *after* I became convinced of its scriptural nature, and gone into eternity in that frame of mind, while omitting what I regarded as a religious duty, that I should have been received into that “ rest which remaineth for the people of God.” Whatever God has thought it worth his while to teach and command, we should think it worth our while to hear and obey, and not be wise above what is written. Let those who are convinced that this ordinance is scriptural, remember that they are commanded to “ be baptized,” that to *refuse* is to be disobedient, and to *delay* is putting off an unpopular duty till to-morrow, which we ought to perform to-day. Let the man that is delaying put this solemn question to himself, “ Should I die before I receive baptism, should I not be afraid to meet my Judge, after carelessly putting off one of his plainly revealed ordinances?”

The following passage in our Lord’s Sermon on the Mount has made an indelible impression on my mind : “ Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach *them*, the same

shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”—Matt. v. 19. From my heart I am sorry that ever I *sprinkled a babe*, and “*taught men so* ;” and I rejoice greatly that the Lord hath convinced me that I ought to follow him into the water, by immersion, and “*teach men so*.” On looking at the Commentary of Henry and Scott on this passage, I find the following note : “ If a man, pretending to be Christ’s disciple, encourage himself in allowed disobedience to the holy law of God, or teach others to do the same, whatever his station or reputation among men, he can be no true disciple.”

The language of the Holy Spirit by James, is still more *awfully* strong. “ For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all.”—James ii. 10.

Let none of my readers attempt to explain these texts away. They stand as a part of that word “ one jot or tittle of which shall not pass away,” by which we shall have to be judged. The obedient man only is safe.

I have one more strong objection to infant sprinkling, which I must state,—it *corrupts the church of Christ*. In Scotland, for example, it is a general rule among the ministers of nearly all churches, only to sprinkle the infants of church members ; consequently, thousands of unregenerated persons become members of churches, that they may get church benefit. Besides, wherever the sprinkling of babes obtains, repentance and faith, which are essential to baptism and church membership, are not likely to be insisted on as *essential to church fellowship*, when one of the ordinances of the church can be obtained without either.

CHAPTER III.

TESTIMONIES *from the FATHERS and learned PÆDO-BAPTIST writers to prove that IMMERSION is the only Scriptural Baptism.*

THE FATHERS.

BARNABAS, who lived Anno Domini 50.—“ We go down into the water full of sin and filth, but we ascend with fruit and benefit in our heart.”—*Epist. Cathol.* § 9, p. 235.

TERTULLIAN, who lived in 200, represents baptized persons as entered into the water,” *aquam ingressi*.—(*De Spectaculis*, p. 583.) And as “ let down into the water,” *in aquam demissus*.—(*De baptism.* p. 597.)

JUSTIN MARTYR, who lived in 155, describes baptism “ by being washed in water,”—(*Apolog.* ii. p. 94,) and calls the place where men were baptized “ a washing place,” or a “ bath.”

FIRMILIAN, who lived in 250, inveighing against the Baptism of Hereticks, condemns it as carnal, and as being no whit “ different from the baptism or washing of the Jews, which they used as a common and ordinary bath to wash away the filth of their bodies.”—(*Apud Cyprian, Ep.* 75, § 11, p. 139.)

LEARNED PÆDO-BAPTIST WRITERS.

CALVIN.—“ The word *baptize* signifies to immerse.”

BEZA.—“ Christ commanded us to be *baptized*, by which word it is certain *immersion* is signified.”

WITSIUS.—“ It cannot be denied that the native signification of the word *baptize*, is to plunge, to dip.”—(*Econ. Fed.* l. iv. c. xvi. § 13.

VENEMA.—“The word *baptize* is no where used in the Scriptures for *sprinkling*; no, not in Mark vii. 4. It is without controversy that Baptism in the primitive church was administered by immersion into water, and not by sprinkling, Mat. iii. John iii. Acts viii. Rom. vi.; nor is there any necessity to have recourse to the idea of sprinkling, in our interpretation of Acts ii. 41, where *three thousand souls* were said to be added to Christ by baptism, seeing it might be performed by immersion equally as by aspersion; especially as they are not said to have been baptized at the same time.”—*Hist. Eccles. tom iii. secul. i. § 138.*

DR. WHITBY.—“We are buried with him by baptism (*plunging us under the water*) into (*a conformity to his*) death, (which put his body under the earth.) It being so expressly declared here, and Col ii. 12, *that we are buried with Christ in baptism*, by being buried under water; and the argument to oblige us to a conformity to his death by dying to sin, being taken hence, and *this immersion being religiously observed by ALL CHRISTIANS FOR THIRTEEN CENTURIES.*”—*Comment. on Rom. vi. 4.*

DR. G. CAMPBELL.—“The word βαπτίζω, *baptize*, both in sacred writers and classical, signifies *to dip, to plunge, to immerse*; and was rendered by TERTULLIAN, the oldest of the Latin Fathers, *tingere*, the term used for dying cloth, which was by immersion.” *Translation of the Four Gospels. Note, Matt. iv. 11.*

DR. WALL.—“All those countries in which the usurped power of the Pope is, or has formerly been, owned, have LEFT OFF dipping of children in the font; but *all other countries in the world* which had never regarded his authority, *do still use it.*”—*Pædo-bap. Exam. vol. 1. pp. 289, 290.*

T. SCOTT.—“Immersion is DOUBTLESS baptism.”—*Life by the late J. Scott.*

J. WESLEY, on Rom. vi. 4, allows that this is an allusion “to the ancient manner of *baptizing* in immersion.” In his journal, he says, “MARY WELSH, aged eleven days, was baptized *according to the custom of the first church*, and the rule of the church of England, by IMMERSION IN WATER.”

It will be perceived that I have used the words *immerse, immersion, immersed*, as equal in meaning to *baptize, baptism, baptized*, and as a justification of this application, I produce the following additional authorities:

Schleusner.

Βαπτω; *mergo, immergo, tingo, intingo, imbuo*, to dip, to dip into, to dye, to dip in dye, to imbue, to soak.

Βαπτίζω; *proprie, immergo, ac intingo, in aquam mergo*; properly it signifies to immerse, to dye, to dip in water. It is derived from βαπτω, to dip.

Βαπτισμα; *baptism, proprie, immersio, intinctio in aquam, lotio*, properly signifies an immersion, a dipping in water, a washing.

Parkhurst.

Βαπτίζω, from βαπτω, to dip, to immerse or plunge in water.

Dr. Jones.

Βαπτίζω; I plunge, plunge in water, dip, baptize. John iv. 2.

Our translators have not translated the Greek words at all, they have only given them an English termination. A translation would have been fatal to sprinkling, as the above authors testify; and authorities for immersion might be multiplied to an almost indefinite extent.

CONCLUSION.

1. When persons change their views on such subjects as baptism, some charge them with being changeable: they are always *changing*. The Reformation from Popery was a change. The activity which has sent Bibles and Missionaries to the heathen was a change, considering the previous indolence of the church. If we change for the better let us not be afraid, should we change every day. Why should we stand still, when we have both the Bible and the Holy Spirit waiting to change us into the image of God? An infinite teacher will constantly advance attentive and obedient disciples.

2. Some are saying, "Why has the church been in ignorance on this ordinance so long?" Answer, why was she in ignorance in reference to Transubstantiation and the Sacrifice of the Mass for so many centuries? Because the Scriptures were departed from, and there is no more authority for Pædo-baptism in the New Testament, than for the Sacrifice of the Mass or Transubstantiation in the Lord's Supper. If I had time and money, I would write a *BOOK ON THE POPERY OR PROTESTANTISM, OR THE REMAINS OF POPERY IN PROTESTANT CHURCHES*.

3. An *unwillingness to be baptized is rejecting God's counsel*. Jesus Christ said of JOHN THE IMMERSER, "And all the people that heard him and the publicans justified God, being baptized (immersed) with the baptism (immersion) of John. But the pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized (immersed) of him."—Luke vii. 29, 30. When Jesus Christ said to "the chief priests and the elders," "The baptism (immersion) of John, whence was it? from heaven or of men?"—Matt. xxi. 25. He plainly intimated that it was from heaven, and it was on this account wicked in "the pharisees and lawyers to reject" it.

What authority have we now to prove that the baptism of Jesus Christ is from heaven.

(1.) The *COMMANDS* of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. See Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; Mark xvi. 15, 16, &c. Acts ii. 37—41.

(2.) The *EXAMPLE* of Jesus Christ and the first disciples. Matt. iii. 13—17. "The pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized (immersed) more disciples than John, though Jesus himself baptized (immersed) not, but his disciples." John iv. 12. On the day of Pentecost "they that gladly received Peter's word were baptized (immersed)." See also Acts x. 44—48.

4. Should an unconverted sinner read these pages, I call upon him to bring forth fruits meet for repentance. Let him flee from the wrath he has provoked, escape from the danger by which he is threatened, to that rejected Saviour who is inviting miserable sinners in tenderest language, "Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Immersion will do you no good without repentance and faith; "Repent therefore, and be baptized."

5. My last word to Christians is this. "Dearly beloved brethren, *search the Scriptures*, there the subject under consideration *shines as clearly as the sun at mid-day*." If any should reply, "Why here is a Christian of nearly twenty-two years' standing, and a minister of about seventeen years, who has professed to be solely guided by the Scriptures, and who has taught that infant baptism came instead of infant circumcision, and that were it not so, the Christian dispensation would be inferior to the Jewish,—coming forward to tell us, that he has been in the dark on a mid-day subject twenty-two years. How does he account for it?"

I now see reason to deny that baptism came instead of circumcision, and maintain that *Believers' Baptism is as much superior to infant cir-*

cumcision, as an ordinance, *as a man is superior to an infant.* My long blindness arose,

(1.) From my education or early training.

(2.) From the *custom* of real Christians and ministers as dark as myself.

(3.) From adhering too closely to human authors.

(4.) Before the 10th of the 3d mo., I had indeed read the Scriptures on Baptism, but I had never read consecutively all the texts I could find on the subject.

My experience on this subject has taught me that the *dense mists* of the *middle and dark ages*, are only now *passing away*.

Texts quoted in this Treatise to prove that the Immersion of Believers is the only Scriptural Baptism.

Matthew iii. 5, 6..... p. 5	Acts xxii. 16.....p. 9
— iii. 13—17..... 5	— ix. 17, 18..... 9
Luke iii. 23..... 5	Luke xii. 50 9
John iii. 23 6	Acts x. 46—48..... 9
Romans vi. 3, 4..... 6	— viii. 36—39, compared with
Col. ii. 12..... 6	Mark xvi. 16 10
Ephes. v. 26..... 7	Acts viii. 12..... 10
John iii. 5..... 7	1 Cor. i. 13—17..... 10
Titus iii. 5..... 7	1 Cor. xii. 13 11
Heb. x. 22..... 7	Ephes. iv. 5..... 11
1 Peter iii. 21..... 7	1 Cor. xv. 29..... 11
John iv. 1, 2 8	Gal. iii. 27..... 11
Matthew xxviii. 19, 20..... 8	Luke vii. 29, 30..... 15
Acts ii. 37—41..... 9	Matthew xxi. 25..... 15
Mark i. 4, 5 9	

Texts which are alleged in favour of Infant Sprinkling, proved to be against it.

1 Cor. x. 1, 2; compared with	1 Cor. i. 16; compared with 1
Ex. xiv. 39—31p. 2	Cor. xvi. 15.....p. 3
Acts xvi. 14, 15; compared with	Mark x. 14; compared with
xvi. 40 3	John iv. 2..... 4
Acts xvi. 30—34..... 3	1 Cor. vii. 14..... 4

Texts to prove that Baptism should not be delayed.

Matt. v. 19.....p. 13	James ii. 10.....p. 13
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