

Jesus replied to them, "In what have I sinned, that I have any need to go and be baptised by him," (then after a pause, he continued) "unless my saying this proceeds perhaps from ignorance." There seems no reason to doubt that this is a true quotation from the original gospel, and a genuine saying of Jesus. He had been quietly preparing and patiently waiting for the time appointed by the *Law*, and in the Prophets, for him to begin the publication of his mission. But he was human, and had the weakness of the flesh common to all humanity, and therefore liable to be tempted and sin, and in order to overcome, he found that submission to Divine and parental law, was among the first lessons to be learned and practiced. He had been subject to his parents, and had faithfully kept the law of God, and all its requirements. "He sinned not, neither was guile found in his mouth." He had learned obedience by the things which he had (mentally) suffered. He saw that he must soon separate himself from home and kindred, and step down and out from every worldly and political entanglement. Whatsoever earthly goods and chattels he owned were disposed of and given to the poor, and "though he was rich, yet (says Paul) for our sakes he became poor," and to the same apostle who had attempted to walk the same course, but failed, the Godliness which he manifested in the flesh,—or the holiness of his character manifested—in his mortal pilgrimage, was a great mystery. Now that the time was almost come for Jesus to begin his public proclamation

of the "Glad Tidings," and knowing by sad experience the very limited knowledge possessed by his nearest and dearest relations, as to the real object of that mission, and now that the preaching and acts of John were causing widespread commotion in the minds of all classes of his countrymen; wishing to teach his own household an important lesson, and perhaps uncertain as to how his future course of action might become associated with that of the Baptist, he spoke the words under consideration. Then seeing the necessity of setting an example worthy of imitation by others, on the subject of Baptism, as well as of a holy life, he probably, with many other relations and friends, set out from Nazareth to the particular part of the Jordan valley, where John was preaching the necessity for a reformation, and the near approach of the Messiah, and requested his assistance in performing on his person the sacred rite of immersion. But the Baptist, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, recognised in Jesus—of whom he had probably but a very limited personal acquaintance—a character of superior holiness, at first hesitated to comply with the request of the young Nazarene. But upon Jesus urging the matter as necessary to fulfil all righteousness, or as the sentence is otherwise rendered, "to establish every ordinance," the Baptist complied and immersed Jesus beneath the waters of the Jordan, not for the emblematic remission of his sins, for he had never transgressed Jehovah's laws, but in order to establish by his personal