

into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death." We discard, then, the idea that there are any procuring qualities in baptism, or any other ordinance! Nay, we unhesitatingly discard the doctrine that would lead a sinner to imagine for a moment that his faith, repentance, reformation, baptism, prayers, or any thing else, purchases pardon or salvation here, much less an inheritance with the saints' in light!! This, with me, is a cardinal point. We have sinned, and consequently rendered ourselves obnoxious to divine displeasure. But, even if we had never sinned, God, as our creator, has a right to demand obedience of us without the promise of a single blessing; so "it is not by works of righteousness that we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us;" and in this procedure he has been graciously pleased to connect with the obedience of all his commands, a promised blessing. The first blessings, then, are pardon, and the Holy Spirit which he has promised in the "laver of regeneration by the renewing of the Holy Spirit," to all those who believe and obey him.

What, then, is this faith? Is it that we are sinners? Abstractly considered, is it to believe in baptism for remission of sins? That God has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass—that he has elected some to everlasting life, or that he has not thus ordained and decreed? No. Is it to believe in regeneration by the spirit alone, or the word alone? No. Is it to believe in any or all the confessions of faith in the land? Impossible. Some of these items are true; others may or may not be true. These things may be believed or disbelieved, and the individual destitute of Gospel faith! What, then, is it? Hear the Saviour and Peter, in the language which we have quoted as the motto of the *Christian*: "Whom do men say that I the son of man am?" said Jesus. "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God?" said Peter. "On this rock I will build my church," said the Lord Messiah, "against which the gates of Hades shall not prevail." Here we are not left to conjecture. The real penitent who believes this, and yields himself unreservedly to the Lord Jesus, to be buried with him, because he loves him, and desires to follow and obey him in all his ways, is a disciple of the Lord, unquestionably!

3. This, you will remember, is not an isolated passage in the word of God and arbitrarily applied, but it accords with all the other portions of his word, as well as our most enlightened view of things. For example, when the Apostle John inquired, "Who is he that overcometh the world?" His answer is, "He that believeth that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is already laid, which is Jesus Christ, or that Jesus is the Christ." These portions will suggest to your intelligent mind, many others of a like import. When a sinner inquired, "What must I do?" if he was ignorant of the Gospel facts he was commanded to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." If he believed these facts he was taught that he should "repent and be baptized for remission of sins;" but if he was already a penitent believer, he was exhorted to "arise and be baptized, and wash away his sins, calling on the name of the Lord." The faith, we perceive, in every instance was, that Jesus was the promised Messiah. His life, mira-