

ted with baptism is to be enjoyed having previous wash away their believers put on that we are saved the answer of a led in baptism."

is simply exegetical, or explanatory of the first. Some of our opponents endeavor to evade the force of this argument by alleging that regeneration and renovation refer to different things; and that water is the instrument of the first, and the Holy Spirit of the latter. But this involves them in the following absurdities: First, if the word regeneration, in this passage, is not explained by the word renewing in the context, it is impossible to know what it means, as it is not applied to the soul in any other part of Scripture. Secondly, if regeneration does not mean such a change as implies the renewal of the soul it can indicate no change of any importance; for without such a renewal no man can enter heaven. Thirdly, if regeneration and renovation be different, then it follows that the Spirit is not the author of regeneration, for on this principle it is ascribed to the washing, and not to the Holy Ghost. Such are some of the absurdities in which the interpretation of the Campbellites involves them. If these two passages fail to teach baptismal regeneration, it cannot be found in Scripture.

This theory is disproved by the Apostle Peter when he says expressly that the baptism which saves us is "not the putting away of the filth of the flesh but the answer of a good conscience toward God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

As a divine ordinance, baptism holds the same place in the Christian economy as circumcision did in the Jewish dispensation. They are both appointed as rites to initiate mankind into the visible church of God. Both were commanded of God; but neither of them was to be relied on for salvation. The Apostle expressly declares that "He is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men but of God."

If circumcision had no more efficacy than this it cannot, with any show of reason, be contended that baptism has for both hold the same place in the covenant of God with man. Religion is always represented as an experimental blessing realized in the heart by the agency of the Holy Spirit, and therefore, it cannot consist in any external forms.

The notion of baptismal regeneration is disproved also by facts. These "disciples" tell you that you must be immersed in order to be saved; that unless you are immersed your salvation is impossible. Let us test this in two ways. If baptism "consummates regeneration," if a man's sins are remitted and his heart changed when he is immersed, how was it that after baptism Ananias and Sapphira continued the subjects of pride, avarice, and deceit they were before? How was it, that, after being baptised, Simon Magus remained in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity? Yes, how is it that so many of these modern disciples, after immersion, live just as in their unregenerate state? It is a melancholy fact that many have been baptized who never were regenerate.

But if baptism cannot change the character of its subjects, neither, on the other hand, did the want of it prevent Cornelius and his company from receiving the joys of salvation, and the gifts of the Holy Ghost: for these blessings were bestowed before the sacrament of baptism was administered. My Methodist brethren you have duly received Christian baptism, by sprinkling or affusion, and these immersionists cannot rob you of your experience of the love of God. It is worthy of remark that important as circumcision was under the Jewish dispensation, God justified and accepted Abraham before he received that rite; and important as baptism is under the Christian economy men have received the Holy Ghost and all the blessings of salvation before being baptized. Thus we have been taught from the beginning the important lesson—that religion does not consist in form but in power; and that its power is displayed in what is accomplished in the inner man. This is a solemn rebuke to the formalism that rests in the outward letter, and ascribes a saving virtue to external rites. If, as these Campbellites assert, baptism is essential to salvation let them explain where and how the dying thief was baptized. If he was not baptized what became of him? Will their theory serve on his behalf? Jesus declared to the thief, on his repentance on the cross, "To-day thou shalt be with me in paradise." But these "disciples" have discovered that Jesus made a mistake. How could the thief go to paradise without immersion? I would also like to ask them what became of "the glorious company of the Apostles?" Did they live and die unregenerate? Let them produce proof that the apostles were baptized. Are we to conclude because we do not really know that they were baptized that they were lost? God forbid. Rather let all these fine spun theories of salvation by baptism go to the winds.

This Campbellite theory is further disproved by the conduct of St. Paul. Were baptism identified with regeneration would he while glorying in preaching have spoken of baptism as an inferior ordinance. So anxious was he for the salvation of men that he exclaimed, "I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren," and yet he declares with evident satisfaction, "I was not sent to baptize but to preach the gospel." How are we to understand his conduct if men could not be saved without baptism? How does his declaration agree with the conduct of these "Disciples?" While they make so much ado about water baptism, as if that were the "Alpha and Omega," are they likely to lead back the church to primitive simplicity? St. Paul preached Christ and Him crucified, and said if an angel from heaven preach any other gospel he should be accursed; and yet here are men preaching the gospel of water, and taking up the cry, "except ye be immersed ye cannot be saved."

This theory is endangering the souls of men. No true Christian will deny that whatever draws away the thought and attention of men from the sacrifice of Christ, and leads them to trust in anything but

the power of the Holy Ghost for regenerating grace is unscriptural and dangerous. The theory now under examination leads men's minds away from the direct agency of the Spirit, teaching them to rest upon immersion as the means of obtaining remission of sins; it is therefore dangerous. My only motive in exposing such damning teaching is to secure you from the may deny the fact that they regard immersion as a saving ordinance, but such a denial does not amount to anything. One of their most truthful, devoted members told me their preachers taught them this doctrine. If they do not, why do they struggle so hard to get people into the water? Why do they seek to draw away members of the Baptist Churches, who have been immersed, but not for the remission of sins, as they teach? Why do they rebaptize those who have sinned? St. Paul explains it, when he says, "They seek to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh." We have unexceptional evidence that they regard every man safe who is immersed. One of their members says, "The waters of baptism, in connection with the death of Jesus, afford him (that is, the person immersed) as great an assurance of safety as did their type, the waters of the Red Sea, to the redeemed Israelites, when they engulfed Pharaoh and his host." At the same time this may seem very satisfactory, but a little thought will show that this illusion is most unfortunate. I fully believe them, when they say the waters of baptism give the same assurance of safety as the waters of the Red Sea gave to the Israelites; but before you trust to it, you had better inquire what assurance that was. (See 1 Cor. 10: 1-12; and Heb. 3: 12-19.) Who would rest his soul on such an assurance as that? Do not, for your life, depend upon immersion to save you, else you will be lost. Baptism never was designed by God to wash away sin, but to symbolize the saving, cleansing efficacy of the blood of Christ applied to the heart by the Holy Spirit. I hold that such teaching is dangerous, in proportion to its tendency to divert the mind of man from the Spirit of God, as the agent of our regeneration. It denies to the Spirit the honour of renewing the human heart, and causes men to trust in ceremonies instead of Divine power. If this theory does this, then it is chargeable with damnable heresies; and those who accept it imperil their immortal souls. It is not external rites, not immersion, but "the blood of Jesus Christ," which "cleanses from all sin."

We have seen that, tried by their own teaching with regard to the Holy Spirit—their theory of baptismal regeneration, a salvation by immersion, and by their manifested spirit, they are not what they profess to be. We charge them with pride and arrogance in assuming to themselves the name of Christian, and consigning all others to the devil. Let the Saviour's words be remembered by all. Reject every novel doctrine as an addition to the word of God, and as the creation of the human mind. Trust not your souls to blind leaders lest, with them, you fall into the ditch; but "Ask for the old paths; where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

OBITUARY.

Died at Whale Creek, Walton, on Oct. 19, 1879, Mr. Rupert Parker aged 44 years. His last illness was protracted and severe; but he endured all with Christian patience and resignation.

Through grace he triumphed even in death. His widow and family mourn, but not as those who have no hope. Again, on October 23rd, we were called to bury one of our most promising young men in Cognac, Mr. James Salter, aged 24. About four years ago, he was brought to God in connection with revival services held by the Rev. E. B. Moore, and the Rev. Mr. Miller. His conversion was clear, and his after life devoted to God. After a short but painful affliction, he triumphantly passed away to the better land.

He is much missed in the social services of the Church. G. O. H.

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