

and it is clear to demonstration that they understood him as directing them to baptize their converts with water. Not to enter into the discussion of this question at large, look at the case of Cornelius (Acts. x). While Peter is preaching to him and his household, the *Holy Ghost* falls on them. This, according to the system I am controverting, was all they required—all that the new dispensation admits—the baptism of the Spirit. But how did the Apostle judge? “Then answered Peter, Can any man *forbid water* that these should not be baptized, which have received the *Holy Ghost*, as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.” In other words, perceiving that they had been baptized with the Spirit, he makes this a reason for baptizing them with water. They gave evidence of being born again; therefore, they were entitled to be baptized, and so, formally admitted into the visible church.

Again, when Philip and the Ethiopian treasurer were studying the Scriptures together in the chariot, the latter said to Philip: “See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?” How would a “Friend” have answered this question? How *must* he have answered it in consistency with his principles? “Thou needest no baptism with water; all thou requirest is to be baptized with the Spirit.” But what was Philip’s answer? “If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest”—which was equivalent to his saying: “If thou hast received the baptism of the Spirit, thou mayest be baptized with water.” He instantly professed his faith in Christ, and thereupon the chariot was stopped, and “they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him.” (Acts 8.)

These and other cases of the kind are so unequivocally stated in the New Testament, that there is only one method in which the argument they supply can be met, viz., by denying that the example of the Apostle is binding upon us. This ground is boldly taken. The Apostles, it is argued, continued to be infected with Jewish prejudices; they retained various Levitical customs; and having been familiar with circumcision and with baptism prior to their conversion, “baptism,” says Gurney, “was very naturally considered by them as appropriate to the specific purposes of their own ministry,” and “they would, as a matter of course, persevere in the practice of baptizing their converts in water.” To this it is added, by way of depreciating this ordinance still further, and showing that it is of no binding force upon us, that the Saviour himself did not baptize; and that Paul avows that *he* was sent “not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel.”

In respect to this last argument, the practice of the Saviour is altogether foreign from the question at issue. The inquiry is not, whether he baptized, but whether he commanded his followers to baptize. It would be easy to suggest reasons which may have led him to abstain from administering the ordinance, if it were worth while to discuss a point which does not properly belong to the subject in hand.

The example of Paul may be fairly quoted as against those who magnify baptism above the preaching of the Word and prayer, and who even make it the specific and exclusive instrument of regeneration. It is quite conclusive in dealing with these parties to quote his declaration; “Christ sent me not to baptize but to preach the Gospel.” But it can avail nothing to those who object to water baptism altogether, for it is certain that he did sometimes administer this ordinance (1 Cor. 1: 14-16), and equally certain that where he did not baptize his converts, they were baptized by other ministers under his sanction.

The other argument, that the example of the Apostles is not binding upon us, proceeds upon very dangerous ground. The question is, “*Did the Saviour*