

&c., and the new love is moving every thought and every desire of the heart in some way to express that love to God, till the pent up desire bursts forth in some such expression as that used by Saul of Tarsus, "Lord, what will you have me to do?" and while with the greatest anxiety he waits, the answer of God comes through his servant Ananias, "Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord," and with heartfelt gratitude to God he hastens to obey his loving Saviour. This is but the beginning. Every act of his life now is the same as his baptism, it is done to honor Jesus. What has wrought this change? Is it baptism? Certainly not. Baptism only gives expression to the change worked in us by the Spirit of God. The baptism, however, is important to give that expression. What does the word of God say about this ordinance? The commission says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Here is a promise that you cannot say is yours unless you have been baptized. Again, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." &c., and Peter says, "The like figure whereunto baptism doth also now save us," and Paul says, "We are baptized into Christ and thus put on Christ." These are important utterances of God's Spirit, when we consider that in Christ there is safety and out of Him all is danger. In Christ there is no condemnation. Dear reader, have you been born again? If you have you are in the Kingdom of God. You are an heir of God and a joint-heir with Christ, and all the blessings of heaven are yours. If you have not you are not in the Kingdom and cannot claim its blessings. May God help us to see where we stand and be wise in the choice we make.

J. A. GATES.

Back Bay, Aug. 13th, 1885.

### BAPTISM FOR THE DEAD.

BY W. H. APPELATE.

Else what shall they do who are baptized for the dead? If the dead rise not at all, why are they baptized for the dead? I Cor. xv: 29

This verse has been a subject of controversy for many generations past and yet no one seems to be entirely satisfied with any of the different interpretations given by the best Exegetes.

The most common view is that it has reference to a practice of a living person being baptized for one who had died without being baptized.

This view cannot be true for three reasons, viz.:

1st. It is not in harmony with other plain passages in the Bible. The law of harmony must be observed. There is nowhere in the Bible such an idea even hinted at, but a number of passages which squarely contradict such a theory.

2nd. No mention is made of such a practice by any writer until several centuries after Paul wrote this letter.

3rd. Paul could not, as a good logician, use such an idea as an argument for the resurrection of the dead. Feeling assured that baptism by proxy cannot be the meaning, I pass to another interpretation.

A prominent professor of exegesis in one of our colleges says, "The baptism of verse 29 is the baptism of martyrdom predicted by Jesus in Mark x. 39, 40." To prove that this position is true he quotes two passages, Mark x. 38, 39, and Luke xii. 50 and then assumes that because Jesus uses the word "baptize" in the sense of martyrdom, Paul, also, uses it in the same sense. This is unfair and bad logic. He then tries to make another point on what he calls the "Distinction between 'they' of verse 29 and the 'we' of verse 30." "Why are they baptized for the dead?" "Why stand we in jeopardy?" "This jeopardy, all admit, is the danger of being put to death," says the pro-

fessor, and the pronoun, *TMEIS* (we) being expressed in the Greek shows that this 30th verse is closely connected with the preceding verse, and brings out the distinction between the "they who are baptized for the dead" and the "we who stand in jeopardy." It seems to me that if Paul intended that so much should depend upon the pronoun he would have written them in both verses whereas he has written it only in the last.

The context shows that the baptism of martyrdom is here meant and no other," says the Prof., and then adds, "otherwise there is no connection between the two clauses, 'why are they baptized for the dead?' and 'why stand we in jeopardy every hour?'"

This seems to me to be a forced interpretation for the following reasons: 1st. It would make Paul unfair and illogical. 2nd. In the Greek the pronoun is expressed only in one case. 3rd. There is no necessity for a close connection between the two clauses. It is true, the clauses are connected by the general thought of the chapter, but they are not connected by any subordinate thought.

That we may see what Paul meant, let us keep in mind that his subject is the "Resurrection of the Dead," and that he presents a series of arguments to prove that Christ rose from the dead and that we shall be raised.

Of these Corinthians it is written: "And many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized." (Acts xviii. 8.) What did they hear and believe? Three things are mentioned in the 3rd and 4th verses of the 15th chapter: 1st. That Christ died for our sins. 2nd. That he was buried; and 3rd. That he rose again the third day. In verses 12—19 Paul shows that the truth of the general resurrection is grounded on the established fact of Christ's resurrection. The Corinthians believed that Christ had been raised from the dead, hence, Paul could use that as an argument in favor of the general resurrection. They had been baptized (immersed). They had been buried with Christ in the likeness of his death, and in the likeness of his resurrection they have been raised from the watery grave. In baptism, then, was the symbol of the resurrection, hence Paul could use that as an argument in favor of the resurrection. But the expression "for the dead" seems to forbid this interpretation. In the original it reads, *hyper ton nekron*—hyper, a preposition with the Genitive case. Among the definitions given to hyper with the Gen. is this, "with reference to." Accepting this as a correct definition the obscurity disappears. The verse now reads, "Else what shall they do who are baptized with reference to the dead? If the dead are not raised, why are they baptized with reference to them?"

Baptism looks to the resurrection. While it brings blissful results in this life—forgiveness of sins and happiness, it brings eternal life with Christ in the world to come. (Mark x. 30.) The Corinthians had been baptized into Christ. If they lived faithful to Christ they could die in the hope of an everlasting life. In the Greek, *nekron* (dead) is plural. Then they were baptized with reference to more than one person. We may conclude that they were baptized with reference to their own bodies when they died and were laid in the grave.

I believe that the baptism here spoken of is literal immersion, and the passage contains a strong argument in favor of our position.—*Atlantic Missionary*.

Toano, Va.

Nothing is intolerable that is necessary. Now, God has bound thy trouble upon thee by His special providence, and with a design to try thee, and with purposes to reward and to crown thee. These cords thou canst not break, and therefore lie thou down gently, and suffer the hand of God to do what he please.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### FLORIDA CORRESPONDENCE.

35 WEST BEAVER ST., Jacksonville, Fla., }  
Aug. 12, 1885.

Editor Christian,—It is with feelings of the deepest and keenest interest that I peruse your columns every month, and there is much to be found there exceedingly gratifying in the encouraging reports from the different parts of the Provinces "by the sea." I have been privately asked, through private correspondence, why I did not write more for THE CHRISTIAN. I can truly say, that it is not because I do not love it with all my heart, nor is it because I am indifferent to the cause it pleads, in the range of its influence; but it is because my head, hands and heart are so full, that I have but little time for outside or extra work.

I am pleased at the success of THE CHRISTIAN and am glad to know that it has a firm basis; it has already given such an impetus to the work where it is supported that nothing else could have given, in my judgment.

By your leave, and should you consider it of sufficient interest to your readers, I will give a condensed report of our work in this city. I have now been with the Church here nearly six months, and they have been months of earnest work, and I am more than ordinarily pleased to write, months of profit to church and preacher. It is the custom in these extreme southern cities, to close up for three or four months, in the heat of summer. After a careful and prayerful examination of the nature of the work here, I suggested to the Church that I thought, instead of closing our doors while others did, that we ought to rather improve the opportunity, and redouble our energy, anticipating that those who might remain in the city, shut out from their own church privileges, would meet with us. The result has proved that the prognostication, to a great extent, was fulfilled. I have preached three times every Lord's day, and taught the Bible-classes of two Sunday-schools, with a marked and constantly increasing interest.

About two months ago, while visiting, officially, the homes of a few friends in the beautiful and rapidly developing suburb, Riverside, I was impressed, that with proper work, a mission point could be established that might, in a short time, give good results. The thought was shaped and presented to Bro. C. B. Smith, of the firm of Tysen & Smith, one of our most wealthy as well as most active members. He promised his support. A gentleman going north for the summer offered his spacious parlors for services till we could do better, and the work began. The work developed, till in a short time we began to feel the need of a proper building in which to meet. Bro. and Sister Smith have for some months been mourning the untimely death of a favorite son, drowned while yachting in our harbor. He was an exemplary young man, and a consistent member of the Church of Christ.

It has been a sad, yet to some extent at least, a slight satisfaction, for these fond parents to almost daily drive to the cemetery to scatter beautiful flowers above him around whose every act, like a tender vine, clung the affections of doting parents. It has seemed to be the earnest desire of these parents to, in some way, perpetuate the memory of their dear son; and one soft, mellow night, sitting under the soft rays of a beautiful moon, conversing with these dear friends, the thought of an instant gave birth to the suggestion: What a beautiful tribute to the memory of your son would be a neat chapel for our Riverside Mission. Without a moment's hesitation, the matter was decided there and then. And at once the lot was purchased, and the erection of the chapel was pushed to completion as rapidly as men and means could do so; and last Lord's day—the 9th—aided by Bro. J. M.