

enunciates the principle on which the Baptists profess to act. They don't profess to receive a man because he has been baptized, but they receive him because they believe the Lord has received him; and they receive him, as far as church fellowship is concerned, in what they believe to be the Lord's appointed way—first to baptism and then to the supper.

As to what is said about the Apostles having never received Christian baptism before they partook of the eucharist, it does not seem to me to affect, in the least, the question. Whether John's baptism was Christian baptism or not—whether the Apostles ever received Christian baptism or not, the fact is the same that they received their authority direct from Christ, and their commission clearly defined the order of their procedure in the organization of churches, and the administration of ordinances. They were to teach, and when men *had received* their instructions, they were to baptize; but they had no authority in that commission to dispense the Lord's supper to any who had not been first baptized on a profession of their faith. This view is corroborated by their practice, as far as we know anything of it from the New Testament history. If any man could show me a commission direct from the Great Head of the Church, I would not ask him whether he had been baptized or not. If that commission recognized him as a member of the church, and authorized him to administer the ordinances, while bound to see that he followed the order of his instructions, I must both receive him and wish him God-speed in his work. The question is not, were the Apostles baptized or not? but, were they instructed to administer baptism to believers as the initiatory ordinance of the visible church? To this question I believe only an affirmative answer can be given. Then, if immersion on a profession of faith is the only baptism, immersion on a profession of faith is required of all believers before they sit down at the Lord's table