

St. Paul says, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that (13) not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; not of works (14) lest any man should boast." Not even water works (15). I know of no one thing which has been and still is the cause of so much controversy, disunion, unsociability and uncharitableness, as that of water baptism! And in my opinion were all the churches to give it up (16) as an unessential thing, as the Quakers do, it would be much better for them all and the cause of religion in general.

The Baptists will not even admit any one to their Lord's table which have not been baptized by immersion; this I know, for I have tried them. But your church go farther still in uncharitableness; for you don't even believe that any man who hears the gospel can go to heaven without immersion. And the Catholics send all unbaptized persons into purgatory, or some worse place! Thus plainly showing that you all need much more of that charity (17) which "Beareth all things; believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." And without which, we shall become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. When I was first filled with the charity thus described by St. Paul, I had a desire to have arms long enough to encircle all in the house (about five hundred persons,) or even in the world, that there might be no discord or disunion among us, or at least among the children of God. Which love, thanks be to Him who gave it, I have maintained since, though not always felt in its same degree.

Of baptism—I believe, Sir, that John "Baptized with water unto repentance," and said, "but he that cometh after me is mightier than I—he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire;" that when Jesus came to be baptized of him John forbade him, saying, "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" that Jesus said "suffer it to be so now," &c.; as much as to say, your baptism will not be needed long; for both yourself and baptism are only a type or forerunner of me and my baptism; so soon as that takes place yours will be of no use. John's preaching was also a forerunner of his master's, for they both began by saying, "repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Just before Jesus was taken up, while teaching and giving orders to his Apostles, he said, "For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." As much as to say—"that will be the baptism of which John's was only a forerunner and type, but will then be of no further use." And in a few days afterwards the Holy Ghost descended, sure enough, in a most wonderful and miraculous manner. (18)

In his epistles to the Cor. St. Paul says, "I thank God that I baptized none of you," &c. (19) and adds, "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel." (20) Now, sir, if Christ thought as much of baptism as the churches before mentioned do, would he have left it out of Paul's commission? Surely not. And if Paul had thought as much of it, would he have thanked God that he had baptized but very few? (21) No, surely.

The above sayings, I think, shew very plain that Paul thought as little of baptism as he did of circumcision, of which he says, Gal. v. 6,