

there is a blessing promised to the obedient. God, in his wisdom, has ordained that all who would be reconciled to him by the death of his Son, shall not only believe in him, and truly repent and turn from all their sins, but openly confess him by being immersed into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. To such he promises a full pardon of all past transgressions, and the indwelling of his Holy Spirit. The question is not now what God *can*, or *cannot* do without this obedience; but what he has *promised* to do. Let us become familiar with his promises, comply with the conditions on which they are based, and then we shall be safe; for sooner will the pillars of Heaven crumble, and the throne of God totter and fall, than one of his promises remain unfulfilled to those who do his will. No one in the primitive ages of the church, was considered a disciple of Christ until he was immersed into the name of the Lord. So important was it deemed that in no case was a believer's immersion deferred a single hour. No one eat or drank after having received the Lord Jesus by faith, until they confessed him in immersion. No promise of pardon or the Holy Spirit, since Jesus was crowned Lord of all in the heavens, without faith, repentance, and immersion, can be found in all the oracles of God. There are some of our rationalists who admit this—indeed the sects generally admit this by the entire failure of all their champions to produce a single promise—but they endeavour to show that although it was necessary in bringing Jews and Pagans into the christian church, yet now since christianity has been established in the earth, the ordinances of the gospel have passed away, or ceased with the days of miracles! As futile as this fond conceit really is, it is the most plausible position that can be taken in opposition to the obedience of faith. Miracles have been necessary only to establish a divine dispensation; ordinances, forms and ceremonies to secure to those included in it, the continued enjoyment of those blessings procured by these miraculous displays of the divine being. The vegetable and animal kingdoms were first created by miraculous power; but by these means they were not continued; for God has never since created an animal or a vegetable; but the ordinances of nature have been perpetuated, and by *birth* and *nutriment*, the animal and vegetable kingdoms have been produced and sustained. God makes his works an exponent of his word. It is precisely so in the kingdom of grace—indeed in every dispensation of heaven. Miracles existed until the first congregations of the Lord were perfected; they were then to cease, but “faith, hope and love” were to continue as the grand elements of christian character. This declaration, however, was made to those who had been immersed (Acts xvii. 8, and 1 Cor. i. 12,) into Christ, and who weekly met (1 Cor. xi.) to keep the ordinances as delivered to them by the Apostle. Immersion and the Lord's Supper then, in the kingdom of grace, are as necessary in order to become and to continue citizens thereof as birth and nourishment to a healthy existence in the kingdom of nature. I have not time at present, fully to elaborate this idea. But certain I am that the continued existence of the ordinances of the gospel are fully sustained, not only by the history of the church in all ages, but by the New Testament; by every development of the kingdom of nature, and especially by the history and nature of man.