

of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, *without* true "saving" faith is of no avail—is a mockery of the ordinance—is profane. Here we can meet. Now for the point from which we diverge. You say that those who possess this faith, this true unfeigned faith, are justified, regenerated, pardoned, born again. Do you not? We teach that this faith must be confessed by an humble, penitent immersion into the name of the Divinity, before the sinner comes within the promise of pardon—before any one has the assurance of God's word that they are one of the regenerated sons or daughters of the Lord Almighty. Now whether right or wrong, no one who can put two ideas together can misunderstand our position! Its correctness must be determined by the testimony of God's word.

Again: you will agree with me in the conclusion that next to faith in the Supreme Being, and in that glorious fact of the new covenant that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of the Living God—I say *next* to this knowledge, Heaven's plan of dispensing pardon to his sinful creatures is most important. To this subject then, gentlemen, I invite special attention. Aside from all personalities and every other denominational consideration, I invite you to a friendly discussion. I will not ask for a hearing in your paper or in your meeting houses, but will give page for page in *The Christian*; or if any prefer it, discuss the question *vir a voce* before those who may choose to listen. Do not call this a challenge: the proposition is not made with that intention; but sincerely, for the purpose of inducing a re-examination of all your premises and conclusions in reference to this most important point in the Christian system—the *conditions of salvation*, through the mediation of the Lord Messiah. You say the condition is Faith. We say—ever since man became a transgressor, to *faith* and every *other* mental act a positive institution has ever been added, in order to *test* the worshipper's sincerity, and to put him into the possession of the enjoyment of God's favor. By *unbelief*, which issued in an overt act of disobedience to a positive institution of Heaven, our first parents lost the favor of God, and "brought death into our world, and all our woe." It was not by unbelief alone, but unbelief made manifest by disobedience. The tempter said "You shall *not* surely die." It was the act that this *lie* called forth that plunged them into ruin and death: they trampled on God's authority in disobeying an act as simple as that of partaking of the fruit of a certain tree! Why then should it be thought a thing incredible, especially by you who profess to take the Word of God as the alone rule of faith and practice—that God should place a positive ordinance between the sinner's faith and the tree of life. By *unbelief* and *disobedience* man first lost the favor of God—why then think it unreasonable that Heaven should ordain faith and obedience to bring him again into his favor. Pardon me, if I exclaim O how weak your faith! You can believe and teach that the sinner may experience pardon, engaged in prayer or in meditation, as he walks by the way, in his house, in a grove, or in a place of worship—in your opinion he may be regenerated while searching the Word of God, reading the "christian experience" of some pious saint—hearing the gospel, or even in a dream or vision of the night. Yes, you can believe all this without the record of *one* such instance—one such conversion, since Jesus rose from the dead; but on the plainest, the most express