

serve sin." His argument then is just this:—Talk of "continuing in sin, that grace may abound?" don't you know that in your baptism you professed to have a new life, and that the old life had been destroyed and crucified; and if your old sinful self has been crucified on the cross of Christ, how can you live to it. "He that hath died hath been freed from sin." A dead man cannot be alive to that to which he hath died; so he that hath died to sin, cannot thenceforth continue to be its slave.

But does the truth stop here? far from it. Christ does not leave us in his grave. "He is not there, he is risen:" and "as he is, so are we in this world," members of his body, joint heirs with him. Therefore, the apostle at once goes on, "now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him; knowing that Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him; for in that he died, he died unto sin once, and in that he liveth, he liveth unto God; likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord; neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law but under grace." So ends the proof that grace cannot lead to sin; and, I repeat it, the proof is just this,—that grace gives a new life, and that having received this, our very profession at the commencement of our Christian course, our very baptism, testifies against living in the flesh; for baptism is the profession of the death of the flesh, and how can a dead man live?

Such is Baptism, the profession of our being "buried with Christ." Now, let me ask, who can make the profession? Can the unbelieving world make it?—clearly not. Can then unconscious infants make this profession of death and resurrection with Christ? Is the fact of being born in England or Canada, or born of Christian parents any proof that you are "begotten again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus?" You answer that you are disposed to think that infant baptism is a nonentity, yet you cannot get over circumcision. Come then, let us look at it. The Old Testament Church was an earthly thing, composed of the natural seed of Abraham, and to be born in Abraham's family, entitled a man to all the privileges of that dispensation: but the New Testament Church is heavenly, composed of the spiritual seed of Abraham: "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed;" and to be "born of God," entitles a man to all the privileges of this dispensation. In the old dispensation God was dealing with man in the flesh, and "meats and drinks, and divers washings and carnal ordinances," (Heb. ix. 10.) "and a worldly sanctuary," (Heb. ix. 1.) were permitted by God just to prove that the flesh could never be improved, to shew that "the flesh profiteth nothing," that "flesh is flesh," (John vi. 63.—iii. 6); all that was then attempted, as far as dispensation went, was "the purifying of the flesh." But now, mark the difference, the Church is a "heavenly" thing, (11th. iii. 1., Eph. ii. 6., Phil. iii. 20.) "begotten again by the resurrection," (1 Pet. i. 3,) and as such "risen with Christ," (Col. iii. 1); and therefore "the kingdom of God is not meat and drink," as it once was, (Rom. xiv. 17,) but "a new creature," (2 Cor. v. 17, Gal. vi. 15,) for just as it is true "that which is born of the flesh is flesh," so is it equally true that "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit," (John iii. 6.) Under the old dispensation, circumcision was the outward ordinance of admission into the church, and this ordinance, true to the purpose of the dispensation, typified "the putting away of the filth of the flesh;" (1 Pet. iii. 21.) for the attempt was still to improve the flesh, "to sanctify to the purifying of the flesh," (Heb. ix. 13.) Under the New Testament, baptism is the outward ordinance for admission, and this ordinance also, true to the purpose of its dispensation, is the emblem of "the death of the flesh," (Rom. vi. 6, 11.) "Putting away the filth of the flesh," is not enough

now; for it has been already proved that "flesh is flesh," that "all flesh is grass," (1 Pet. i. 24,) and that "in me, that is in my flesh dwelleth no good thing," (Rom. vii. 18.) In Christ, therefore, God has brought in the new creation, resurrection work: the flesh, the old man, is now given up as hopelessly bad; and what God has done with it is to put it into Christ's grave; and consequently the word now is "mortify," not "purify"; compare Col. iii. 5, and Heb. ix. 13. "Mortify therefore your members," and "ye have been buried with Christ." Henceforth "as Christ was raised, so we should walk," a heavenly people, "partakers of the heavenly calling," "having our conversation in heaven," and "our life hid with Christ in God." Heb. iii. 1, Phil. iii. 20, Col. iii. 3.

But let me trace this analogy yet a little further. Under the Old dispensation, if Abraham had a son born in the flesh, they were at once to circumcise him. Under the New dispensation, if Abraham has a son born in the Spirit, "for, if ye be Christ's, ye are Abraham's seed," then we are at once to baptize him. But just as of old, a child could not be circumcised before it came into the world, for it could not receive the sign of "putting away the filth of the flesh," until the flesh was born; so a babe in Christ cannot rightly be baptized before it comes into heavenly places, for we cannot receive the token of *the flesh having been buried* until we are manifest to be regenerate. And, just as of old, the child of Abraham was circumcised, though by reason of infancy it knew nothing of the meaning of the rite; so now the babe in Christ, the spiritual infant, is baptized, though by reason of its spiritual infancy, it knows but little of the meaning of the ordinance. The one great question in either case is just this,—*Is there life*.—Abraham's natural life in the one case, Abraham's spiritual life in the other?

Now, you must, I think, see at once from this, that though natural birth in the flesh could put a man into a dispensation in which God was dealing with the flesh, where there was "a worldly sanctuary," and "carnal ordinances;" yet birth in the flesh has nothing to do with "the kingdom of heaven," see Mat. xiii., that is, the Gospel dispensation. Accordingly when the new dispensation was coming in, we find it said, "John the Baptist was the greatest of those born of women," and who as such found themselves in the church: "but he that is least in the kingdom of heaven, is greater than he," Mat. xi. 11. The "new creature in Christ," is the only life God now recognizes; such as are "born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," John i. 13; "wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more," 2 Cor. v. 16. Christ "after the flesh" was of the seed of David, but declared to be the Son of God with power *by the resurrection*, Rom. i. 4; and as such alone we can now know him, "being begotten again to a lively hope by his resurrection," 1 Pet. i. 3.

Baptism, therefore, is, as the Church of England rightly enough says, "the badge of our profession." By it we profess the death of the flesh in Christ crucified: by it we profess the new life of the Spirit in Christ risen. No one has a right to make this profession, and no one can properly and truly make it, who has not got a better life than the life of Adam; in a word, no one has a right to be baptized who is not regenerate. If I go and bury my natural life when I have no other life within me, then I bury all I have. But not so the Christian, and Christians alone should be baptized. The Christian has a better life, and having it, he can afford to give up and mortify "the old man;" and this he does in profession according to Christ's institution in baptism. Just as the Lord's supper is the profession of our communion with Christ, the cup is the communion of his blood," 1 Cor. x. 16, by which blood we are cleansed;—so baptism is the profession of our death and resurrection with Christ our head. See this clearly, and then "buried with him by baptism," and similar passages will no more puzzle you than those other simple