

them the suffrages of men, who might naturally be expected, from a regard to their own profession, and to the usage and prejudices of their countrymen, to maintain the contrary? *But, secondly, these views are worthy of attention, because they are given by men of eminent learning.* As scholars, the German Theologians far surpass those of any other country; and hence they are generally more competent to decide a disputed point in philology, such as the proper meaning of the Greek term *βαπτίζω*. When they, then, declare, as they do without exception, that this term properly signifies *to dip*, it cannot be said that they are incompetent judges. No reasonable man will deny that their testimony on this matter possesses very great weight. When *Prof. Tholuck* of Halle, with his vast erudition, declares from the chair as he did in the writer's hearing, that baptism always means immersion (*untertauchung*) in the New Testament; what person of common candor will disregard his testimony? As church historians also, these Divines generally excel; for their unwearied research renders them familiar with the ancient authors from whom the usages of the early church, after the days of the apostles, must be learned. When therefore they tell us that infant baptism was not known till after the time of the apostles, and that sprinkling was not practised till much later, are they not worthy of credit? If the evidence of men so competent, and at the same time so frank as to admit what militates against their own practice, be set aside; what kind of evidence, we ask, deserves to be heeded and ought to decide our mind? It is certain that similar testimony on any ordinary point in philology, history or philosophy, would satisfy persons of discernment and candor; why then should it not be satisfactory on a point in theology? If the same kind of evidence should be regarded as con-

clusive in things profane, but inconclusive in things sacred, it must only prove, what, alas! is too true, *that men are the victims of prejudice in religion.* It seems to be a principle of our depraved nature, that prejudice should influence the mind, just in proportion as the subject under its consideration, is conceived and felt to be important. Hence many persons, who form dispassionate and fair conclusions in ordinary matters, betray a deplorable want of ingenuousness in the treatment of religious questions.

But as these German Pædobaptists still practise infant sprinkling, notwithstanding their concessions in favor of the proper observance of the rite, it may be asked, what reasons do they give for their conduct? They, of course, endeavor to excuse, if not to justify themselves in their departure from what they admit to be the primitive practice. But, be it observed, they do not defend sprinkling on the ground that the Greek verb signifies *to sprinkle* as well as *to dip*, for their scholarship forbids them to advance such an excuse; nor do they administer the rite to infants on the ground, that either Christ or the apostles set the example or delivered the command, for their honest interpretation of Scripture precludes such an apology. What they allege in self-defence is generally to this effect, —that the mode of performing the rite is of little or no consequence, so that it is no harm to sprinkle though Christ commanded to dip; and that infants, though they were not baptized by the Head of the church or his apostles, may yet receive the rite with propriety, because Christianity is a family religion, and because many advantages are supposed to spring from the practice. Now these reasons are very fair, and worthy of learned and ingenuous minds, and they would be satisfactory too, if we could only find a warrant to set aside the command of Jesus and substitute