

easily pardoned, men will continue in sin that grace may abound.' 'Nay,' replies the Apostle, "how shall we, that we are dead to sin (or dead with Christ, *by* sin, as some understand it,) live any longer therein? Therefore, (because we are dead with Christ, and thus united to him, we must view sin as he views it) we have also been buried with him by baptism unto death: that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead, by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." That is, as if the Apostle had said, We died to sin when we believed: but as burial follows death, and finally and formally separates one from the living world around him, so we not only *died* with Christ by faith, but—to carry out the figure—we were *buried* with him when we formally professed our faith in baptism: and how, then, can we who are both dead and buried to sin live any longer therein."

Where now is the ground for supposing that the word "buried" refers to the mode of baptism? Certainly, there exists no necessity for it in so far as the argument is concerned, as his reasoning is quite as plain, and to our thinking much more forcible, when we understand the Apostle to use the word "buried" figuratively, as he uses the words "dead," "planted," "crucified," &c., than when we understand him to mean immersed.

There are, moreover, what seem to us insuperable objections to the Baptist interpretation of the passage in the language itself.

First, we are declared to be buried "*with*" Christ; not, as we might have expected if the language had been intended to refer to immersion "*like*" Christ. The idea is, we were buried (figuratively) when Christ was buried; just as we who believe, died (figuratively) when He died, as our Surety. The only instance in which any reference is made to *likeness*, in the act, is in the 5th verse; but there, unfortunately for the Baptist theory, the phrase is, "planted together (or planted with Him) in the likeness of His death, not of His burial. How perfectly meaningless it would be to speak of our being "immersed in the likeness of His crucifixion!"

Then, secondly, the Apostle says, "we are buried with Him;" not *were* or have been buried, but are buried, the tense in the Greek being the same as in the 2nd verse, where he says, we "are dead" to sin. We "*were* baptized" (v. 3)—a different tense—but we are dead, and *are* buried with Christ. Our Baptist friends do not remain *immersed*, but they do, if true believers, remain *buried* with Him in the figurative sense of which Paul speaks.

Furthermore, the resemblance between the immersion of a person in water, and the burial of Jesus in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, "hewn out in the rock," and having a "door" to it (Matt. xxvii. 60), to say the least, is very far-fetched and fanciful. The body of Christ was not lowered into the grave *perpendicularly* as in modern burial, but was laid away in the tomb *laterally*. Many such tombs "are still found in Palestine," says Dr. Jamieson, (in Kitto's Cyclopædia) along the sides of which niches are cut, or sometimes shelves ranged one above another, on which were deposited the bodies of the dead, while in others the ground floor of the tomb *was raised*, so as to make different compartments, the lowest place in the family vaults being reserved for the servants." And, again, speaking of tombs hewn out of the rock, as was that of our Lord's, he says, the entrance to these "was either horizontal, or by a flight of steps." What then, becomes of the fancied resemblance between immersion and the burial of our Lord? It utterly vanishes in the light of the facts of the case.

And finally, to suppose the Apostle to allude to immersion, is to make the mode of baptism the symbol instead of the baptism itself. Nowhere in the New Testament, except in this disputed passage, and its parallel in Col. ii. 12, do we ever find baptism setting forth any other truth than that of our need of spiritual cleansing. As water is the God-given element for the purifying of the body, so the water of baptism symbolizes the influence and work of the Holy Ghost in the cleansing of the soul from sin, just as circumcision did before it. See Acts xxii. 16; 1 Peter iii. 21; Ezek. xxxvi. 25; Mark i. 4, etc. And, we may add, as the