

cles and prophets by the Spirit, even that the Gen.iles should be *fellow heirs, and of the same body,*—this mystery it is which Baptism is designed to represent. And how should the Church understand the emblem if it does not know the reality, how is it likely they should have right thoughts about the darkened shadow while their eyes are as yet blind to the substance. I don't wonder then at Christians being bewildered about baptism, (nor indeed do I wonder at their being bewildered about anything,) as long as they remain in ignorance of God's thoughts and God's purposes concerning "His Son" and "the bride": for until we know what it is to be "*in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus,*" we are children liable to be "carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive,"—looking at our own poor flesh instead of looking at Christ; considering our own sinful nature instead of considering Him, and that through Him, "*we are made partakers of the Divine nature,*" (2 Pet. i. 4.) "*partakers of the heavenly calling,*" (Heb. iii. 1.) yea, "*partakers of Christ.*" (Heb. iii. 14.) The proper spirit for a Christian is Abraham's spirit, the spirit of faith: "*he considered not his body now dead,*" (Rom. iv. 19:) why then should we consider ourselves now dead? why worry ourselves about what the Lord has buried in his grave? But this again brings me back to Baptism.

Let me gather up the thought I want you to get hold of: it is this:—Christ and the Church are one; "as He is, so are we in this world." The question then is, *What is Christ's position as respects the world on the one hand, and as respects God on the other?* As respects the world he is dead, "*killed and cast out of his vineyard,*" (Mat. xxi. 38, 39); the life he took from his mother, the life of Adam, that life he laid down for us at the hands of wicked men; and when he laid it down and died, the Church, his body, died with him, (Rom. vi. 5–11); and when he rose, the Church rose with him, for "*we are quickened together with Christ,*" as Paul says to the Ephesians; "*begotten again,*" as Peter says, "*to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead,*" (1 Pet. i. 3.) And what is the ground of this? Simply the truth I have touched upon at the commencement of this letter, that Christ and the Church are one, that "*as He is, so are we in this world.*" As he died in the flesh, so the Church being one with him, is to "*reckon itself dead,*" (Rom. vi. 8;) as he rose from his grave, so we in him are "*risen,*" (Col. iii. 1.) As he was "*made of the seed of David,*" according to the flesh, and declared to the Son of God with power *by his resurrection,* (Rom. i. 4:) so we, though the sons of Adam, by natural birth, are likewise "*begotten again (or regenerated) to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,*" (1 Pet. i. 3.) Christ was "*declared*" or manifested "*to be the Son of God by his resurrection,*" and thus the prophecy, "*thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee,*" is in the New Testament (see Acts xiii. 32, 33,) referred to Christ's resurrection rather than to his birth, for though "*the Son*" before, he was not manifested as such until his resurrection. In like manner the Church is "*begotten again by the resurrection of Jesus,*" and, therefore, the Holy Spirit says by Peter, "*the like figure whereunto even baptism doth now save us, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,*" (1 Pet. iii. 21.)

But, you say, you do not quite understand this. Then let me try to put it yet plainer. You know, the Christian has two natures: he is child of Adam by natural birth, and child of God by spiritual birth. In his old nature he is "*in Adam,*" and as such, without doing a single act, good or evil, he comes in for Adam's inheritance, death: in his new nature he is "*in Christ,*" and as such he comes in for Christ's inheritance, life, (1 Cor. xv. 22.) Just as a babe without a single evil act, simply because it is in Adam, is implicated in Adam's sin, and comes in for Adam's reward, death; so the young Christian, "*the babe in Christ,*" being God's child by faith, (Gal. iii. 26,) without a single good act, just because it is, by God's gift, united to Christ, comes in

for Christ's reward, eternal life. And what follows? Why this, that as members of, and one with, Christ; since he died in the flesh, we have died also, (Rom. vi. 2); since he has been raised up, we have "*risen with him,*" (Col. iii. 1); for "*God hath raised us up, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus,*" (Eph. ii. 6); in a word—that as Christ has died, so we as old creatures have died; and as Christ liveth, so we as new creatures in him, live also. We are to judge thus concerning ourselves, (2 Cor. v. 14); and all practical exhortation to "*die daily*" is founded upon the one finished death in Christ. "*Ye have died, and your life is hid with Christ in God: mortify therefore,*" &c. (Col. iii. 3, 5.)

And this is just what Baptism represents.* It is the sign of death with Christ, and resurrection with him; and, therefore, we are said, as in Romans vi., to have been "*buried with Christ by baptism,*" because in it we signify that God has laid our flesh in his grave; and, as in 1 Pet. iii., to have been "*saved by his resurrection through baptism,*" because in that baptism we profess to have new life in him risen. When I go down into the water, and my body is laid under it, it is the outward emblem of my old man having been buried in Christ's grave. It shews that God has buried the dead out of his sight. So, too, when I am raised from the water, it is a sign that I have risen in Christ, and in him profess a life which the grave cannot take from me, even life in Christ risen. The submitting to receive this sign is our confession.

But you will understand this better if you look with me for a moment at Rom. vi. At the end of the fifth chapter, the apostle had been preaching the exceeding fullness of the grace of God,—"where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; that as sin reigned unto death, so might grace reign." Now, this full statement of grace seemed open to an objection. The objection was this,—and it is one which has always been made to the doctrines of grace,—"*If this be true, if grace is what you say it is, so rich, so free, let us continue in sin that grace may abound.*" Now, how does Paul, or rather the Spirit of God in Paul, meet this objection? Does he say, as is sometimes said, that mere gratitude for God's love, forbid's such an idea? does he say that the greatness of the favour done to us, must necessarily make us obedient? Nothing of the sort. His answer is just this: "*how shall we that have died to sin, live any longer therein;*" in other words, how can a *dead man live?* "*Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound.*" How can we? How can we that *have died to sin, live any longer in it?*

But you will say, perhaps, "*died to sin?*" what does the apostle mean? how have I died to sin?" Now, mark his answer: "*Know ye not that so many of us have been baptized into Jesus Christ, have been baptized into his death?*" Don't you know this? Are you a Christian, and do you not know that when you were baptized that very baptism was a profession of your having died with Christ? "*Know ye not that so many of us as have been baptized into Jesus Christ have been baptized into his death:* therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life." In other words, at our baptism we signify, that, having life in Christ, we have laid down the life of Adam in the grave of Christ, that henceforth "*as Christ was raised, even so we should walk in newness of life.*" For, as he goes on, "*if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection;*" knowing this that our old man hath been crucified with him, that the body of sin, that is, the sinful body, might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not

* With regard to John's baptism, it was not Christian baptism. It had no reference to the believer's union with Christ in his death and resurrection; and therefore "certain disciples," who had only received John's baptism were rebaptized by the direction of the Apostle Paul, "in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ." (Acts xix. 1–5.) John's baptism was "unto repentance," (Mat. iii. 11); Christ's baptism is "unto his death," (Rom. vi. 4.)