

bestow this (pardon) on any, unless through this means;”* and then with the greater part of the Wesleyans of this province ridicule the idea of any benefit whatever derived from obeying that command of the Lord Jesus by his Apostle Peter—“be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for remission of sins,” we might have with them, notwithstanding the charge of Arminianism by Calvinists, be invited to a part with them in the evangelical alliance!!

My brother, I am sometimes tempted to conclude that the more one’s general practice is opposed to the plain teachings of the New Testament, the more popular and orthodox he becomes!

But to the question. “What is the design of baptism?” The New Testament as plainly teaches that it is required of the believing penitent *for the remission of sins* as that Christ’s blood was shed for that purpose. For every argument and scripture that any living man can bring to show that he who disbelieves that Christ died for sinners is an unbeliever in him, can I bring to prove that he who disbelieves in baptism for remission of sins is an infidel. So confident am I of the futility and weakness of the opposition and the strength of truth, and so many times have we stated and proved the scriptural design of this divine ordinance, that I feel strongly inclined to dogmatize. The scripture never ascribes to baptism any other object or design than that which is akin to the enjoyment of pardon. It is not said that it is in the place of circumcision—for the purpose of giving names to children—for the consecration of infants to the Lord—for the purpose of joining the church—for making a public profession, or for any other purpose than remission of sins. He who opposes it, opposes God’s word—he who would reject it, tramples on the authority of Heaven.

2. “Is being baptized in water synonymous with being born again?” or in other words “is immersion in water, regeneration?” No, neither. A man may be baptized fifty times, and neither be regenerated or born again. All the ordinances of the new covenant are curses rather than blessings to those who are not penitent believers. Brother G. you did not certainly ask this latter question for your own satisfaction! If I thought you did, I would give it more attention. We never taught that baptism was regeneration. Faith in the blood of Christ, and genuine, heartfelt repentance—the full surrender of body, soul, and spirit to the service of the Lord Jesus in immersion, are all necessary in order to obtain a scriptural assurance of the new birth. If any of our readers will refer us to one who was recognized as a child of God, as born again, after Jesus ascended on high, without immersion, we will give the account of his conversion a conspicuous place in our publication.

3. The “kingdom of God” spoken of in John iii. 5, we understand to mean the church on earth.

4. When our Saviour was on the earth, he disposed of men as pleased him. Some eyes were opened by a touch, by a word, and others by the application of clay, and washing. Lepers were healed by a word, or on their way to the priest. He forgave sins conditionally, or unconditionally for aught we know, just as he saw fit, when here with men in the flesh. But just as he was going to glory, he committed to the Apostles the word of reconciliation, which was—“preach repentance and

* See Wesley’s notes on Acts xxii. 16.