

Saviour fulfilled the will of God. When eight days of his life were accomplished Luke tells us in II. 21. that he was circumcised, and his name Jesus given. Matthew mentions the names, but seems to think it unnecessary to speak of the act of circumcision, thinking, perhaps, that none could doubt it, but gives us instead two names, one for his divine nature, which is Emanuel, or "God with us," and one for his human nature, which is Jesus, by being circumcised after the law and humbly submitting to all things necessary to our salvation. He fulfilled the prophecy in Isaiah XLII. 21. "He will magnify the law and make it honorable." Could he have magnified it unless he had submitted to it? No; in being circumcised he did magnify it. But as Christ took all our sins upon him, and bore all our pains, so he instituted in place of circumcision, baptism, which is as binding on the Christian as circumcision was on the Jew. A Jew was not a Jew unless he was circumcised. A Christian is not a Christian till he is baptized. No stranger could keep the passover unless he had been circumcised—Ex. XII. 48—so no Christian can go to the Lord's table unless he has been baptized, for as soon as the Jews believed on Christ they were baptized. John was circumcised before Christ, Luke I. 59. His baptism is not mentioned, but he is called the Baptist, which evidently means more than is expressed. John seems to have expected that Christ's Baptism would have had a much more powerful effect, and been altogether different from his; but Christ, to make it plain to John that he was only going to fulfil the law not to change it, submits at once to John's Baptism, shewing us, by this act, how necessary it was to salvation, and that the power that he would give his ministers would enable them to make men Christians, to enlist them, as it were, under his banner, just as