

but the name of Jesus Christ. He that believeth on him hath everlasting life.

II. Let us now consider the ardor and intensity with which the Psalmist desired this object. "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that I will seek after."

1st. This is the language of decision. It is not the language of doubt or speculation. The merchant would say, I desire to add ship to ship, ware house to warehouse, that I may acquire an immense fortune, and leave my family a large estate. "The man of study would say, I desire to acquire fresh accessions of knowledge and of learning, to bind around my brows the wreath of literary fame, and to grow immortal in my works. The hero would say, I desire to conquer my enemies, to acquire the favour of my prince, to receive the applause of my countrymen, and to build up an imperishable fame. But the Christian says, "One thing have I desired, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple."

2nd, This is the language of decided preference. The Psalmist says in another place, I had "rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." And who is the person that utters this language? Do you suppose it is some individual unacquainted with life, or disgusted with the world, who wishes to spend the remainder of his days amid the mopings of religious melancholy, or the ravings of methodistical fanaticism? This is not the case. He was a mighty monarch, the wealth of a kingdom lay at his feet, and the splendors of royalty glittered around his brow. Yet he, as the object of his highest ambition, says, "One thing have I desired, to behold the beauty of the Lord." I now commend the choice of the Psalmist to you. You have now the power to choose. The shadows of another Sabbath evening are gathering thick around us; the religious services of another of the days of the Son of man soon will terminate; the voice of the preacher soon will cease, and you will depart to your respective habitations. But shall we ever meet again? The feet of those who shall carry you out, may now be at the door. Ere another Sabbath, you may be hurried to an eternal state. Now, not next Sabbath; not to-morrow, not next hour, not the next minute; "now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation."

AN ADDRESS.

Delivered by the Author, June 22, 1823, at Mill Wall Chapel.

On the ordinance of Baptism being administered to LEWIS HENRY LESSEY.

On this pleasing and interesting occasion, it may not be deemed unseasonable or unimportant to acquire briefly into the origin, the nature, the subjects, and design of Christian baptism.

1. Its Origin.—In the church under the former dispensation, there were two ordinances, divinely instituted, viz. circumcision and the passover. In the Christian dispensation there are two, baptism and the Lord's supper, which came in place of them. It is the ordinance of baptism we are now to speak of.

John's baptism was not Christian baptism, but was introductory to it. He was sent to prepare the way, and to introduce the Messiah to Israel, which was its principal feature; see John i. 25-30. Our Saviour came to John to be baptized of him, Matt. iii. 13. It was his public ordination. The Jewish priests were washed previous to their entering on the sacerdotal office, Exo. xxix. 4. It behoved our Lord Jesus to fulfil all righteousness, i. e. of the ceremonial as well as of the moral law, which consisted, amongst other things, in divers washings; it was (as one says) his public inauguration. "He was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows." "The Spirit, in the shape of a dove, descended and lighted upon him, by him to be derived to all believers, in his gifts, graces and comforts. To explain and complete this ordination, "there came a voice from heaven; saying, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;" mine by eternal generation, by supernatural conception, and by special designation to the work and office of the world's Redeemer. John's baptism had its use, its day, and then passed away. Christian baptism was founded by Christ. Matthew xxviii. 19, go ye therefore, and teach all nations;

baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. As an initiatory ordinance it is to continue till the Redeemer comes the second time.

2. Its Nature.—If it be asked, What is Christian baptism? We answer, it is the washing a person with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; three divine persons in one triune Jehovah, the same in substance, and equal in power and glory. It testifies the doctrine of original sin, and the necessity of regeneration; it declares every man as born of the flesh to be polluted; that unless he be washed with purifying waters, he cannot be received into the outward church, and unless he be inwardly cleansed by the Holy Spirit, he cannot be a member of the true church, or have any part in Christ, John xiii. 8. It implies a belief of the blessed provision which God hath made in his gospel for the purification of souls from sin and all its defilements. It is the baptism of repentance, for the remission of sins, Mark i. 4. It also implies a humble acceptance of these blessings.

When we come under this ordinance, we do, as it were, by way of action and emblem, consent to accept of this purification, both from the guilt and principle of sin.

If it be asked, how is this ordinance to be administered? We answer, by pouring or sprinkling water on the baptised person, an apt emblem of the influences of the Spirit. The regenerating and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit are spoken of in scripture, under the emblems of pouring and sprinkling, and baptism is the sign of his operations on the souls of men. "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit on thy seed and my blessing upon thine offspring, &c." Isa. xlv. 3. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean, &c." Eze. xxxvi. 25. Also, the blood of Christ is referred to, as being sprinkled on the conscience, &c.

3. Its Subjects.—Baptism is to be administered to such as profess their faith in Christ, and to their children; whole households (of which children make up a considerable part) were baptized by the apostles; God called Abraham, and settled his visible church in his family, and said to him, he would be his God, and the God of his seed. If time would permit, we might notice God's covenant with Abraham, which we have, Gen. xvii. And the apostle's exposition of it, Rom. iv. and shew that Abraham was made the common father of Jews and Gentiles. We might refer you to several scriptures, and particularly to Col. ii. 11, "to shew that baptism and circumcision signify the same thing, and that being baptised, we need not be circumcised. But we shall more especially call your attention to that passage of holy writ, Acts ii. 38, 39. "Now when they heard this they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and the rest of the Apostles, men and brethren, what shall we do?" They spake like persons quite at a loss, not knowing what to do. "Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost; for the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." The promise of spiritual blessings and outward privileges is made the motive of compliance with a sacred ordinance; this brings them to the ordinance of baptism. "Then they that gladly received his word, were baptized." Here we learn, that that promise which was made the ground of circumcision to the Jews and their seed, is now made the ground of baptism to Gentiles and their children. The promise is the same; the parties are the same; the

* If it be objected, there is no express warrant in the scripture for the baptizing of infants? We answer there is an express command to circumcise infants, and there is equal reason to baptise them. Compare Gen. xvii. 10, 14, with Col. ii. 11. There is a command to baptise nations, of which infants are a part; there is a gracious promise respecting the infants of believers, Acts ii. 29. There is no more express command for the observation of the Christian sabbath, nor for women partaking of the Lord's supper, than there is for the baptism of infants.

If it be objected, that children should not be baptised, because they cannot believe; on the same principle, it may be objected, that they cannot be justified, because they cannot believe; since the scriptures require faith in the one case as well as the other.

ordinance only is changed; thus it is, that the blessing of Abraham comes upon the Gentiles, through faith in Christ. Children receive the seal of baptism, as a bond laid upon them in infancy, to fulfil the obligations and duties at riper years, and as encouragement to wait and hope for the blessing. This was the case of Jewish infants, and why may not Christians be favoured with it also?

4. Its Design.—Its institution in the Christian Church was designed as a separating ordinance from the world. To keep up a memorial of our natural impurity and our constant need of purification; to set forth the blessings of God's grace; the work of the Holy Spirit on the souls of men. All that mighty and gracious change spoken of, 1 Cor. vi. 11 is figuratively represented in this divinely instituted ordinance. "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

The adult believer, while he or she acknowledges him or herself to be a sinner, at the same time declares a reliance on the mercy of the Father, and on the mediation of the incarnate Son, and on the grace of the Holy Spirit, for complete salvation. By believers presenting their offspring to the Lord in this ordinance, they solemnly declare that they desire the same blessings for their children, as they have chosen for their own portion; and they thus pledge themselves to the church, to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, giving them every instruction, and using every means of rendering them wise unto salvation.

This ordinance ought to be adhered to, in obedience to the command of God, with all convenient speed, with faith in God's gracious promise, with reverence, with prayer unto God for a blessing on his own ordinance. It ought to be publicly dispensed, and with preaching of the gospel immediately preceding it; it ought to be administered by those only, who are stewards or ministers of Christ.

You, my brother and sister, the parents of this dear babe, remember the vows of God are upon you, by his precept, by example, train it up for God, let it have an interest in your prayers, let your own temper and deportment, which it shall witness, be worthy of its imitation. May your souls, with that of the dear young immortal, be bound up in the bundle of life. Amen.

A word to you that compose this congregation, and I have done, You have witnessed the dedication of this child unto the Lord, and heard the sacred name of our covenant God named upon him, into which he has been baptized; nothing short of its entire renovation and restoration to the divine image has been shadowed forth in this insignificant ordinance, you have been reminded of your own personal concern in an act similar to this. A young lady, lately called by grace, said to me, "I make my parents' act for me, in baptism, my own, and in meditation and purpose of heart, make it as real as tho' I was to go through the ordinance again." May you, my respected friends, do likewise, as the happiest method of deriving present and eternal advantage in the use of this appointed institution in the church of God. Amen.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

WILBRAHAM ACADEMY.

We understand that there is a gracious revival among the students at Wilbraham Institution. Some sixteen or twenty have found the "pearl of great price," and the glorious work is still progressing. This Institution has been highly favored of the Lord. We hope to be able to present to our readers a more circumstantial account of this revival in a future number.—N. E. Herald.

Great Revival.

The town of Portsmouth, Greenland, Dover, Great Falls, and Somersworth, in New Hampshire; and Berwick, Elliot, and York, in Maine, are at this time experiencing refreshing showers of grace. More than six hundred are reported to have professed religion and about three fourths of that number to have united with the M. E. Church. A camp meeting and four days meetings, are thought to have been the principal means of this revival.