

On the day of Pentecost, Peter preached to a large congregation of sinners, many of whom were pierced in the heart. The words *pierced in the heart*, are expressive of their deep sorrow. They asked Peter and the rest of the Apostles, what they should do to be saved. Peter commanded them to repent. But if Peter, when he commanded them to "*repent*," meant *become sorry*, there was not one of them that obeyed him! They all became GLAD! "They that GLADLY receive the word were baptized."—Acts ii. 41. They had been already made sorry enough. When, therefore, they heard and believed, that by amending their lives and being baptized, they could obtain pardon in the place of sorrow, overwhelming joy sprang up in their hearts! Thus, then, is the practice of sin destroyed; not, however, by mere external reformation; it is a reformation of mind and of heart, and which eventuates in a reformation of behaviour; it is a breaking off from our sins by righteousness, and our transgressions by turning to the Lord. Those, therefore, who repent evangelically, bring forth fruits meet for repentance; in other words, demonstrate their repentance by a change of practice; and thus is the practice of sin destroyed.

We can inform the sinner *how much* sorrow for his sins he ought to possess! Just enough to constrain him to amend his life! If he has a faith, through which a sufficiency of grace flows into his soul to work within him godly sorrow, and enough of genuine hatred of sin to effect in his behalf both internal and external reformation, he has become the proper subject for baptism or a change of state. We hasten therefore to show:

THIRDLY. *That by baptism the state of sin is destroyed.*—When a foreigner takes the oath of allegiance to the government of the United States, he passes from the state of an alien into that of a citizen; when persons are married, they pass out of the single into the married state. So, when penitent believers put on the Lord Jesus Christ, they pass out of the unpardoned into the pardoned state. Observe, we do not affirm that the state of a sinner is never changed except in baptism.—This is no part of our creed. What may be done out of baptism is not the present question. We have, however, no great liking for the principles of those persons, who are always enquiring how near they can approach the precipice of disobedience without falling over! The question is of what utility is baptism? Does it convey any blessing to the obedient? Or is it a mere empty, unmeaning ceremony? We say, that in it, the state of the believer is changed! and in effect, so say the popular creeds. Let us hear what our friends, the Methodists, say concerning baptism:

ART. 17. "Baptism is not only a sign of profession and mark of difference, whereby christians are distinguished from others who are not baptised, but it is also a sign of regeneration or the new birth." Baptism is a *mark of difference* whereby christians are distinguished from others that are not baptised. Will this Article recognise those as christians who have not this distinctive "mark?" If so, then of what use the "mark?" Did not the fabricators of this "article" believe that persons not having this "mark of distinction," ought not to be recog-