

No man, who believes that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, will accept uninspired history as *necessary* to the correct *interpretation* of Scripture. We place the Bible with all confidence in the hands of men who know little or nothing of history, as able to make wise unto salvation,—profitable to the extent of making the man of God *perfect*, thoroughly furnished *unto all good works*: and are we to hold up history as a supplement to the *Word* without which it cannot be intelligently applied? To believe Paine, or Park, even when they speak truth, is not to believe the Word of God. History may teach us what men from age to age have believed, professed, taught: but we must come to the *Word* to learn whether their doctrine is *correct*. History may inform us what Professors did; but we must come to the *Word* to learn whether what they did was *right*. If the Scripture does not show us, not only that we are to be baptized, but what baptism is, and how it is to be administered, we can know nothing assuredly about it. If we are to be *divinely* taught, the *Word* must show us the import of the ordinance, whether we are to be immersed in water or to have water sprinkled on us, or whether either will do. It is a gross imposition practised on unsuspecting man to lead away their minds from the *Word* to history. The faith of God's elect rests on *divine* testimony. History can add nothing to the strength of their faith.

The whole of the Baptist system rests on the denial of two *facts*, of which we have ample evidence in the Bible.

1. One fact is that—*Baptism is an ordinance of the former dispensation*. Of this we have the most direct and unequivocal evidence. Baptism was divinely administered and divinely enjoined hundreds of years before the appearance of John Baptist. The Apostle is writing to a Christian church whose members had all been baptized, and of course knew what baptism was and *how* they had been baptized; and he informs them that the Israelites, having come forth from Egypt, were all *baptized* in the cloud and in the sea. When he writes to the Hebrew Christians, he reminds them that the instituted rites of the former age comprehended *divers baptisms*. To assert then that baptism is peculiar to this dispensation is to deny the *inspiration* of Paul, or to *make God a liar* because the record which He gives concerning this matter is not accepted. With no levity, with a solemn present sense of responsibility, do I bring against the leaders of a confiding people the heavy charge of imputing to the Holy Spirit a blunder or an error. With no spirit of bitterness do I bring the charge, but to lead to serious consideration in the light, not of man's testimony, but of the Divine word. Once brought to accept the testimony—the plain and decisive testimony of the Spirit, we are near an end of the assertion of the baseless and fanatical ceremony of *immersion*.

2. The second fact is that,—*We can never learn the design or form of an ordinance from the name given to it*, unless baptism is an exception to what is otherwise universally true. There are Circumcision, Sacrifice, Sin-offering, Trespass-offering, Passover, Meat and Drink offerings, Lord's supper. Let the Baptists select the name which God has attached to any one of these ceremonial institutions. Let him tax his ingenuity or his literature. Let him call into play the vivid imagination by which he can combine the waters of the Red Sea and a pillar of cloud or fire to construct a baptistry, in which

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