

that "cleanseth from all sin." And yet again, in Acts viii. 23. what says Peter to Simon Magus, a baptized man?—"I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity!" Oh! what an emphasis all this gives to our Lord's great announcement, "Ye must be born again!" John iii. 7. Let no man lose sight of these lessons. He does so at his everlasting peril.

And let no man plume himself upon his clear, Scriptural views of baptism. A man, in a certain sectarian, polemical sense, may be a very good Baptist, and a very poor Christian. No man can be saved as a controversialist. Paul, Col. i. 27. speaks of "Christ *in*" the saints—not Christ without them—nor Christ as a party-badge, or a party-cry, as at one time among the Corinthians, 1 Ep. i. 12.—"Christ *in* you," he says, "the hope of glory." John the Baptist tells those who came to *his* baptism of "the baptism of the Holy Spirit," and of Him who should administer that baptism; and thus turns his hearers over from himself to his Lord, and from all outward baptisms to "the baptism of the Holy Spirit." Let the advocate of believers' baptism remember these things. Vain is the clear intellect, vain the vigorous maintenance of Bible truth on any point, without the inward, vital experience of that truth. Let each one, therefore, be concerned, first of all, to become acquainted with a "Christ *in*" him—to receive a spiritual baptism from the hands of Christ. Then let baptism in water follow upon this—be found in its own place—do its own work—and bring with it its own benefits. Let baptism be all this, and do all this; *but no more*. Thus, and thus only, will Scriptural views of baptism be sanctified to him who holds them. Apart from this, the clearer the view, the hotter the zeal, the fiercer the contention on the baptismal dogma, or on any other Bible dogma, the greater the guilt here, and the deeper the condemnation hereafter.

2. Next, I would adopt Paul's warning, Phil. iii. 2. "*Beware of the concision!*" So the apostle styles the Judaizing teachers, the first troublers of the first churches. They claimed to be "the circumcision." Nay, says Paul, they are "the *concision*," not "the *circumcision*."\* They *cut off* their brethren; they divide the church into parties; and introduce into it snarlings, and every evil work. Wherefore "*beware of dogs; beware of evil workers; beware of the concision.*" The epistle to the Galatians amply justifies the epithets which the apostle here applies to these men; as may be seen by a reference to Gal. iii. 1—3. iv. 10, 16, 17. v. 15—17. vi. 12, 13. With his eye upon such men, and such

\* KATatome, not PERitome.