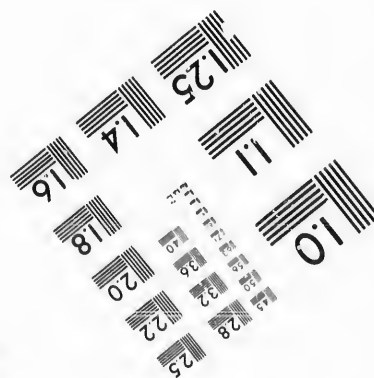
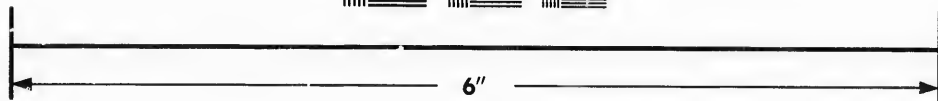
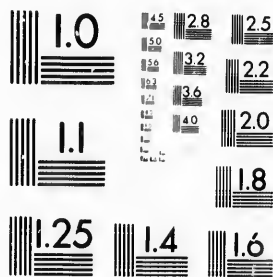
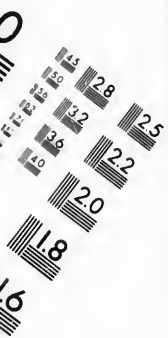


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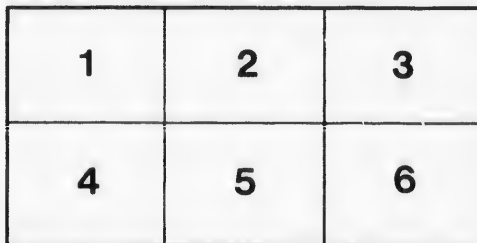
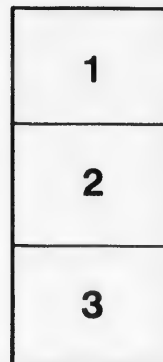
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BY THE

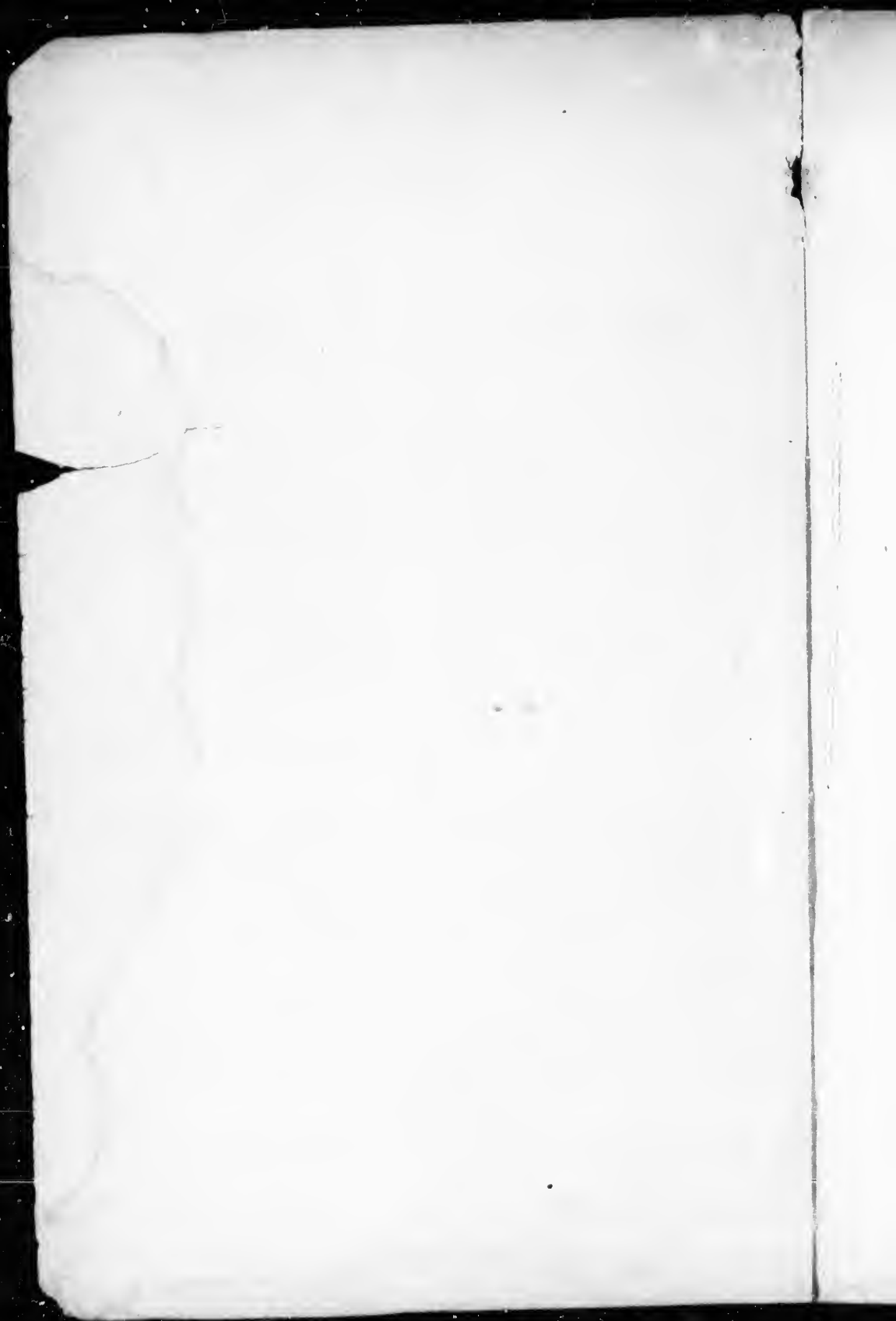
REV. JOHN ROAF,

AND PRINTED AT THEIR REQUEST.

TORONTO:

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NOTE.

I delivered the following sermons without expecting them to be printed. This has been requested by the church under my care, and in hope of their being serviceable when read, I comply with the request. They now appear as nearly in the form in which they were delivered from the pulpit as my notes and recollections allow of their being made. They contain not a discussion of the whole subject of which they treat, but a selection of topics and arguments for two baptismal services occurring in the ordinary course of my ministry. I have to apologize for the delay which has occurred in their being sent to the press, arising as it has done, first from one of my manuscripts having been lent, and then from a pressure of engagements hindering my writing them out in full. This has now been done in great haste, and without the care which I should have wished to bestow upon documents required by my respected and beloved church.

J. ROAF.

YORKVILLE, *November 4, 1850.*

SERMON I.

BELIEVERS' CHILDREN TO BE BAPTIZED.

"She was baptized and her household."—Acts xvi. 15.

I have, this morning to administer the Lord's ordinance of baptism; and as it belongs to the "common salvation," as it exhibits God's covenant in which we are all interested, as most of us have already received it, and as all are required to do so, I have resolved to administer it here in the church, and not merely with the parties more immediately concerned. A private administration of this ordinance is valid, for it was thus that Philip baptized the Ethiopian eunuch, and thus that Apostles baptized Cornelius, Lydia, and the Jailor, with their families. In the churches, also, it may properly be observed, as was the case on the day of Pentecost under the direction of a number of the Apostles.

The parties who are about to be baptized are children, and in selecting some of the aspects of baptism to engage us in this preliminary discourse, I shall confine myself to the institution in its relation to children, and notice

THE DIVINE AUTHORITY FOR ADMITTING CHILDREN TO THIS ORDINANCE; and

THE IMPORT OF IT, WHEN THUS APPLIED.

In this proceeding, I pass over such questions as the perpetuity of baptism, the element to be used, the influence accompanying the service, and the proper mode of its administration. Interesting as these topics are, they must be reserved for other occasions.

There are parties who doubt whether children are admissible for baptism. Now, the question between them and the rest of the Christian world is not whether children *or* adults are to be baptized, not whether infants *or* believers, but it is whether

infants, as well as their believing parents, ought not to be baptized. Those who baptize children, baptize also adults. It therefore proves nothing in this controversy to argue that penitents and believers are to be baptized, unless it is also shown that children are not to be received with them. True faith preceded scripture baptisms, but that faith led to the baptism of "households." Stress is often laid upon the facts that men were called upon to "repent" and "believe," and then to be baptized, and it is supposed that as children could not repent and believe, they were never baptized. But that the order in which matters are *stated* or *described* in scripture, is not a proof of their having *taken place* in the same order, is clear, for the scriptures thus interpreted would be self-contradictory,—that being sometimes mentioned first, which at other times is mentioned last; and in many cases such a rule of interpretation would lead to a denial of truths abundantly confirmed in the Bible. In the case now before us, this rule would in one place lead to a belief in baptism *preceding* godliness of heart, and in another to godliness preceding baptism. In John iii. 5. it is said "except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," which explained by the rule now referred to, would teach that baptism goes before the work of the Spirit; but in Acts ii. 38, it is said "repent and be baptized," which, similarly explained, teaches that repentance is to go before baptism; and in Acts xviii. 8. we read that "many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized," which puts faith before baptism. Thus the order in which these things are mentioned, is no proof that it is the order in which they occurred. Use this strict rule in interpreting God's word in other cases, and see to what it will lead; for instance, take 2 Thess. iii. 10, "if any would not work neither should he eat," and you will deny food to non-working children, as some deny baptism to non-believing children.

But admitting, as we do, that faith and repentance did precede baptism, we see nothing in it opposed to the baptism of infants. The question still is untouched, which is, did not the faith of such as were parents lead to the baptism of themselves

and their young children? A believer's baptism may include believers and their "households." Under the Mosaic administration, the heathen were to be admitted to the church of God upon their faith and repentance; but this admission included the individuals and their children; and upon the conversion of the individuals, their children, together with themselves, were circumcised. Thus, as a required repentance before circumcision availed for parents and their infants, so may believers' baptism extend not only to individuals but to families. Upon such a construction of scripture as refuses baptism to children who do not believe, we must deny their salvation; for faith is spoken of as the precursor of salvation as well as of baptism, and if, because a child cannot believe, he is excluded from baptism, he must also, because he cannot believe, be excluded from heaven. You say, that the law, "he that believeth shall be saved and he that believeth not shall be damned," does not condemn those who are incapable of belief; and so we say that the demand to believe before we are baptized, bears only upon those who have arrived at an age when personal faith can be exercised. The objection to infant baptism which is thus disposed of, is put in many forms, such as that very young children cannot "fulfil all righteousness," cannot make the "answer of a good conscience," &c., circumstances included in baptism, which, though not to be found in children, are brought to their baptism by those believing parents, on whose account and on whose faith children participate in this ordinance. To say, that because a child does not come to this observance intelligently, he is unfit for it, is to raise an objection to the ancient *circumcising* of infants, for they then were quite as disqualified to receive the initiatory church ordinance as they are now; and if their moral and intellectual state was compatible with a proper administration of a spiritual ordinance to them, it is not incompatible with a proper administration of the spiritual ordinance at present. It is also often objected that a child can get no benefit from baptism; but it may be replied that though an infant knows nothing of a legacy which is left him, yet it will in due time do him good service; and though he may at the moment of baptism not be the better for it, yet he may

afterwards. Does not God remember the covenant made 'by himself with his people in baptism, and by his people with himself, and long afterwards honour it even to the third and fourth generation? Do not believing parents who have brought their households to baptism, remember and fulfil their professions and vows, and solemn dedications? Do not well-reared children look to the obligations laid upon them in their baptisms and to the special promises thus made their own? If any of these things take place on account of baptism, far indeed are infants from receiving in it no blessing.

Some persons think it an objection to the baptism of children, that when Christ was an infant he was not baptized; but they overlook the circumstance that, at that time, Christian baptism was not established; and though he would "fulfil all righteousness," he did not observe what was not then appointed. In a similar manner Abraham was not *circumcised* when an infant; but *was*, at the age of ninety-nine years; and yet the followers of Abraham circumcised their infants. Thus the household, in which our Saviour was born did not receive Christian baptism; but the household of his followers, as Lydia, and the Jailor, and Cornelius, and Stephanus *did* receive it. But, say those who invent and cherish doubts on this matter, we have no express command for baptizing children. And what, if we have not, provided that we have the Lord's will expressed in any other way? If he has, by *any* means, intimated our duty, shall we evade it, by saying "I require an express command?" If it is *implied*, where it is not stated, if it is set forth by example, where it is not given in the form of precept, be that enough for us who are pledged to "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." Says the scoffer at the mysterious tri-unity of the Godhead, "Shew me a direct assertion of a Trinity, or I will not believe." We say, avoid a presumptuous dictation as to the form in which a truth shall be revealed by God; we have abundant testimony from Heaven that to Jesus and the Holy Spirit belong the designations, perfections, works, and honours, which are exclusively appropriate to the Divine nature, and that there is a plurality of subsistencies in that nature; and, whether we have the word "Trinity," or not, we have the fact which it expresses.

So, too, on the baptism of infants; even if we have not any one particular kind of evidence, if we have any other that is distinct, it should suffice with those who profess to be asking, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" On many points, knowledge is made to be the reward of enquiry, comparison, and diligence; and the short concise declaration is withheld, while we are required to "compare spiritual things with spiritual." Thus, the constitution of churches, the sacred day, the mode of keeping the Lord's supper, the admissibility of women to it, are left to be gathered, and can be gathered, from scattered intimations. The right of believers' children to baptism is hardly to be compared with these other points, in the directness with which it is recognized. Of this, however, more presently. But even if, as in the other particulars, it were ascertained only by a lengthened series of inferences, yet, in such a case, it would demand our prompt, cordial, and grateful assent.

As positive proofs of baptism being rightly administered to the infant children of believers, take the following facts:—

1. The non-restriction of the ordinance to adults in the original appointment of it by the Lord, shews that as infants would *necessarily be understood* to be appointed recipients, they were *intended* to be such. For instance, conceive of the circumstances in which the commission was given. Our Lord's hearers were all Jews: he was known to be a Jew. They had been accustomed to see Gentiles and Gentile children admitted to the church by circumcision—the right of the children was never amongst them disputed—thus it had been through all ages from Abraham, their great leader, as believers. Well, Christ now is about to give them a commission to go out amongst Gentiles, as well as Jews, and he says (Matt. 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." Now, suppose that he had been appointing the admission of the nations by *circumcision*, instead of *baptism*, how would he have been understood? Would they not have at once seen that he was sending them to circumcise the children of converts, as well as the converts themselves? No change from the long-established course would have been understood other than was expressed

—a change from a conversion to Judaism, to a conversion to Christianity; and from the name of the “Holy One of Israel,” to that of “the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.” Would they not have seen, that if Christ meant to exclude any of the parties who were accustomed to be received upon conversion, he would have named them, and pointedly drawn attention to the new arrangement? Would they not see that the statute which was not repealed, remained in force, and that, to say nothing of the classes which were to be admitted, was to authorise a continuance of the existing course? Did not the Lord know how his command would be understood, and sanction the construction which would naturally be put upon it by his hearers? He had previously required the admittance of children to him, taken them up, blessed them, and said that of such was the kingdom of Heaven; and now he makes no exceptions, and must mean to be understood as appointing their baptism with that of their parents. Then, too, see how this accorded with the pretensions to expanded liberality and grace, which he meant to have asserted on behalf of his system—pretensions which would have been at once resisted, had that system been more restrictive than Judaism, and cut off children which had all along been admitted. See, too, what objections on this point, would have been made amongst the converts who stickled for Jewish observances in connection with Christianity—who wished to retain their old ceremonials, as circumcision, but never, in one instance, complained of the non-admission of their children. How can we account for the uniform satisfaction of the converts respecting the classes admitted to baptism? or, rather, how can we account for their not objecting that their children were rejected, when they were so captious respecting any infringement upon their old customs and national pride and prejudice? Is it not evident that they could find nothing here for remark—that their children, in fact, were not rejected? Had it not been intended for the children of believers to be received in baptism, would not great explicitness, on the part of the Apostles, as well as of Christ, been requisite? How would such hearers, as were found in the streets and temple of Jerusalem, understand such passages as (Acts ii. 38, 39.) “repent and

be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost; for the promise is unto you, and to your children," &c.? Would not they understand this as a call to be baptized, with their children? And yet no mistakes ever occurred; and amongst all the objections raised, nothing was once said respecting the non-admission of children. The children were received; and no objection on their account was, or could be thought of. Looking, then, to the manner in which our Lord directed his Apostles to baptize, and in which the Apostles spoke of baptism, and in which the Jews, opponents and friends, heard them, we have no doubt of its having been intended and understood that the children of converts were to be baptized. Connect with this the fact—

2. That the general character of the apostolic baptisms, was "household." I do not mean merely that Lydia was baptized, and her household, Acts xvi. 14, 15; and the "Jailor and all his," Acts xvi. 33; and "the household of Stephanas," 1 Cor. i. 16; and Cornelius and his kinsmen and near friends, Acts x. 24; and Crispus and all his house, Acts xviii. 8; and Onesiphorus, 2 Tim. i. 16; and Aristobulus and Narcissus, Rom. xvi. 10, 11; but I mean that it was the practice of the Apostles thus to baptize households. Does it not seem to have been the ordinary as well as frequent course for the families of believers to be immediately baptized? does this not appear to have been expected, and then regarded as a natural thing? Now, this, following our Lord's very general commission before referred to, and accompanying the equally general mode of the Apostles speaking respecting baptism, intimates very strongly what was their meaning as well as practice. The *custom* of baptizing "households" shows what was the *doctrine* of baptism. Would there have commonly been families baptized, if personal piety had been required in every individual? Is it so with the Baptists now? Is it so here or in their mission fields, that we ordinarily or hardly ever hear of baptisms without whole families being baptized together, and this as soon as the heads of these families are converted? Why,—were such reports to come from any missionary, he would be looked upon as no

Baptist; and were they to come frequently, constantly, the proof would be looked upon as conclusive. Certainly, household baptisms do not naturally or frequently occur with those who know nothing of a believer's family as entitled to share in his baptism; individuals, here one and there another, are baptized under such a system. But that was not the system of the Apostles, and hence "household" baptisms constituted a large proportion of the cases of this ordinance being administered by them.

In all this, I have made nothing of the proof of the baptized individuals appearing in many cases to have been children. Not that I doubt the fact, for the word translated "household" in several of these cases, means children. And when we read of family after family, is it not natural to understand a number of children, and some quite young, to be included in them? Is not this the ordinary state with a large proportion of "households?" And hence would not some intimation have been given of there being an unusual and unnatural absence of children, had this been intended to be understood. Especially does it seem natural to understand the terms "households," "families," to mean children, when the speakers are parties accustomed to regard families as consecrated to God, together with their pious heads. Take the case of Lydia: the historian says, *she* worshipped God, *she* heard the Apostles, *her* heart the Lord opened so that *she* attended to the things spoken, and never mentions another person as at all with her in these proceedings; but when he comes to speak of her baptism, he adds "and her household," as if studying to *exclude* others from his account of attentions and faith, but to *include* them in the account of the baptism. She (only she) besought the Apostles to accept of entertainment; "*she* besought us saying if ye have judged *me* (not us) to be faithful to the Lord, come into *my* house and abide; and *she* constrained us." Acts xvi. 14, 15. Does not such language, carefully excluding all but the converted woman from the sentiments and acts described, but as carefully changing so as to include the household in the matter of baptism, shew that the piety belonged to the *individual* and the baptism to the whole *family*? When Lydia based upon her con-

version the request for the disciples to accept of her hospitality, it would have strengthened her plea to have been able to say, "my family, too, are Christians;" but she could only refer to her own piety and say, "if ye have judged *me* to be faithful come into *my* house." Afterwards when the Philippian brethren "met at her house," their being comforted is mentioned (v. 40), but in the sentiments accompanying the baptism of herself and her "household," she is mentioned alone. Then in the case of the Jailor, Acts xvi. 33. every pious act and feeling is ascribed to him, but in his baptism, "all his" were associated with him. True, he is afterwards said to have "rejoiced, believing in God with all his house," but the original conveys no idea of his house "believing," but only of his believing through all his family proceedings. Then again, in the case of Stephanas, the baptism of his household, not the pious members of it, but the household of Stephanas is mentioned, and this by an individual well known to be used to the consecration of the families of good men. What could the Jewish writers of the New Testament have expected their readers to understand by these unexplained terms and phrases "households," "families," but the children of the converts referred to? "The house" in other cases plainly means children, as in Gen. xli. 26, 27, and 1 Tim. iii. 4, and 1 Tim. v. 14. The word "family," or "household," was better for describing young children, than that of "infants," for this last term was sometimes used to refer to parties who had attained to the age of eighteen or twenty years, and who were thus too old to receive baptism upon the faith of their parents, while "house," "household," "family," were used for those who were quite young, and under parental management. Well, then, this is how the case stood: our Lord, a Jew, spoke to Jews (all accustomed to the admission of children with parents,) of going out to baptize all nations,—they went forth; and, immediately after the occurrence of conversions, they baptized "households." Of the instances of baptism, a large proportion are these family baptisms. Eight families are named as having been baptized; and in no instance is an individual, however young, spoken of as rejected. Throughout the scripture history, not a case is recorded of an adult being baptized, who was the

child of believing parents: even down to the time of John, writing his epistles towards the close of his very protracted life, not a case is mentioned of the baptism of one who, when young, had Christian parents; and amongst all the classes in various ways exhorted by those epistles, the unbaptized children of Christians are never once alluded to. Is it not then clear that "family baptisms" had taken the place of family circumcisions? and that the children of converts were, as a matter of course, brought and admitted to the initiatory ordinance? I add

3. That the spirit of the Gospel system points and leads to infant baptism. Under the law, narrow and rigid as it was, there was a provision for the membership of children, and their orderly admittance to it. The Gospel professes a vast improvement upon the law in the particular feature of graciousness and liberality; and must it not be expected to admit to its blessings, at least as many as were received under the law? and if it must, how can children who were formerly accepted, now be rejected? Look to the conduct of Christ, related Mark x. 13-16—his determination to receive children (called by Luke, xviii. 15. "infants,") that were in the arms of their friends, his blessing them, and saying, that "of such is the kingdom of heaven." Now, Christian baptism was not at that time instituted; but the "dedication" of children was practised, and the Lord recognized the membership of such children. He must have referred to their place in the earthly church; because the injunction, "forbid them not," could not refer to their going to Heaven. To say, as some have done, under the pressure of this fact, that not children as such, but parties of a child-like spirit, meek and harmless, are to be received, is to trifle with the passage; for this spirit is found in lambs and doves without constituting a qualification for admission to the church. He evidently meant, not that the possession of a child's spirit, but that the young, before any thing of their spirit is developed, were to be brought to him, and received by his people. Hence the Apostles regarded children one only of whose parents were believers, as "holy," or set apart and admissible to the house and presence of God, in distinction from the children of other or unbelieving parties, who were declared to be "unclean," or not entitled to

a place amongst God's people. In fact, from the manifestation of "salvation by faith," in the time of Abraham, this has been a term of the covenant of grace. God said to that father of believers, "I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee. and to thy seed after thee," Gen. xvii. 7. Spiritual blessings were thus secured to the family: circumcision, the sign of separation to God, was administered to children, even of eight days old; and they who were thus consecrated, and they only, said "this God is our God, for ever and ever." This covenant, including as it did, the children of the faithful, was under Christ, not annulled, but confirmed and enlarged. Gal. iii. 16, 17. "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect." "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise," Gal. iii. 29. "Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers," Rom. xv. 8. Now, was the covenant made with Abraham, made *in* Christ? did it involve a spiritual relation between God and believers? did it bear, as its sign or seal, the rite of circumcision? was this seal put upon the infants of believers? was this covenant confirmed at Christ's appearance in the flesh? How clear, then, is the right of believer's children to a church-standing, through the present sign or seal, namely, baptism. Here, then, pass your eye over the Divine dispensation of grace. Abraham and his seed were accepted; and, in token of it, wore the badge of faith: through all subsequent times his believing children brought their offspring, and in them received anew the sign of grace. Upon Christ coming "full of grace and truth," he blessed infants in arms. When he sent out his Apostles to baptize, he placed no restriction upon their practice—they soon are seen baptizing "households," and calling the goodly seed "holy" or clean. And amongst the innumerable baptisms of

the Apostles' ministry no grown-up children of Christians are reported as being baptized, or being advised so to be.

My brethren, who appear here to-day to dedicate your children in this ordinance, the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, welcomes you and yours. He will be your God. Jesus receives you; and I trust that your children will never, under the influence of temptation, be induced to repudiate this grace of our covenant God, by submitting to be re-baptized.

But I intimated that I would speak of---

THE IMPORT OF BAPTISM, WHEN APPLIED TO CHILDREN.

1. The first idea in it is, an act of dedication performed by a believer. You, to-day, "take God to be your God," and give yourselves and your children to be his people. As you consecrate your property by an avowed and solemn purpose to use it as you believe God requires—yea, to apply it for the accomplishment of his will—so you wish your children to be his: you intend to use your parental influence to this end; and this you here declare to his minister and his church. In heart you devote your children, and your influence over them, to the Lord. This he hears and records, and to it he graciously responds in his word. When your children were just born, you, I presume and hope, did in private, what you now do in an open, formal, and instituted manner. Let me beg of you to remember for ever this solemn act of dedication. It will now devolve upon you, by virtue of this, your spontaneous and deliberate profession, as well as by your private vows and God's command, to rear your children for him; teach them; restrain them; make them feel his claims. He will remember his part of the high transaction, as he remembered Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, even for generations after their decease. Great, indeed, is the loss which those Christians sustain, who do not know of this Divinely given means of approaching God with their parental anxieties, and hopes, and purposes. Then

2. There is here an acknowledgment of the need there is for the moral cleansing of our souls. When you express your hope of the salvation brought by Christ, you avow the ruin which that salvation has to repair. Your children inherit from you a polluted nature—one deserving of Hell. These little ones, so

often called innocents, are corrupt, as really as a vulture's egg contains an undeveloped bird of prey. You thus stand here to-day, confessing the lamentable impurity and danger to which your children have been born; and their need of that cleansing which is effected by the blood of Jesus Christ. How affecting such an exhibition! How much of humility should you now feel, and ever exhibit!

3. You here assert your faith in the Gospel remedy for man's sinfulness. Because you put your trust in the Divine promises through Christ, because you believe that "we have received the atonement," which "cleanses from all sin," you now apply to God in this ordinance. You are warranted in so doing, because the invitations and promises of the Gospel assure us of "the righteousness by faith"—the justification and holiness of the soul that comes to Christ. Come, then, with confidence, assured that the promises given to Christ's followers are all yea and amen, not yea and nay, and will be fulfilled and surpassed.

4. You undertake the educating of your children in accordance with the will of the Lord Jesus Christ. By education, I mean all the protection, and guidance, and government, and tuition which may subserve their spiritual and eternal welfare. The Lord is the Saviour, and his saving work he would have accomplished upon these little ones. They have to be brought to him in belief and obedience; and in baptism they are re-committed to your hands, that very early, and quite uniformly, and with all perseverance, and in cordial faith, you may use the divinely appointed agencies for renewing their souls. It ought to be the case in Christian churches that conversions ordinarily took place in infancy and childhood. To "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," tenderly and intelligently: "ruling them well;" yet "forbearing threatening," and not "provoking them to wrath,"—this is to be the principal business of your days: the one to which every earthly interest, gratification, plan, and taste must give way. You now engage to preserve your baptized children from ungodly influences, and to keep them under such as are salutary and saving!—a most happy and noble employment; but one requiring all our souls, and time, and grace.

5. Here is God's renewed engagement to you, and to all, to save you and yours, if you abide in Christ. Here is the "seal of the righteousness of faith"—the seal of the covenant—a sign added to the writing—to give us a double assurance, that through faith in Christ, we shall receive "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Fulfilling your part in this great transaction, you will find God fulfil his. A faithful maintaining of your baptismal professions and pledges, will certainly be accompanied by the baptism of fire, or of the Holy Spirit's influences. God speaks to you in his word here, this morning: again makes his "promise to you and to your children." Your act is the "answer," or response "of a good conscience toward God,"—a reply made by a pardoned and sincere soul; and a covenant-keeping God will graciously remember you to the "third and fourth generation."

SERMON II.

SPRINKLING, A PROPER MODE OF BAPTISM.

"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance:" "he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire."—Matt. iii. 11.

It is with reluctance that I occupy a service with such a subject as the *mode* of administering an ordinance. Evangelical institutions are spiritual acts on the part of Christ's followers; and mainly, essentially, consist in spiritual aims. "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," Rom. xiv. 17. There are many things that belong to an ordinance, but that are not essential to it; just as there are members of our bodies, which, though conducive to health, and action, and beauty, may be wanting, and yet leave us truly men. Prayer may be acceptable and successful whether it be liturgical or free. In praise there is a preferableness, and therefore a propriety, in one posture rather than another; and yet, whether we stand or sit, it may be pleasing to God, and beneficial to our hearts. The Lord's supper *essentially* requires that we "discern the Lord's body" through the emblems that we receive; but it does not essentially depend upon the part of the day in which it is administered, or the kind of bread and wine employed, or the attitude of sitting, kneeling, or reclining, in which it is observed. So baptism is the "answer of a good conscience toward God;" and that answer or response to the Gospel promise, may be truly made whether its utterer stand to receive water from above, or be plunged backwards into water beneath. Which ever be the form employed, there is baptism where this answer is sincerely made; and there is not baptism, where this answer is not intended.

It is, however, necessary to direct our attention to the mode of baptizing, because some persons have doubts whether they

are or are not baptized,—an undue or exclusive regard to the form employed, and, therefore, a neglect of the intention of the administrator and recipient, induce a fear that they have not received baptism, and hence their consciences are uneasy; and they are tempted to the sin of re-baptism. Divisions and dissensions result from the same error, God's ordinance falls into contempt, and is dishonoured by scoffs. A view of the subject may, therefore, relieve disturbed consciences, and render our observance of the ordinance, to-day, a "reasonable service" on the part of the whole church.

I shall, at this time, confine my observations to the following statements:—

I. THE VALIDITY OF BAPTISM DOES NOT DEPEND UPON THE FORM IN WHICH IT IS ADMINISTERED.

II. THERE IS NOTHING OBLIGATORY IN IMMERSION, AS THE MODE OF BAPTISM.

III. AFFUSION, POURING, OR SPRINKLING IN BAPTISM, IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

I have already said that baptism is a spiritual act; and that where an individual means his solemnity to express the required sentiments, there those sentiments are regarded of God; and, in effect, baptism really takes place. Any application of water, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in obedience to the command of Christ, and as the utterance of a believing hope of salvation through his blood, is Christian baptism. But there is another consideration of great weight, in reference to this point, which is, that irrespective of the spiritual signification of the ordinance, the outward and formal act depends rather upon the effect produced, than upon the mode employed for producing it. Neither pouring nor immersing is baptism, which consists in the "wetting or washing," which results from the act performed. Christian baptism is wetting or washing for religious purification; and, whether we effect the wetting by one mode or another, enters not into the essence even of the outward form. In Heb. ix. 10. we read of "divers washings," or "divers baptisms," as it is in the original. These baptisms were employed upon "cups and pots, brazen vessels and tables," or couches (Mark vii. 4), and the administrator used

a portable vessel of brass, which stood on one foot. Did he, suppose ye, immerse the "tables," or couches or beds in the vessel? or did he, with the bunch of hyssop, sprinkle them? "The blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer *sprinkling* the unclean, sanctified to the purifying of the flesh," Heb. ix. 13. The temple baptisms were a sprinkling with blood, oil, ashes and water. Supposing, then, that the "cups and pots, and brazen vessels," were ceremonially wetted, washed, purified, by plunging them into the mixture, yet this could not be the case with the tables, or couches, and even with the smaller vessels it would be easier to "sprinkle" for purification than to dip. When I say that the word "baptize" does not mean any particular mode of wetting, but the result itself, I do not mean that the form of Christian baptism is of no consequence: my design is only to shew, that though it is proper to follow the Scripture examples, and though one mode may be more significant, and more edifying than another, yet that the mode is not *essential* to the solemnity, that baptism is wetting by one mode or another, and *Christian baptism* is wetting for the purpose of a believing dedication to the Trinity. But

II. THERE IS NOTHING OBLIGATORY IN IMMERSION, AS THE MODE OF BAPTISM. I say obligatory, in distinction from essential, of which I have already spoken; and I select "immersion" rather than any other unsuitable mode of baptism, because *that* in distinction from every other form, is urged by those who object to "sprinkling" or pouring. It is represented as essential to baptism at all, as the kind of baptism which Christ received and appointed, as expressive of the truth of which the ordinance is the memorial—as in fact, the *only* form of Christian baptism. It is paraded as an act of exemplary self-denial on the part of the recipient, and he is sent away as having done "some great thing," and distinguished himself from other Christians. Not unfrequently surrounding followers of Christ are bantered as refusing to be immersed merely from a want of courage, they are dared to come and be immersed. There are *sung at them* the lines,

"Ashamed of Jesus! sooner far
Let evening blush to own a star," &c.

Now there is little room for this air on the part of our Baptist brethren; for

.There is not an instance yet produced, where the word "baptize", in classical authors, means the act performed in immersion; and

There is not an instance in the *Holy Scriptures*, where the word necessarily means that act.

I know that these will appear to be strong assertions; for so much is confidently said, as to the meaning of the word; and Greek passages, are so impressively given, as meaning immersion in baptism, that few persons can have a suspicion of the exceedingly slight foundation upon which such pretensions are based. You will avoid much trouble, and prevent eventual uncertainty, by particularly noticing the distinction which we make. We are told that to baptize means to plunge under and raise up another from the water. We answer that not only is not *that* the only act denoted by the word; but *that* there is no known instance of the word denoting *that act* at all. In the classical authors the word often means to submerge and keep down a person or thing under the water, but there has yet to be adduced the first case of a person mentioned in the Bible or the Classics being said to baptize another by that very different act of plunging him into the water and then bringing him up again. It would only be to ascribe to you a familiarity with the Greek language which even classical scholars will not pretend to, were I to read out passages from this pulpit; I will go with you to the Bible where we can stand upon a level. There is no example in the *Holy Scriptures* of baptism meaning the dipping of another into water. Observe, that it is the mode in which baptism is performed that is in question: this mode is said to determine whether baptism does or does not take place. It is not, then, whether a thorough wetness is produced, nor whether a body is covered with water; but *how*, by what act, the wetness or submersion is effected. Well, then, what is the act, or mode, in which baptizing was performed by the Apostles? To what methods of applying water does the term baptize refer in other proceedings, than those of the Apostles? Conceive of the act called baptism, by immersionists, and see if that act was

performed by the New Testament baptizers! For instance, "a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch, of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, was baptized by the Evangelist Philip; and the account of the solemnity is this—"And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip," &c. Acts viii. 27, 38, 39. This is understood, by many, to intimate that Philip plunged the eunuch into the water. But look again at the passage, and ask yourselves, what expressions denote any such act. "They went down both into the water," certainly does not mean this, for the baptizing, whatever it was, followed the going down, and was thus a separate act; and as Philip went down, and he was not baptized, the going down does not mean being baptized. And "they came up out of the water:" this, too, cannot mean baptism; for both did exactly the same thing, which, of course, is not the case when one baptizes, and the other is baptized; and as the coming up out of the water followed baptism, it was not baptism itself. But, why did they go down into the water, and come up out of it, unless for immersion? It is *not said in the original* that they went into the water, and came up out of it—it is only said, that they went unto, and came from it. The very word which is here rendered into (by our translators, who were favourable to dipping,) is in John xi. 38. translated *to*,—"Jesus, therefore, groaning in himself, cometh *to* the grave." Now, just as Jesus went to the grave, Philip and the eunuch might have gone *to* the water—that is, to the side of it. This is a very common meaning of the word here used by Luke, who was the writer of the book of the Acts. "He went up into a mountain," (Matt. v. 1.), surely does not mean he was immersed in it. Many hundreds of instances of the word used here, and improperly translated into, meaning *to* a place or object, occur in the New Testament. It, therefore, does not appear that the minister and convert here mentioned, went into the water at all. Indeed, it is most unlikely that they should have done so; for they were travelling in Gaza, which is desert (Acts viii. 26); and in a desert, it was

not likely that there would be a stream ample enough for plunging in. No history or geography speaks of a river there,—there is now no trace of any old river-bed there,—and it appears that the Ethiopian eunuch, who had gone that way to Jerusalem, did not expect to see a river, for he suddenly, and in apparent surprise, exclaimed, “See, water!” Why, then, it may be asked, did they descend from the chariot? Apparently it was to reach the water’s edge, where Philip had to lift up the water to pour it upon his disciple. Even had they, wearing, as they did, sandals, stepped into the water, it would not have indicated any intention for one to plunge the other. Cattle walk down into streams without bathing; and so with all parties in hot countries, whose sandals render a frequent use of water to the feet needful and easy. When we read of baptism in houses or cities, nothing of going down into water, or coming up out of water, is found, which however would have been the case, had immersion been practised. Is any thing like this said of Lydia’s family, or the Jailor’s or Cornelius’s? Certainly not. And yet it must have appeared, had so special a proceeding as immersing been resorted to. Here, too, nothing is even hinted of some circumstances that must have taken place, had there been an immersion. For instance, while Luke is minute enough to relate that the eunuch “commanded the chariot to stand still,” and that “they went down both into, or to, the water,” he says not a word about the eunuch changing his clothes before and after baptism; or Philip producing a baptismal suit; or of the eunuch driving away thoroughly drenched; or any other of the remarkable features of the baptism, had there been immersion. Looking, then, closely at this case, I do not see a particular that indicates Philip dipping the eunuch; while the known absence of a large stream in the neighbourhood, the surprise felt at their sudden arrival at water, and the silence of the narrative respecting several great features of an immersion-baptism, plainly shew that such a proceeding did not take place.

Much stress is laid, by some persons, upon John Baptist using the waters of the Jordan and of Ænon for baptizing. Now, the circumstance that he resorted to those neighbourhoods, proves no thought of immersing; for there “went out to him Je-

rusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan." Matt. iii. 5, 6. For numbers so great, a large and ready supply of water for refreshment and cleanliness would be requisite. In that arid region, artificial wells had to be provided for travellers; and these were commonly twenty miles apart. To choose a neighbourhood, where was a river whose waters were fit to be drunk, or much water, "many waters," as there were at Ænon, was prudent in one who had in view a protracted meeting at which so many thousands would attend. To suppose, then, that John had in view the dipping of persons, is a gratuitous assumption. Besides, neither Jordan nor Ænon was suited for immersion. As to the latter, it was not a river at all: it was "a well in a cave;" a spot now known; a well, like that of Samaria, where water was drawn; and, into which it would be neither decent, lawful, nor possible to plunge a human body. "Much water" there, means "many waters," as the name Ænon denotes; and it expressed the fact of there being several small springs and rivulets round about. The Jordan, on the other hand, was a deep, rapid current, rushing through steep banks, and thus very unsuited to dipping, which requires a particular depth of water, a quiet surface, and a comparatively safe bottom. It is found that a greater or less depth than about two-thirds of a person's height, or from three feet four inches to four feet, is unsuited to immersion-baptism; but the Jordan is six or seven feet deep close to the shore, and from a hundred to a hundred and fifty feet wide. Now, were men and women, in light, loose, flowing dresses, taken into such a current? or did John stand in it to such a depth, plunging people, and this for days and months together, as he must have done? Why take such a difficulty for granted? why resort to it unnecessarily? Again, the people came out to *hear*, and not expecting to be baptized; and therefore did not take clothes in which to be baptized. Were they then baptized in their ordinary clothes? and did they remain in them, when saturated?—a course which must, in that hot climate, have produced wide-spread disease. Or did they strip in the presence of such crowds, and thus save their health at the sacrifice of all decency? They clearly did neither, and therefore were not immersed. Nor could they, in

the time, have been immersed by John Baptist, or any other man. It will be remembered that John completed his proceeding with the people before Christ was baptized. "Now, when all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus, also being baptized," &c.—Luke iii. 21. Well, Christ was baptized, "when he began to be about thirty years of age."—Luke iii. 23. John was only six months older than Christ (Luke i. 36); and he could not enter upon his work, till he was thirty years old, (Num. iv. 3-47, and 1 Chron. xxiii. 3.) He thus began his ministry only six months before Christ's baptism; by which time he had baptized all the people. The numbers that, in these six months (and perhaps less), he baptized, were probably two millions. If he occupied the whole six months in the operation, he passed through his hands 12,800 a-day, a number which it is physically impossible to immerse, but which he could have sprinkled in large numbers with great ease. Every thing, therefore, forbids the supposition of plunging at *Ænon* or *Jordan*: in the former spot, there is only a "well;" in the latter, a deep rushing stream; while crowds of people, unprepared with a change of clothes, were baptized at the rate of 1070 an hour, or 18 a minute. To suppose all this, merely because John selected the neighbourhood of these waters to carry on his ministry for six months, amongst such crowds, twenty-five miles from Jerusalem, is to discard the natural view of the case, in order to buttress a distinctive scheme. But it may be said, that John baptized in *Jordan*. You will, however, recall what was said about Philip going down into the water of *Gaza*, and the fact that it would be as correct a reading of the original to read "at" *Jordan*, or "with" *Jordan*; for these are as ordinary meanings of the prepositions used by the Scripture historians, as "in" or "into;" and if John only baptized "at" or "with" the *Jordan*, it does not shew any immersion. But the question is closed by John's own statement in our text, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance," "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." Now, what was the mode of baptizing with "the Holy Ghost, and with fire?" Clearly, by the descent of the Holy Ghost, "and cloven tongues of fire" which sat upon them," Acts ii. 3. Now, as the

Holy Ghost came down upon them, so did John baptize, by pouring down upon his disciples. We never read of his baptizing *into* the Holy Ghost, but we do of baptizing "*with* the Holy Ghost."

Our Lord, himself, was baptized; and by what form or act? He received the baptism of John, to which I have just referred—the *descending* of the element upon him. True, he is said to have been "baptized in Jordan, and straightway coming up out of the water, he saw," &c.—Mark i. 9, 10. The "in the Jordan," and "coming up out," are expressions like those already shewn to mean "to," or "at," and "from," rather than "in," or "out of." But even were it the fact that Christ went into the Jordan, it would not follow that he went *under* it—he might go into it, and stand to receive the element outpoured by the hand of the prophet. In the Greek church, it has been customary for the recipients of baptism to kneel in a font, while a priest lifted up water, and poured it on the head. There are also pictures of that form of baptizing, which have come down from the earliest times. Now, had Jesus gone into the Jordan, he might thus have been "baptized with water," and not have been plunged into it. Aaron and his sons were washed or baptized with water, at the door of the tabernacle (Lev. viii. 6), and with oil (Lev. viii. 12), and with blood (Lev. viii. 23, 24). Not that they were immersed; but the oil was "poured" (v. 12), and the blood was "put" upon the person. Our Lord, indeed! did *he undress*, in order to go into the Jordan?

The case of Cornelius presents these considerations: Peter inquired (Acts x. 44-48), "Can any man *forbid* water, that these should not be baptized?" Now, "forbid," would have been an inappropriate word, had the person been applied to the water, rather than the water to the person. If any could "forbid" water, that water must have been what could be moved to Cornelius,—if it had been meant "can any forbid Cornelius being baptized into the water," that form of expression would have been used. There is also the fact, that when Peter, in Jerusalem was vindicating his proceeding with Cornelius and his house, he said that the Holy Ghost "*falling on*" the family, reminded him of the Lord's comparison of John's baptizing with

water, and his followers baptizing with the Holy Ghost.—Acts xi. 15, 16. Now, it is easy to see how the descent of the Holy Ghost would remind him of the *descent* of the water; but not how it could remind him of a totally different process, namely, the dipping the body into water. Then, too, the Lord's expression there (Acts xi. 16), shews that baptizing was the *descent* of water, as baptizing was the *descent* of the Holy Ghost.

Of the people of Samaria, a great number were baptized.—Acts viii. 10-12. *How* were they baptized? by immersion or affusion? There was not water enough for immersions; for such was the deficiency in this respect, that in early times Jacob had to dig a well there, and "drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle."—John iv. 12. And his well had to be preserved till the time of Christ; and then was used by the people, who came forth to it from the city to procure their supplies. The absence of any river or stream in the neighborhood, is thus made manifest. Well, could there be immersion in the well? would it have been decent, even if practicable? would it have been suffered by the people, who had there to draw water as their beverage? How, then, were the crowds baptized?

Further, there were baptisms in houses—as Paul's in a house in Damascus, and the Philippian Jailor's in the prison. It is not likely that immersion was practised in these buildings; for even supposing that they were furnished with baths, it is not probable that these were baths so spacious that in them one man could dip another—a process requiring much more room than is required for a person's bathing himself. Look, too, at the circumstances. Paul "*arose*," to be "baptized," (Acts ix. 18); the act which he would have to perform, for receiving baptism from Ananias. Nor is it likely, that under the exhaustion which was then upon him, produced by three days' fasting and mental agitation, he would be plunged into a body of cold water. So the Jailor, at Philippi, cannot be supposed to have had a bath in a heathen prison, in those days of severity to prisoners,—nor even if he had, is it likely that at midnight, after rousing his family from their rest, he would have them immersed.

Finally, baptism was administered to crowds in Jerusalem, as

on the day of Pentecost. Now, think of the three thousand converted and baptized, and ask if it was done by immersion? Think of the time and exertion required for plunging, raising and delivering a single person. Think of the whole work of baptizing fifty—of three hundred—of three thousand—and say was this done after the morning service, followed out, as it must have been, by conversation and inquiries with this large number? Supposing the work to have commenced at twelve o'clock, then, as night came on at six o'clock, only six hours could have been consumed in it. Well, 3000 divided amongst the twelve apostles, gives 250 to each, or 41 per hour, or $1\frac{1}{2}$ minutes to each person; and this every $1\frac{1}{2}$ minutes for six hours. Most irreverently hasty would this have been, even if possible; but it is what twelve men for six hours could not possibly endure. Besides, where were the twelve baptizing places? for the Jewish rulers and their party, were little disposed to render accommodation for any such proceeding; and there was no river, no lake at Jerusalem; but, on the contrary, there was always a great deficiency of water. Could twelve places, with the requisite depth (and no greater) of water be instantly procured, amidst this hostile and persecuting population? Again, how were these 3000 people to be immersed? Surely not naked in the view of such crowds? surely not with clothes specially prepared for baptism? surely not in their common clothes, so as to be afterwards wet through in that climate, in which this evil is incomparably more injurious to health than it is here? The supposition of immersion being employed with these crowds is surrounded with difficulties and absurdities—while pouring would be easy, decorous, and safe.

I have referred to these cases of New Testament baptism, because they are the leading ones in which any reference to the mode is made; and from them every thing possible has been pressed that could favour the dipping process. They not only do not countenance that practice, but very decidedly look another way.

The term baptism is in several cases employed irrespective of historical objects; and in them, also, is sought some evidence in favour of immersion. For instance, in Rom. vi. 4, and Col.

ii. 12, Christians are spoken of as "buried with Christ in baptism;" and this is, by some, thought to shew that immersion was the baptism referred to. But the Apostle Paul, in those passages is speaking of the meaning, purport of baptism, and not its form,—as if he were to say, "in baptism, Christians profess to partake of Christ's death, and therefore should remember the obligations which this professed dying with Christ involves." Now, that would be appropriate to baptism, whatever were the mode employed—the signification being all that is in view. As we are said to be "planted" in the likeness of Christ's death; and to be "crucified" with him, so we are baptized into him,—that is, this is the meaning of our baptism. As for resemblance in mode, there is nothing in immersion like burial. When a body is buried, it is not dipped and raised again—or, rather, the feet and legs first placed in the ground, and the rest of the corpse plunged and raised,—nothing of the kind takes place in burial; and the processes are very dissimilar. Besides, if our Lord's burial is to be imitated, there must be a baptizing horizontally, for the cave or tomb in which he was buried, was in the side of a rock; and bodies were put into it laterally, and not by lowering or dipping. If, in reply to this, it is said it does not matter *how* the burial was effected, that the result only is of consequence, and this was the covering of the body by earth. I say that the *how*, the mode, is every thing in the case; because this is the whole of the immersion theory, namely, that the *mode*, and not the result, is essential to baptism, that it must be performed in a given manner; and this is plunging and raising again.

There are allusions to baptism in the Old Testament, which are more unfavourable to immersion, than those of the New. The Israelites are said to have been "baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea," when they passed from Egypt into the Desert by the Red Sea; but then they went over dry-shod, while, probably, the spray from the walled-up waters on each side, came over them, as a cloud, and *sprinkled* them. Nebuchadnezzar is said to have been baptized with the dew of heaven, while he grazed in the fields; and this dew must have descended upon him; and he was not dipped into the dew.—Daniel iv. 25-33.

These examples of the Scripture meaning of baptism must suffice for shewing that immersion is by no means *the* signification of the word.

III. AFFUSION, POURING, OR SPRINKLING, IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

1. It accords with the examples of baptism there preserved. I have shewn, from Acts xxii. 16., that Paul, when baptized, was in a state of exhaustion, which would forbid plunging into cold water, and was required to "stand up," to receive the water;—that the Samaritans who had to "fetch" water (John iv. 7,) from a well, were baptized in large numbers;—that the Philippian Jailor, with his family, just roused from sleep, was in the night and within the prison, baptized;—that Cornelius and his family, were, within his house, baptized; and the Apostle Peter spoke of water being forbidden, rather than of the persons being forbidden to be immersed;—that the crowds who were in a few hours baptized in Jerusalem, on the day of Pentecost, without any previous provision for the service, must have been too numerous to be immersed by the twelve; and if they were baptized by more than the twelve (say, for instance, the seventy,) a greatly increased improbability is encountered in providing so many immersion places at a moment in the centre of a city, always short of water, and in the midst of an actively hostile and persecuting population and priesthood. The impossibility of dipping having been used in these cases of baptism, leaves us to the alternative that sprinkling or pouring was the mode employed. Other cases might have been adduced, bearing the same character, as, for instance, that of five thousand converted (Acts iv. 4,) and probably, according to usage, immediately baptized, who could have received the ordinance from only two apostles, Peter and John; and that in, or near, Solomon's Porch, where immersion would be impossible, and prevented by the priests. Now, as in these cases, we are shut up to the conclusion that only a little water could have been obtained, as every circumstance was unfavourable to immersion—the easier and simpler mode must have been resorted to.

Then baptism evidently means wetting, by descending water,

in the case of Nebuchadnezzar; and in that of the Hebrews, in the channel of the Red Sea; and in the descending influences of the Holy Ghost, in the spiritual baptisms predicted by John Baptist.—Matt. iii. 11.

This last fact reminds us, also, that pouring is more suited to the representative and significant purpose of baptism. As in the Lord's supper, we are aided in "discerning" the Lord's body by appropriate emblems—namely, bread broken to represent the violence done upon Christ's person, and wine poured out, to represent the pouring out of his blood and life;—and the eating and drinking these memorials in representation of faith appropriating them; so baptism is a sign of the cleansing away of sin by Christ's blood, applied by the Holy Spirit? Now, what act most suitably sets forth the application of Christ's blood, through the Spirit? Are we said to be immersed in the blood of Christ? or, is it said to be sprinkled upon us? "The blood of sprinkling;"—the purging from sin, as by the "hyssop" branch, with which sprinkling was effected, (Ps. li. 7.)—the "sprinkling clean water" upon us that we may be clean,—and other such references to religious purification, shew that an applying of the blood and grace of Christ to us, rather than our being plunged into them, is the Scriptural idea. The Holy Spirit descended upon Christ and the Pentecostal assembly, and his operation is therefore more correctly represented by water descending upon the baptized. Christ was to "sprinkle many nations (Is. lii. 15); and God has "poured out his Spirit" upon the house of Israel (Ezek. xxxix. 29); and these operations of grace are fitly figured forth in the sprinkling or pouring out of baptism. Thus, as water was used in the New Testament baptisms, and immersion could not have been the mode employed; and as baptism, in the wetting of Nebuchadnezzar, and the temple purifications, clearly was a descending of the water, —as pouring forth, or sprinkling, is the mode of the Spirit's application of Christ's blood, which is represented by baptism, there is an evident propriety in thus using the baptismal water. The idea of plunging into the blood of Christ, or into the grace of the Holy Ghost, is inconsistent with the phraseology of Scripture, and with feelings of Christian reverence and devoutness.

And immersion in baptism involves a changing of dress, an attention to its sinking in the water, and a close clinging of saturated clothes to the person, from which delicacy shrinks, not to say anything of the dread and the shock to which it subjects even the tender and the sickly. In very few cases can persons thus plunged, possibly be calm and devotional; and in frozen regions or seasons, the use of rivers, or other natural means of thus baptizing, is impracticable. But to pour or sprinkle, is • easy, safe, and calm—every where, and at all seasons, it can be done—in the house or the field, by night as well as by day, in the regions of frost, or of perpetual heats, to the youngest or most delicate, or timid, or sickly, it can be administered. It thus accords with the practice of the Apostles of our Lord, and with the genius of the system, “whose yoke was to be easy, and whose burden was to be light;” while it is the appropriate manifestation of that spiritual baptism in which sin is cleansed from the soul.

