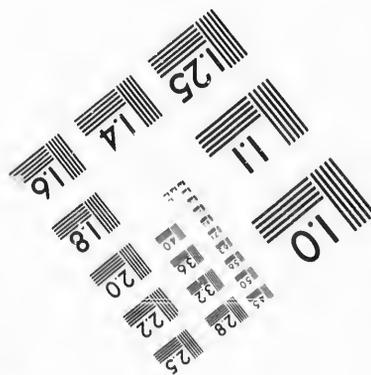
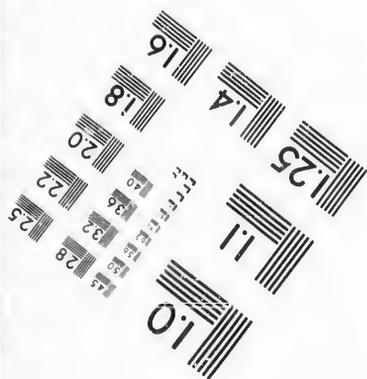
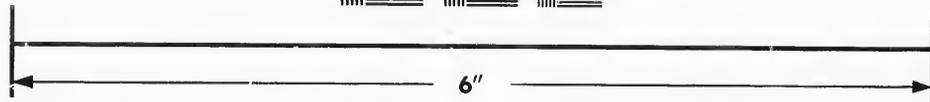
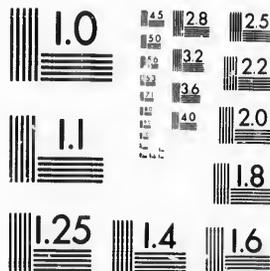
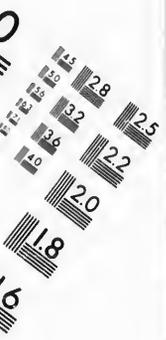


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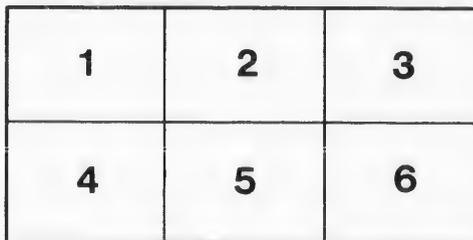
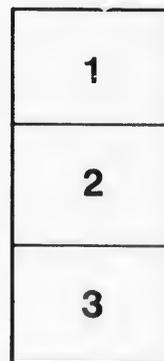
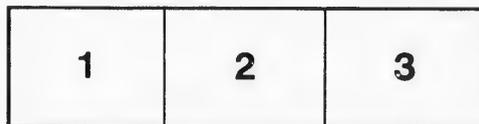
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CATECHISM OF BAPTISM.

BY
REV. DUNCAN D. CURRIE,
OF THE CONFERENCE OF EASTERN BRITISH AMERICA.

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean.—
EZEKIEL xxxvi. 25.

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit
upon all flesh.—JOEL ii. 28.

For the promise is unto you, and to your children.—ACTS ii. 39.

THIRD EDITION.

Saint John, N. B.:
J. & A. McMILLAN, 78 PRINCE WILLIAM STREET.

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P R E F A C E .

THIS Catechism is written because such a work is believed to be needed. Many, who have not access to larger and better books on this theme, will be glad to accept a compact, concise, and clear statement of this subject, as it is taught in the volume of inspiration. Of course, in a work of so small compass, the writer could only present an outline of some of the points that invite discussion. Those into whose hands this pamphlet will fall, and who have thought and read largely upon this topic, will recognize, in the arguments advanced, many old acquaintances, and in very much the same garb in which they have been met before. The writer has aimed, in the preparation of these pages, to be useful rather than original. He has borrowed freely, when it suited his purpose to do so. He is, moreover, specially indebted to the admirable works on baptism, by Rev. F. G. Hibbard, D.D., and Rev. D. D. Wheden, D.D. It is believed this work will do good; and, invoking the blessing of God upon it, it is sent forth to accomplish its destiny.

D. D. C.

SUSSEX VALE, N. B., May, 1864.

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A CATECHISM OF BAPTISM.



I.—DIFFERENT BAPTISMS.

1. ARE there different baptisms mentioned in the Scriptures?

Yes. Jewish baptisms, or the baptisms required by the Mosaic ritual. John's baptism. Christian baptism, or the baptism of water required in the Christian dispensation. And the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

II.—JEWISH BAPTISMS.

2. What were the Jewish baptisms?

Various washings imposed by the Mosaic ritual, and which were to continue until the beginning of the Christian dispensation. Hebrews 9 : 8-10 : "Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, (*baptisms* in the original Greek,) and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation."

3. To what did these baptisms pertain?

These divers baptisms were ordinances pertaining to the flesh or body; they were therefore personal.

4. How is it shown that these baptisms were personal?

The Apostle contrasts the inefficacy of these various baptisms, visibly applied to the person to purify the conscience, with the sufficient efficacy of the blood of Christ when sprinkled in behalf of the person. Hebrews 9 : 13, 14 : "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the

blood of Christ purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God."

5. Were the priests to be subjects of these baptisms?

It was required of the priests that they should be cleansed for the work of the ministry and the priesthood, by the sprinkling of water upon them, and by their being anointed with oil.

6. Did the Mosaic ritual require that the priests should be washed with water?

Yes. And that ritual also shows that God's method of cleansing or washing the person is by the visible mode of sprinkling.

7. Is it affirmed in the Mosaic ritual that the priest should bathe himself in water?

It is; and it will be shown hereafter in these pages, that the word rendered "bathe" means to *wash* or to *sprinkle*.

8. By what passages of Scripture is it proved that the priests were to be washed or cleansed by the sprinkling of water upon them?

Exodus 29: 1-7: "And this is the thing that thou shalt do unto them, to hallow them to minister unto me in the priest's office, Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt wash them with water; then shalt thou take the anointing oil and pour it upon his head, and anoint him." Exodus 40: 12-15: "Thou shalt bring Aaron and his sons, and wash them with water. . . . And thou shalt anoint them, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office, for their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations." Numbers 8: 5-7: "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying: Take the Levites from among the children of Israel, and cleanse them. And *thus shalt thou do unto them to cleanse them: Sprinkle water of purifying upon them.*"

9. What was the mode prescribed in the Mosaic law for the cleansing of the lepers?

They were to be sprinkled seven times. Leviticus

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14: 7: "And he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy, and shall pronounce him clean."

10. What ceremony did the ritual of Moses require for the cleansing from a dead man?

Whoever touched a dead body was unclean under the law, and could only be washed or made clean by having water sprinkled upon him. Numbers 19: 13-20: "Whosoever toucheth (a dead body) . . . because the water of separation was not sprinkled upon him, he shall be unclean. And a clean person shall take hyssop, and dip it in the water, and *sprinkle it* upon the tent, and upon all the vessels, and *upon the persons* that were there, and upon him that touched one dead," etc. . . . "But the man that shall be unclean, and shall not purify himself, that soul shall be cut off from among the congregation; . . . the water of separation hath not been sprinkled upon him; he is unclean."

11. Did these washings, which the Apostle Paul called "divers baptisms," include the baptism of all the people?

Yes; as all were sinners and needed cleansing, so all were required to be sprinkled, that they might thereby be washed or made clean. Hebrews 9: 19: "For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people *according to the law*, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and *sprinkled* both the book, and *all the people*."

12. Were any persons baptized under the law by immersion?

There were sometimes the immersions of cups and other inanimate things, but never the immersion of a person. There is no passage of Scripture to show that any person was ever washed or cleansed by immersion, though the priests and all the people were baptized — that is, washed, or cleansed, by sprinkling.

III.—SCRIPTURAL WASHING.

13. Of what is baptism symbolical?

Baptism is the outward symbol of the inward washing or cleansing from impurity.

14. Is Scriptural washing in close analogy, as regards the mode, with the ordinary washings in every-day life?

No. The Scriptural washing of a person is always effected in connection with the act of sprinkling. But the ordinary washing of a person, and washing generally, in daily life, are performed by rubbing, or similar operations. It is neither by simple immersion, nor sprinkling, that we wash ourselves, our clothing, or our furniture. The immersion of a person, or thing, under water is not of itself sufficient to cleanse. God's wisely established plan, however, is that in *spiritual life* sprinkling is washing, t'rough sprinkling there is cleansing.

15. Do the dictionaries of our language show that to wash means to immerse?

Worcester (edition 1849) gives nine different meanings of the verb to wash, but no one of these is to immerse. Webster (unabridged edition, 1861) gives twelve different definitions, but in no one of these does he indicate that the word means simply to immerse. The second definition given by him is: "To wet; to fall on and moisten, as *the rain washes the flowers or plants.*"

16. Do the Scriptures teach that immersion is essential to washing?

No. The application of water to a part of the body significantly represented the perfect cleansing or purity of the whole man. It was a custom not only among the Hebrews, but also among the Greeks and Latins, to wash their hands in token of their innocence, and to show that they were pure from any imputed guilt. In Isaiah 6 : 7, it is shown that the entire purification of the prophet from moral defilement was secured by simply applying a coal of fire to his lips only. "Lo," says the seraph, "this hath touched thy lips, and thy iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged." Psalm 26 : 6 : "I will wash my hands in innocency." Matthew 27 : 44 : "Pilate . . . took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just man."

17. By what passages of Scripture is it proved that

the heart and flesh are made clean or purified through the act of sprinkling?

Ezekiel 36 : 25 : "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean." Psalm 51 : 7 : "Purge me with hyssop, (as the law required, Leviticus, chapter 14, that is, take hyssop, and dip it in water, and sprinkle me,) and I shall be clean: wash me, (in this way,) and I shall be (spiritually) whiter than snow." Hebrews 9 : 13 : "The blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer *sprinkling* the unclean, *sanctifieth* to the purifying of the flesh." Hebrews 10 : 22 : "Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed (that is, sprinkled) with pure water."

18. What authority have you for supposing that the word washed, in Hebrews 10 : 22, should be sprinkled, and not immersed?

There is no passage in the Scriptures that teaches that to wash means to immerse. The Holy Spirit has not chosen to make immersion a symbol for the washing or cleansing of a person; but, on the contrary, sprinkling is throughout the Bible the symbol of the cleansing and the blessing of the bodies and the souls of men. We need, therefore, the double baptism—having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies sprinkled—that is, baptized—with pure water.

19. What is meant by the bathing required in the purification of the Jews?

The Hebrew word, which in some passages is rendered "bathe," means only to "wash," and is in many places in our English Bible now rendered *wash*. Bathing does not imply immersion, and may be performed without it, and is so performed by multitudes every day.

IV.—IMPORTANCE OF MOSAIC BAPTISM.

20. In what consists the importance of Mosaic baptism?

The water baptism of the Mosaic ritual ought not

to be undervalued by us, because of *its identity with Christian baptism.*

21. Wherein can this identity be recognized?

Firstly, the import of baptism under both dispensations is *consecration*. Secondly, the one grand idea pervading the whole system of revelation in the Old Testament and in the New, is the cleansing and renewing of man's depraved nature by the dispensation of God's Spirit, and this is symbolized in the system of water-illustrations, or cleansings, in both Testaments.

22. Why is it that in the new dispensation there is but one baptism, whereas in the old there were "divers baptisms"?

The peculiar nature of the Levitical dispensation made its various baptisms indispensable; the superior simplicity of the *new* admitted of their being condensed into one, and that one to occupy the initiatory place of abolished circumcision.

23. Were any others except the Jews baptized under the Mosaic ritual?

The Mosaic ritual was designed especially for the Jews alone, but during the interval of four hundred years between the Old Testament and the New, the Jewish rabbins are supposed to have invented the baptism of converts to the faith.

24. When a convert was received into the Jewish Church, to whom were the sign and seal of baptism applied?

If the convert were the head of a family, he and all his family, even to the children of eight days old, were proper subjects for baptism.

25. What word was generally used to express this initiatory rite?

The Greek word *baptizo* became the popular term; and, because of its frequent use in this connection, it came to be applied vernacularly to express any sacred ablution.

V.—MEANING OF THE GREEK WORD BAPTIZO.

26. What is the meaning of the Greek word *baptizo* ?

It has a variety of meanings, like almost every other word in the Greek and other languages.

27. Do words have certain fixed significations ?

No. Words are changeable in their significations. Words in frequent use in Shakespeare's writings are now unintelligible without a dictionary. Many of the household phrases of a hundred years ago are now obsolete. Words fade. They assume new shades of meaning. They die out. The same word is now used by different persons with various and sometimes opposite significations. No word has a fixed, arbitrary meaning. We use words as signs to express ideas, and our wants are so great that we must sometimes use old words in a new sense. In many instances, the best-chosen word but poorly expresses the idea of the thinker. Thoughts will sometimes weave a new garment for themselves, and there is then a new creation in the world of words. Hence new editions of our dictionaries are needed several times in a lifetime.

28. Is there any word in the Greek language that means what baptism means in the English ?

No; it was not possible there could be such a word. By baptism we mean a *Christian ordinance*, in the observance of which persons are initiated into the Christian Church. The word *baptizo* originally had no sort of ecclesiastical sense. There was among the Greeks no such ordinance or ceremony, and therefore they had no need of a word to mean that which did not exist. They were no more likely to have a word in that language that meant baptism, than a word that meant photograph, or telegraph, or railroad, or steam-engine, or any thing unknown among them. A language might possess, in the grandest luxuriance, all the words that a heathen nation wants, and yet its vocabulary be barren of those terms which a Christian literature needs.

29. Why was the Greek word *baptizo* chosen to express the idea of baptism?

That word came the nearest to what we mean by baptism of any in the Greek. It was necessary, therefore, to choose that word, or, perhaps, coin one. The former alternative was preferred.

30. How many different significations has the word *baptizo*?

In the writings of Greek authors, the verb baptize, or the noun baptism, has been used with at least forty-seven different shades of meaning. It is unimportant to inquire what was the radical or primary meaning of the word. The point for us to consider is, in what sense did it come to be popularly used and to be popularly understood?

VI.—CLASSICAL MEANING OF THE GREEK WORD BAPTIZO.

31. How do you ascertain the classical meaning of the word *baptizo*?

By the best lexicons of the Greek language.

32. What are some of its significations as given in the best Greek lexicons?

SCHREVELIUS, a great master of the Greek language, gives these definitions of *baptizo*: "To immerse, to wash, to sprinkle, to moisten, to wet."

SCAPULA and HEDERICUS give the same definitions.

SCHLEUSNER, in his Lexicon of the New Testament, a work of the highest authority, defines *baptizo* as follows: "1. To immerse in water; 2. To wash, or sprinkle, or cleanse with water; 3. To baptize; 4. To pour out largely."

COLE gives these definitions: "To baptize, to wash, to sprinkle."

PASSOW defines it: "To immerse, to wash, to sprinkle."

SUIDAS defines it: "To immerse, to moisten, to sprinkle, to wash, to cleanse."

DWIGHT's definitions are: "To tinge, stain, dye, or color."

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GROVE defines it: "To dip, plunge, immerse, wash, wet, moisten, stain, sprinkle, steep, imbue, dye, color."

The learned GASES, a member of the Greek Church, whose Lexicon of Ancient Greek is generally used by the modern Greeks, gives these definitions of *baptizo*: "To wet or moisten, to wash, to draw water."

The lexicons agree in giving *wash* as the most prominent meaning of *baptizo*. If one affirms that he *washed* himself, we do not suppose him to mean that he *immersed* himself.

33. Is there any other way of ascertaining the classical meaning of *baptizo*?

Yes, by consulting the Greek authors, and noticing the connection in which the word stands, and the sense in which it was there obviously used.

34. With what significations did the Greek writers use the word *baptizo*?

Sometimes meaning one thing, and at other times something else, just as we use words. It was used both in the sense of dipping or immersion, and sprinkling or pouring; but it was never used by them in the sense of dipping or immersion *as a Christian rite*.

35. Did the Greek writers use the word *baptizo* when it could not possibly mean to immerse?

Yes, they sometimes used it in the sense of sprinkling, and when they meant nothing else. In the Greek writers we read of "baptizing the grass with dew;"—"baptizing a garment with needlework;"—"baptizing a wall with arrows;"—"baptizing the head with perfume;"—"baptizing the sea with the blood of a mouse." Plutarch, writing on the education of children, compares, by the Greek word for baptize, his labors to those of a gardener *sprinkling* or *pouring water* on his plants. In these places, to *baptize* could not possibly have meant to *immerse*.

VII.—SCRIPTURAL MEANING OF THE WORD BAPTIZO.

36. How do you find the *Scripture* meaning of *baptizo*?

By examining the connection in which the word stands, its obvious meaning may be ascertained.

37. What version do you employ for this purpose?

The Greek translation of the Old Testament. This is important, because it will determine the sense in which the Hellenistic Jews understood the word *baptizo*, and how it was applied by them in their ceremonial institutions. The Septuagint version was made by the Jews themselves, about two hundred and seventy-seven years before the Christian era, and was in use among those of that nation who spoke the Greek language at the time of our Lord's coming. To this translation the New Testament writers repeatedly refer, and from it they frequently quote, employing its very language in the same sense in their own inspired compositions. Here we may look for the ecclesiastical meaning of the word *baptizo*.

38. Is there any passage of Scripture where it is evident that baptism must necessarily mean immersion?

There is no passage in the Bible where the obvious meaning of baptism is immersion, and may not be sprinkling or pouring.

39. Is there any Scripture to show that to baptize necessarily means to sprinkle or pour upon, and can not possibly mean to immerse?

Yes, there are many passages that clearly show that baptism was frequently performed when there could not possibly have been immersion.

40. How do you prove that?

By the following considerations:

1. In Leviticus 14 : 4-6, the priest is required to take for the cleansing of the leper two birds, and to kill one of them, and preserve the blood in a vessel. He is then to *baptize* (it is "dip" in the English translation, but it is baptize in the Greek) the living bird, and the cedar-wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, with the blood of the dead bird. It is manifestly impossible that this baptism could have been by immersion.

2. In 2 Kings 5 : 14, Elisha told Naaman to go wash seven times in (or at) Jordan, and he went and baptized (it is "dipped" in the English version, but bap-

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tized in the Greek) himself seven times. It is evident that he must have sprinkled himself seven times. Naaman was a leper. The leprosy was incurable by human means. God had provided a way by which a cure might surely be effected. There was no other way but God's way. That way is defined in Leviticus 14:7: "And he shall *sprinkle upon him* that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall pronounce him clean." Through this sprinkling there was to be cleansing. Naaman, who did not belong to Israel, heard of the cures effected through God's appointment, and went to the prophet. What did the prophet tell him? As a faithful prophet he must not make a law of his own, but must tell him to keep God's law. "Go and wash — that is, sprinkle — seven times." That was what the ritual of Moses required. In God's law sprinkling is washing. Elisha must have told him to sprinkle seven times, for the law required it. There was no reason why he should tell him any thing different from that. Naaman went and baptized himself seven times — that is, he sprinkled himself seven times. He did not immerse himself. No law required him to be immersed. To immerse would not be following the instructions given. To immerse would not cleanse him of the leprosy. Immersion is not symbolical of cleansing. He must have sprinkled himself seven times, for *he was made clean*—his flesh became as the flesh of a little child. He would never have been cleansed by going contrary to the law, but in its observance he secured the blessing. By comparing Scripture with Scripture, and allowing the Holy Spirit to be his own interpreter, it is evident that the baptism of Naaman could not have been by immersion, and must have been by sprinkling.

3. In Daniel 4:33, Nebuchadnezzar, it is said, "was driven from men—and was *baptized* (it is translated "wet" in the English version, but it is baptized in the Greek) with the dew of heaven." It is manifestly impossible that his baptism *with dew* could have been by immersion.

4. In Mark 7 : 4, it is stated that the Pharisees observe "the baptisms (it is "washings" in the English translation, but baptisms in the Greek) of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and tables." That the mode of baptism here was sprinkling will be apparent if we refer to the Levitical rite to which they allude. In Numbers 19 : 18, the ritual requires that "a clean person shall take hyssop and dip it in the water, and *sprinkle it* upon the tent, and upon all the vessels." In these "baptisms" there could not have been immersion.

5. Throughout the New Testament the Greek word baptizo, is used in the sense of sprinkling, or pouring on. In Matthew 3 : 2, John foretold that Jesus would "baptize with the Holy Ghost," and Peter expressly recognizes the fulfillment of the promise in Acts 11 : 15, when "the Holy Ghost *fell* on them." This baptism could not have been by immersion.

VIII.—AFFUSION.

41. What is affusion ?

The act of sprinkling, or pouring upon.

42. What is the difference between sprinkling and pouring ?

They are substantially one. In both acts there is the application of the element to the person. To sprinkle is to scatter or disperse in small particles or drops. In pouring, the act is the same in form, but the element is shed forth more copiously.

43. What is immersion ?

The act of putting into a fluid below the surface ; dipping ; plunging ; overwhelming.

44. What is the difference between affusion and immersion ?

In affusion the element descends upon the subject ; in immersion the subject is plunged into the element.

IX.—THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

45. In what relation does the baptism of the Holy Spirit stand to water baptism ?

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The baptism of the Holy Spirit is the *real* and *essential* baptism; that of water is the *symbolical*, or *figurative*.

46. Wherein do they differ?

In the real baptism the administrator is God; the element is his Holy Spirit; and the subject is the individual. In the symbolical baptism the administrator is God's minister; the element is water; and the subject is the human person.

47. Which is the more important?

The real baptism is more important than its symbolical representation. The application of the Spirit is essential to salvation. Our Lord says, John 3 : 5 : "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he can not enter into the kingdom of God." As if he had said : "Except a man be born (not only) of water, (which, as the mere emblem, is the less important, but also) of the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God."

48. Are the terms used to denote the baptism of the Spirit figurative?

No. When God baptizes with his Spirit the thing is *real*, and the term is *literal*. We are not to suppose that because the term employed was *spiritual*, it was therefore *figurative*.

49. In what mode is the baptism of the Spirit always represented as being performed?

The baptism of the Spirit, in his renovating and sanctifying operation, is always expressed under the conception of its descent upon the subject. When there is the operation of the Spirit for other purposes, that is never called baptism.

50. What Scripture proofs can you give to show both the sanctifying descent of the Spirit and its representation by the symbol of water affusion?

Isaiah 44 : 3 : "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring." Beautiful emblem! "I will *pour water*—*I will pour my Spirit*."

Ezekiel 36 : 25-27 : "Then will I sprinkle clean water

upon you, and ye shall be clean ; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you ; . . . and I will put my Spirit within you." Here also the Spirit's influences are associated with the sprinkling of water.

Psalm 72 : 6 : " He (Messiah) shall come down like rain upon the mown grass." Hosea 10 : 12 : " Seek the Lord till he come and rain righteousness upon you." Hosea 14 : 5 : " I will be as the dew unto Israel." Here the refreshing influences of the *real* baptism are represented by a metaphor taken from *the falling of dew and of rain*.

51. Is the symbolism between the Spirit and the water taught, under the new dispensation, as under the old ?

Yes. Only it is more definitely developed in the new, under the name and form of the double baptism. Matthew 3 : 11 : " I indeed baptize you with water, but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." Luke 3 : 16 : " I indeed baptize you with water ; but one mightier than I cometh ; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." John 1 : 33 : " He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me : Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost."

52. By what passages of Scripture does it appear that in the baptism of the Spirit there is no immersion, but that the element descends upon the subject ?

Proverbs 1 : 23 : " I will pour out my Spirit unto you."

Matthew 3 : 16 : " He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him." Here was baptism, but not immersion. He was not plunged into the Spirit.

Acts 2 : 3 : " There appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them." There was no immersion here. A sound filled the house, and the baptism of fire *sat upon* them.

Acts 2 : 16, 17, 38 : " But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel : I will pour out of my

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Spirit." This outpouring is called baptism. "Then Peter said: Repent, and be baptized every one of you: and ye shall *receive the gift* of the Holy Ghost." This could not have been immersion. One could not be said to receive an element in which he was immersed. Moreover, it is said, "the gift of the Holy Ghost was *poured out*."

Acts 10: 44-47: "The Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. . . . On the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. . . . Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized which have received the Holy Ghost?" As they had *received* the real baptism, so should they *receive* the symbolical baptism.

Acts 11: 15, 16: "And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost *fell on* them, *as on us* at the beginning. Then remembered I the word (not of John, but) of the Lord, how that he said: John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost." Thus Peter pronounces the outpouring and the falling of the Holy Spirit to be baptism.

53. What important point is confirmed by the argument drawn from the baptism of the Spirit?

The biblical, ritual use of the word baptize is established. Whatever may have been its primary meaning, we learn its meaning when used in a Christian sense. "The Bible is its own dictionary. The Spirit is his own interpreter." The thing has been made so visible that we may see it. God himself has given a definition of the word in question. "He *poured out* upon his Son, visibly and really—it was pouring, and not immersion, and *he called it baptism*. The Holy Ghost *descended upon* the disciples, and *sat upon* them, and this *he calls baptism*. "On the Gentiles also was *poured out* the gift of the Holy Ghost," and this affusion he calls *baptism*."

54. If the real and essential baptism is performed by affusion, ought not the symbolical and figurative baptism to be performed by the same mode?

The mode of the former should in all fairness determine

the mode of the latter. The symbolical act should be a true representation of the real thing. If the form of a symbol does not express the reality it is not really a symbol. The design of a symbol is to present to the mind the idea of an unseen reality. We should make all things according to the pattern showed to us in the mount. Behold that pattern showed to thee when God himself baptized! See that pattern where at Pentecost he baptized his disciples! It was by affusion, and not by immersion, that blessed work was done. And if thus it is that God baptizeth us, is not this the way in which his ministers should baptize his people?

X.—JOHN'S BAPTISM.

55. What was John's baptism?

An ordinance performed by John, independent of the regular services of the synagogue of the Jews, and intended to prepare them, in connection with repentance, for the aftercoming of Christ.

56. Why was John's baptism called the baptism of repentance?

He was specially commissioned to preach repentance, and baptize all who came to him with repentance, confessing their sins.

57. Was John's baptism performed under the Christian dispensation?

No. The Christian dispensation was not inaugurated when John preached and baptized. This dispensation did not commence until after Christ had died, and risen again. John's work was finished and his life ended before the Jewish system was discarded. John never, in his preaching, spoke of the new dispensation as established already, but as being "at hand."

58. Was John's baptism Christian baptism?

No. John had died several years before Christian baptism was instituted. Christian baptism is a ceremonial ordinance in which men are initiated into the Church of Christ. John never received any person into the

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Christian Church. The persons baptized by John still remained members of the Jewish church, and were as much the subjects of Christian baptism afterward, as if they had never been baptized. Christian baptism must be administered in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. John baptized upon the confession of sin, before conversion, and without faith. Many of those baptized by John had never heard of a Holy Ghost, nor had they been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus; they were therefore again baptized with Christian baptism. See Acts 19: 1-6. That John's baptism was not Christian baptism has been admitted by a distinguished Baptist divine, (Rev. Robert Hall.) He says: "A Christian ordinance, not founded on the authority of Christ, not the *effect* but the *means* of his manifestation, and first executed by one who knew him not, is an *incomprehensible mystery*."

59. In what locality did John preach and baptize?

It is said that he baptized "in Jordan," and again, "in the river of Jordan." The preposition here rendered "in" has, like other words, a variety of meanings, and it means "at," or "near to," or "by," as much as it means "in." Those passages that indicate the scene of John's labors do not affirm any thing more than that John preached and baptized in that part of the country lying "near to" the Jordan.

60. Is similar phraseology employed in the present day without implying the idea of immersion?

It is not unusual to hear persons speak of having been *in* a certain river, when they do not design to affirm that they were in the waters thereof. There is a locality in Nova Scotia called "River John." A Wesleyan minister is annually appointed to labor *in* River John. It is not only the river itself that bears that name but *the country lying in the vicinity of that river*. That minister preaches and baptizes in River John, but baptizing in River John does not mean immersion, for his mode of baptism is sprinkling. It is as incorrect to suppose that he immerses any one, because he baptizes in River John,

as it is to suppose that John the Forerunner of Christ immersed any one because he baptized in the river Jordan. The Jordan had several banks within banks, and the whole country lying within these outer banks was called "the river Jordan;" hence a person could be in the river Jordan, so called, and on dry ground at the same time. John could therefore baptize in Jordan and not enter the water of the stream.

61. How is it proved by the Scriptures that the phrase "in the river of Jordan" does not mean in the water of Jordan?

By passages which are *more definite* than those which simply say in the river Jordan. For John might have been baptizing several miles away from the waters of Jordan, and still it might have been said he was baptizing in, that is, near to, the river of Jordan. Moreover, it is never said he baptized *in water*, but always *with water*.

In Mark 1 : 4, it is said, "John did baptize *in the wilderness*," and yet the following verse says it was "in the river of Jordan." This apparent contradiction is easily explained by showing that he baptized in a wilderness which was *near to* the river of Jordan. It is plainly affirmed that he baptized "in the wilderness." That could not therefore have meant immersion in the water of Jordan.

In John 1 : 26-28, it is said : "John answered them, saying, I baptize *with water* : but there standeth one among you whom ye know not ; . . . these things were done in Bethabara, *beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.*" Bethabara, where John gave his testimony concerning Christ, and where he was baptizing, was not in Jordan, but *beyond it*. This Bethabara was at one time called Bethany. There was a Bethany about two miles from Jerusalem ; and there was another Bethany, here called Bethabara, in the tribe of Reuben, east of Jordan, and yet near to it. This was where John baptized—not in the water of the Jordan, but beyond it.

John 10 : 40 : And Jesus "went away again *beyond Jor-*

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dan, into the place *where John at first baptized*, and there he abode." When it is affirmed elsewhere that John at first baptized *in Jordan* it is evident that it was not by immersion in the water of Jordan, but *near to* that river, as the Greek preposition indicates, and yet "beyond Jordan," as is plainly declared.

That to be "in Jordan" does not necessarily mean to be "in the water," is evident from Joshua 3: 8: "When ye shall come to the brink of the water of Jordan ye shall stand still in Jordan." Hence "in Jordan" and "in the water" are by no means synonymous terms.

The rendering of the passages in our version referring to John's baptism is contradictory and inexplicable, if we regard some of them as meaning immersion in the water of Jordan. Luke says, John preached and baptized in "all the country about Jordan." Another evangelist says, he baptized "beyond Jordan." Another locates him "in the wilderness." And yet they say it was in Jordan. There is only one way of reconciling this apparent contradiction, and that is by substituting for the preposition "in" the words "near to," which is the meaning of the Greek as much as "in" is. Then the narratives will all agree in simply locating the scene of John's labors in that part of the country lying in the vicinity of the Jordan. Every difficulty will then be removed; the whole record will then be plain, probable, natural, consistent, and reasonable. If John was accustomed to immerse in the water of Jordan, as some affirm, how pointless and meaningless the passage which says he went to Ænon because there was much water there! That would be leaving plenty of water, and going to less. But if we regard John as an itinerant, going about doing good, we wonder not that he should be glad to locate for a time, with his followers, at a place of "many springs," as Ænon was, and sometimes along the shores of Jordan's stream, not merely because he needed water to baptize with, but because, for other purposes, such multitudes as accompanied him would require an abundant supply of water.

XI.—THE MODE OF JOHN'S BAPTISM.

62. Did John baptize by immersion?

There is no passage in the Bible which proves that John immersed.

63. Why do immersionists suppose that John immersed?

Great stress is laid upon certain prepositions, "in," and "into," and "out of," and they might just as correctly have been rendered respectively, "near to," and "to," and "from," and the translation would thereby have been more definite and correct. It is also affirmed that going *down into* and coming *up out of* the water imply immersion. The logic which teaches that immersion inevitably follows from going into and coming out of the water, appears rather defective to most persons. In their judgment it is difficult to establish the point, that having been in the water implies having been under it; but nevertheless to some there appears no flaw in the argument, and upon this assumption a theory is built.

64. Does our English translation of the Scriptures, as it now reads, imply immersion?

No. One may baptize in a river, and not immerse. One may go down into the water, and not be immersed. One may come up out of the water without having been under it. One may drive his horse down into the water, and up out of the water, and not have him immersed. Going down into the water, and coming up out of it, do not imply going under it. The word of God does not say that John immersed. "He baptized *with water*," is the repeated testimony of God's word; and *baptism with water means affusion* and not immersion. John tells us himself, that he was to be followed by Him who was to "*sprinkle all nations*," and that his own baptism was but the type of His great *outpouring* of the Spirit and the fire.

XII.—CHRIST'S BAPTISM.

65. With what baptism was our Lord baptized?

It was not John's baptism, for he had no need of

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repentance, which that baptism implied. It was not Christian baptism, for that was not instituted until several years after he had been baptized. The nature of the case makes it impossible that he could be baptized in his own name; therefore he could not receive Christian baptism. Christian baptism is a symbol of cleansing from inward impurity; and he had no such impurity from which to be cleansed. He was baptized "to fulfill all righteousness;" that is, all the requirements of the law. He came among men that he might become a minister of his gospel, and our Great High Priest, and he had to fulfill all the requirements of the law appertaining to those offices.

66. What did the law require of our Lord as a minister and a priest?

The Mosaic ritual required that he would not begin to preach until he should be thirty years of age, and not then without being sprinkled with water. Numbers 8 : 5-7 : "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Take the Levites from among the children of Israel and cleanse them. And *thus shalt thou do unto them to cleanse them : Sprinkle water of purifying upon them.*"

67. How does it appear that these laws applied to Jesus?

They were parts of the established ritual, and were binding upon every one who entered upon the office of the ministry and the priesthood, from Aaron down to Christ.

68. Might not Christ be exempt from these laws, inasmuch as he was holy?

No. He made himself subject to his own laws. He was holy because he kept every law faithfully. He could not preach until he was thirty years old, because he must keep the law. He could not be our faithful High Priest unless he kept the law. "Think not," says he, "that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill."

69. Did the law require that Jesus should be immersed, or that he should be sprinkled?

There was *no law that required him to be immersed*. There is no evidence in the Scriptures to show that he was ever immersed. *The law required him to be sprinkled* before entering on his ministry. If he was not so sprinkled he violated the law, and could not be a priest. He must have been sprinkled by John, for it is said he was "baptized to fulfill all righteousness." The law is explicit: "Thus shalt thou do unto them, (the priests :) *Sprinkle water of purifying upon them.*"

70. Is Christ our example in baptism?

No. The baptism of Christ was an official act. By it he was inducted into the Jewish priesthood at the age of thirty years. We should follow Christ in *moral conduct*, but not in his official acts. We are not to follow Christ in all things. He was a preacher; but all are not to follow Christ in that office. He never married; all are not to follow Christ in that particular. He was circumcised; we need not follow Christ in that ordinance. To follow Christ in baptism would be to follow him into a priestly office. If he were our example in baptism, none should be baptized until the age of thirty years, and his example would not therefore be worthy of all imitation. If he were an example in baptism, he failed to be an example to the age in which he lived, for Jesus was not baptized, until about the close of John's ministry, and until after "all the people were baptized." (Luke 3 : 21.) There is no proof in the Scriptures, direct or indirect, that our Saviour was baptized as an example for us. Christ never made a profession of faith: such a profession was with him unnecessary and impossible, since *he himself* is the only Being in whom faith can be exercised unto salvation. How, then, could he have been our example in baptism? How can we "follow our Saviour" in this respect?

XIII.—CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

71. What is Christian baptism?

Baptism as a Christian ordinance is the application of pure water to a proper subject, by a lawful administrator,

in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

72. Are these conditions essential?

The water should be *pure*, as it is intended to symbolize the inward purifying of the *real* baptism of the Spirit. If the water be not pure, it fails to be a real symbol. The commission was given to ministers of the Gospel alone to baptize, subject to certain conditions. No others have a right to perform this office. It must be done in the name of the Sacred Trinity. Matthew 29 : 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." Heb. 10 : 22 : "Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed (that is, sprinkled) with *pure* water."

73. When was Christian baptism instituted?

It was instituted by our Lord after his resurrection, and before his ascension, when he gave the commission to go and baptize all nations.

74. What is its sacramental import?

It is the visible act by which a person is initiated into the visible Church of Christ; and it is a sign and seal of the covenant of grace.

75. Why is it said to be a sign?

It holds out to our view the provisions and promises of the covenant of grace. It is a most appropriate symbol of that influence by which the soul is cleansed from moral defilement. It is an acknowledgment of moral pollution; and also a recognition of God's tenderness, and of the efficacy of the blood of Christ to cleanse, and of the power of the Spirit to regenerate.

76. Why is it said to be a seal?

It is a visible pledge on the part of God that he will faithfully keep all his covenant engagements. Thus he binds himself by a perpetual ceremony. And when we look upon this visible pledge of his fidelity, our faith hears breathed through it, as through the trumpet of jubilee: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from

all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." (Ezek. 36 : 25.)

XIV.—THE SUBJECTS OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

77. Who are proper subjects of Christian baptism ?

It is commanded that all nations—all the world—every creature, should be baptized. The minister of Christ is commissioned to baptize all. All should be baptized, and made disciples of Christ, and trained from childhood in the way that they should go. Matthew 28 : 19, 20 : "Go ye and teach (that is, *make disciples* of, as it reads in the margin) all nations : (first by) baptizing them (into the faith, and then) teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

78. Upon what conditions may unbaptized adults receive Christian baptism ?

By becoming like little children. *Children are the New Testament standard.* It is not he who believes the doctrines of any particular church or creed that shall be saved, but he that becomes like a little child. Little children are made partakers of grace and heirs of heaven, through the atonement of Christ. Unbaptized and unrenewed adults can only attain unto like precious grace and heirship *through faith* in Christ. When they exercise faith they are made free from condemnation, as children are, and being thus like unto them, they are proper subjects for baptism. Mark 10 : 14-16 : "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not : for *of such* is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child he shall not enter therein." This does not refer to children that are old enough to sin, for all such do actually become transgressors, and our Lord would not make sinning children a Christian standard. "He took them up *in his arms*," and must have set them down upon his knee, for he put both "hands upon them, and

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blessed them." Ye must become like little, un sinning children—humble, teachable, trustful. Luke 18: 15-17: "And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them. Jesus said, Of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein."

79. Upon what ground is it affirmed by some that children should not be baptized?

It is said that children must not be baptized because they can not have faith. But faith is not required of them, for of this they are incapable. If this plea were valid it would shut infants out of heaven. Our Lord has positively declared: "He that believeth not shall be damned." Abraham received the initiatory rite, admitting him into the Church of God, because *he had faith*. Isaac was admitted to the same privilege when he was eight days old, without faith, for of this he was incapable.

It is also urged that infants ought not to be baptized, because they can not consent to the covenant of which it is the seal. But it is universally acknowledged in the transactions of daily life, that children are bound by the acts of their parents. It is done in various pecuniary transactions, in acts of civil legislation, and in the conveyance of real estate. Thus men bind themselves, their heirs, and assigns, forever. The sacred word shows that not only parents, but their *little ones*, may enter into covenant with God. Deut. 29: 10-12: "Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, with all the men of Israel, your *little ones*, your wives, and thy stranger that is in thy camp: that thou shouldst enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his oath, which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day."

80. What evidence can be adduced to show that infants should be baptized?

1. Our Lord has commanded that *all should be baptized*

and children form a part of the whole. This command was given by one who was a Jew, and who understood all their laws and customs. When Gentiles had been proselyted and embraced the Jewish religion, the laws and customs of the Jews required that they should be circumcised, including children down to the age of eight days. And now that a new initiatory rite is substituted for circumcision, and a command given, "Go and disciple or proselyte *all*, and baptize them," they must have understood it to include children. If Jesus had said, "Go, make disciples of, or proselyte all, and circumcise them," would the apostles have doubted whether children were to be circumcised? And when baptism is made the sign instead of circumcision, why should any doubt whether children are to be baptized? If our Lord did not wish infants to be baptized, existing circumstances made it necessary that he should expressly forbid it, and he would have done so, openly and definitely.

2. Man's wisdom suggests that infants should not be baptized because they can not understand the design of the rite, or make any profession of their faith. But man's wisdom is not as God's wisdom. God in his wisdom provided that the sons of Jews and proselytes should be circumcised when eight days old, and when they knew not the intent and meaning of the ordinance. The analogy must have been very clear to the first Christians, and to the Apostles, who were themselves Jews.

3. As Jewish proselytes were baptized in the time of Christ, and long previous thereto, and as it was universally known that infants eight days old were baptized, as well as adults, *would it not be natural*, as there was no prohibition of the baptism of infants, that *the Apostles should continue this practice*? Our Lord, with a full knowledge of these facts, says, Go, and *make disciples of all, and baptize them*, and he gave them no instruction to act differently from the prevailing custom. Surely if he had designed them to adopt a plan so peculiar and novel, as the exclusion of infants would be, he would have said so.

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4. As our Lord has commanded that all should be baptized, infants should receive that ordinance, because *the only period* in life in which it is possible that this command *can be universally obeyed is in early infancy.* If baptism be denied to little children, then, it is inevitable that of those who are "forbid" thus to come to Christ, a large majority, perhaps more than seventy-five persons out of every hundred will pass through life, and go down to the grave, forever unbaptized.

5. Infants should be baptized because of *the importance of water baptism.* In John 3 : 5, it is said : "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God." God in his wisdom has not only made water baptism important, and required it of all, but has also indicated the period in which it should be administered to the subject, namely, in early infancy. Those parents who do not suffer little children thus to come to Christ, and those teachers who forbid them thus to come, assume the awful responsibility of rejecting the only possible period in which *all can be* "born of water," and of sanctioning a system the tendency of which is to send the great majority unbaptized into eternity.

6. Persons should be baptized in infancy because God has *fixed the order* in which this should be done. The command says, "Go ye and make disciples of all," by, *first*, "baptizing them," (Matt. 28 : 19 ;) and then, after they are baptized, "teaching them (verse 20) to observe all things." *First*, baptize them as soon as they can be baptized, and *then* teach them as soon as they can be taught. It is sometimes affirmed that children should be left to grow up to mature years, and choose for themselves respecting these things. Such teaching is unscriptural, unphilosophical, inconsistent, mischievous, and most perilous. The guardianship of childhood involves the responsibility of training up children in the way they should go, irrespective of any consent or choice on their part ; and the Head of the Church says, do this by *first* baptizing them, and then teaching them.

7. God has in his Church, from the beginning, *included the children* in his covenant with the parents, and made them members of his Church. Gen. 17: 7: "I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee." In speaking to Noah, God said, Gen. 7: 1: "Come thou and *all thy house* into the ark, for thee have I seen righteous." *Thee* have I seen righteous; therefore, come, not only thou, but all thy house. Though many persons regard as foolishness the recognition of infants in connection with any religious rite or obligation, because of their want of comprehension, yet what is the foolishness of men is the wisdom of God. In God's plan infants have never been overlooked, or unprovided for. When God orders the assembling of the people, the children are not excluded because they do not understand. He says: "Assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts." (Joel 2: 16.) Infants have ever been objects of his tenderest solicitude. He made them heirs of heaven, until they rebel by *actual transgression*. The great Shepherd has never forgotten the lambs; he gathers them in his arms, and carries them in his bosom. It is not like him to *cast them out* from among his people, or *thrust them from the pale and privileges of his Church*.

8. The *Church of God is one*, and has been one, from Abraham until now. The Church is now built on the same foundation as at the first, having the same chief corner-stone. God has made a covenant with the Church, and it is an "everlasting covenant." The Church has now the same Head and the same spiritual requirements as when David sang and Abraham believed in God. God's law provided that children should be admitted into the Church by its initiatory right. *That law has never been repealed, and must stand good until God himself repeals it*. Children, therefore, by his covenant have the right of initiation into the Church. It was not necessary that this should be specially affirmed in Christ's day, any more than it was that the ten commandments should be reënacted; it was then well understood and

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acted upon. The obligation to keep the Sabbath-day holy, and to keep all the ten commandments, as well as the obligation to receive infants into the Church, is binding without special reënactment, because *these enactments were never repealed*. Paul, moreover, says (Gal. 3 : 14) that "the blessing of Abraham," an important part of which consisted in the covenant connection of his children, had "come on *the Gentiles* through Jesus Christ." Peter, speaking (Acts 2 : 38) of the double baptism of water and of the Spirit, says : "The promise is unto you, and to *your children*, and to all that are afar off."

9. Infants should be baptized because of *their Church relation*. "Children are related to the Church, spiritually, really, vitally. It is no figure of speech, but a first truth in the divine economy. When our Lord said, 'Of such is the kingdom of heaven,' he affirmed a spiritual relation. He did not predicate their membership in his kingdom of the simple fact of their baptism, or their circumcision, but of their being redeemed children. Their relation to the 'kingdom' arose from their relation to the King, and it applied to all children as such. Baptism is only the sign and seal of membership; the spiritual relation, which is the real one, precedes the emblematic and the conventional, and is the moral ground of the latter." When our Lord says, (Matt. 18 : 5,) "Whoso receiveth one such little child in my name receiveth me," he completely identifies little children with himself, and his spiritual family, the true Church. In Mark 9 : 41, the phrase "in my name" is explained to mean, "because ye belong to me." This is decisive of the sense. On no other ground could they be received in Christ's name. And this he affirms of little children, such as one could hold in his arms, as Christ thus held that little one. As they belong to the "general assembly and Church of the first born, whose names are written in heaven," in "the Lamb's book of life," as they are spiritually, really, vitally, related to the Church, they are

entitled to baptism, the visible sign and seal of that relationship.

10. Apostolic practice shows that infants should be baptized. In baptizing families, the Apostles acted according to the provisions of the existing covenant. It was the apostolic custom to baptize the children immediately after the baptism of the parents, as is indicated by the fact that there are eleven instances recorded in the New Testament in which infant baptism is involved. The familiar way in which these instances are mentioned suggests the probability that infant baptism was by no means an unusual thing in the Christian Church, and that many families were baptized in the same way.

11. Our Lord says: "Of such is the kingdom of God." By taking infants in his arms, and publicly recognizing them as subjects of his kingdom, he certainly *authorized the application of the distinguishing symbol* of that kingdom. Can any adult believer give any better evidence of being worthy of this ordinance than Christ has given of the worthiness of infants? An adult professor may be *untrue* and *unworthy to be baptized into the kingdom*, but the great Head of the Church gives the most positive evidence of the fitness of infants for baptism, for to such the kingdom of God belongs. Can there be any mistake when he speaks? What more than this do we need? There is reason and propriety, therefore, in dedicating them to God in the ordinance of baptism. Why should we deny them the seal when Christ has declared them entitled to the thing sealed?

12. Infants should be baptized because *they are justified* by the blood of Christ. Through him grace flows to all children. Faith is not required of them because they can not exercise it, and they are saved without it. The infant stands in the same relation to God that the adult Christian does. It has a moral fitness for baptism and Church relations. If the infant dies in infancy, it will as surely go to be with Jesus as the dying saint of riper years. Then the infant is truly a member of Christ's *invisible* Church, and it has therefore the same claim for admis-

sion to the *visible* Church that the believing adult has, namely, justification through the blood of Christ. Can you exclude them, then, and be guiltless? Nay, it is your imperative duty to bring them unto Christ in baptism, that they may be admitted to the visible Church of Christ, and "forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God."

81. Have you any additional proof to sustain the doctrine of infant baptism?

Yes. The following collateral evidence helps to establish the validity of infant baptism:

1. The teachings of the immediate successors of the Apostles show that infant baptism was handed down from them. Irenæus was one of the early fathers. He was the pupil of Polycarp, who was the disciple of John the Evangelist. He was born near the close of the first century. His writings show that infant baptism was an ordinance of the Church in his day.

Justin Martyr was cotemporaneous with Irenæus, and the first man of great learning who adorned the Church after Paul. He wrote about forty years after the apostolic age. In his writings he speaks of persons of seventy years of age who were made disciples in their infancy, and therefore received infant baptism. Justin Martyr had a dialogue with a celebrated Jew, and in it Justin compares baptism with circumcision. He declares that "*they are alike* in their nature and use." He says all are permitted to receive baptism, and none are excluded on account of their age. And as baptism came in the place of circumcision, infant baptism must have been an ordinance of the Church.

After these men came Tertullian and Origen, who were both young men when Irenæus and Justin Martyr died. These witnesses both speak of infant baptism as having universally prevailed in the Church from the Apostles' day. Tertullian urged the "delaying of baptism" until just before death for certain reasons, but speaks of it as the well-known and general practice of his day. He writes of infants of a "guiltless age," who

“can not of themselves” come to Christ, and “know not whither they are brought when they are brought to baptism.” Origen speaks of himself as having been a baptized child. He was a very learned man. He travelled extensively among the churches. His father had died a martyr for Christ. Timothy and Titus had lived with the Origen family many years. Infant baptism was of almost daily occurrence, and common to the Church in every place. If infant baptism were a delusion, where were Timothy, and Titus, and Polycarp, and Irenæus, that they did not expose the error everywhere prevailing in the Church? Origen says, in his Homily Eighth, on Leviticus, chapter 12: “According to the usage of the Church, baptism is given to infants.” In his Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, book 5, he says: “For this cause it was that the Church received an order from the Apostles to give baptism even to infants.” And he specially speaks of those infants who have never committed any actual sins.

“In the time of Cyprian, in the third century, there arose a controversy concerning the day when the child should be baptized, whether or not before the eighth day. But there was no question about the point whether children ought to be baptized — in this they were all agreed.”

Thus do those who sat at the feet of the Apostles and earliest fathers testify to the validity of infant baptism.

2. That infant baptism was the universal practice of the Church from the days of the Apostles is strongly corroborated by the fact that for hundreds of years next after their day, there was no sect or schism in the Church that did not practise it; and from the fifth century to the present time, in every period, it has been observed by the greater part of the Christian Church.

3. The history of the Church furnishes no satisfactory evidence of this practice having ever crept in. If infant baptism had sprung up as a *new doctrine* or practice, it would have arrested the attention of the historians of the Church. There is no trace of opposition to the first

practice of infant baptism. There can be no time mentioned in which the baptism of infants was first introduced after the death of the Apostles. There is no written record to show that it was introduced as a novelty among Christians, and we have therefore the strongest reason to believe that this practice has come down to us from the days of the Apostles.

4. The Catacombs of Rome furnish evidence indicating that infant baptism was practised by the Apostolic Church. Long before the beginning of the Christian era, excavations for building-stone were made near where Rome now stands. In the course of hundreds of years they became a net-work, extending from fifteen to twenty miles under ground. Cicero, in his oration for Cluentius, speaks of them. For the first three hundred years after Christ, these recesses were the burial-place of the entire Christian population of Rome. There the Christians dwelt during the persecutions in the first age of the Church. Jerome visited them about the year 300, and calls them "the sepulchres of the apostles and martyrs." Here, in those dens and caves of the earth, were the doctrines and teachings of the Apostles preserved in their primitive simplicity and purity. The relics and inscriptions found there indicate that infant baptism was an established ceremony among them. In those catacombs there are numerous epitaphs of children who are called "faithfuls" and "neophytes," which titles could not have been applied to them unless they had been baptized. The age at which they died shows that they were baptized in infancy. Some of these epitaphs read as follows: "The tile of Candidus, *the neophyte*, who lived twenty-one months; buried on the nones of September." "Flavia Jovina, who lived three years and thirty days—*a neophyte*." "Leopardus rests here in peace, with holy spirits; having received baptism, he went to the blessed innocents. This was placed by his parents, with whom he lived seven years and seven months." "Bufilla, newly baptized, who lived two years and forty days."

5. The evidence is abundant, specific, and certain that

Christ, when he instituted the new dispensation, did not deprive infants of the ancient privilege which belonged to children when the Gospel was preached to Abraham. Not one word of evidence can be adduced from the Scriptures, or the history of the Church for the first four hundred years, to prove that infants ought not to be baptized. It is alike unjewish and unchristian to refuse them the initiatory rite of the Church.

6. The Head of the Church has seen fit to make baptism occupy an important place in his economy of salvation, and he has not shut the children out. This ordination belongs to them. Through the grace of the Lord Jesus, infants belong to his kingdom. Can we, then, rightly refuse them the sign and seal of their relationship and heirship? There were disciples who rebuked those who brought infants to Christ during his sojourn on the earth, and it was *just like him* to be displeased with them. How much alike is human nature in every age! There are disciples *now* who rebuke those who bring them. With such disciples the Master can not but be displeased. Can you stand between those little children and their privileges and be blameless? And if ye have done this wrong to one of these little ones, does not the Judge of all the earth say: *Ye have done it unto me?*

XV.—CIRCUMCISION AND BAPTISM.

82. What relation has baptism to circumcision?

Baptism occupies the place under the evangelical dispensation that circumcision did under the Levitical.

83. By what evidence can you sustain that position?

1. Baptism does for us what circumcision did for the Jews.

2. Persons were initiated into the Jewish Church by the rite of circumcision. Persons are initiated into the Christian church by the rite of baptism.

3. The only way of admission into the Church of God, under either dispensation has been by circumcision in the one case, and by baptism in the other.

4. Circumcision and baptism are both alike, the outward, visible sign of the same inward, spiritual grace. The Apostle Paul speaks of baptism as being evangelical circumcision, in Gal. 3 : 27, 29 : "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

XVI.—MODE OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

84. What is the Scripture mode of Christian baptism ?
 Affusion. This is apparent from its emblematical import. It is the symbol of certain gospel blessings, which are repeatedly spoken of under the figure of sprinkling or pouring, and never under that of immersion. The prophet, speaking of the Messiah, says, (Isaiah 52 : 15 :) "So shall he *sprinkle* in many nations." If this promise refers to the influences which Christ bestows upon the nations of the earth, "through the redemption of his blood" called "the blood of sprinkling," then these gracious influences are designated by the term *sprinkling*, and baptism, the outward sign, should surely correspond with it. Or, if this promise refers to the admission of persons into the Church by the ordinance of baptism, it fixes the mode to be *affusion*, and not immersion. The prophet does not say : So shall he immerse many nations.

85. What term is employed in the New Testament to denote the manner of the application of the blood of Christ ?

The term sprinkling. Paul says, (Hebrews 12 : 22 :) "Ye are come . . . to the blood of *sprinkling*, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." And Peter speaks (1 Peter 1 : 2) of the same "sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." If, through the sprinkling of the blood of Christ, moral cleansing is effected, then the outward ordinance of baptism, which is the symbol of this inward cleansing, should correspond thereto in form.

86. Was immersion practised by the Apostles and by the Apostolic Church ?

There is no evidence that it was. The word *baptizo* was evidently used to denote only the ordinance of baptism, without reference to the mode. Baptism is an emblem of the purifying influences of the Holy Spirit; and the grand and leading emblem of purification instituted by Jehovah himself is *sprinkling*. Immersion is never foretold by the prophets, but sprinkling is, and that too as connected with the new dispensation. When immersion is practised the water is sometimes inevitably *far from being pure*, whereas "pure water" is indispensable in this symbolical washing. Sprinkling is more simple, more in accordance with the whole spirit of the New Testament, and an ordinance of universal adaptation. In the Jewish ceremonies, although the blood was sometimes poured out at the base of the altar, and sometimes smeared on its horns, or on parts of the person for whom expiation was to be made, yet the grand significant emblem was *sprinkling*. The whole nation was familiar with the idea that where there was sprinkling there was mercy. Sprinkling and mercy, in the great heart of the nation, were linked together. When the whole nation was consecrated to God at Sinai, Moses *sprinkled all the people*, (Hebrews 9 : 19.) On the great day of atonement the High-priest entered the most holy place, and *sprinkled* the Ark of the Covenant, (Leviticus 4 : 17, and Hebrews 9 : 25.) Paul and Peter both speak of the blood of *sprinkling*. Sprinkling throughout all the Bible is the symbol of mercy and blessing. Where the blood of the sacrifices was sprinkled there was mercy. When the destroying angel passed over Egypt, there was mercy where the blood was sprinkled. There is no evidence in the word of God that this ancient sign of mercy and blessing and cleansing was discarded, when Christian baptism was instituted. There is no reason why this long-familiar, well-understood, and God-established symbol should be discarded, and immersion substituted. "There are three," says the Apostle, (1 John 5 : 8,) "that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: *and these three agree in one.*" As the

Spirit bears witness through the mode of affusion—*falling upon*—and as the blood bears witness through the mode of affusion—*being sprinkled*—so should the water bear witness *in the form of affusion*, for God's design is that these three should bear witness in earth, and that these three should agree in one. The testimony in favor of sprinkling is clear and irrefutable. It is the Bible mode. It is a form instituted by Jehovah himself, was practised throughout the Jewish dispensation, was adopted by John the Baptist, and was practised by the Apostles and the primitive Church. Immersion never was the scriptural symbol of mercy and blessing and cleansing, and can nowhere be found in the Bible as an ordinance, either implied, acknowledged, sanctioned, or commanded.

87. When was immersion introduced as a mode of baptism?

The practice of immersion was probably introduced in an early age of the Church. Some men are so organized mentally that they are prone to yield an undue regard to *forms* and *ceremonies*, and hence the practice was introduced and persisted in. Men of the purest motives sometimes run into extremes. In Paul's day members of the Christian Church adopted a strange error concerning the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. They probably argued that if a little wine and a little bread are good in this ordinance, a little more must be better, and so they ate and drank to excess. And men were just as likely to err in reference to the sacrament of baptism. If a little water is good, more must be better, the wisdom of this world would suggest. Some minds are so peculiarly organized, that they can never understand what good a little water can do sprinkled on a person's head, but imagine there is special virtue in the grosser form of immersion.

XVII.—PHILIP AND THE EUNUCH.

88. Do the Scriptures indicate the mode in which Philip baptized the eunuch?

The narrative shows that Philip and the eunuch

were riding in a certain desert together, and they conversed about a particular portion of Isaiah's prophecy which the eunuch had been reading. He did not understand the teaching of the prophet, (Isaiah 52 : 13, etc.,) who spoke of One whose visage was more marred than any other man, who was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and who was to "*sprinkle many nations.*" Philip began (Acts 8 : 35) at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. They came to a certain water in the desert, and the eunuch wanted to be baptized, for he had just been reading about baptism—"so shall he sprinkle many nations." There was nothing in the prophecy he had been reading to lead him to think of immersion. He had been reading and speaking about *sprinkling*. The prophet foretold that Messiah must sprinkle many nations. That prophecy must be fulfilled, though Jesus "baptizeth not, but his disciples." They both went down into and came up out of the water—that is, more correctly, they went *to* and came *from* the water. But if we take the passage as it reads, it does not say he *immersed* him. Many persons have gone down into the water a thousand times, and have come up out of it as often, and not once gone under the water.

As the Scriptures indicate that the eunuch was sprinkled, so does common-sense suggest the same fact. If immersion were required, would not Philip have desired him to wait until the chariot would arrive at a stopping-place, and facilities be procured for attending to such a work? Is it probable they would engage in an act that would involve the necessity of continuing their journey, one man wet all over, and the other man half wet? Why this inconvenient wetting? Was ever that thing so done since? Who ever saw a parallel to that scene as immersionists paint it? But if the thing done by Philip were sprinkling, as the prophet had foretold, and about which they had been reading and speaking, there was no difficulty in the way.

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XVIII.—THE JAILER OF PHILIPPI.

89. How was the jailer of Philippi baptized ?

He was baptized in the night, and in the prison. (Acts 16 : 24-34.) If the parties concerned had left the prison, to attend to that ordinance, the jailer would have been guilty of violating the laws of his country, and the most sacred duty of his office, and Paul and Silas would have been involved in the act. Moreover, Paul and Silas would have been liable to the charge of hypocritically pretending, when morning came, that they had not been out of the prison, for they refused to leave it, until the magistrates should come and take them out. The inference is inevitable that his baptism must have been by affusion.

XIX.—BURIED BY BAPTISM.

90. What does the Apostle mean by being "buried by baptism" ?

He is speaking not of symbolical baptism, which is with water ; but of the real, essential baptism, which is with the Holy Ghost.

91. How do you prove that ?

The whole passage with which those words are connected shows that he does not allude to *natural things*, but *spiritual*. "How shall we," says he, (Romans 6 : 2,) "that are *dead* to sin ?" He does not refer to a physical condition of himself and his brethren, when he says "*we that are dead*," but to a *spiritual*. Ye that "were baptized into Jesus Christ," does not mean a physical act—*into water*, but a *spiritual* baptism "*into Jesus Christ*." Therefore we are buried with him by baptism *into death*—not buried in baptism into water, nor into the grave, but *into death*. There is no allusion here to water baptism, nor to its mode. The Apostle is speaking of *spiritual* death, burial, resurrection, and life. He speaks also in the same place of our being *planted* together in the likeness of his death, and of our old man "being crucified with him." If the baptism mentioned

be a literal burial of the body in water, we should adopt the same interpretation in reference to the planting and crucifixion, and be literally planted and crucified. Besides, to follow the figures literally, the person should be put under *and left there*. This alone is burying and planting. But, no, the whole passage has a *spiritual*, not physical, significance. Being "baptized into his death" can not mean a physical act, because there is no similitude between being put under water and being hung upon a cross, between the heavens and the earth, to die.

92. Does Paul teach the same doctrine elsewhere?

In the Epistle to the Colossians, (chapter 2 : 10-12,) Paul corroborates what has just been affirmed. He also shows that the circumcision of which he speaks and baptism are one; but this is the circumcision *made without hands*, and *by which circumcision* "ye are buried with him in baptism," and not by water. This is not water baptism, then, but that baptism of the Spirit which is "through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead."

Romans 6 : 3 : "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized unto Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" That is, as many as were united to Christ, by the baptism of the Holy Spirit, were made partakers of the benefits of his death.

1 Cor. 12 : 13 : "For *by one Spirit*," not by water, "are we all baptized into one body," that is, "baptized into Jesus Christ."

Romans 6 : 11 : "Likewise, reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Can water baptism, then, accomplish the great moral change to which the Apostle here alludes? If we interpret these passages to refer to physical acts, they involve us in difficulty. That interpretation would favor the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. But every thing is plain, and consistent, and beautifully significant, if we suppose him, in speaking of being buried into Christ's

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death, and being planted, and crucified, and dead, and yet alive, to refer, not to the outward man, but to the hidden man of the heart; not to physical, but to spiritual things.

XX.—ISRAELITES BAPTIZED UNTO MOSES.

93. What is meant by the Israelites being baptized unto Moses?

The Apostle alludes especially to the *import* of baptism. They were *consecrated* unto Moses, when passing through the sea, and took him as their leader and guide.

94. How were they baptized?

It could not have been by immersion. Immersion means being dipped, or plunged, or overwhelmed in a fluid until covered by it, and they passed "*on dry ground* through the midst of the sea," (Exodus 14 : 16.) A man can not be immersed on dry ground. They were baptized by affusion, for "*the heavens dropped,*" "*the clouds poured out water*" upon them, (Psalm 77 : 17.) The people of God who went over "*dry shod,*" and upon whom the sprinkling rain fell were, Paul says, *the baptized people*. The hosts of Pharaoh were *immersed*—they were buried in a "*liquid tomb,*" but they were not baptized.

XXI.—NOAH AND THE ARK.

95. What do you understand by what Peter says of baptism in connection with Noah?

He probably refers to the baptism of Noah and his family, or the ark, or both conjoined. In either case, there was not immersion, but there was affusion. The rain fell upon them. They were sprinkled. The wicked inhabitants of the world were immersed. Those who were sprinkled were baptized, and had mercy. Those who were immersed "*went down into a watery grave*" and perished. "*The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us,*" *not the outward rite*, which is the putting off the filth of the flesh, but the inward or spiritual operation, through which we are purified, so as to live with a good conscience toward God, (1 Peter 3 : 21.)

XXII.—PAUL AND APOLLOS.

96. Do the facts recorded in the New Testament, concerning Paul and Apollos, throw additional light on the subject of baptism?

Paul stands out preëminently the model minister of the New Testament. The great theme of his preaching was, not Christ and *him baptized*, but Christ and him crucified. Apollos, when a young man, did not understand the things of God as well as Paul. He was eloquent, however, and mighty in the Scriptures, and being probably trained in the school of John, he went preaching in the synagogues, "knowing only the baptism of John," (Acts 8 : 25.) When Aquila and Priscilla heard him they "took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly."

Paul says, (1 Corinthians 3 : 6,) "I have planted, Apollos watered." This language implies that immersion could not have been the mode in which Apollos baptized, and that the mode must have been sprinkling, or pouring. Paul never would have used such a figure if Apollos had immersed the people. He was too correct a writer for that. An unbiased mind would naturally infer that those plants were watered by affusion. No gardener ever waters his plants by immersion. There is no evidence to indicate immersion here.

Apollos appears to have made the subject of water baptism too prominent a topic in his preaching. Paul, on the contrary, "determined not to know any thing among them, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." "Christ sent me," says he, "not to baptize, but to preach the gospel." Again he says: "I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius. And I baptized also the household of Stephanus," (1 Corinthians 1 : 14-16.) What a rebuke there is in these words for those whose one peculiar and distinctive theme is the baptism of water! No such preacher could adopt the language of Paul, after a successful and glorious ministry, as his had been at Corinth, and say: "I thank God I have only baptized two of you, and the family of another."

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XXIII.—HE THAT BELIEVETH AND IS BAPTIZED.

97. What is the obvious teaching of the word of God in the passage in Mark, (chapter 16 : 16 :) “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved” ?

If an unbaptized person is born again through faith in Christ, he is a proper subject for water baptism ; but if he *is already baptized* he should not receive that ordinance again. It is not anywhere said in God’s word that water baptism must come after believing in Christ. It is not, he that believeth and *shall be* baptized, but “he that believeth and *is* baptized.” If one *is* already baptized, when he becomes a believer, that is sufficient. Nor was it taught by John that *his* baptism should be preceded by faith. John did not require a profession of faith of his disciples. They were baptized upon repentance and the confession of sin.

The reasoning that requires water baptism to follow the act of faith is unsound, and if adopted will lead into serious errors. This theory involves the idea that the one act of faith, through which the individual is accepted of the Father, secures his eternal salvation, and meets the claims of the word of God. But the divine testimony is, *not* he that believed, on some particular occasion, shall be saved ; it is rather, he that believeth—he that *has* faith, and *continues to have it*, shall be saved.

It does not follow because one had faith *yesterday* that he therefore has faith *to-day*. Faith should be an act of the heart, as regularly repeated as is the rising of the sun. There should be the forth-putting of the hand of faith—the confidently taking hold of the hand of God *every day*, and all the year round. If water baptism must *follow* the act of justifying faith, then, as that faith should be an every-day work, repeated baptisms would be required of every Christian. He who becomes a believer in Christ may be asked if he *is baptized*, and if that rite *is* performed, whether before or after he is renewed by the power of the Holy Spirit, through faith, the law in the case is met. “He that believeth and *is baptized* shall be saved.”

XXIV.—THE IMMERSIONIST CREED INCONSISTENT AND NARROW.

98. Wherein does the immersionist creed agree with, and differ from, that of the Christian Church generally?

They agree in affirming that by baptism we are initiated into the visible church of Christ. The immersionist creed differs from all others in affirming that no person should be baptized but a believing adult, and that there is no baptism without immersion.

99. What is the logical inference deducible from the dogma of the immersionists?

If the immersionist creed were true, there never has been a visible Church of Christ on the earth except Baptist churches. All those in other churches who were faithful followers of Christ, and who nobly served their Master, and who triumphed over sin and over the world through faith, and whose robes were washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb, have been *stamped by the immersionist creed with the brand of excommunication*; for, says that creed, they were too early brought to Christ if they were brought when little children, and they never received baptism if they were not immersed. A creed which inevitably excludes such persons from the visible Church, is manifestly inconsistent and narrow.

100. Has the peculiar doctrine of the immersionists been believed by any considerable portion of the Christian Church?

Only a small fraction of the Christian Church ever believed their dogma. The great body of divines who have been eminent for piety and learning and genius, and whose writings have graced the literature of the ages, has been radically opposed to the peculiar doctrine of the immersionists—namely, that only adults should be baptized, and that there is no baptism without immersion.

101. Is the immersionist creed in accordance with the genius of Christianity?

The immersionist creed is antagonistic to the genius of

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Christianity. It says: We are right; all who differ from us are wrong—v. only are the Church of Christ, there is no visible Church but ours, for none can enter the Church but in our way. All ye great and good men of the past, says that creed, who imagined ye were in Christ, and who lived and died in the faith of Christ; ye pillars of the Church of England, Latimer, Ridley, Cranmer; ye princes of the Presbyterian Church, Calvin, Knox, Chalmers; ye eloquent divines of the Independent Church, Baxter, Howe, Watts; ye noble spirits of the Methodist Church, Wesley, Whitefield, Asbury; ye faithful children of the cross, who pined in inquisitions, and who died for Christ at the martyr's stake; and ye nameless ones who sleep in unremembered graves, the immersionist creed hath denied you the fellowship of the saints! It matters not that ye had faith in Christ, that ye had been converted, that ye were new creatures in Christ Jesus, that ye had been baptized with the Spirit, and that ye had been baptized with water—if ye were not *immersed in water*, all else is vain, ye were not in the visible Church of Christ. Stand ye aside! we only are in the Church, and immersion is the door! Such are the inevitable teachings of the immersionist creed. It is therefore obviously antagonistic to the whole spirit, and scope, and breadth of Christianity, and to the plain teaching of the Bible.

102. Are immersionists as inconsistent and narrow as their creed?

Immersionists are better than their creed. Their creed is opposed to the fellowship of the saints, but they love the brethren in Christ. Their creed is Roman Catholic where it requires the rebaptism of those who would come into their fold from other churches; but they are Protestant, for they say: "No matter—ye are Christians, though ye were never immersed." Their creed, if it be consistent with itself, *must be* "close-communication;" but they love Christians of every name. Their creed excommunicates the seraphic masters of spiritual song, Charles Wesley and Isaac Watts, because they were never immersed; but they have admitted their hymns to church

fellowship with them, and made them the vehicle of praise and supplication in all their churches. Their creed excludes children from the privileges and pale of the Church on earth; but they testify, when these are taken away by death, that they belong to the Church of the first-born whose names are written in heaven. Their creed is inconsistent, unscriptural, and behind the age, and all *intelligent immersionists* have outgrown it. In every recognition, by an immersionist, of a Christian of a different faith and practice, as a brother in the Church of Christ, there is an admission of the inconsistency of their creed. In every instance in which an immersionist church has abandoned the close-communication idea, and in every effort to do so, there is an acknowledgment of the unsoundness of their creed. In the recent attempt, by many of the most learned men in Baptist churches, to publish and circulate a new version of the Scriptures, ignoring the old landmarks, and substituting phraseology that will teach immersion, there is the confession, on the part of those Baptist scholars, that our good old English Bible—the Bible of our fathers, and of Protestantism, *does not teach the doctrine of immersion*, as they desire the Bible should teach it.

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