

Mode and Subjects of Baptism

EXAMINED,

IN

SEVEN SERMONS.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A MINIATURE HISTORY OF THE BAPTISTS.

BY DANIEL MERRILL, A.M.

*PASTOR OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN SEDGWICK. [ME]

"Doth our law judge any man before it hear him, and know what he doeth?" NICODEMUS.

John vii. 51

"Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath cannot be my disciple."

JESUS CHRIST.

TENTH EDITION.

BOSTON:

Printed and sold by MANNING & LORING, No. 2, Cornhill.

Sept. 1812

[Ed:*The term "Church of Christ" does **not** refer to the denominational entity known by that designation today, but simply to the local church in Sedgwick, Maine which Daniel Merrill considered to be the genuine expression of Christ's church in that town.]

TO THE READER

Fellow traveler to eternity,

You and I are the offspring of God. The period of our return to Him swiftly approaches. Then the motive I have had in writing, and which you shall have had in reading, will both be known. How, and how far the following pages will affect my present and future life, is with the LORD. How far they shall affect thine, is also with HIM. One thing is certain: the truth of what I have written will be soon known. You are willing to know it now, provided you know the value of the gospel, and possess an heart humbled by its doctrines.

Reader, be not offended at what I have written till you be sure it is false. Do thyself no harm. Read, consider, compare every part, and the whole, with divine ***truth**, in such a manner and spirit, as shall yield thee a pleasing reflection in the world to come.

If the subject, as here presented, be true, it is a serious truth. If an error, it is a serious one. It nearly concerns the kingdom of IMMANUEL, to whose pleasure and mercy the whole is cheerfully resigned,

By, Reader,
Thy Servant,
For Jesus' sake,
THE AUTHOR

Sedgwick,
Dec. 27, 1804

***[Editor's Note]**

Daniel Merrill's desire to know and defend the **TRUTH** at any cost appeared to be the overwhelming passion of his entire life and ministry; a highly commendable virtue in an age when truth is being diminished and denied.

THE MODE AND SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM

SERMON I

A COMPILATION OF ALL THE WORDS, PASSAGES AND VERSES DEALING WITH BAPTISM IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, ALONG WITH BRIEF DEFINITIONS AND SOME INITIAL CONCLUSIONS

Matthew 28:19-20

"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

[Ed: Merrill begins his seven sermons with part II of the Great Commission, the part dealing with baptism; part II-baptism-constitutes the theme and content of his seven sermons]

It hath pleased the Father of Mercies to bestow on fallen man a revelation from heaven. In it is contained the scheme of grace, which brings life and immortality to light. It shows the way by which to escape the wrath to come, and to find the favor of God. All scripture is given by his inspiration and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Till the human heart be humbled, in measure, man feels not his need of divine teaching; nor will he make the scriptures the man of his counsel. But, my brethren, and people, it is doubtless the case that many of you possess a willingness to have your principles and practice squared by the word and testimony of Jesus Christ. My text contains some of the last words of our great High-Priest.

It is the general orders which he gave his first apostles and left for the instruction, practice and comfort of all their successors, to the end of the world. In the verse which precedes my text, Christ informs us that all power in heaven and in earth is given unto him.

His words, therefore, are clothed with authority. May we hear, and fear, and be obedient. Where the word of a king is, there is power; and who may say unto the King of Zion, What dost thou?

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF BELIEVERS

So far as we be Christians, all that is necessary to enforce obedience is, to know what Christ would have us to do. Perhaps not a passage of all the oracles of truth contains more extensive instruction than do the words of my text. The commands are exceedingly broad; the Baptismal Institution comprehends all obedient disciples; and the comforting promise is durable as the world.

THE THREE PARTS TO THE GREAT COMMISSION

In my text, Christ Jesus, the Head of the church and Lord of all, constituted his present and succeeding disciples to be apostles unto all nations. It contains their commission and general and particular orders. In it they are directed—

I. To go and disciple all nations.

II. To baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

III. He directs these newly constituted apostles, and all their successors, to teach their baptized disciples to observe all things whatsoever he had given in commandment.

Lastly. For their encouragement and comfort, he adds, And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

I suppose it will be expedient, and with me it is an indispensable duty, that I lay each of these propositions as fairly and as fully before you as I can. But I shall not observe the order in which they lie in my text, which is as I have just stated them. For I have many things to say unto you, in agreement with my text, but fear that you are not, all of you, able to bear them now.

We shall therefore begin with the **II** [2nd Part of the Great Commission] which contains Christ's command to baptize, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, those who shall be disciplined of all nations.

MERRILL'S GOAL IN THE FIRST SERMON

TO GIVE THE DEFINITION AND DESIGN OF BAPTISM FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT

Nor do I purpose to call your attention, at this time, to the whole which is implied in this proposition. But what I purpose is, to **define** a few words which appertain to the ordinance, and then collect the scripture account of baptism, with some other texts, which may throw light upon the subject.

Afterwards, in discourses which may follow, I may **produce evidence that my definition of baptism is accurate and just**; and show **how the apostles and primitive Christians understood this matter, and how they practiced**. When this is done, it will be easily seen, what is the outward and visible part of baptism; and then the **purport** [meaning-intention], **end** and **design** of the institution may call for some attention.

Before I proceed to open, illustrate and confirm these particulars, I have several things to say unto you. For I wish you to attend to the subject without partiality and without hypocrisy. I pray God to remove darkness and all prejudice from your minds, that you may, indeed, come to the law and to the testimony of Jesus Christ in this matter.

THE ANTICIPATED DISPLEASURE AND SHOCK OF RELATIVES AND FRIENDS UPON THE PREACHING AND PRINTING OF THESE SERMONS

You will consider me as under the strongest worldly inducements to continue to believe and practice as I have heretofore done; for should I, after mature consideration, be constrained to believe and practice differently, you will be released from all legal obligations to afford me any farther support;

My relations will, the most of them, probably be greatly shocked and displeased at the report; many, whom I highly value as Christians, and numbers of them zealous preachers of the gospel, will, it may be, consider me as lost, and worse than lost, to the church, and world:

And, besides this, multitudes will, no doubt, say all manner of evil against me. All this being true, with a thousand other connected smaller evils, and nothing of a worldly nature in prospect, save what is contained in the promise of Jesus Christ, you cannot but conclude that I shall proceed no farther in this matter than I am obliged to, in following the Lamb of God whithersoever he goeth.

Having said thus much with respect to myself, I will still add, that, should a change in my belief and practice, respecting the subject on hand, bring me to a more full belief and practice of the truth, I shall, on the whole, be a gainer.

But, should a change take place, and I be called to sustain all the evils which I may calculate upon, and after all be plunged myself into a hurtful and bewildering error, surely all the meek and lowly in heart would rather commiserate than revile me.

THE INFALLIBLE TEST

ALL ARGUMENTS MUST CONFORM TO SCRIPTURE

Another thing I would mention to you, so that the subject may, if it possibly can, meet your minds without prejudice. You ought not to fix your judgments, nor found your belief, upon the arguments or confessions of great and good men, any farther than such arguments and confessions are conformed with the scriptures of the truth.

Should we hearken to what the greatest and best of men have confessed and affirmed of the subject which we are about to consider, and have our belief and practice corresponding with what they have written, the matter would, most evidently, go against what we have, in time past, both believed and practiced.

For they have very generally, or very many of them, if not all of them, confessed, or affirmed, however their practice may have been, that immersion was the mode practiced by the apostles and primitive church. This I purpose to prove to you in its proper place.

What I have more to add, before I proceed to the main business, is, to state a few plain truths.

SIX BASIC TRUTHS CONCERNING BAPTISM

1. Baptism is a positive institution, about which we can know nothing, as to its being a Christian ordinance, but from what Christ, and those inspired by his Spirit, have taught us.
2. All which we are required to believe and practice, with respect to the Christian ordinance of baptism, is declared to us by Jesus Christ and his forerunner and apostles.
3. When Jesus Christ first instituted the ordinance of baptism, he, no doubt, delivered his mind so clearly and fully upon the subject, that his immediate disciples and apostles understood and practiced as he would have them.
4. Every thing which hath, by the precepts and commandments of men, been added since, is distinct from the ordinance, and makes no part of it.
5. No man, or body of men, have any more authority to add to this ordinance, or to diminish from it, than they have to institute a new one and call it Christ's.
6. Whenever, and wherever, this ordinance is so changed, as to lose the intent of the Institutor, then and there the ordinance is lost, and becomes no Christian ordinance at all.

MERRILL'S PROCEDURAL PLAN FOR THE FIRST SERMON

Having laid these preparatory observations, remarks and plain truths before you, we proceed to consider the subject now on hand, which is—Christ's command to baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, those who shall be disciples of all nations.

What is proposed for the present discourse is—

1. To define a few words which appertain to the ordinance of baptism. Then—
2. To collect the scripture account of baptism, together with some other texts, which may throw light upon the subject. Afterwards, in some following discourses, we may—
3. Produce evidence that my definition of baptism is accurate and just. Then show—
4. How the apostles and primitive church understood this matter and how they practiced. When this is done, it will be easily seen—
5. What is the outward and visible part of Christian baptism. Then—*Lastly*. The purport, and design of the baptismal institution may call for our attention. Agreeably to what is proposed, we are—

DEFINITIONS OF WORDS

A. To define a few words which appertain to the ordinance of baptism. These are

1. *Baptisterion*, Greek; *baptisterium*, and *lavacrum*, Latin; a font, a bath, a washing place, a vessel to wash the body in; English.
2. *Baptisma* and *baptismos*, Greek; *Baptisma* and *lotio*, also *ablutia saura*, Latin; baptism, washing, sacred, ceremonial washing; English.
3. *Baptisles*, Greek; *baptista*, Latin; one who dips, a Baptizer; English.
4. *Baptizo*, Greek; *Baptize*, *mergo*, *lavo*, Latin; to Baptize, to dip all over, to wash; English.
5. *Louo*, Greek; *lavo*, Latin; to wash, to rinse, to bathe; English.

COLLECTION OF ALL NEW TESTAMENT REFERENCES ON BAPTISM AND RELATED TEXTS

B. We are to collect the scripture account of baptism, together with some other texts which may throw light upon the subject.

VERSES RELATING TO JOHN THE BAPTIST'S BAPTISM [28 Scriptural References]

We will begin with those passages which speak of the baptism of John.

1. *Matt. 3:5,6,7*. "Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers" & c.
2. Verse 11. "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance," & c.
3. Verses 13,14,15,16. "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan, unto John, to be baptized of him: but John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and, comest thou to me? And Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness: then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water."
4. *Matt. 21: 25,26,27*. "The baptism of John, whence was it, from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we should say, From heaven, he will say unto us, Why did ye not believe him? But, if we shall say, Of men we fear the people, for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered Jesus and said, We cannot tell," & c.

5. *Mark* 1:4,5. "John did baptize in the wilderness and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him IN the river of Jordan, confessing their sins."

6. Verses 8,9,10. "I indeed have baptized you with water—And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John IN Jordan; and straightway coming up out of the water," & c.

7. *Mark* 11:30. "The baptism of John, was it from heaven or of men?"

8. *Luke* 3:3. "And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins."

9. Verses 7,8. "Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers----- bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance."

10. Verse 12. "Then came also publicans to be baptized."

11. Verse 16. "I indeed baptize you with water."

12. Verse 21. "Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also, being baptized," & c.

13. *Luke* 7:29,30. "And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him."

14. *Luke* 20:4. "The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?"

15. *John* 1:25,26. "Why baptizest thou, then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet? John answered them, saying, I baptize with water."

16. Verse 28. "Beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing."

17. Verse 31. "That he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water."

18. Verse 33. "He that sent me to baptize with water."

19. *John* 3:23. "And John also was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, because there was much water there; and they came and were baptized."

20. *John* 4:1. "The Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John."

21. *John* 10: 40. "Beyond Jordan, into the place where John at first baptized."

22. *Acts* 1:5. "John truly baptized with water."

23. Verse 22. "Beginning from the baptism of John."

24. *Acts* 10:37. "After the baptism which John preached."

25. *Acts* 11:16. "John indeed baptized with water."

26. *Acts* 12:24. "When John had first preached, before his coming, the baptism of repentance to all the people."

27. *Acts* 17:25. "He [Apollos] spake and taught diligently, the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John."

28. *Acts* 19:3,4. "Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him, which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus."

REFERENCES TO BAPTISM AS TAUGHT BY CHRIST AND/OR THE APOSTLES REFERRING TO CHRIST'S TEACHING ABOUT BAPTISM

[31 Scriptural References-Several passages use the word "baptism" numerous times]

We will next turn our attention to those texts which mention Christ's baptism.

1. *Matt.* 28:19. "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."
2. *Mark* 16:15,16. "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature: he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved."
3. *John* 3:5. "Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit," &c.
4. Verse 22. "After these things, came Jesus and his disciples in the land of Judea, and there tarried with them and baptized."
5. Verse 26. "Behold the same baptizeth, and all men come to him."
6. *John* 4:1,2. "When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples."
7. *Acts* 3:38. "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
8. *Acts* 2:41. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized."
9. *Acts* 8:12,13. "But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed also, and when he was baptized," &c.
10. *Acts* 8:16. "Only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."
11. Verses 36,37,38,39. "And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch said, See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still. And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water," &c.
12. *Acts* 9:18. "And he [Saul] arose, and was baptized."
13. *Acts* 10:47,48. "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord."
14. *Acts* 16:15. "And when she [Lydia] was baptized, and her household."
15. Verse 33. "And was baptized, he [the jailer] and all his, straightway."
16. *Acts* 18:8. "And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed, and were baptized."
17. *Acts* 19:5. "When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."
18. *Acts* 22:19. "And now, why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
19. *Rom.* 6:3,4. "Know ye not, that so many of as were baptized into Christ Jesus, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."
20. *I Cor.* 1:13,14,15,16,17. "Were ye baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius; lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. And I baptized also the house of Stephanas: Besides, I know not whether I baptized any other; for Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel."
21. *I Cor.* 6: 11. "But ye are washed."

22. *I Cor.* 12:13. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." *This intends, as some suppose, the Baptism of the Holy Ghost.
23. *I Cor.* 15:29. "Else what shall they do that are baptized for the dead?"
24. *Gal.* 3:27. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ."
25. *Eph.* 4:5. "One baptism."
26. *Eph.* 5:26. "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word."
27. *Col.* 2:12. "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him."
28. *Titus* 3:5. "According to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."
29. *Heb.* 6:2 "The doctrine of baptisms. **It is not certain that this hath any reference to Christian baptism. If it have, it must not refer to that only. See Doddridge in Loc.
30. *Heb.* 10:22. "Our bodies washed with pure water."
31. *I Peter* 3:21. "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth now save us, (not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.)"

SUMMARY OF VERSES ON BAPTISM

BELIEVERS ARE BOUND BY THE SCRIPTURE. WE MUST ACCEPT ONLY WHAT THE SCRIPTURE STATES, NOTHING MORE, NOTHING LESS

These, I believe, are all the texts in the New Testament which have a plain and obvious reference to either the baptism of John or of Christ. They afford us the sum of all the knowledge which we can have of either the mode or subjects of Christian baptism.

REFERENCES WHERE "WASHING" IS MENTIONED

[31 Scriptural References]

What these passages say, we may believe; what they do not countenance, we may not believe. I will now set before you those passages where washing is mentioned, and the Greek words which are used.

1. *Matt.* 6:17. "But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thy head, and (*nipsai*) wash thy face."
2. *Matt.* 15:2. "Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they (*niptontai*) wash not their hands when they eat bread."
3. *Matt.* 27:24. "When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water and (*apenipsato*) washed his hands."
4. *Mark* 7:2. "And when they saw some of his disciples with defiled, that is to say with (*aniptois*) unwashen hands."
5. Verse 3. "For the Pharisees and all the Jews, except they (*nipsontai*) wash their hands oft, they eat not," &c.
6. Verse 4. "When they come from the market, except they (*baptisontai*) wash, they eat not; and many other things there be which they have received to hold, as the (*baptismous*) washings of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables."
7. Verse 5. "But eat bread with (*aniptois*) unwashen hands."
8. Verse 8. "For, laying aside the commandments of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the (*baptismous*) washing of pots and cups."
9. *Luke* 5:2. "And they (*apeplunan*) were washing their nets."

10. *Luke* 7:38. "And stood at his feet, behind him, weeping, and began (*brechein*) to wash his feet."

11. Verse 44. "And he turned to the woman, and said to Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet; but she (*ebrexe*) hath washed my feet with tears."

12. *Luke* 11:38. "And when the Pharisees saw it, that he had not first (*ebaptisthe*) washed before dinner."

13. *John* 9:7. "And said unto him, Go, and (*nipsai*) wash in the pool of Siloam;-- he went his way therefore and (*enipsato*) washed."

14. Verse 15. "Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight: he said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I (*enipsamen*) washed and do see."

15. *John* 13:5. "After that he poured water in a basin, and began (*niptein*) to wash the disciples' feet."

16. Verse 6. "And Peter said unto him, Lord, dost thou (*nipteis*) wash my feet?"

17. Verse 5(sic.). "Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never (*nipses*) wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I (*nipso*) wash thee not, thou hast no part with me."

18. Verse 10. "Jesus saith to him, He that is (*oleloumenos*) washed, needeth not save (*nipsasthai*) to wash his feet," &c.

19. Verse 14. "If I then, your Lord and Master, (*enipsa*) have washed your feet, ye also ought (*niptein*) to wash one another's feet."

20. *Acts* 9:37. "And it came to pass in those that she was sick and died, whom when they had (*lousantes*) washed."

21. *Acts* 16:33. "And he took them the same hour of the night, and (*elousen*) washed their stripes."

22. *Acts* 22:16. "And now, why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and (*apolousal*) wash away thy sins."

23. *I Cor.* 6:11. "And such were some of you; but ye (*apelousagthe*) are washed."

24. *Eph.* 5:26. "That he might and cleanse it with (*loutro*) the washing of water by the word."

25. *I Tim.* 5:10. "If she (*enipsen*) have washed the saints' feet."

26. *Titus* 3:5. "By the (*loutrou*) washing of regeneration."

27. *Heb.* 9:10. "Which stood only in meats and drinks, and (*diaphorois baptismois*) divers washing."

28. *Heb.* 10:22. "Having our bodies (*leloumenoi*) washed with pure water."

29. *II Peter* 2:22. "But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb—and the sow that (*lousamene*) was washed," &c.

30. *Rev.* 1:5. "Unto him that loved us and (*lousanti*) us from our sins in his own blood."

31. *Rev.* 7:14. "These are they who came out of the great tribulation and (*ephunan*) have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb." **Pluno* properly signifies to wash clothes; as *louo*, the body; and *nipite*, the face and hands.

BIBLICAL REFERENCES TO SPRINKLING

[Six Verses]

Those passages which make mention of SRINKLING, with the Greek words used, now call for your attention.

1. *Heb.* 9:13 "For if the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer (*rantizousa*) sprinkling the unclean," &c.

2. Verse 19. "He (Moses) took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and (*errantise*) sprinkled both the book and all the people."
3. *Heb.* 10:22. "Having our hearts (*errantismenoi*) sprinkled from an evil conscience."
4. *Heb.* 11:28. "Through faith he kept the passover and the (*proschusin*) sprinkling of blood."
5. *Heb.* 12:24. "And to the blood of (*rantismou*) sprinkling."
6. *I Peter* 1:2. "And to the (*rantismon*) sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ."

SCRIPTURAL REFERENCES TO "DIP"

[Five Verses]

Lastly. You will now give attention for a moment those passages of scripture where the word DIP is mentioned.

1. *Luke* 16:24. "That he may (*bapse*) dip his finger in water."
2. *Matt.* 26:23. "And he answered and said, He that (*embapsas*) dippeth his hand with me in the dish."
3. *Mark* 14:20. "And he answered and said unto them, It is one of the twelve that (*embaptomenos*) dippeth with me in the dish."
4. *John* 13:26. "And he answered, He it is to whom I shall give a sop when I have (*bapsas*) dipped it; and when he had (*embapsas*) dipped the sop," &c.
5. *Rev.* 19:13. "And he was clothed with a vesture (*behammenon*) dipped in blood."

CONCLUSION OF FIRST SERMON

SOME DISCERNING OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE BIBICAL WORDS THAT ARE USED TO DEFEND OPPOSING MODES OF BAPTISM

A few remarks on what we have passed over will close the present discourse.

1. We see that all the words which appertain to the ordinance of baptism, signify the same which they would, provided immersion were the scripture mode.
2. We see the subject of baptism is very repeatedly mentioned in the New Testament. It is brought to view expressly in about threescore [60] passages.
3. Whenever baptism is mentioned, and neither the word *baptizo* nor *baptismos* is used, the word substituted intimates that bathing or washing the body all over, is the mode; for this is the signification of *louo*, which is the word, and the only word, which the scriptures employ in the room of *baptizo*.
4. Whenever *baptizo* or *baptismos* is translated washing, a ceremonial and not a common washing is manifestly intended.
5. We find that in all the places where sprinkling is mentioned, the original words, are *rantizo*, and *proschusin*, are very different from *baptizo* and *baptismos*.
6. You will be pleased to observe that wherever we find, through the New Testament, the word, to dip, it is from the same theme whence *baptizo* comes.
7. We see that everything looks as though *immersion* might be the *mode*; and, as for *sprinkling*, there is, to say the least, nothing which *looks* like it.

SERMON II

SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE THAT DANIEL MERRILL'S DEFINITION OF BAPTISM IS BIBICALLY CORRECT

Matthew 28:19-20

"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

THE TRUTH CAN BE KNOWN AS WE SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

The business which we are now upon depends very much upon the definitions of certain words, and principally upon the definition of the word *baptize*, and upon the certain evidence of such definition or definitions being accurate and just. For we can no otherwise understand what God the Lord saith unto us, than by knowing the import of the words by which he is pleased to communicate his will.

The great Teacher who came from God, hath doubtless communicated his mind so explicitly that the humble in heart may know the common matters which relate to faith and practice. If we devoutly search the scriptures, and seek wisdom as silver, and search for her as for hid treasures, God will make us to understand knowledge, and to serve him with acceptable practice.

The Spirit of the Lord hath most certainly chosen acceptable words, words of definite meaning. We are to search out their signification, and to be obedient. I cannot judge of their signification for you, nor can I answer for the judgment which you shall make up, nor can you for me.

I am by my office obliged to exhibit, so far as I can, all those divine truths which relate to faith and practice. I am obliged to believe and practice according to the best light which I can gather, or have in any way afforded me. You are under similar obligations.

THE GOAL

THE KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE OF THE TRUTH

While we proceed, I wish you to believe fully two things; one is, that truth, if believed and practiced, will not, on the whole, harm you. The other is, that the most sure way to acquire truth is, to be of a humble and obedient mind, ready to receive the truth. For God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.

In the preceding discourse, we attended to the definition of certain words which appertain to the ordinance of baptism; and then collected the scripture account of baptism, together with some other texts which are supposed to throw light upon the subject under consideration.

In this discourse, we are—to produce the most direct evidence that my definitions of baptism and to baptize are accurate and just. The definition which I gave of baptism was, a *washing, a sacred, a ceremonial* washing. I will now add to this definition that it is immersion, or dipping one all over in water.

The definition which I gave of the word *baptize* is, to dip all over, to wash. I will also add, that the word signifies, to wash the body, or any thing, all over. What I mean is, that these are the significations of the words *baptisma* and *baptize*, which are rendered baptism, and, to baptize.

EVIDENCE THAT SUPPORTS DANIEL MERRILL'S DEFINITION

I am now to produce evidence that this is a just and accurate definition of the words. You will observe, that this is quite different from the *subjects* of baptism; that is another subject which must be attended to in its place.

The evidence which I have to offer, in order to fix precisely the just sense and meaning of the words *baptism* and to *baptize*, is contained in the following facts.

A.

GREEK LEXICON, CONCORDANCE AND ENGLISH DICTIONARIES

The first comprises what the Greek Lexicon, Concordance, and two English dictionaries testify of the words.

1. **Schrevelius's Lexicon** testifies, the import of *baptism* is *lotio*, washing. Also that *baptize* signifies to *wash*, to put under water, or under any other liquid thing; to sink, dip in, duck or plunge over head, to immerse.

2. **Butterworth's Concordance** says, Baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament, instituted by Jesus Christ, whereby a professed believer in Christ is, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, immersed in and covered with water, and then raised up out of it as a sign of his fellowship with Christ in his death, burial and resurrection, and a sign of his own death to sin, and resurrection to newness of life here, and to life eternal hereafter. The same Concordance defines the word to baptize thus—to dip, immerse, or plunge.

3. **Entick's Dictionary** says, that—*Baptism* is a sacrament that admits into the church. — *Baptizer*, one who christens, or dips.—*Baptistry*, the place of baptizing at, a font.----*Baptize*, to christen, plunge, overwhelm.—*Baptized*, admitted to baptism, dipt, &c.

4. **Bailey's Dictionary**, speaking of baptism, or rather the place in which persons were baptized, says, *Baptistry* is either the place or vessel in which persons are baptized. In ancient times, this being performed by immersion, the persons so initiated went into a river and were plunged.

But in the time of Constantine the Great, chapels or places on purpose to baptize in, were built in great cities, which was performed in the eastern and warmer countries by dipping the persons; but in process of time, in the western and colder countries, sprinkling was substituted in place of dipping; which was the origin of our fonts in churches.

B.

CIRCUMSTANTIAL FACTS RELATING TO BAPTISM

I will repeat some of the attendant or circumstantial facts, which have relation to the ordinance of baptism, that you may look at them and judge for yourselves, whether the preceding definitions appear just.

1. **WHERE JOHN BAPTIZED:** John baptized IN the river Jordan. He was baptizing in Enon, because there was much water there.

2. **THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WORD THAT DESCRIBES THE BAPTISMAL LOCATION**

The name of the place, baptism was administered, is *baptisterion*, or *baptistry*, which signifies a place in which to wash the body all over.

3. **THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WORDS DESCRIBING BAPTISM**

Baptism signifies to dip, plunge, immerse, or wash the body all over in water. *Baptizer* signifies one who dips, plunges, or washes the body all over in water. *To baptize* signifies to

plunge under water, to dip, or to wash to body all over. *To be baptized* is to be plunged, immersed, or washed all over in water.

Does this whole matter, taking so many of the words, and some circumstances, and finding them all so well agreeing together, help you, in any degree, to the definition of the word *baptize*? Supposing these things be facts, and you had never had any prejudice for or against the word *baptize*, would you be able to gather the meaning of it from what hath been said?

OBJECTION BY PEDO-BAPTIZERS

There is an objection starting in the minds of some of you, which should be now obviated, lest in prejudice your minds from the truth. The objection is, do not the words signify some other things, as well as those which have been mentioned?

ANSWER TO OBJECTION

I have thought they did: but I have searched in several dictionaries, and read many authors upon the words, yet have not found one dictionary which has given a definition of the words different from what I have given; nor one author who has been able to show, that the true meaning of the words is any otherwise than what I have mentioned.

Besides, the very course of argumentation which Dr. Lathrop, Mr. Cleaveland and others have taken, by which to prove that *baptize* hath some other signification than to dip, immerse, to bury or overwhelm, is an implicit confession that they were not able to prove any such thing. It is also a strong presumptive argument, that no different signification can be found.

Their argument is this: *Bapto* signifies, in one instance, in the Old Testament, to wet with the dew of heaven. *Baptizo* is the offspring of *bapto*, and consequently may be taken in the same sense.

This argument is of the same weight with the following: My father believes in sprinkling, as being baptism: I am his offspring, and consequently I believe the same; when the fact is, I am largely convinced that it is no such thing. Would gentleman employ such an argument, did not their cause labor? Such an argument, when it stands, as it does, at the front of all their supported evidence, is an implicit confession, that they cannot prove what they wish to.*

*Since writing the above, I have met with *Cole's Latin Dictionary*, which gives one English of *baptize*, to *sprinkle*. It hath, indeed, been matter of not little surprise, that all modern dictionary compilers have not given one definition of the word *baptize*, to *sprinkle*; for it, indeed, is one signification, which the practice of many Christians, for two or three hundred years past, has given to the word.

Had all lexicons, and all dictionaries, for the two last centuries, borne united testimony, that one sense of the word *baptize* was to *sprinkle*, it would not have been half so unaccountable as it now is that they have so generally retained the ancient and primitive significations, and refused to adopt the modern one, which prejudice, convenience and modern practice have given to it. Indeed, could a thousand modern lexicons and dictionaries be found, which should say, to *sprinkle* is one sense in which *baptize* is used, it would all come to nothing, unless they should testify that this is one of the ancient and primitive significations and even then, it would come to no more than this, that the word is less determinate, than it is now supposed to be. Could they do this, it would be still nothing, unless they prove the scriptures use it in this sense, which they cannot do. But if they could, it would not be fully to their point, unless they can show that it is thus used in application to the ordinance. [end of footnote]

This matter will have farther attention in another place.

C.
BAPTISMOS AND BAPTIZO
THE TWO TRANSLATIONS

The words *baptismos* and *baptizo* have two, and only two, translations in the New Testament: These two are, *baptism* and *washing*. They are very generally rendered, *baptism*, or to *baptize*. This is their usual translation. But several times in *Mark*, *Luke*, and the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, they are rendered washing.

As the washing of pots, and cups, and brazen vessels and tables, and seats on which they reclined, when they are meat; and *diaphorois baptismois* in Hebrew is rendered *divers washings*.

In the law given by Moses, the people were, on many occasions, to bathe their bodies, and wash their clothes in water; and also to put their pots and cups and brazen vessels into water, that they might be cleansed from ceremonial uncleanness.

To these legal ceremonies the Pharisees had added traditional ones, which were, no doubt, observed in the same manner as those appointed by the Lord. If so, then the washing of pots, &c. in *Mark*, was putting them into water, as the command was to do, Lev. 11:32 32.

The divers washings in *Heb.* ix. 10. were ceremonial washings, or bathings, in which the body was washed, or dipped. *Numbers.* 19:19. This being the case, does not this matter go to confirm, or determine, what is the definition of baptism?

D.
TESTIMONIALS CONCERNING THE MEANING OF THE
WORD *BAPTIZO*

We will now mention a few noted witnesses, who have given their testimony as to the meaning of the word *baptizo*.

1. CALVIN: Calvin, a very warm opposer of the Baptists, shall, as a witness in this cause, speak first. His testimony is, "Howbeit, the very word of baptizing signifieth to dip."

2. ZANCHIUS: Zanchius, as brought forward by the Rev. Mr. Butterworth, shall be my next witness. He says, *baptizo* is to immerse, plunge under, to overwhelm with water.

3. DR. OWEN: I could quote, or bring forward, a multitude of witnesses, and all from our own order, the Pedobaptists, to prove the same point. But in the mouth of two or three witnesses, if they be good ones, every word shall be established. We will therefore produce but one more; that shall be good Dr. Owen. "For original and nature signification of it (*baptizo*) signifies to dip, to plunge."

E.
THE USE OF THE GREEK WORD *LOUO* HAS THE SAME
MEANING AS THE WORD *BAPTIZO*

I will mention to you a Greek word, which Paul repeatedly uses, as signifying the same thing as *baptizo*, and where he means the same thing, namely, baptism.

In *I Cor.* 6:11. Paul speaking to the Corinthians of divers kinds of vile sinners, says "And such were some of you; but ye are washed," &c.

Eph. 5:26. That he might sanctify and cleanse it (the church) with the *washing* of water, by the word.

Heb. 10:22. Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our *bodies washed* with pure water.

The Pedobaptists acknowledge that *washing*, in these texts, means *baptism*, and I know not that any of them deny it. Baptism and washing appear to be used as synonymous words, or as words signifying the same thing. If this be the case, then the two words, *baptizo* and *louo*, which are translated, one to baptize, and the other to wash, mean the same thing, and are thus intended by the Apostle.

Then, provided we can determine what *louo* means, we can also determine what is the signification of *baptizo*. This word, *louo*, signifies to wash, and to bathe the body in water; for thus it is generally if not universally used, and from it is *loutron*, a bath, or place to wash the body in.

Besides, the word *louo*, is never used in the New Testament, nor any where else, to my knowledge, to signify either sprinkling or common washing. Its appropriate sense appears to be, bathing, or washing any thing all over; as you may see, *Acts* 9:37. and 16:33; *II Peter* 2:22; which are the only places where I recollect the word *louo* is used, save where the ordinance of baptism appears to be referred to.

This being the case, the matter appears just as it would, provided the ordinance included the bathing of the body in water. This is letting scripture interpret itself; and the interpretation which it gives is, baptism is bathing, or washing the body in water. This, therefore, may help you a little towards determining in your minds what is the signification of *baptizo*. For *louo* is repeatedly used in scripture, as importing the same mode of washing which is commanded in the ordinance of baptism.

F.

PAUL'S DESCRIPTION OF THE MODE OF BAPTIZING SUPPORTS IMMERSION

Paul's description of the mode of baptizing, or of what is done to those who are baptized, may afford you farther light upon the subject.

Paul brings this matter up to the Roman and Colossian Christians, as a matter well known to them. To the former he says, *Rom.* 6:4. Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. To the other he says, *Col.* 2:12. Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him, through faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

Upon these texts, Dr. Doddridge has the following note, "It seems the part of candor to confess, that here is an allusion to baptism by immersion, as was most usual in these early times." Here the good doctor says "as was *most usual*:" this I shall, by and by, explain to you."

In the mean time, you will please to pay due attention to what was done to those who were baptized, and which appears to be familiar to the Roman and Colossian Christians. The Apostle makes no remarks, and explains nothing to them, but speaks to them as though they would and did well understand what he meant, when he said, "We are buried with him by baptism unto death;" and, "Buried with him in baptism." It is plain fact, that Paul thus speaks, and it also appears, very plainly, that he had no apprehension but that he should be understood.

Bishop Hoadly's declaration appears to be much in point: 'If baptism,' says he, 'had been THEN,' *i.e.* in the apostles' days, 'performed as it is NOW among us, we should never have so much as heard of this form of expression, of dying, and rising again in this rite.'*(*Ten Letters*)

These things I have thought it my duty to lay before you, that I might assist you, by a number of plain facts, to form a judgment, each one for himself, what the meaning of baptism is, and what the word to *baptize* signifies.

THE EVIDENCE ALL FAVORS IMMERSION

I have still more light upon this subject, and shall, in the next discourse, lay it within your view. It will perhaps be, to some of you, more convincing that any thing which I have as yet exhibited. But previously I will make one observation, and it is this: all the evidence we have been exhibiting, we have on one side of the question; and, if I mistake not, none on the other to counteract it:

For if my memory and judgment be correct, the wisest and best of men, of our own denomination, have asserted, that these things are so. I do not say that all good men have; but the most learned have, and some who have appeared very pious.

But you will say, why have they not practiced differently, if they have thus believed? I am not answerable for their practice; but, of the Lord will, I shall, ere long, give you the reasons which they assign.

SOME CLEAR CONCLUSIONS FROM THE EVIDENCE THUS FAR PRESENTED

I shall only add, for the present, two or three consequences, and then leave the subject for your consideration.

1. THE HONEST TESTIMONY OF NOTED PEDO-BAPTISTS SUPPORTS THE BAPTIST POSITION

The Baptists have, against our practice, and for theirs, that kind of evidence which is, perhaps, in all cases but the present, considered the most unequivocal and certain. This evidence is given in by a cloud of witnesses, who, whilst they are bearing their testimony, condemn themselves every sentence they utter.

If these men, who are confessed by both sides to be both pious and learned, may be believed, the cause will most certainly be determined against us; for there was never a clearer case. They unitedly testify that the scripture mode of baptism is immersion, but omit the practice. In this they condemn themselves.

2. THE SCRIPTURE SENSE OF THE WORDS DESCRIBING BAPTISM SUSTAINS ONLY IMMERSION AS THE BIBLICAL PRACTICE

The scripture sense, and, for aught appears, the only sense, of baptism, is, dipping, immersion, burying in water, being overwhelmed, and the like.

THE DILEMMA PEDO-BAPTISTS FACE

We are brought to this dilemma, either to commence Baptists, as to the mode, or do as our fathers have done, confess the truth in theory, and neglect it in practice.

SERMON III
THE ADMINISTRATION AND PRACTICE OF
BAPTISM DURING THE APOSTOLIC AGE AND
THE PRACTICE OF BAPTISM DOWN THROUGH
THE CENTURIES AFTER THE APOSTOLIC AGE
VERIFY IMMERSION AS THE CORRECT MODE
OF THE CHURCHES

ALSO

EVIDENCE FROM IMMERSERS AND SPRINKLERS THAT IMMERSION IS THE N. T. METHOD, ALONG WITH SOME SHOCKING CONCLUSIONS FOR PEDOBAPTISTS AND IMPERATIVE ACTIONS THEY NEED TO TAKE IN VIEW OF THE OVERWHELMING EVIDENCE

MATTHEW 28:19-20

[Sermon Three is a Continuation of Sermon Two, with a Powerful Addendum Concerning what Honest PedoBaptists Should Do in Light of the Overwhelming Evidence]

"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen".

Men, brethren, and fathers, we are still upon a very important subject—a subject which highly concerns us—a subject in which our feelings, our reputation, and our peace too, may not be a little concern. Many things, not to say every thing, call upon us not to go to fast; and, at the same time, obedience to our Lord forbids all backwardness, in pursuing where his truth and Spirit lead us.

TRUTH MUST DICTATE THE ANSWER CONCERNING THE MODE OF
BAPTISM

All which I request of you is, with candor hear, with readiness obey, what truth shall dictate. Should we, after long and serious deliberation, be obliged to believe and practice differently from what we have heretofore done, we shall be much exposed to two things: one is, to be reviled; the other, to revile again. What we shall need is, patience to bear the one, and grace that we may avoid the other.

THE HUMAN TENDENCY TO MAKE OURSELVES, NOT THE SCRIPTURES, THE DETERMINATION OF PRACTICE

Perhaps human nature is more inclined to nothing than to an overbearing spirit. It is perfectly consonant with human nature to make ourselves, and not the scriptures, the standard of both faith and practice. The natural consequence of this is, censure against all who dare to think, or act, as we do not.

To guard you against unreasonable and common prejudice, I will, for your consideration, suggest a thought, which we may do well to remember; and it is this: many, who shall believe and practice as we have long done, may be as honest and faithful as we then were.

This being true, the following consequence is plain, that the line of conduct which the Baptists ought to have practiced, in months and years past, towards us, the same, if we be Baptists, will it become us to pursue with relation to others. It requires not much foresight to discover, that we shall need much of that wisdom which is profitable to direct.

Whilst it may be indispensable with us to use every prudent mean to diffuse that light which God may graciously afford us, it will be our wisdom to do every thing in such a manner as not to heighten, but, if possible, to lower the prejudices of good people.

THE DESIRE THAT TRUTH MIGHT ALWAYS PREVAIL

Whilst you, my dear friends and people, know that light chaseth away the darkness, and that truth will ultimately prevail against every error; I solicit your candour and prayerful attention, that error may not be retained, or prevail against any of us, to our wounding.

Our attention hath already been called to the definition of a number of words which relate to the ordinance of baptism, to the scripture account of baptism, together with some other texts, which were supposed to throw light upon the subject, and also to some evidence in support of the given definitions.

A.

THE ADMINISTRATION AND PRACTICE OF BAPTISM DURING THE APOSTOLIC AGE WAS SOLELY BY IMMERSION

[BAPTISM DURING THE APOSTOLIC AGE]

As the great question turns upon what is commanded, and as that cannot be otherwise known than by making sure the import of the words used, we shall therefore search for additional light and certainty, by inquiring how the apostles and primitive Christians understood this matter, and how they practiced.

If this can be made plain, then, perhaps, your minds will be satisfied, and your judgments made up. I proceed to lay the evidence before you.

There appears no necessity of spending time to produce evidence that the apostles understood the matter to be as I have proved to you that it was: for they, no doubt, understood the words which Christ spake, and the commands which he gave: besides, if the apostles and primitive church practiced thus, it is evident that they thus understood it; for doubtless they, especially the apostles, were honest men, and practiced as they understood Jesus Christ to have directed them.

TRUTH ALWAYS THE CRITERION FOR DECISION

I will here make two observations to you; and wish you to remember them. The first is, no person should, especially in important matters make up his judgment, that any particular subject is true till he has evidence of its truth.

The other is, the best proof which the nature of any case admits of, may and ought to be considered as evidence, and so received by us, as to those things we are called to believe and practice.

There are different degrees of evidence: the highest kind produces knowledge. When the evidence is small, it produces a weak and dubious belief. But where it is such that, on supposition the thing be true, the evidence could not be greater than it is, there we are obliged to yield our assent, and we do violence to our reason if we do not believe.

The evidence, which we have with respect to the practice of the apostles in the manner of baptizing, differs in degree, and, in some measure, in kind, from the evidence which we have respecting the practice of the church in later ages as to the same matter.

But if we have, with respect to the practice of both, the best evidence which the different cases admit of, we are under obligation to believe the evidence good, and the facts true, which are supported by it.

We have much the same kind of evidence with respect to the practice of the apostles, which we have as to the practice of the church for many ages after them. Mr. Baxter, bishop Hoadly, and others, testify, that the apostolic practice was, immersion. We have, moreover, as to their practice, a much higher kind of evidence. In support of their practice, I shall produce the best kind of evidence, and afterwards, while speaking of the practice of the church in succeeding ages, may occasionally bring forward some of the other kind of evidence, in support of the apostles' practice.

1. THE USE OF THE UNCOMMON WORDS FOR BAPTISM BY THE APOSTLES IS EVIDENCE THAT BAPTISM WAS SOLELY BY IMMERSION.

As to the practice of the apostles, in the administration of baptism, I observe, we have in the scriptures four distinct sources of evidence. The first is this. When baptism is mentioned by the disciples and apostles, and the common word is not used, they uniformly employ one particular word, and this word is of very determinate signification, and expresses the bathing, or washing, of the body in water, as *Heb. 10:22*: Having "our bodies (*teloumenoi*) washed with pure water." *Acts 22:16*: "Arise and be baptized and (*apolousai*) wash away thy sins." *I Cor. 6:11*. "But ye are (*apolousasthe*) washed." By the determinate signification of this word, their practice appears to be immersion.

2. THE COMMAND TO THE APOSTLES TO DIP, IMMERSE AND PLUNGE IS EVIDENCE THAT BAPTISM WAS SOLELY BY IMMERSION.

The apostles were commanded to dip, immerse, or plunge all over in water, the persons whom they admitted to this ordinance. This is evident from the determinate signification of the word to baptize. Says the command, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them, &c.

We have before proved what is the signification of this word," and consequently what Christ commanded his disciples, when we sent them to baptize. I do not now say that the apostles immersed any; but this is what I say, they were commanded to do. I leave it for you to determine, whether they did, or whether they did not.

3. THE SIGNIFICATION OF THE WORD USED IN BAPTISM IS EVIDENCE THAT BAPTISM WAS SOLELY BY IMMERSION

I observe to you, that the New Testament, wherever it speaks of the apostles baptizing any, says they immersed them, or dipped them all over in water. For this is the plain, literal and

common, if not the only signification of the word. I still leave it with you to determine whether the apostles did, or did not, practice thus.

Lest some of you may have forgotten what I have before proved to you, and consequently entertained some doubt whether baptism may not sometime signify the application of water in a different way; we will make two or three observations.

SOME OBSERVATIONS FROM THE USE OF WATER IN REGARDS TO BAPTISM

a. THE COMMON SIGNIFICATION OF THE WORD FOR WASH MEANS TO IMMERSE

The plain, literal and common signification of the word is to immerse, overwhelm, dip, or to plunge all over. There appears to be no evidence that it is ever used so much as once, in any part of the Bible, to signify the application of water in any other sense. Even in those passages where I have in time past supposed that the meaning might be, and probably was, *washing* without immersion, the sense appears to be putting into water or immersion, and not what we commonly understand by the word washing.

Of this you may be convinced by considering the treatment to which the Jews were accustomed with respect to those vessels which were ceremonially unclean. They were to baptize them, or put them into water, as you may see, *Lev. 11:32*. "And upon whatsoever any of them, when they are dead, doth fall, it shall be unclean; whether it be any vessel of wood, or raiment, or skin, or sack; *whatsoever vessel* it be, wherein any work is done, it must be *put into water*, and it shall be unclean until the even; so it shall be cleansed."

b. CHRIST USED THE COMMON WORDS CONCERNING BAPTISM WHEN HE MANDATED THIS ORDINANCE, TERMS ALL HIS HEARERS CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD.

I will observe to you that it would most visibly be a reflection upon the great Teacher who came from God, to suppose that he should, when appointing a positive institution, use words aside from their plain and commonly received sense;

That too without giving any intimation of his using words in any sense differing from the common, especially when he was setting up a new institution, about which his most faithful followers could, in all succeeding generations, know nothing but from the words used in and about the institution. Does not all this appear plain and reasonable?

Now the Bible in the plain, literal and common sense of the words which it uses, says, the apostles dipped, plunged or immersed all such as they admitted to baptism. You will judge for yourselves whether the apostles practiced thus, or whether they did not.

4. PAUL'S TEACHING TO THE BELIEVERS IN ROME [ROMANS] AND COLOSSEE [COLOSSIANS] CONCERNING BAPTISM IS EVIDENCE THAT BAPTISM WAS SOLELY BY IMMERSION.

The practice of the apostles is farther illustrated and confirmed by what Paul tells the Roman and Colossian Christians, with respect to what took place when they received the ordinance of baptism. He says to the former, "We are buried with him by baptism into death:" To the other he says, "Buried with him *in* baptism."

Paul speaks of this matter as a thing perfectly understood by Christians in his time, and used it as an argument to promote their weanedness [no dependence upon] from the world, and growth in sanctification.

But have you not either passed over these and similar passages, without noticing them, or considered them rather hard to be understood? But how easy is it to understand them, provided

the apostles practiced as the scriptures say they did! I still leave it with you to determine for yourselves how the apostles practiced.

This is the best evidence which the nature of the subject admits. This matter, the apostles' practice, was transacted many ages since. We have the testimony of the scriptures as to what it was: this is evidence enough: however, we shall occasionally add the testimony of men.

We shall now attend to the practice of the church, and discover, of we can, how it was for ages after the apostles. The best evidence which this part of my subject admits, is that of human testimony.*

* Christ's promise to his apostles, to their successors, and to the Church may assure us, that the ordinance of baptism, by which his people should be distinguished from the world, would ever continue. Therefore could we know what the Church hath always practiced, especially that part of it which hath been most separate from the world, then their practice would afford a strong argument in favour of what the institution intended.

I by means rest the merit of the cause on this evidence. At the same time, it may weaken the prejudices of some, and be a mean of confirming others in the belief of the truth. It appears so plain a case that we can hardly refuse assent to it, that as the church hath for a series of ages practiced, so have they believed. When we shall see what their practice hath been, we shall the more easily concede that their belief hath been similar.

B.

THE ADMINISTRATION AND PRACTICE OF BAPTISM AFTER THE APOSTOLIC AGE-DOWN THROUGH THE CENTURIES-IS EVIDENCE THAT BAPTISM IS BY IMMERSION

[BAPTISM AFTER THE APOSTOLIC AGE]

What is now before us is to produce and to receive evidence relative to the practice of the primitive church. It is the following:

This evidence conflicts in the united testimony of both those who practiced the administration of the ordinance by immersion, and those who used sprinkling, and called it baptizing.

1. THE TESTIMONIES OF IMMERSERS AND SPRINKLERS IS EVIDENCE THAT BAPTISM IS SOLELY BY IMMERSION

a. THE TESTIMONY OF MOSHEIM: NOTED CHURCH HISTORIAN

Mosheim, a very noted church historian, and not very friendly to the Baptists, bears direct testimony that John, Christ's forerunner, and the church in the first ages of Christianity, practiced immersion as the mode of baptizing.

The following you may take as a sample of his evidence. "The exhortations of this respectable messenger (John) were not without effect; and those who, moved by his solemn admonition, had formed the resolution of correcting their evil dispositions, and amending their lives, were initiated into the kingdom of the Redeemer by the ceremony of immersion, or baptism."

Speaking of the church in the second century, he says, "The persons that were to be baptized, after they had repeated the creed, confessed and renounced their sins, and particularly the devil in his pompous allurements, were immersed under water, and received into Christ's kingdom by a solemn invocation of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, according to the *express command* of our blessed Lord. *(Century II, part 2, chap. 5, sect. 12)

The Doctor speaking of some inferior sects of the seventeenth century, and particularly of a sect called Collegiants, says, "Those adult persons that desire to be baptized, receive the sacrament of baptism according to the ancient and primitive manner of celebrating that institution, even by *immersion*." ** (Vol. 5, p. 488)

b. THE TESTIMONY OF BAILEY: ENGLISH DICTIONARY AUTHOR

Mr. Bailey, in his Etymological English dictionary, says, "In ancient times, this [baptism] being performed by immersion, the persons so initiated went into a river, &c. and were plunged."

c. THE TESTIMONY OF JOHN CALVIN: PROTESTANT REFORMER

John Calvin, in his *Institutions*, Book IV. chap. 15. sect. 19, says, "It is certain that the manner of dipping was used of the old church." Here are three substantial witnesses. These might be sufficient, seeing there is not one to be found who will, or dares, give direct and positive testimony against the truth of what these affirm.

But since there are an host who stand ready to give in their testimony, even against their own practice, we will hear what two more of them will testify relative to the important cause now on trial. These two shall be Dr. Cave and the famous Mr. Baxter.

d. THE TESTIMONY OF DR. CAVE: ANTIQUITY RESEARCHER

Dr. Cave, a great searcher into antiquity, says, "That the party baptized was wholly immersed, or put under water, which was the *common, constant* and *universal* custom of those times; whereby they did significantly express the great end and effects of baptism, representing Christ's death, burial and resurrection, and, in conformity thereto, our dying unto sin, the destruction of its power, and our resurrection to a new course of life," &c. ***[*Ten Letters*]

e. THE TESTIMONY OF DR. BAXTER: [PURITAN THEOLOGIAN]

Most remarkable is the testimony which Mr. Baxter gives to this truth, in the following words: "It is commonly confessed by us to the Baptists, (as our commentators declare) that in the apostles' time, the baptized were dipped over head in water, and this signified their profession both of believing the burial and resurrection of Christ, and of their own dying unto sin, and living, or rising again to newness of life, or being buried and risen again with Christ, as the apostle expoundeth baptism, Col. 2:12, and Rom. 6:4.

And though (saith he) we have thought it lawful to diffuse the manner of dipping and to use less water, yet we presume not to change the use and signification of it; so then he that signally professes to die and rise again in baptism with Christ, doth *signally* profess *saving faith* and *repentance*; but *this* do all they that are baptized according to the apostolic practice." *(*Ten Letters*)

As these witnesses testify, so do all learned and pious men who have critically attended to this subject, and afterwards given in any direct and positive evidence upon the matter.

2. THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCHES PRACTICE OF BAPTISM IS EVIDENCE THAT BAPTISM IS SOLELY BY IMMERSION

a. DR. LATHROP'S ASSERTION OF THE CHURCHES HISTORICAL PRACTICE OF IMMERSION

The evidence as to the practice of the primitive church, consists in the testimony of men to this truth, that the church did for thirteen hundred years practice immersion, some extreme cases excepted.

The only evidence which I purpose to give in support of this for the present, is the testimony of the author of *Ten Letters* to Bishop Hoadly upon the mode and subjects of baptism, and the confession of Dr. Lathrop that it was even so.

The author of the *Letters* asserts that this was the practice of the church for thirteen hundred years after the commencement of the Christian era. Dr. Lathrop assents that this was the fact; as you may see, by reading his four sermons on baptism, where he gives these letters a particular attention, and is supposed to assent, where he makes no objection.

b. THE NON-ROMAN CATHOLIC DENOMINATIONS IN OTHER CONTINENTS STILL PRACTICE IMMERSION

All the churches in Europe, Asia and Africa, ever have done, and do now, practice immersion, save those who are now, or have been, under the jurisdiction of the Pontiffs of Rome.

The same witnesses who bore their testimony to the last particular, give in their evidence in support of this, and in the same way; the one asserting the fact, the other assenting that it is even so.

3. THE INDEFENSIBLE REASONS GIVEN BY PEDOBAPTISTS [SPRINKLERS] IS EVIDENCE THAT BAPTISM IS BY IMMERSION

The very reasons which have been given and which are still given to justify the contrary practice, are a plain confession that immersion, or burying the subjects under water, was the practice of the apostles and primitive church in the ordinance of baptism, and what Christ commanded to be done.

The reasons which are alleged why sprinkling may be substituted for immersion, are, **the want of health**, in some instances where they suppose baptism to be necessary; **the weakness of constitution** with respect to some, and **the coldness of climate** with respect to many, and as to all in northern climes in the wintry season. Here is a silent acknowledgement that it is not the institution, that it is not the permission of Christ, but mere accidental and local circumstances, which make it lawful to lay by the command of Christ, and to receive in its stead the precepts and commandments of men.

WHAT PEDOBAPTISTS STATE WAS THE ORIGINAL MODE OF BAPTISM AND THE REASONS FOR THE CHANGE

a. BAILEY'S DICTIONARY

Mr. Bailey says, in his Dictionary, that baptism was performed in the eastern and warmer countries by dipping the persons all over; but in process of time, in the western and colder countries, sprinkling was substituted in the place of dipping.

b. DR. LATHROP'S SERMONS

Dr. Lathrop in his sermons implicitly confesses the following extracts to be both true and genuine.

c. MR. BAXTER'S THEOLOGICAL WRITINGS

Mr. Baxter, in his *Paraphrase on the New Testament*, observes on Matt: 3.6. "We grant that baptism then was by washing the whole body; and did not the difference of our cold country, as to that hot one, teach us to remember, 'I will have mercy and not sacrifice,' it should be so here."

d. LETTERS TO BISHOP HOADLY

The author of the *Letters to Bishop Hoadly*, in the twenty-third page, writes thus: "Mr. Baxter, we have already seen, excuses the matter by the coldness of our climate.

e. CALVIN'S EXPOSITIONS

Calvin, the celebrated reformer of Geneva, observes in his Exposition of Acts 8:38, 'We see here what was the baptismal rite among the ancients, for they plunged the whole body in the water.'

Now it is the custom for the minister to sprinkle only the body or head, and he too excuses this sprinkling, but how, I cannot well recollect, not having his book at hand."

f. BISHOP BURNET

Bishop Burnet, though he thus describes the primitive baptism, "With no other garments but that serve to cover nature, they at first laid them down, as a man is laid in the grave, and then they said these words, I baptize, or wash, thee in the name, &c. Then they raised them up again, and clean garments were put upon them; from whence came the phrases of being baptized into Christ's death, of being buried with him by baptism into death, of our being risen with Christ, and of our putting on the Lord Jesus Christ; of putting off the old man, and putting on the new."

And though he justly observes that sacraments are positive precepts which are to be measured only by the institution in which there is no room left for us to carry them any farther; yet forgetting his own measure of the institution, viz. the party baptized was laid down in the water, as a man is laid in the grave, he says, "The danger in cold climates may be a very good reason for changing the form of baptism to sprinkling." *

*Burnet's Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles

g. DR. WALL'S: *THE LETTERS*

I propose for the present to note but one quotation more, and that shall be in the words of Dr. Wall, as quoted in the *Letters*. The Doctor, in giving the reasons why, in Queen Elizabeth's reign, the custom of dipping was laid aside, observes, "It being allowed to weak children to be baptized by effusion, many found ladies and gentlemen first, and then, by degrees, the common people, would obtain the favor of the priest to have their children pass for weak children to tender to endure dipping in the water."**

**Vol. II, p. 30, I Ed.

Now, it may be easy for you to gather what is the outward and visible part of the ordinance of baptism.

It is to immerse proper subjects in water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. This is the outward and visible part of baptism, the scriptures being judge; this literal and plain meaning of the command being judge; the practice of the apostles being judge; the practice of the church for more than a thousand years being judge.

And even if we appeal to those who refuse to practice thus, they add their testimony, that it is what was commanded. They pretend not to say that any new command hath been given, or that the old one hath ever been changed. What shall we say to these things!!!

SOME STARTLING CONCLUSIONS

WHAT PEDOBAPTISTS SHOULD DO IN VIEW OF THE OVERWHELMING EVIDENCE THAT BAPTISM IS BY IMMERSION

I conclude by submitting a question, and a few inferences, for your consideration. The question is, If immersion be from heaven, and sprinkling from men, by what authority do we continue the practice? The inferences are—

1. THE BAPTISTS HAVE THE PLAIN TRUTH OF SCRIPTURE ON THEIR SIDE.

We, who call ourselves Pedobaptists, are as a house divided against it self. To say the least, we appear thus. Our champions will look us in the face, and assure us, that the Baptists have plain Scripture for their mode, and yet we have a right to choose on the score of convenience, &c. what mode is pleasing to us.

Thus say Calvin, Hoadly, Owen, and others: whilst in their practice they have been, in his instance, like the servant who knew, but did not his lord's will. These good men have confessed rather too much for the credit of their practice, and our comfort while copying it.

Many, however, have risen up, in defense of our fathers' practice and ours. They invent many ingenious hypotheses to prove it from heaven, but not one affords a solid conclusion which shows it to be so.

2. PEDOBAPTISTS SHOULD BE HONEST, ACCEPT THE TRUTH AND PRACTICE BAPTISM AS THE SCRIPTURE COMMANDS, BY IMMERSION.

According to the light which for the present appears, we cannot but conclude that our definitions of baptism and to baptize are scriptural, accurate and just. If we will do the will of God, we must practice what he commands.

3. SPRINKLING IS NOT PROPER BAPTISM; IT NEVER HAS BEEN, AND IT NEVER WILL BE.

It appears that it is not left with us what mode we will practice in administering or in receiving the ordinance of baptism; for we find but one mode to it: and we must practice this, or none.

We may sprinkle a person in the name of the Father, &c. and we may wash the face, or any part of a person, in the same sacred name; but it is not possible to baptize a person in this way; for sprinkling, or any small partial washing never was, is not now, nor ever will be, what the scriptures mean by Christian baptism.

4. THE SCRIPTURE SPEAKS OF NO OTHER MODE OF BAPTISM BUT IMMERSION.

That a person must be greatly unacquainted with the plain, literal scripture account of baptism, or extremely prejudices, not to say perverse, to affirm that the Bible says nothing about immersion, or burying in water for baptizing. For it speaks of this mode, and of no other, in the application of water as a gospel ordinance.

The Baptists have for their mode the broad *basis* of *scripture*, antiquity, and the uninterrupted and somewhat universal practice of the church.

5. SINCE BAPTISTS HAVE THE SCRIPTURE ON THEIR SIDE, OPPOSING IMMERSION IS AN EVIL ACTIVITY

It appears that for well-informed Pedobaptists to oppose the Baptists, as to their mode of baptizing is very great wickedness. For the Baptists have the advantage of plain and express scripture on their side, and the learned, critical and candid Pedobaptists know it.

A DISCERNING OBSERVATION

IGNORANCE THE ONLY LEGITIMATE EXCUSE FOR SPRINKLING

Ignorance is the best and only excuse which we can make for ourselves for any opposition which we have made against the ancient and primitive mode which the Baptists have practiced in the administration of the ordinance. Our contention in this matter hath not been against the Baptists merely, but it hath been against their Lord and ours.

Dr. Lathrop appears generously to grant the truth, that immersion is scripture baptism, and only contends that sprinkling be also allowed; which every candid mind would readily do, were there one text of scripture to support it.

6. NO GENUINE BELIEVER WHO IS KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT THE TRUTH OF BAPTISM WILL MINIMIZE IMMERSION AND THE BAPTISTS INSISTENCE UPON IT AS THE SOLE METHOD OF BAPTISM

No true Christian, if he knew what he did, would ever make light of immersion, which the Lord commands, and the Baptists practice, as the mode of baptizing, or, more strictly, as baptism itself.

SERMON IV
THE DESIGN AND PURPOSE OF BAPTISM
TO WHICH ONLY IMMERSION CONFORMS
PLUS
A REFUTATION OF THE REASONS GIVEN FOR
SPRINKLING BY JOHN CLEVELAND

MATTHEW 28:19-20

"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the world. Amen."

**A REQUEST TO MAKE AN HONEST DECISION AFTER CONSIDERING
THE EVIDENCE TO BE PRESENTED**

Whilst discoursing to you upon these words, I have, as I suppose, proved to you what is the outward, and visible part of baptism. You have, to appearance, given a serious and solemn attention, and, I hope, a candid one, to what hath been said.

All which I ask of you in this matter is, that you in the spirit of meekness hear the whole, and then judge and practice in such a manner as you cannot refuse to do, without doing violence to your reason, and without disobedience to the command of Heaven.

Some of you may be afraid of discord; but whence, I pray you, will discord arise among brethren? Will a candid, prayerful and self-denying attention to truth cause this feared discord? Hath truth a tendency to produce discord among the faithful followers of the Lamb of God?

I know that once, when Christ preached the doctrines of the cross, multitudes of professing disciples went back, and followed no more with him. I hope it will not be thus with any of you. But, my brethren, however it may be with any of you, once things is clear—I ought, I must declare to you, so fast as I profitably can, all those truths of God which appear necessary to build you up in sound faith and holy practice.

**DANIEL MERRILL BOUND BY TRUTH TO TEACH WHAT GOD DECLARES
IN HIS WORD**

As I have said before, so say I unto you again, that all which I ask of you is, to give truth a candid hearing, and yield your assent, when facts are plainly proved.

Nothing should, by me, be thought too much to be done, to clear away from your minds the darkness of prejudice, together with any erroneous belief and practice which you may have imbibed, in part, by my means. I shall, therefore, in this discourse, after having attended to the purport, end or design of baptism, answer some objections, which may for the present obstruct the force of truth.

Before we proceed to the particular business of this discourse, you will, if you please, attend for a minute to a few questions, and their answers.

SOME PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. Is it not a plain case, that it is my duty to deliver to you the whole counsel of God, according to the best light it may please him to afford me?

2. Is it not equally plain, that your duty is to yield, not to me, but to the truths which I deliver, an obedient ear?

3. Should you, from an un-candid and prejudiced mind, refuse to be converted by the truth, will the fault be mine?

4. Should I exhibit full evidence as to the subject on hand, and exhibit that evidence clearly too, or should it be that I have done this, and yet great difficulties should arise, will you be justified should you lay the blame to me?

5. Should I teach you the truth, and produce all the evidence which you can ask for, and you should, all, like faithful Christians, believe it, where or whence will arise any difficulty among us? Should any of you refuse to believe, will you charge your difficulties to my account?

6. Are not all of you determined that you will hear candidly, and believe upon evidence?

You will please to give a Christian and judicious answer to each of these questions, and let your practice be conformed with the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Having laid before you the principal part of the facts and evidence, which I intended, as to the visible and outward part of baptism, now—

7. Lastly, the purport, end and design of the Baptismal Institution may call for some attention.

A.

THE FIRST DESIGN AND PURPOSE OF BAPTISM TO SERVE AS THE DIVIDING LINE BETWEEN CHRIST'S KINGDOM AND THE KINGDOMS OF THIS WORLD

The purport, end or design of this Christian ordinance, or institution, appears to Be for a dividing line between the kingdom of our Lord, and the kingdoms of this world.

John was Christ's forerunner: he was sent before his face to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just: to make ready a people prepared for the Lord; (Luke 1:17); and that Christ should be made manifest to Israel, therefore says John, am I come baptizing with water. (John 1:31)

John's mission comprehended a double purpose, to make ready a people, prepared for the Lord, and to manifest Him unto Israel. The people which he instrumentally made ready, and prepared to receive the Lord, he baptized; and it appears from his rejecting many of the Pharisees and Sadducees, that he intentionally baptized none other. (Matt. 3:7)

The whole discourse which he had with them, *Matt. 3:7 to 12*, is good evidence that he admitted none to baptism but such as brought forth visible fruits of repentance. Such persons he admitted among that people which he was making ready for the Lord.

This people were, when prepared, to compose that kingdom, or the beginning of that kingdom, which shall never be destroyed, and which is an everlasting kingdom, which shall stand forever; *Daniel 2:44 and 7:27*. This kingdom Christ calls the kingdom of heaven, and says, it is not of this world.

It appears to be this kingdom, which was now at hand, almost ready to be set up, of which Christ speaks to Nicodemus, when he says, *John 3:5*, "except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

All this does, for substance, meet the sentiment of Baptists and Pedobaptists on this subject. Both suppose, that none can belong to his kingdom without being born of the Spirit: but, perhaps,

neither the Baptists nor Pedobaptists, would say, that any due, strictly speaking, belong to this kingdom, except they have been born of water and of the Spirit.

Our Lord saith, Verily, verily, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. If a man cannot enter into this kingdom but in this way, he cannot belong to it in any other.

A FACT ON WHICH BOTH SIDES AGREE

BAPTISM IS A VISIBLE SIGN OF ENTRANCE INTO GOD'S KINGDOM

Both sides grant, that baptism, or to be born of water, is the only way of admittance into this kingdom.

THE ISSUE ON WHICH THEY DISAGREE

WAS IT BY IMMERSION OR BY SPRINKLING?

They are not so well agreed as to what it is to be born of water, whether it be to be sprinkled, washed, or immersed. Concerning this matter you must judge for yourselves.

This being a given point, that the design of baptism is, that it should be for a dividing line between that kingdom, which the God of heaven was to set up in the latter days, and this world, I would suggest for your consideration—Which draws the line of separation between this kingdom and all other kingdoms on earth; to enter it by being sprinkled; or by being visibly and actually buried in water, and rising as it were from the dead, to join this kingdom?

AN IMPORTANT ADDED ITEM FOR CONSIDERATION

WHICH MODE BEST REPRESENTS THE TRUTH OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM AS BEING DISTINGUISHED FROM THE UNBELIEVING WORLD?

I will also suggest one thing more for your consideration: Which hath the most direct and natural tendency to cause Christ's kingdom to appear to be, as it really is, not of this world? To have almost all admitted into it, in infancy, and so in unbelief, and all by sprinkling, or by a little water put upon the face, and the greater part of them living in open wickedness, or manifest unbelief, and unnoticed by the church to which they are supposed to belong;

Or, to have none admitted but professed believers, and these admitted in a way which significantly says, that they turn their backs upon the world; yea, that they are dead to the world, and are risen with Christ? I only suggest this for your consideration. I hope to attend to it in its place, but not to-day.

B.

THE SECOND DESIGN AND PURPOSE OF BAPTISM

TO SHOW THAT ITS SUBJECTS HAVE FORSAKEN ALL FOR THE GOSPEL

The purport, end or design of baptism appears to be for a manifestation, that the subjects of it have forsaken all, yes, their own lives, for Christ's sake and the gospel.

How can this be more visibly manifested, than by being buried with him in baptism? How can a man more visibly forsake all, than he does when buried? How can any one more manifestly forsake his own life for another, than by voluntarily submitting himself into the hands of another to be buried alive?

Is not this agreeable to what Christ says, "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple"?

C.

THE THIRD DESIGN AND PURPOSE OF BAPTISM TO SYMBOLIZE BEING WASHED FROM OUR SINS IN THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB

It appears to be for a representation of our being washed from our sins in the blood of the Lamb. John, the revelator, says, speaking of Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."

This is a figurative expression, showing at once the procuring cause, the blood of Christ, and the gracious effect, our souls purged from dead works to serve the living God. Can any natural sign represent this more fully, than does baptism, in which our bodies are washed with pure water?

D.

THE FOURTH DESIGN AND PURPOSE OF BAPTISM THE PROMOTION OF A SANCTIFIED AND SEPARATED LIFE IN BOTH THE SAINT AND THE CONGREGATION

The purport, end or design of this Christian ordinance appears to be for the promotion of piety in individuals, and purity in the church. What can have a stronger tendency to move the heart of a Christian to piety and weanedness [to free from dependence upon] from the world, than has the institution of baptism?

Seeing at every remembrance of it, he is put in mind, how Christ died *for sin*, and how every one who hath believed and been baptized, has by the ordinance signally died *to sin*, been buried from the world, and raised again to newness of life.

Hath not this ordinance also an equally strong tendency to preserve the purity of the church, should it be administered as we have proved it ought to be, by immersion only?

And should another thing be found to be true, that visible believers only should be admitted to it, what a world of unbelievers would this shut out of the church! How differently would the professed Christ of Jesus Christ appear from what it now does!

PEDOBAPTISM [SPRINKLING] WITH ITS ATTENDANT PRIVILEGES DESTROYS THE PURITY OF THE CHURCH

If my information be correct, every natural born subject of the crown of England is, according to the laws of their national church, to be baptized, and immediately considered as a member of the church. This is, indeed, consistent, if all the parents have, in any past period, been proselyted to the Christian religion, and if baptism have come into the place of circumcision, and to be administered to children and infants, as that was.

Not only so, but probably nine-tenths of the inhabitants of New England, if not of our nation, belong to the church, according the professed beliefs of the Pedobaptists. Upon the same principle, I presume that more than three-fourths of all the adults in this and the neighboring towns, belong to the church, and have, if the principle be according to the gospel, a right to require admittance to the Lord's Supper, and baptism for their children.

Then, upon the same principle, would their children be members of the church, and entitled to all the privileges of God's house, as they come to years, and nothing short of gross immorality could justify their exclusion. Does this look as though Christ's kingdom were not of this world?

E.

THE FIFTH DESIGN AND PURPOSE OF BAPTISM A SYMBOL OF THE BELIEVER'S COMMUNION WITH CHRIST IN HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION

The purport, end or design of baptism appears to be will described by Dr. Goodwin, in the following words: "The eminent thing signified and represented in baptism is not singly the blood of Christ, as it *washes* us from our sins, but there is a further representation therein of Christ's death, burial and resurrection, in the baptized: and this is not a bare conformity to Christ, but is a representation of a communion with Christ in his death and resurrection; Therefore it is said, We are buried with him in baptism, and wherein we are risen with him, &c.

And moreover, here it is that the answer of a good conscience, which is made the inward effect of this ordinance, I *Peter* 3:21, is there also attributed to Christ's resurrection, as the thing signified and represented in baptism; and as the cause of that answer of a good conscience, even baptism doth now save us, as it is a figure of salvation by Christ."

F.

THE SIXTH DESIGN AND PUROSE OF BAPTISM TO PORTRAY THE BELIEVER'S FORGIVENESS AND CLEANSING FROM SIN

The purport, end or design of the ordinance appears to be to point out, or shadow forth, the forgiveness or remission of sins, and the being cleansed from them. Hence the propriety of scripture expressions, which are like the following: "The baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." *Mark* 1:4. "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins." *Acts* 22:16.

Here it is worthy of the critical reader's notice, that the word translated *wash away*, is *apoulousai*, which signifies to wash clean, or to wash out a stain, as well as to wash away. It is also worthy to be observed, that the word *louo*, whence this is derived, is the only word or theme, save *baptizo*, which, in the New Testament, signifies to wash the body. This being well considered, it cannot be doubted but baptism is a most significant representation of the remission of sin, or cleansing from it.

G.

THE SEVENTH DESIGN AND PURPOSE OF BAPTISM A PUBLIC IDENTIFICATION WITH CHRIST AND AN OPEN DECLARATION TO LIVE FOR CHRIST AND ACTIVELY SERVE HIM

The purport, end or design of the ordinance of baptism appears to be, for an open and manifest declaration that those who receive it, do heartily, and of a ready mind, put on Christ, enter into his service, receive him to be their Prophet, Priest and King, and covenant to be for him, and for him only. Accordingly it is said, As many as were baptized into Christ, have put on Christ: They have put on his name, his self denying profession, his suffering, despised, but glorious cause.

IMMERSION IS THE ONLY MODE THAT MEETS THE SEVEN DESIGNS AND PURPOSES OF BAPTISM

Is the purport, end and design of baptism as hath been now stated? then the mode is immersion; and those who change the *ordinance* from *dipping* to *sprinkling*, and apply it to

unbelievers, *pervert* the ordinance, lose its import, and make it quite another thing. This we have, for years, ignorantly, done.

THE ARGUMENTS OFFERED BY MR. CLEVELAND FOR SPRINKLING, WITH THEIR SCRIPTURAL REFUTATION

We will now attend to the arguments, which the late Rev. John Cleaveland hath left us in support of *sprinkling*, as being authentic baptism. This Mr. Cleaveland was, and I believe justly too, esteemed as one of the most pious and faithful servants of Christ.

Whilst I was favored with a personal acquaintance with him, he stood very highly in my estimation, for his unaffected piety, and fervent simplicity, as a preacher of the ever-lasting gospel. I still retain the same opinion of the good man. But great and good men are not always wise. In any instance where their wisdom hath failed them, we should be careful how we follow.

THE NECESSITY FOR TESTING ALL ARGUMENTS BY SCRIPTURE

The Bereans would not take Paul for a guide, without first bringing him to the standard of divine truth. The Bereans were justified. Should we treat Mr. Cleaveland in the same way, he could not, and I am inclined to think, he would not, though he were living, condemn us.

I might let his works and arguments in support of sprinkling, sleep, were it not, that some of you, my people, and perhaps others, may by them in one particular, be kept from beholding Christ, as in an open glass.

1.

ARGUMENT NUMBER ONE

THE WORDS "BAPTIZO" AND "BAPTISMOUS" SIGNIFY THE SAME AS THE WORD "NIPTO"

The good man's object was, to prove that baptism by sprinkling is authentic, or is scriptural; or that sprinkling is baptism. I will now lay before you his supposed strong arguments by which he supports the validity of sprinkling for baptizing.

After stating the principles of the Baptists, as to the ordinance now considering, his first argument is, "Their learned men know that the word *baptizo* in *Luke* 11:38, and *baptismous* in *Mark* 7:2-5, are used to signify the same as *nipito* is, i.e. proper washing, or making clean by the application of water, in cases that do not necessarily require dipping as the mode of washing."

SCRIPTURAL REFUTATION

CEREMONIAL WASHING MEANS TO BATHE IN WATER, NOT SPRINKLE

The answer this is: That neither the learned men among the Baptists, nor the learned among any other class of men, know any such thing. Besides, *baptisthe*, in *Luke*, and *baptismous*, in *Mark*, have reference to, and mean, a ceremonial, a religious, or rather, as may be more properly called in these instances, a superstitious washing. What is meant by a ceremonial washing, you may see by looking into the ceremonial law: *Lev.* 11:32, and in *Num.* 19:19, where you will find that this ceremonial washing was, to put into water, or to bathe one's flesh in water.

You hence see that these two passages, with which Mr. Cleaveland lays the foundation of his support of sprinkling for baptism, utterly fail him, and come in as auxiliaries to confirm immersion as the only scripture baptism.

I will not say that *nipito* is never used to signify ceremonial washing, and so intend the washing or putting the hands into water, (*pugme*) with abundance of exactness, as Dr. Doddridge expounds it, or up to the elbows, as L'Enfant renders it.

But one thing is evident to all who will examine the texts, and compare them with the ceremonial washings of the ceremonial law, in conformity with which the Jewish doctors meant

to have their traditional ceremonies, that *baptizo* and *baptismos* are not used in the sense in which *nipto* generally is.

In every point of view, Mr. Cleaveland's texts utterly fail him, and go to destroy the custom or tradition he brought them to support. Besides, I do not find that *baptizo* is used, in any place, for washing the hands, or for washing or dipping a part of the body; or any other thing.

2.

ARGUMENT NUMBER TWO

"DIVERS WASHINGS" IN HEB. 9:10 MEANS "DIVERS SPRINKLINGS"

Mr. Cleaveland's argument is built upon *Hebrews 9:10*. where the Apostle speaks of (*diaphorais baptismois*) divers washings. Here, where the Apostle is speaking of divers ceremonial washings, or bathings, Mr. Cleaveland, without the least possible evidence, concludes the Apostle means divers sprinklings.

SCRIPTURAL REFUTATION

SPRINKLINGS WITH BLOOD NOT EQUIVALENT TO WASHING WITH WATER

The same answer which was given to the first argument belongs to this, as Mr. Cleaveland has produced no evidence, that (*baptismois*) washings, or bathings, means sprinklings, save that in the 13th and 21st verses. The Apostle makes use of the word sprinkle, when speaking of the application of blood, and speaking of the unclean; he says, they are *rantized*, and adds, almost all things are by law purged, *catherized*, not *baptized*, with blood.

It is not a little surprising that a man of Mr. Cleaveland's good sense should say, and that Dr. Lathrop, and other men of erudition, should follow him, in saying, these different sprinklings, in the 13th and 21st verses, refer to *baptismois*, when, had they looked three words farther, they would have found them to be, *kai dikaiomasi sarkos*, the liberal English of which is, "The ordinances of God concerning the ceremonial rites of bloody sacrifices!"

Had they looked into their Greek testaments, they might, with ease, have seen that their argument would not beat examination. Surely, had these gentlemen had the right question, they never would have compelled the Apostle to explain by the sprinkling of blood, what he meant by bathings or washings with water.

Perhaps a more forced exposition of scripture is seldom heard. Besides, the Apostle told them, by placing what is translated, carnal ordinances, between divers washings in the 10th, and sprinklings in the 13th and 21st verses, that he intended no such thing as they supposed.

3.

ARGUMENT NUMBER THREE

"BAPTO" AND "BAPTIZO" MEAN THE SAME THING AND SIGNIFY MORE THAN DIPPING INTO WATER

If I mistake not, Mr. Cleaveland's third argument is an attempt to prove that *bapto* and *baptizo* are used to signify some-thing more than to dip, put into water, &c. When the good man brought forward his argument, he forgot -- &c. -- which belongs to his quotation from Dr. Gale, and which includes immersion and overwhelming, and which comprises the whole which Mr. Cleaveland has proved that *baptizo* signifies.

But, waving his forgetfulness, we will attend to what he says. All which he appears to do here is, to show that *bapto* and *baptizo* are used to wash, dip and wet with sprinkling the dew of heaven, and to overwhelm. That is, *bapto* signifies to dip, put into water, wet with the dew of heaven, &c. and *baptizo* signifies to dip, put into water and overwhelm.

What is the consequence? According to Mr. Cleaveland, it is this: Because *bapto* is sometimes used to signify one's being wet with the distilling dew of heaven, &c. therefore *baptizo* signifies the same thing:

Because *bapto* signifies one place to wash without dipping, therefore *baptizo* signifies to wash without dipping; and because *bapto* is sometimes used to signify to color, or stain, by aspersion, or the like therefore *baptizo* is used in the same sense; therefore sprinkling is authentic baptism.

SCRIPTURAL REFUTATION

SIMILARITY OF WORDS IS NOT IDENTICAL WITH MEANING OF WORDS OR USE OF WORDS: "BAPTIZO" NEVER SIGNIFIES SPRINKLING!

What evidence, I pray you, my hearers, is there in all this? Would ten thousand such arguments afford you the least conviction, or gain your assent, where you had a cent to lose?

Every person of sense, who is acquainted with the Greek, would, generally speaking, allow Mr. Cleaveland's premises, that *bapto*, in different places, signifies the application of water in different ways; and that *baptizo* sometimes signifies overwhelming. But no person, who understands the matter, will allow his conclusion, for it hath no connection with the premises.

His argument, in plain English, is this: The verb to wet, sometimes signifies to sprinkle, as in a heavy dew we say it sprinkles, or wets; the verb to overwhelm, sometimes signifies to cover all over with water, as is the beach, by the flowing of the tide. Of consequence, to overwhelm is to sprinkle; therefore to sprinkle is authentic overwhelming, or baptism.

The fallacy of this argument is easily detected, and with the same ease may any one, who knows the different significations of *bapto* and *baptizo*, uncover the fallacy and complete inconclusiveness of Mr. Cleaveland's argument.

The plain truth is, he hath done his side a disservice; for by searching he hath found, and implicitly acknowledges, though not intentionally, and (I suppose) without knowing it, that no instance can be found where *baptizo* signifieth the application of water by sprinkling, or any other way, which does not imply overwhelming, or washing, that is, a ceremonial washing, which is bathing, or putting into water. But—

4.

ARGUMENT NUMER FOUR

BAPTISM [BY SPRINKLING] SIGNIFIES CHRIST'S BAPTIZING BELIEVERS WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

There is another argument upon which Mr. Cleaveland chiefly dwells, and upon which he appears greatly to rest the defense of his whole cause. It is his strong hold against immersion, and for sprinkling; and it is this: Baptism with water, or baptism as a Christian ordinance, is to signify Christ's baptizing with the Holy Ghost.

I have no where found that he hath proved that this is the great and principal thing which baptism signifies; nor do I by any means obtain conviction that the mode of baptizing is to be determined, with certainty, from this particular thing, even should it be granted that one important design of baptism is to signify Christ's baptizing with the Holy Ghost.

But, as Mr. Cleaveland seems to depend upon the strength of this argument more than he does upon the strength of any other, we will grant for the present, that baptism with water was appointed particularly, if not mainly, to set forth the mode in which Christ baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

Now the great question is, In what manner or mode, by sprinkling or overwhelming, did Christ Jesus baptize with the Holy Ghost? Mr. Cleaveland in his treatise, replies abundantly, By sprinkling, certainly. We will put this subject to the test, by instancing the most remarkable

season which ever was, in which Christ, in a most remarkable, public and astonishing degree was baptizing with the Holy Ghost.

I presume were Mr. Cleaveland now alive, he could not, with any face of propriety, object against taking a sample for the whole, the most remarkable instance which ever hath been, and perhaps which ever will be exhibited of Christ's baptizing with the Holy Ghost.

I am willing to submit the strong argument of Mr. Cleaveland to this great sample of Christ's baptizing with the Holy Ghost. Are not all you, my hearers, willing to leave the weight of his argument to such a decision? I am persuaded you all say, yes.

SCRIPTURAL REFUTATION

THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT ABOUT WHICH CHRIST SPOKE FAVORS IMMERSION NOT SPRINKLING!

AT PENEOST, THE DISCIPLES WERE "OVERWHELMED" WITH THE SPIRIT OF GOD, NOT "SPRINKLED" WITH THE SPIRIT.

We will then bring his argument to the proposed test. The instance which we will take, (for surely it is the most astonishing one,) is that which Christ foretold, as related, Acts 1:5. "John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence."

The accomplishment of this prediction and promise we have related in the four first verses of the next chapter. It is thus: "When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there was a sound from heaven, as of a rushing, mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost."

Here was truly a wonderful instance of Christ's baptizing with the Holy Ghost. Here, (a) All the house was filled with the sound, wind or Spirit from heaven. (b) Cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. (c) They were all filled with the Holy Ghost. We here see that they were all overwhelmed; for all the house, where they were sitting, was filled; and not only were they all overwhelmed, but they were also filled.

It is left for you to determine, what becomes of Mr. Cleaveland's argument, upon which he lays so much stress, and of which he speaks with so much confidence and not un-frequently with an air of triumph.

Is there a word about sprinkling in any part of it? or is there any thing which looks like it? Does it not look considerably like immersion, or overwhelming? At least, does it not favor immersion, or overwhelming, as much as it does sprinkling? If so, then it proves nothing for sprinkling. It is left with you to determine which side it favors.

It is possible, however, that some of you may suppose, that Mr. Cleaveland might intend *that* baptism, if it may be so called, which the Holy Ghost ministers, when it creates the soul anew. To this supposition, I will just observe, "The wind bloweth (saith Christ) where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell *whence* it *cometh* or *whither* it *goeth*; so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

Would it not be extreme folly to suppose that water baptism represents the *operations* of the Spirit, when none can know *whence* it *cometh*, or *whither* it *goeth*? It may represent the effect of the Spirit's operations; and it is called, a being born, not sprinkled, of the Spirit.

5.

ARGUMENT NUMBER FIVE

FIVE GREEK WORDS SIGNIFY "TO WASH"; THEREFORE BAPTISM HAS TO BE BY SPRINKLING

In reading Mr. Cleaveland's defense of sprinkling, as being authentic baptism, I noticed but one more distinct argument, and it is this: "*Nipto, baptizo, louo, brecho, pluno, or apopluno*, all signify to wash." The conclusion which he draws from this is, in short, the following: To baptize is not to immerse, but to sprinkle.

SCRIPTURAL REFUTATION

THERE IS NO CONNECTION BETWEEN MR. CLEAVELAND'S PREMISE AND HIS CONCLUSIONS: "COMMON WASHINGS" NOT EQUIVALENT TO SPRINKLING AND THEY FAVOR IMMERSION

I see no connection between his premise and conclusion. Besides, Mr. Cleaveland tells us, page 80, that the Jews, by adhering to the tradition of the elders, observed the washing of hands, and divers other things, as a religious ceremony.

Now, if all the words which Mr. C. mentions, signify to wash, and yet some of them signify common washing, and another, and that *baptizo*, signifies ceremonial washing, and that be to put into water, as is the case, what does his argument prove? It proves just nothing to his point.

Had he proved, what he hath not even attempted, that they all signify the same kind of washing, and that the washing signified was not immersion, but sprinkling only, then his conclusion would have followed, that sprinkling is baptism.

If the above arguments will not support Mr. Cleaveland's theory, it must all come down; for they are they substance, if not all the arguments, which he hath adduced, and I presume better cannot be found.

I thought to have taken Dr. Lathrop's arguments upon the same subject, into consideration; but upon re-examining them I find there is no material dissimilarity between his and Mr. Cleaveland's; they therefore both stand or fall together. A word or two may be here added.

A FINAL ARGUMENT DEFLATED

DR. LATHROP'S USE OF THE POST APOSTOLIC CHURCH FATHER CYPRIAN ACTUALLY VALIDATES IMMERSION AS THE ANCIENT MODE OF BAPTISM, WHILE ADMITTING THAT SPRINKLING WAS USED ONLY BY SO-CALLED "NECESSITY" NOT BY SCRIPTURAL PRECEPT

Dr. Lathrop assures us that Cyprian, who wrote within about one hundred and fifty years of the apostles, speaking of sprinkling, says, "In the sacrament of salvation (that is, baptism) when *necessity compels*, the shortest ways of transacting divine matters do, by God's grace, confer the whole benefit." The Doctor adds, "**The ancients practiced immersion.**" (pp. 24-25)

By this quotation of the Doctor's from Cyprian, and confession of his own, being put together, it appears at once that all his preceding arguments are erroneous; for Cyprian does not intimate the sprinkling was from heaven, but says it was from necessity.

Besides, his calling baptism the sacrament of salvation, shows us the error, whence the necessity of sprinkling came, namely, a belief that the ordinance of baptism was necessary to salvation.

This being the case, and it also being true, as the Doctor acknowledges, that the ancients practiced immersion, save when necessity compelled, as they erroneously supposed, the consequence is fairly this, that immersion is from heaven, the ancients being judges; and that sprinkling is from men, from necessity, or rather from error.

ONE MORE BRIEF REFUTATON

I thought to have added no more upon the Doctor's mode of Christian baptism. However, one argument ought to be taken out of his hands, lest it misguide some of his readers. He tells us, that *baptizo*, in Mark 7 and Luke 11 is used to signify the application of water to the hands. The only answer needed is, It is not thus said, in Mark, or Luke, or in any other part of the Bible. When the Doctor shall re-examine the passages, he will probably see the mistake.

CONCLUSION

IMMERSION

THE INSTITUTION OF HEAVEN

Will gentlemen, and Christians too, forever contend against *immersion*, the institution of heaven, and for *sprinkling*, which hath nothing but *error* and *convenience* for its support!

SERMON V
A BRIEF REVIEW OF ALL THE FACTS
PRESENTED IN SERMONS 1-4 FOR
CONSIDERATION, ALONG WITH TWELVE
PRACTICAL AND SCRIPTURAL
APPLICATIONS OF THESE FACTS
PLUS
SEVEN IMPORTANT QUESTIONS FOR
PEDOBAPTISTS TO ANSWER

MATTHEW 28:19-20.

"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

MERRILL'S CONFIDENCE THAT THE CONGREGATION WILL PROPERLY RESPOND
TO THE TRUTH

I have confidence in you, brethren, that ye will keep the ordinances, as I shall deliver them to you, and prove them to be from the word of the Lord.

One thing I would still know of you, my brethren, whether you, like the more noble Bereans, will receive the word with readiness, searching the scriptures daily, that you may know the truth of what you hear.

SAINTS MUST ANSWER TO CHRIST REGARDING THIS RESPONSE

You will bear in mind, that whosoever loveth father or mother, house or lands, wife or children, more than Christ, is not worthy of him. If, through affection for any of these, you should refuse to obey Christ, it will be too evident that you love them more than you do him, and so are not worthy of him.

Should you love any erroneous belief and practice more than you do the truths of Christ, you will, so far as you manifest it, prove that you are not worthy of him.

Should you despise me for delivering and vindicating the truths of Christ to you, you will at the same time despise him. You will therefore give good heed to what you say, and to what you do in this matter; for if it be of God, it will stand, and none can overthrow it. It is hoped none of you will be found fighting against God.

A.

A REVIEW OF THE SERMONS PRESENTED THUS FAR
SERMON NUMBER ONE

1. A REVIEW OF THE PRINCIPLES FAVORING IMMERSION

This discourse may contain a review of what we have passed over, together with some application. In my first discourse to you on the subject, which we have still before us, the following are the principal things to which we attended. I professed a number of plain truths, considered to be as first principles, for your attention.

- a. Baptism is a positive institution, about which we can know nothing, as to its being a Christian ordinance, but from what Christ, and those inspired by his Spirit, have taught us.
- b. All which we are required to believe and practice, with respect to the Christian ordinance of baptism, is declared to us by Jesus Christ, and by his forerunner and apostles.
- c. When Jesus Christ first instituted the ordinance of baptism, he no doubt delivered his mind so clearly and fully upon the subject, that his disciples and immediate followers understood and practiced as he would have them.
- d. Every thing which hath, by the precepts and commandments of men, been added since, is aside from the ordinance, and makes no part of it.
- e. No man, nor body of men, hath any more authority to add to or diminish from this ordinance, than they have to institute a new one and call it Christ's.
- f. Whenever, and wherever, the ordinance of baptism is so changed as to lose the intent of the institution, then and there the ordinance is lost, and becomes no Christian ordinance at all.

2. REVIEW OF THE WORDS USED FAVORING IMMERSION

I defined for your information a number of words which appertain to the ordinance of baptism. We found all these to be just as we might expect to have found them, provided immersion be baptism, or the mode in which it is administered.

Baptisterion, a place in which to wash the body. *Baptism*, immersion, or dipping one all over in water. *Baptizo* signifies to dip, or wash, the body all over in water. *Louo* (a word several times used in reference to, or signifying the same, as baptism) is, to wash, to rinse, to bathe, &c. Then,

3. REVIEW OF THE TEXTS RELATING TO BAPTISM BY JOHN AND CHRIST, PLUS REVIEW OF THE PASSAGES WHERE WASHING AND DIPPING ARE MENTIONED

I set before you all the texts in the New Testament which relate either to the baptism of John, or to that of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the next place, I proposed for your meditation the passages of Scripture where washing is mentioned, and the Greek words which are used.

I then called your attention to those passages in which sprinkling is mentioned, and to the Greek words which are made use of. *Lastly*, I read to you those scriptures where to dip is mentioned, and also the Greek words which are rendered to dip.

In not one of the places, where the ordinance of baptism is brought to view do we find one word about sprinkling, or any thing which looks like it. In every place where to dip is mentioned, we find a near relation to baptism; every word which is used, coming from the same *root* or theme, from which *baptizo* comes.

As to the word *wash*, we find no relation between the words which signify to wash, and those which signify to baptize, save in those few instances where the meaning is to wash the body, or put into water, or wash a thing all over.

When we come to the Greek words which signify to sprinkle, we find no similarity, or likeness, between them and the word to baptize.

CONCLUSION

NOT ONE WORD INTIMATES OR SIGNIFIES SPRINKLING

In all the places where baptizing is mentioned, not a word is used which looks like sprinkling; where sprinkling is mentioned, there is not a word used which appears like baptism.

SERMON NUMBER TWO

REVIEW OF DEFINITIONS, FACTS, WORDS AND TESTIMONIES

In my next discourse, I produced my evidence, that my definitions of baptism and to baptize were accurate and just. I dwelt largely upon this evidence for the merit of the whole subject depends greatly, if not entirely, upon the determinate meaning of the words, which our Lord used in the institution of the ordinance, and when speaking of it.

When we know the determinate signification of his words, we know what he says, and what we ought to understand by the words which he uses. The evidence which I produced, was, in short, the following:

1. REVIEW OF DEFINITIONS OF WORDS IN CONCORDANCES AND DICTIONARIES

The Greek Lexicon, Butterworth's Concordance, Bailey's and Entick's Dictionaries, bear their united testimony, that the plain, literal, and common, if not universal, signification of the words *baptism* and *to baptize*, is immersion and to immerse, bury in water, to dip, or to plunge a person all over in water.

Here are four learned and positive witnesses to the same thing. Indeed, they give no other signification, save it be to wash, which we have seen intends a ceremonial washing, which is to put into water, or to bathe.

2. REVIEW OF CIRCUMSTANTIAL FACTS CONCERNING BAPTISM THAT FAVOR IMMERSION

I repeated some of the attendant or circumstantial facts, which have relation to the ordinance of baptism. John baptized IN the river Jordan. He was baptizing in Enon near to Salim, because there was *much water* there. The word *baptistry* signifies a place in which to wash the body all over. *Baptism* signifies to dip, to plunge, immerse, or to wash the body all over in water.

Baptizer signifies one which dips, plunges, or washes the body all over in water. *To baptize* signifies to immerse, plunge under water, or under any other liquid thing, or to dip, or to put into water. To be *baptized* is to be plunged, immersed, or washed all over in water.

These things being true, is it not easy to determine what the ordinance of baptism signifies?

3. REVIEW OF USE OF TWO WORDS THAT ALSO FAVOR IMMERSION

The words *baptismos* and *baptizo* have two, and only two, translations in the New Testament. These two are *baptism* and *washing*. Where their meaning is washing, or where they are thus translated, it is a ceremonial washing, which is to put into water, or bathe the flesh in water, as you may see, *Lev. 11:32. Num. 19:19.*

When they are translated *baptism*, or *to baptize*, the thing intended is the baptism of water, of fire, of sufferings, or of the Holy Ghost.

4. REVIEW OF TESTIMONIES OF WORD USE BY NOTED PREACHERS AND THEOLOGIANS

I brought forward several noted witnesses, to bear their united testimony, that I had given just definition of the word *baptizo*: these were, John Calvin, Zanchius, and Dr. Owen.

5. REVIEW OF THE USES OF "LUO" AND "BAPTIZO" SHOWING THEY ARE INTERCHANGEABLY USED BY THE APOSTLE PAUL AND MEAN VIRTUALLY THE SAME THING

In the next place I mentioned to you that Paul repeatedly uses the word *louo*, where he means the same things as where he uses the word *baptizo*; that he uses these words as signifying the same thing. Whereas, *louo* signifies to wash and to bathe the body in water, and consequently *baptizo* means the same.

6. REVIEW OF PAUL'S USE OF THE WORD "BAPTISM," AND THAT IT MEANS A BURIAL OR IMMERSION

Lastly. I brought forward Paul's exposition of the word *baptism*, and showed you, that he expounds it, as being buried with Christ in baptism, or immersion.

SERMON NUMBER THREE

A REVIEW OF THE APOSTOLIC AND POST APOSTOLIC EVIDENCE THAT FAVORS IMMERSION

1. THE APOSTOLIC PRACTICE AS ILLUSTRATED BY THE USE OF THE WORD "LUO"

In my discourse, which I next preached to you, I produced evidence, that the apostles and primitive Christians, not only understood the matter as I have described it, but practiced accordingly.

In support of the apostle's practice, I observed, that the word *luo*, of determinate signification, which they used to signify their practice, or what was done by them in baptism, determines or fixes their practice to be immersion. I farther observed, that they were commanded to practice baptism, or to baptize, as I have described it; and that the scriptures testify, that they thus did; and also that the apostles say, the mode of baptizing in their day was, by burying the subjects in baptism.

2. POST-APOSTOLIC EVIDENCE BY LEADING AUTHORITIES THAT CONFIRMS THE APOSTOLIC PRACTICE OF IMMERSION

For witnesses that the primitive church practiced immersion, we have Mosheim, Bailey, Calvin, Baxter, and many others, all agreeing in this one point, that the mode of baptizing, or baptism itself, among the ancients, was immersion. We have also evidence that the church thus practiced for thirteen hundred years, some extreme cases excepted.

Moreover we have evidence that all the church, in Europe, in Asia, and in Africa, save that part of it, which is now, or hath been, under the bewildering power of the popes, do now, and ever have, practiced immersion.

Besides all this, the very reasons which the Pedobaptists assign, why they have laid aside immersion, show that sprinkling is not commanded by the Lord, but is taught by the precepts of men.

A MAGNITUDE OF EVIDENCE THAT REFUTES THE PEDOBAPTIST POSITION

You see we have an ocean of witnesses and evidence against us; and all, or nighly so, from our own denomination of Christians. What a world of evidence might we reasonably expect that the Baptists would be able to bring for themselves, and against us and our practice, would we hear them, when our own side brings so much against their own practice and for the Baptists!

Besides, this evidence appears to stand in its full force against us, there being no opposite evidence to weaken its force. Indeed we are, in this matter, much like criminals, who plead, at least the leaders of them, guilty to the whole indictment. However, some have made a full plea of, not guilty but in part. At the same time, numbers of them, in their plea, have convicted themselves of being guilty throughout.

SERMON NUMBER FOUR

A REVIEW OF THE DESIGN AND PURPOSE OF BAPTISM

In the last discourse, after holding to your view the purport, end and design of baptism, I examined one of their pleas of, not guilty. But what evidence did the good man give of his innocence? Can the largest stretch of charity allow more than this, *he knew not what he did?* Was truth ever brought to such straits as to require to be supported by such arguments?

B.

IMPORTANT APPLICATIONS FROM THE SERMONS PRESENTED THUS FAR

From a review of the whole subject, the following appear to flow as necessary consequences.

1. THE SCRIPTURES DEFINITELY DECLARE IMMERSION TO BE THE SOLE METHOD OF BAPTISM.

Whether we allow immersion to be the scripture mode of baptism, and the only one which it requires, or not; one thing is clear, that we have as much evidence of its being so, as we could have, on supposition that it were. The scriptures declare, in various ways, that this is the mode, and mention no other. The scriptures expound themselves to mean immersion, or burying.

We find not a single trace, in all the scriptures, where the ordinance is spoken of, of any thing short of immersion being mentioned. Good men, who are skilful in the true import of words, have agreed, that the plain, literal and accurate meaning of the word to baptize, is to immerse or bury in water, &c. Nor have any been able to show that in any part of God's word it hath any opposite meaning or application.

The church of Jesus Christ have, in all ages, understood the matter of baptism as I have explained it. We must, however, except for the last three or five hundred years, many of those branches of the church, which have been, or are now, under the jurisdiction of the church of Rome.

WITHOUT QUESTION, THE DESIGN AND PURPOSE OF BAPTISM SOLELY SIGNIFIES IMMERSION

The purport, end and design of baptism also intimate to us, that this is the manner of baptizing. Indeed, if there be any words in the Greek language by which the Lord of the Baptismal Institution could have told us what he intended, the words used do this. For there are no two words in the language, or, at least, none which have come to our knowledge, which so literally, so uniformly, and so expressly, signify to immerse, or wash, or bathe the body in water, as do the words *baptizo* and *louo*. Hence, if immersion be baptism, the Lord, if I may so say, could not have told us of it in the New Testament, of the words, chosen by the Holy Ghost, do not afford this information.

If baptism be immersion, then the two most suitable words have been chosen to express it; but if sprinkling be baptism, two words which were farther from the point, could not have been found. We find no instance, in the Bible, where they are thus used. In short, no two words, which mention the application of water in any way, are farther from the idea of sprinkling, than are those two which are used when baptism is intended.

It therefore appears, that whilst we have used sprinkling for baptism, we have departed from the plain and primitive import of the words used, as far as we could without a complete omission of water. None can be at a farther remove from the instituted, scripture baptism, than we have been, without denying it in whole.

2. BAPTISMAL REGENERATION WAS AN EARLY ERROR THAT DEVELOPED IN THE POST APOSTOLIC AGE. SPRINKLING WAS THEN INSTITUTED AS A REPLACEMENT FOR IMMERSION WHEN UNFAVORABLE CIRCUMSTANCES SUPPOSEDLY NECESSITATED SPRINKLING.

Error is very insinuating and deceiving. Surely it hath proved thus in the subject of sprinkling.

Cyprian, who wrote within about a hundred and fifty years of the apostles, speaking of sprinkling, says, as quoted by Dr. Lathrop, "In the sacrament of *salvation*, (i.e. baptism) when *necessity compels*, the shortest ways of transacting divine matters, do, by God's grace, confer the whole benefit." Here we see the origin of sprinkling for baptism.

It was an early error in the church, that baptism was necessary to salvation. Hence, when it was judged, that life would be endangered by immersion, the person must either lose his life by baptism, or lose his soul for want of being baptized, or some other mode must be invented.

Or, if the sick person was nighly dying [near death], he must be baptized without immersion, or probably lose his soul, before he could be conveyed where the ordinance might be administered. Under these circumstances, man's fruitful invention devised sprinkling as a substitute for baptism. Here is the origin of sprinkling, as the ancients have told us.

In process of time, sound ladies and gentlewomen wished to have sprinkling substituted for baptism in their behalf; afterwards others, till at last, it became a general custom in many of the European nations.

In the mean time, the Baptists, and many others, objected against the practice, as being contrary from the command of Christ. Hence arose the necessity of defending it, or else having it considered as a departure from the faith. Matters being thus, the invention of many was in full exercise to defend sprinkling, as being of divine origin. A number of ceremonial rites of the Levitical law were pressed into this service; several passages of the New Testament were wrested from their natural meaning to a forced interpretation; and out of the motley mixture were formed what were styled *arguments*; but such arguments can stand no longer than while prejudice lives to support them.

However, the most disagreeable part it, a good number of very pious and learned men have been carried away in this whirlpool of deception. Their being deceived has deceived others; and we are, or have been, among the deceived.

3. SPRINKLING IS BASED ON NUMEROUS INTELLECTUAL INCONSISTENCIES.

Sprinkling is not from heaven, but of men. This too, of I mistake not, by the fully and fairly implied concession of those, who have written in its defense.

a. If from heaven, why, in the first place, use it only when necessity compelled! as was supposed to save souls from hell?

b. If from heaven, why, afterwards, use it only in cases of less urgent necessity?

c. If from heaven, why bring in the coldness of the country as an excuse for using it?

d. If from heaven, why not mentioned in the institution of the ordinance, or in some passage where mention is made of baptism, or in some other place in all the writings of the Evangelists and Apostles?

e. If from heaven, why not intimated as being so, by those who first introduced it?

f. If sprinkling be from heaven, who so many *inconclusive* arguments in its support?

Is the word of God deficient in this particular, and hath it revealed what cannot be supported by it?

g. If from heaven, why not commanded, enjoined, required, or so much as once hinted, as being a mode of a gospel ordinance, in any part of that revelation which we have received from heaven?

4. IMMERSION IS NECESSARY FOR THE PROPER ADMINISTRATION OF THE ORDINANCES.

Another consequence is, that the scripture mode of baptism is immersion, and for aught we know, the only mode, and necessary to the administration of the ordinance.

This is the plain, literal, scripture sense of baptism; therefore this is the plain, literal, scripture mode. The scriptures mention no other mode; therefore this may be, and is, for aught appears, the only scripture mode.

5. SPRINKLING HAS NO VISIBLE CONNECTION WITH BAPTISM. CHRIST NEVER COMMANDED HIS DISCIPLES IN THE GREAT COMMISSION TO "RANTIZE" [SPRINKLE] CONVERTS.

From what we have gone over, one thing appears certain: That Christ never commanded any of his followers to administer any gospel ordinance by sprinkling, and, at the same time, to say, *I baptize*. For to do thus, would be to command them to do *one thing*, and to say that they did *another*.

To *sprinkle* is to *rantize*, which hath no visible connection with baptism. To say, Christ commanded his disciples to rantize, and, at the same time, to say, We baptize, is what no Christian would, knowingly, be willing to say. This would, if I mistake not, be making Christ the minister of sin. But what I have long, implicitly, though ignorantly, done, others may still do.

6. CUSTOM AND TRADITION ARE THE ONLY REAL REASONS FOR SPRINKLING.

Another consequence is, custom hath great influence upon the human mind. It surely hath upon us. For, even after we have full evidence that sprinkling, for baptism, is not from heaven, but was the offspring of error, and fostered by the dark ages of Papistical [Papal based] usurpation, we are hardly persuaded to renounce it. But, my brethren, my expectation is, that after you have searched your Bibles through and through, and find nothing of it there, you will give it up.

Should the Lord inquire of us, why we substitute sprinkling for baptizing, and say unto us, Whence is this substitution, from heaven, or of men? Would there not be great reasonings among us what answer to return? Should we say, From heaven; he might reply, How do you prove it? Should we say, Of men, then might he ask, Why do you practice it?

7. THERE IS MORE SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT IMMERSION AND THUS PRACTICE IT THAN ANY OTHER N. T. PRECEPT.

Another consequence is, we have the same kind of evidence, and perhaps more of it, that baptism is to be administered by immersion, or dipping, or putting into water, than we have to support any other gospel precept, or practice. The evidence which we have, in either case, is the signification of the words which are used to point out the thing to be believed, or practiced.

Were it not for the influence of habit, or custom, you would as readily and naturally conclude, from the very words used, that immersion, or dipping, or washing the body in water, was the meaning of baptism, as that a religious eating of bread, and drinking of wine, in commemoration of our dying Lord, was the way to observe the Lord's supper.

8. PEDOBAPTISTS HAVE A CLEAR CHOICE TO MAKE: ACCEPT THE UNSCRIPTURAL TRADITIONS OR REJECT AND RENOUNCE SPRINKLING.

We appear to be brought to this dilemma: We must either embrace the tradition of the elders, for the rule of one part of our practice; or we must no more sprinkle and call it baptism.

9. THERE IS NO SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY TO INTRODUCE SPRINKLING AND USE IT AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR BAPTIZING.

Another consequence is, Those, who first introduced sprinkling for baptizing, had no more right so to do, than they had to institute a new right, or ordinance, and call it Christ's. What authority have we to follow their erroneous and hurtful practice?

10. SPRINKLING DOES NOT PORTRAY THE DISTINCT SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD THAT BAPTISM REQUIRES.

We have another consequence worthy of consideration, and it is this: The Christian ordinance of baptism is a most solemn and significant ordinance, and of very high importance.

I speak not of the visible, or actual administration of it, in particular; for I never saw it administered, as Christ hath delivered it to his people: But I refer to the purport, end and design of

it. It is, among many other things, the great dividing line, which Heaven hath appointed to be drawn between the visible kingdom of Immanuel, and the men of this world.

Doubtless there are a large number who belong to Christ's invisible kingdom, who are not, strictly speaking, or regularly, in his kingdom visibly, having not submitted to this ordinance, which is the great and important line of distinction.

11. PEDOBAPTISTS ARE CAUGHT IN A WEB OF HABITUAL INCONSISTENCY.

It appears that we are, truly, in a trying state. We must depart, in one instance, from a long habit, or continue to do as we have done, and yet not be able to vindicate, by the scriptures of truth, our own conduct.

12. THE ORIGIN OF BAPTISM DOES NOT COME FROM THE REFORMATION PERIOD, BUT FROM THE N. T.

Lastly. We come, at length, to the answer of this old and difficult and perplexing question: Where, and when, did the religious sect called Baptists, arise? The answer is, plainly, this: They arose in Judea, at the time when John came, preaching in the wilderness the baptism of repentance.

I mention this consequence with considerable assurance, because the New Testament favors it, and no man is able to contradict me. Should any attempt it, he will fail for want of evidence.

I should, not long since, have been gratified could I have found their origin any where in the dark ages of Popery, or at the commencement of the reformation, among the famous enthusiasts of Germany, Holland, Switzerland, or Westphalia. But, after having long pursued the perplexing research, I found their *origin*, where I least of all expected it, in Enon and Jordan.

C.

SOME IMPORTANT QUESTIONS THAT PEDOBAPTISTS [SPRINKLERS] MUST ANSWER

A few questions are now to close the present subject.

1. IS NOT IMMERSION THE SCRIPTURE BAPTISM?

2. IS SPRINKLING A MODE OF BAPTISM WARRANTED BY SCRIPTURE? IF SO, WHERE?

3. ARE OLD TESTAMENT RITES TO EXPLAIN N. T. ORDINANCES? IS MOSES LEFT TO COMPLETE WHAT CHRIST HATH LEFT INCOMPLETE? IS IT SO?

4. WILL CHRIST APPROVE OF THAT PRACTICE OF MEN, WHICH SO CHANGES HIS POSITIVE INSTITUTION, AS TO LOSE THE PURPORT [PURPOSE], END AND DESIGN OF IT?

5. WAS IT EVER RIGHT, AND IS IT NOW, FOR MEN TO CHANGE WHAT CHRIST HATH COMMANDED TO BE IN PERPETUAL OBSERVATION? DID THE SUPPOSED EXTREME CASES JUSTIFY THIS CHANGE AT FIRST, AND WILL TRIFLING INCONVENIENCES JUSTIFY US NOW?

6. WILL IT BE WISE AND SAFE FOR US CONTINUALLY TO FORSAKE THE COMMANDMENT OF CHRIST FOR THE PRECEPTS OF MEN?

7. DO YOU, MY BRETHREN, OR CAN YOU, BLAME ME FOR WISHING YOU TO KEEP THE ORDINANCES OF CHRIST AS HE HATH DELIVERED THEM UNTO THE SAINTS?

8. SHOULD I HAVE MANIFESTED MYSELF YOUR FRIEND, OR CHRIST'S, IF, AFTER HAVING FOUND SUCH A PRECIOUS, NEW AND OLD *TREASURE* IN HIS WORD, AS IS THE CHRISTIAN ORDINANCE OF BAPTISM, I HAD NOT VENTURED MY LIFE, OR IN OTHER WORDS, MY REPUTATION, MY CASE, MY PROPERTY, AND MY EVERY WORLDLY CONSIDERATION, TO BRING IT FORTH TO YOUR VIEW AND ACCEPTANCE, THAT YOU MIGHT MORE FULLY WALK IN ALL THE STATUTES AND ORDINANCES OF THE LORD BLAMELESS?

AN ADMONITION THAT SHOULD BE HEEDED

One request, my brethren, I pray you to grant me, and it is this: **Search the scriptures devoutly, and follow me so far as I follow Jesus Christ, your Lord and mine.**

SERMON VI
CONCLUSIVE PROOF
THAT THE GREAT COMMISSION INCLUDES
BELIEVERS BAPTISM ONLY, THAT
CIRCUMCISION HAS BEEN ABOLISHED, AND
THAT INFANT BAPTISM IS BASED ON EXTRA
SCRIPTURAL SOURCES AND TRADITION

Matthew 28:19-20.

"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen".

I have already observed to you that Christ Jesus, the Head of the church, and Lord of all, was now constituting his present and succeeding disciples to be apostles unto all nations. My text is their commission, and general and particular orders. In it they are directed—

1. To go and disciple all nations. 2. To baptize them in the name of the Father, &c. 3. He directs these newly constituted apostles, and all their successors, to teach their baptized disciples to observe all things whatsoever he had given in commandment. *Lastly*. for their encouragement and comfort, he adds, "And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

A.

THE GREAT COMMISSION INCLUDES BELIEVERS
BAPTISM ONLY

What I purposed to say to you, particularly, upon the second proposition, I have said. I now recur to the [first point] which contains Christ's command to *his disciples* to go and *disciple* all nations.

I have already showed you what baptism is, and the design of it. I am now, if the Lord will, to lay open what is commanded to be done **before** baptism be administered, also the evidence which the Lord may afford me to prove to you that my instruction is from him.

Your feelings, my brethren and people, have no doubt been highly wrought up, whilst I have opened before you one of the laws of Christ's kingdom amongst men. I have still more things to say unto you respecting the rules and regulations of this kingdom.

I pray the Lord, that your minds may be so prepared to hear, that you may not forsake me and flee, as many of Christ's professed friends did, when he preached on a subject which greatly crossed their prejudices and carnal expectations.

CHRIST AND HIS APOSTLES THE SOURCE OF AUTHORITY, NOT THE WORDS OF OUR FOREFATHERS

Your busy minds, no doubt, will, before you are aware, be inquiring what great and good men, in our days and in the days of our fathers, have said and thought of these things; but we should look farther back than our forefathers.

The man Christ Jesus, and his inspired prophets and apostles, should be the men of our counsel. Should I speak according to these, you may hearken to me with safety: if contrary, convict me by the word and testimony of Jesus Christ; for I appeal to these, for by them I ought to be judged.

A PLEA TO LAY PREJUDICE ASIDE WHEN CONSIDERING THIS ISSUE

One request, my hearers, I pray you to grant me; namely—Lay prejudice aside, and let scripture, reason and common sense be heard for a few minutes.

Surely you must consider my case more trying than any of yours. For it is, perhaps, as difficult for me to combat my own prejudices and carnal feelings, as it is for any of you to contend with his: Besides this, I have to look your prejudices in the face, while I venture to bring any of your old practices to the scriptures for trial. Yes, more than all this, I have many trials to encounter which you have not, nor can have.

I should not have made the attempt to bring our former practice to the standard for trial, had not my difficulties been so great, that I durst proceed no farther, without proving my works. One of my practices hath been weighed in the balance, and is found wanting.

I am now, if my heart deceive me not, willing to lead another of my works, or the subjects on which some of my works have been, to the bar for trial. If this shall be found of wood, hay or stubble, may the fire of truth burn it up, and may the fire of love cause me to rejoice while it shall be consuming.

THE REAL ISSUE AT STAKE:

COMPREHENSION AND OBEDIENCE TO CHRIST'S COMMAND EXACTLY AS HE GAVE IT

The proposition which will bring this other of my works to the trial, is—Christ commands his ministers to go and disciple all nations. I have engaged to be one of these ministers. The command is, therefore, binding upon me. I have gone forth, that I might obey. The great thing to be determined is, whether I have understood what it is to disciple, or to make disciples, and have practiced accordingly.

THE CRUX OF THIS MATTER

DOES DISCIPLING A PARENT AUTOMATICALLY INCLUDE CHILDREN AT THE SAME TIME?

The important question to be decided is just this: If I disciple any of you who are parents, do I, as a necessary consequence, disciple all your children and households? The only difficulty, in this question, relates to children and households. What it is to disciple the master of a family, is a thing in which Christians generally agree.

I ought just to remark to you, that *matheteusate*, to teach, is, in its literal and genuine sense, to disciple, or so to teach as to make disciples.

A HYPOTHETICAL ILLUSTRATION

To bring the question before you as fully as I can, I wish you, each one of you, to fix his attention upon some one family in this town, in which family not a Christian is to be found. If each one has his mind fixed upon such a Christless household, I will now put the question:--

Suppose I, instrumentally, disciple the father of this family, do I, as a certain consequence, make disciples of the whole family?

THE SCRIPTURAL DESCRIPTION OF A DISCIPLE

Before you determine the question, it may be well to fix in your minds what a disciple is. Let the scriptures speak. The *disciples* were called Christians first at Antioch, Acts 1:26. The commission which Christ gave to the first ministers, and to all succeeding ones, as recorded Mark 16:15-16, is Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature: he that *believeth*, &c.

Here a believer is the same as a *disciple*. Here we see a disciple, in the sense of my text, is a believer, a believer in Christ, a Christian. This is the idea which the New Testament, from beginning to end, gives us of a disciple. There is, however, mention made of disciples, who were so but by profession, or who were visible disciples only, not having the love of God in them.

QUESTIONS THAT MUST BE SCRIPTURALLY ANSWERED

Now try the question with respect to both sorts of these disciples. **Suppose I, instrumentally disciple the father of a Christless family, do I, as a necessary consequence, make Christians of all in his house?** You will please to make up your minds, on this question, decidedly.

(a) Suppose again, that I, instrumentally, disciple the father of a Christless family, do I, as a necessary consequence, make *visible* disciples of all his family? Let your minds be clearly determined as to the answer.

(b) Once more; suppose I, by delivering the Lord's message, convert, or make a disciple of the father of a Christless family, do I, of necessary consequence, make any one of his household besides himself a disciple?*

*Prejudice may reply, you are to disciple the household by baptizing them. This contradicts my text that says disciple them first.

TWO SOURCES TO CONSIDER IN DISCOVERING THE ANSWERS

1. REASON AND COMMON SENSE PROVE THAT DISCIPLING A PARENT DOES NOT AUTOMATICALLY INCLUDE CHILDREN.

Let scripture, let reason, let common sense, let any thing speak, which will speak the truth, and determine these questions. Consider, take advice, and speak your minds.

Can you suppose, or can you not, that to make a father of a family a disciple, his wife, his servants, and his children, are all disciples of course, or of necessary consequence?

Is not this a clear case? And yet the great and momentous subject before us turns altogether upon the answer of this question. If discipling the father of a family renders all his household disciples, they are all subjects of baptism, they have the scripture qualification for it; if it do not, then they have not the qualification which my text requires to be in those who are baptized.

You will judge for yourselves whether households to thus become disciples; as for the rest, the scriptures determine: if they be disciples, they are to be baptized; if not, they are not to be.

I know what your answer must be, for by incontestable facts, in this town, the discipling of a father of a family does not disciple his household; it does not even make them visible disciples, or give them even the appearance of being so.

2. SCRIPTURAL PROOF THAT BAPTISM REQUIRES PROFESSION OF FAITH BEFORE BAPTISM

The following is for evidence, that persons must be made disciples before they are baptized.

a. John made his hearers disciple before he baptized them. He required, in order for baptism, that they should bring forth fruits meet for, or as evidence of, repentance, Matt. 3:8. and Luke 3:8.

b. Christ disciples baptized none but such as were made disciples first, John 4:1-2.

c. Christ, in my text, gives no liberty to baptize any but such as are first disciplined. Yes, he commands his ministers to disciple before they baptize.

The account which Mark gives us of the Apostles' commission, and of the Baptismal Institution, is confirming evidence in this matter, 16th chapter, 15th and 16th verses: "Preach the gospel to every creature: He that believeth and it baptized," &c. Here believing is put before baptism. The way adopted by some to avoid the force of this text is, if they be baptized, say they, no matter when, before or after believing. This way of getting clear of the difficulty appears neither wise nor candid; for it injures the plain meaning of the text, and makes Matthew's and Mark's account of the commission to disagree.

B.

THE CEREMONIAL LAW AND CIRCUMCISION HAVE BOTH BEEN ABOLISHED

What remains are a number of plain truths, facts and consequences, which have a more near or remote relation with the subject on hand, and may serve to throw light upon it.

In the first place, we may take notice of two particulars, which perhaps have not been sufficiently noticed. One is, the ceremonial law, and the covenant of circumcision which was annexed to it appear to be disannulled and past away.

1. SCRIPTURE MAKES IT PLAIN THAT THE CEREMONIAL LAW WITH ITS ATTENDANT COVENANT OF CIRCUMCISION HAS BEEN ABOLISHED. The following may make this matter plain: The disannulling or abolishing of the law we see:

a. Heb. 7:18. "There is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof."

b. Also Gal. 3:19. "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions *till the seed should come to whom the promise was made.*" What seed this is, to whom the promise was made, we are told in the 16th verse of the same chapter. "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made: He saith not to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."

We hence see, that Christ was the seed to whom the promises were made, and that the *law* (the ceremonial law) was added because of transgressions, till the seed, i.e. Christ, should come. It is hence plain, that the ceremonial law was to continue no longer than till Christ came.

The covenant of the circumcision appears to be annexed to this law. For says Jesus Christ, John 7:23, "If a man on the sabbath day *receive circumcision*, that the *law of Moses* should not be *broken*, are ye angry at me:" &c.

c. Heb. 8:13: That this covenant of circumcision, or the Sinai covenant, which includes it, hath passed away, or is disannulled, see Heb. 8:13. "In that he saith a new covenant, he hath made the first old: now that which decayeth and waxeth old, is ready to vanish away."

d. Gal. 5:2-3: Besides, circumcision is evidently a very important part of that law, which is disannulled; for, saith Paul to the Galatians, chap. 5:2-3. "If ye be *circumcised*, Christ shall *profit* you *nothing*. For I testify again, says he, to every man that is *circumcised*, that he is a debtor to the whole law."

It is hence plain, that the ceremonial law is no longer binding; and that the covenant of circumcision which was incorporated with it, hath vanished away

AN IMPORTANT FACT TO NOTE

2. THE GOSPEL PROMISES TO ABRAHAM WERE MADE BEFORE THE COVENANT OF CIRCUMCISION WAS EFFECTED

a. The other particular is this: the promises which were made to Abraham and to his seed, were not made to him in *circumcision*, but in *uncircumcision*; and the covenant which was

confirmed of God to Abraham in Christ, was while he was in *uncircumcision*, and about twenty-four years before the covenant of *circumcision* was given: *Rom.* 4:8,9,10; *Gal.* 3:16,17; *Gen.* 12:3,4,7, and 17:10,17.

b. Moreover, when Paul speaks of the covenant which was confirmed of God in Christ, he points out the exact year when this was made known or confirmed with Abraham, as though he had a foresight, as certainly the Holy Ghost had, of the contention which should be long continued for want of judiciously understanding what covenant should be disannulled, and what covenant the law could not disannul.

He tells us, *Gal.* 3:17, that this covenant, which cannot be made void, was four hundred and thirty years before the law; whereas the covenant of circumcision was about four hundred and six years before the law, with which circumcision was united.

Seeing matters are thus, what, I pray you, my hearers, have we to do with the covenant of circumcision? If we keep it, Christ shall profit us nothing; if we observe something which we substitute in its place, Christ may profit us as little in such observance.

*[See editor's note below on the following paragraph] I know it will be asked, Is not the church the same now that it was in Abraham's day? I answer, yes, and the same that it was in Noah's, Enoch's, and Adam's, and the same that it ever will be.

*[Ed: Daniel Merrill is dispensationally confused in the above paragraph as he incorrectly pre-dates the church. The church is a N.T. entity, a mystery in the O.T. Israel. It must be remembered that Pastor Merrill was just coming into the Biblical comprehension of truth. There was not much solid local N.T. Baptist literature available for his consideration.]

3. AS A COVENANT SIGN, CIRCUMCISION WAS LIMITED TO THE OLD TESTAMENT. THE "NEW" COVENANT IN THE N. T. IS TO BE CONTRASTED WITH THE "OLD" COVENANT IN THE O. T. WHICH WAS TEMPORARY AND IS NOW ABOLISHED.

It will be asked again, Is not the covenant the same which it was in Abraham's time? Yes, the covenant which was confirmed of God in Christ is unchangeably the same; but the covenant of circumcision which God made with Abraham, renewed with Isaac and Jacob, and solemnized with Israel in the wilderness, (*Deut.* 29:10,11,12,13,) is far from being the covenant, the *new covenant*, which God makes with the house of Israel in our day.

The covenant of circumcision was, more than 1700 years ago, decaying, waxing old, and ready to vanish away. But you will again say, Is not the church composed of parents and children, and of households now, as it was in Abraham's day?

Let Paul answer how it was (as touching the gospel) in Abraham's day and after, *Rom.* 9:6,7,8. "They are not all Israel which are of Israel, neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they that are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."

Just so now. The children of God, the children of the promise are counted for the seed, and compose the church; and of those who appear thus should the visible church be made up, and of none else. But, if by the question be meant, Does not church membership descend from parents to children, and from masters to servants, as it appears to have done under the old covenant of circumcision?

The answer is, The New Testament nowhere acknowledges, nor does it know, any thing about a church thus made up.

SOME EXCELLENT ADVICE

I would that all good men would consent to take New Testament directions and examples by which to constitute and guide New Testament churches.

A GOOD QUESTION
DOESN'T BAPTISM SIMPLY REPLACE CIRCUMCISION?

But it will be asked once more, Hath not baptism come into the place of circumcision, and to be supplied to similar subjects?

THE BIBLICAL ANSWER

BAPTISM IS NEVER SUBSTITUTED FOR CIRCUMCISION IN THE N. T.

Circumcision was a positive institution, and so is baptism. Abraham and the Israelites knew nothing to whom circumcision should be administered, but as they received direction from the Divine Institutor; just so it is with respect to the administration of baptism.

The Christians at Antioch, the Elders at Jerusalem, the church of Galatia, and Paul and Barnabas, knew nothing of baptism being substituted for circumcision. *Acts* 15:1 to 35; *Gal.* 3 and 5 chapters. We know nothing, and can know nothing, as to whom baptism is to be administered, but from what Christ hath told us as to the subjects. Now—

C.

INFANT BAPTISM HAS NO SCRIPTURAL WARRANT,
BUT IS BASED ON EXTRA SCRIPTURAL SOURCES AND
CHURCH TRADITION

Secondly [thirdly] I ask, what evidence have we from the Bible that infants are to be baptized?

You may reply, they are included in the covenant. What covenant? In that of circumcision? Surely not, for that hath vanished away. If you say, In the covenant that was confirmed of God in Christ, I *answer*, It was not this covenant which entitled Abraham's household to circumcision; therefore, though your children be in this covenant, that does not, of itself, entitle them to baptism; whether baptism be in the place of circumcision, or not.

You will then say, What can entitle our children to baptism? *Answer*. Their being disciples, and so coming within the compass or pale of the baptismal institution.

As we can know nothing of the subjects of baptism, any more than Abraham and Israel could be the subjects of circumcision, but from what we are informed in the institution, and in what is said upon it, we will inquire what the Bible saith of this matter.

If the Lord, in his word, hath not given us sufficient instruction upon this subject, we must practice in the dark, for we have no where else to go.

1. NO EVIDENCE THAT JOHN BAPTIZED INFANT CHILDREN

We will begin with John. 1. Did he baptize any children? We have no evidence that he did. Besides, he told the multitude which attended his ministry, not to plead Abraham, or Abraham's covenant, as a title to baptism. *Matt.* 3:7, 8, 9, 10.

2. NO EVIDENCE THAT CHRIST'S DISCIPLES BAPTIZED INFANT CHILDREN

Did Christ's disciples, whilst he was with them, and whilst they *made* and *baptized* more *disciples* than John, baptize infants, or any visibly unbelieving children? No evidence that they did.

3. NO EVIDENCE FROM THE GREAT COMMISSION MANDATE ABOUT INFANT BAPTISM

Is there any evidence from my text, which contains the words of the institution, that infants, or unbelieving households, were to be baptized? None; but the contrary.

4. NO EVIDENCE FROM ANY N. T. PASSAGE THAT COMMANDS INFANT BAPTISM

Is there any passage in the New Testament, which commands, or says so much as one word, that infants are to be baptized? Not one.

5. NO EXAMPLE OF INFANT BAPTISM ANYWHERE IN THE N.T.
THE THREE SUPPOSED EXAMPLES OF INFANT BAPTISM SCRUTINIZED UNDER THE
SCRIPTURAL SEARCHLIGHT

Is there any example, which shows that the apostles baptized any upon the faith of parents, or masters, or upon the faith or promises of any others? I know, my brethren, there are three instances, which are supposed by some to favor the affirmative of the question. I have rather been of the same opinion. If it be so, many facts convince us. We will look at each of these examples separately.

a. LYDIA: ACTS 16:13-15

The first supposed example we find at Philippi. Here was a woman, named Lydia; she appears to have been a woman of business. She belonged to Thyatira, but was now at Philippi, probably selling her merchandize, with several attendants. The history is thus related, *Acts* 16, 13th, 14th, and 15th, verses.

(1) THE SCRIPTURAL RECORD

“On the sabbath day, we (Paul and other disciples) went out of the city, by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made, and we sat down, and spake unto the women who resorted thither. And a certain woman, named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, who worshipped God, heard us, whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there.”

(2) THE ATTENDANT FACTS

This is all we know of the matter. She belonged to another city. She worshipped God. She was, on the Sabbath day, by the side of a river, where prayer was wont to be made. The Lord opened her heart to attend to what Paul said. Her servants were with her. She had a house, either her own, or one taken for the time. She was baptized, and her household.

As to her having infants with her, you can tell, as well as I. Moreover, whether her servants believed the words of Paul, you can, if you attend to the circumstances, form as correct a judgment, perhaps, as any other can make up for you.

(3) THE OBVIOUS CONCLUSIONS

The things to be considered are. (a) Lydia was a godly woman. (b) She attended meeting. Paul found here where prayer was wont to be made, where religious women had been accustomed to meet. (c) She, like other religious people, took her household to meeting with her. (d) It appears that Paul baptized none of her household, but such as were with her at the female prayer meeting. (e) The strong probability is, that Lydia, being a pious woman, one who worshipped God, would select for her attendants, maidens or servants who also were worshippers of God.

In verse 40, we are told, the apostles entered into the house of Lydia, comforted the brethren, &c. You will weigh these circumstances, and make up for yourselves, so far as you can, a righteous judgment.

b. THE PHILIPPIAN JAILER: ACTS 16:25-34

The next example is recorded in the same chapter, and appears to be in the same city. The history of the matter is contained in the 25th verse, and on to the 34th.

(1) THE SCRIPTURAL RECORD

The noticeable facts, and on which we must make up our judgment, are—The jailer says, "Sirs, What must I do to be saved?" Paul and Silas answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he was baptized, he and all his, straightway—and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house."

(2) THE ATTENDANT FACTS

Here are three things to be put together. (a) The word of the Lord Jesus was spoken to them all. (b) They were all baptized. (c) They all believed in God. Whether here be any example of infant baptism, you will judge, each one for himself.

As some have supposed that this passage, and a few others of similar import, afford an argument in favor of sprinkling, it may be well to give it a moment's consideration. Here we are told, that the keeper of the prison brought out Paul and Silas. Where he brought them to, seems plainly enough to be gathered from the 32nd verse, in which we find them speaking to the jailer the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.

In the next verse we are informed that the jailer and all his were baptized. Where they were baptized, we are not told. One thing however is plain, it was not in the house; for in verse 34 it is said, When (i.e. after the household were baptized) he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God, with all his house.

(3) THE OBVIOUS CONCLUSIONS

From these observations, the following things appear: (a) That Paul and Silas were in the jailer's house, when they spake the word of the Lord to all that were in his house. (b) That when the ordinance was baptism was administered, they were not in his house. (c) That the mode of baptizing then in use rendered it inconvenient to be performed in the jailer's house. (d) After the ordinance was administered, they went into the house. How this favors sprinkling, I see not.

c. THE HOUSEHOLD OF STEPHANAS: I Cor. 1:16 & 16:15

The other supposed example is in *I Cor.* 1:16, where Paul says, I baptized also the household of Stephanas. In the 16th chap. 15th verse, we have a short history of Stephanas's household; it is thus, "Ye know the household of Stephanas, that it is the first fruits of Achaia, and that *they* have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints." Whether there is here found any evidence of infant baptism, you will determine for yourselves.

6. NO ENCOURAGEMENT FOR INFANT BAPTISM IN N.T. VERSES VERSUS THE GREAT ENCOURAGEMENT FOR PARENTS TO DEDICATE THEIR CHILDREN TO THE LORD

Are the encouragements which are given to parents in behalf of their children, made to their having them baptized; or are the blessings connected with their dedicating them to the Lord, and with their bringing them up in his *nurture* and *admonition*? With which, your Bibles will inform you.

7. NO CERTAIN EVIDENCE OF INFANT BAPTISM EITHER BY EXAMPLE OR PRECEPT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Do we, or do any, pretend, that there is any certain evidence, from either precept or example, for the baptizing of infants? Indeed there is none. Probably not many suppose it.

8. NO EVIDENCE FOR OBSERVANCE OF INFANT BAPTISM ON THE LORD'S DAY-SUNDAY-LIKE THERE ARE FOR OTHER CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

Is there, as some have affirmed, the same evidence for baptizing infants, that there is for observing the Lord's day, for admitting females to communion, and which there is for family prayer?

There is a day called the Lord's day, and religious things were to be observed on it. Are there infants, who are called baptized infants, and are they to be attended to as such? Females and males are declared to be all one in Christ, and so fit subjects for the communion of saints. Are infants unequivocally declared to be fit subjects of baptism?

We have examples of family prayer, and are commanded to pray with all prayer. Are there scripture examples of infant baptism, and are we commanded to baptize all; and so are infants included?

9. NO COMMAND BY CHRIST TO HIS DISCIPLES TO BAPTIZE INFANTS

Ought I to teach you infant baptism, if our Lord Jesus Christ hath no where directed me to do thus?

10. MORE EVIDENCE THAT CIRCUMCISION AND THE CEREMONIAL LAW HAVE BEEN ANNULLED

a. CHRIST NEVER STATED THAT BAPTISM WAS A REPLACEMENT FOR CIRCUMCISION

. Hath Jesus Christ spoken one word of baptism as being substituted for circumcision? Hath he any where commanded his ministers to teach this substitution?

Shall we go, and are we under the necessity of going, to the law and covenant of circumcision, to prove infant baptism, when both this law and covenant have long since waxed old, been repealed, and have perished? *Heb. 7:18,19, and 8:13.*

b. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE BLESSINGS OF ABRAHAM ON PRESENT DAY BELIEVERS

(1) QUESTION # 1: But you will ask, are not the blessings of Abraham come on the Gentiles? [*Answer*] Yes.

(2) QUESTION # 2: You will then say, are not our children included in the promise? "If they be Christ's, then are they Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." *Gal. 3:29.* [*Answer*] Abraham's children, after the flesh, were not included in the promise, as the Pedobaptists of our day would have theirs.

(3) QUESTION #3: But you will say again, Are not our children included in the covenant? [*Answer*] In what covenant? In that of circumcision? Surely not. For though that covenant was often renewed, yet it hath long since passed away. Is your question this? Are they not included in that covenant, which was confirmed of God in Christ, twenty-four years previously to the covenant of circumcision?

I answer, No man knoweth, nor can know, but as your children give evidence, that they possess the Spirit of Christ. But as I have observed to you before, so I say again, even were your children included in this covenant and saints; this does not of itself give them any right to baptism, any more, than Abraham's being included in the same covenant gave him a right to circumcision.

BAPTISM AND THE COVENANT OF CIRCUMCISION ARE NOT RELATED

This covenant determines nothing as to the one, or the other. The covenant of circumcision determined who were to be circumcised. So the ordinance or institution of Baptism determines who are to be baptized. One determines no more who are to be admitted to the other, than does the covenant of an everlasting priesthood (*Num. 25:13.*) determine who shall be ministers in gospel days.

In short, there is no arguing from one to the other in this matter. They are both of them positive institutions, and nothing can be known of either, but what is revealed in its particular institution.

IF INFANT BAPTISM DOESN'T SUCCEED CIRCUMCISION, WHAT CAN PARENTS DO FOR THEIR CHILDREN?

While viewing this subject, you will inquire, What will become of our children? I answer, God only knoweth. You may rejoice; But what shall we do for them? [*ANSWER*] Dedicate them to God, and, like faithful Christians, bring them up for him.

SOME LEGITIMATE CONSEQUENCES IF BAPTISM SIMPLY REPLACES CIRCUMCISION

We will now attend to some legitimate consequences which follow, upon supposition that the subjects of baptism are to be determined from the subjects of circumcision.

1. THE ENTIRE HOUSEHOLD WOULD BE BAPTIZED, REGARDLESS OF THE NUMBER, AND WOULD BE AUTOMATICALLY CONSIDERED CHRISTIANS," EVEN ATHEISTS AND INFIDELS, REGARDLESS OF THEIR BELIEFS AND/OR CONDUCT.

One consequence is, every man who is converted to the Christian religion is to be baptized, and all his household, though he may have three hundred and seventeen training soldiers born in his own house. Not only are these soldiers to be baptized, but their wives, children, and all other servants, who belong to this great man's house. A thousand infidels are to be baptized, because one great man, their master, is christianized.

2. THE ENTIRE HOUSEHOLD WOULD BE CONSIDERED CHURCH MEMBERS IN GOOD STANDING, REGARDLESS OF BELIEFS AND CONDUCT.

These soldiers, with their wives, children and servants, are all to be considered and treated as church members, or as being in covenant. I confess this does not look to me gospel-like.

3. THE ENTIRE HOUSEHOLD, REGARDLESS OF BELIEFS AND CONDUCT WOULD HAVE TO BE ADMITTED TO THE LORD'S TABLE.

Another consequence is, the adults among these, and among all others, who are baptized, are not only to be admitted to the communion, but required to come. I ask: Could such a communion be called the communion of saints? – one great and good man, with hundreds of unconverted servants!

4. ALL THE CHILDREN OF THE HOUSEHOLD WOULD HAVE A RIGHT TO BAPTISM.

All who have been baptized, and have not, for misdemeanor, been expelled the church, have a right to baptism for their children; and not man may forbid them.

5. THE EQUAL ACCEPTANCE OF CONVERTED AND UNCONVERTED DESTROY CHRIST'S DIVINELY DECREED DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD.

Another consequence is, notwithstanding Christ saith, "My kingdom is not of this world," yet the regulations were such, especially the mean of admission into it, as strongly, and of infallible consequence, tended to make it of this world, and that abundantly so.

6. THE PRACTICE OF **SOME** GODLY PEDOBAPTIST PASTORS IN REQUIRING EVIDENCE OF REGENERATION BEFORE ADMISSION TO THE LORD'S TABLE AMONG ADULTS WHO WERE BAPTIZED IN INFANCY IS CONTRADICTIONARY TO THE O. T. CEREMONIAL PRACTICES.

Another consequence is, many learned and pious ministers of New-England are inconsistent with themselves, in requiring of persons baptized in infancy a profession of experimental religion, as a term of communion. It was not so done in Israel.

7. SOME GODLY PEDOBAPTIST PASTORS ARE INCONSISTENT IN REFUSING BAPTISM TO CHILDREN, WHO BY VIRTUE OF THEIR PARENTS PROFESSION, ARE ENTITLED TO BAPTISM AND ITS BENEFITS.

Another consequence is, many of the same pious and learned ministers are very inconsistent with themselves, in refusing baptism to the children of such as are, by their baptism, in regular church membership, or in covenant, as it is termed.

I have taken, as you observe, for granted, what I do not believe to be true, that sprinkling, or a very partial washing, is baptism.

8. AS THE SO-CALLED SUCCESSOR TO CIRCUMCISION, INFANT BAPTISM DESTROYS THE PURITY OF THE N. T. CHURCH

Another consequence is, it doth, so far as it hath its *perfect work*, destroy the very idea of the gospel church, contradict the prophets, and make Paul and others speak not the truth, and it throws us back to the state of the Jewish church. [Ed: Merrill errantly uses the term "church" to refer to the O.T. Jewish administrative economy]

[Editor's note about the following paragraph: Believers in this present dispensation, do share **now** in the **spiritual** provisions of this future millennial covenant that Merrill cites below, as the writer of Hebrews clearly declares in Hebrews chapter eight. The full and primary reference in Jeremiah 31, however, concerns the future conversion and restoration of Israel at the time of the Millennial reign of Christ on earth.]

a. JEREMIAH'S PROPHECY

Jeremiah, prophesying of the gospel church, saith, chap. 31:31 to 34, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with your fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel,

After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least of them, unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord."

If this means any thing, it certainly means that the gospel church shall exceed in purity the Jewish church; that it shall, at least, be composed of professing saints.

b. ISAIAH'S PROPHECY

Isaiah says, chap. 14:13, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord." The latter of these passages, our Lord applies to the gospel day, *John* 6:45: The former is applied to the gospel church by Paul [in] *Heb.* 8.

c. MOSES' PROPHECY

Moses says in *Deut.* 18:15,19, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of the brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words, which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him."

d. PETER'S DECLARATION

This, and much more, Peter applies to gospel days, and to the gospel church, *Acts* 3:22, to the end. "Moses truly said unto the fathers, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul that will not hear that Prophet, shall be *destroyed from among the people*".

Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. "Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed." "Unto you first, God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you in *turning away every one of you from his iniquities*."

THE CHURCH A DISTINCT ENTITY

Through the New-Testament, the gospel church is, or appears to be, spoken of as a society, nation or church of saints; and as being greatly different from the nation of the Jews.

But the subjects of baptism being determined by the subjects of circumcision, brings the gospel church as to its constituent materials, to the same condition with the church under the law of carnal ordinances. Indeed, what is now, generally, called the gospel church, is hardly to be distinguished by its members from the old Jewish church.

THE LACK OF SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION BY SOME GODLY PEDOBAPTISTS IN NOT RECOGNIZING THE ROOT PROBLEM IN THEIR NOBLE ATTEMPTS TO CLEANSE THEIR DENOMINATIONS OF SPIRITUAL POLLUTION

Do not these things look as though the twelve hundred and fifty years of Antichrist's reign were not wholly past? Is there not, my brethren, some ... error at the root of all this? Can such

streams, as are these consequences, flow from a pure fountain? Indeed many good ministers of our land have long since discovered some of these evil consequences, and have labored hard to rectify them.

President Edwards, and many others, made a noble stand against this flood of *corruption*; yet they discovered not the fountain whence these streams flow, and will flow, till it be removed.

Putting or mistaking the covenant of circumcision, for the covenant which was confirmed of God in Christ to Abraham, twenty-four years before circumcision was known, and substituting baptism for circumcision, and determining the subjects of the one by the subjects of the other, without any authority thus to do, have produced all this corruption, deception, and world of evil. Would good ministers be persuaded to lay the axe at the root of the tree, as John did, the evils would be soon rectified.

The subject, on which we now are, is of such high concernment to the church of Christ, generally, and your conviction of the truth of it being almost, or quite, essential to our future peace and union together, I would willingly omit nothing which might chafe away your darkness, and cause the true light to appear.

A HISTORY OF INFANT BAPTISM BASED ON EXTRA SCRIPTURAL SOURCES AND TRADITION

I will, therefore, add here the history of infant baptism. Should we find that infant baptism is of men, as we have already found sprinkling to be, it is hoped that you will either give it up, or practice it as being of man's device, and not, as Mr. Dickinson would have it, as belonging to infants by divine right.

1. INFANT BAPTISM IS POST-APOSTOLIC IN ORIGIN AND UNKNOWN BEFORE THE SECOND CENTURY.

The first information which we have of infant baptism is about the middle of the second century; about which time Irenaeus, in one of his epistles, has the following sentence: "The church received a tradition from the apostles to administer baptism to little children or infants."*(Professor Dickinson on Baptism)

2. INFANT BAPTISM NOT MENTIONED AGAIN UNTIL THE MIDDLE OF THE THIRD CENTURY

The next account we have of this matter (if we except Tertullian, who opposed the practice) is given us by Origen, in about the middle of the third century. His words are, "Little children are baptized for the remission of sins." For the remission of original sin, or pollution; for of this is he speaking. Again he says, "The church had an *order* from the apostles to give baptism to infants."

Another part of the history of infant baptism we have in a quotation from the decisions of the famous Council at Carthage in the year 253. It is this: "From baptism and the grace of God *none* ought to be *prohibited*; especially infants *need our help* and the divine mercy."

We have a farther account from Augustine, who flourished about the middle of the fourth century. His words (writing of infant baptism) are, "Let none, therefore, so much as *whisper* any other doctrine in *your ears*: This the church hath always had, has always held.

3. A ROMAN POPE FINALLY SEALS THE DOCTRINE OF INFANT BAPTISM

The next we hear of infant baptism is, that the practice was confirmed, and so put beyond dispute, by Pope Innocent the First.

Now fire and sword were the all-conclusive arguments used for the conviction and reformation of all who refused to practice, or dared to call in question, infant baptism. We will pass over the horrid persecutions, which now began to be, and have ever since been practiced, at intervals, upon those who would not submit to the divine right of infants to baptism, as conferred on them by the ghostly Popes of Rome.

4. THE TESTIMONIES OF FAMOUS THEOLOGIANS

Luther, the famous German reformer, says, "that infant baptism was not determined till Pope Innocentius;" and Grotius, in his annotations on Matthew 19 says, "It was not enjoined till the Council of Carthage."* (*Ancient Dialogue Revised*)

5. THE PROTESTANT REFORMERS ILLOGICAL ATTEMPTS TO MAKE INFANT BAPTISM DOCTRINE AN "IMPLIED" N.T. PRECEPT, WHEN THEY DID NOT WANT TO USE ROME AS THEIR AUTHORITY SOURCE

We ought, however, to trace the history of infant baptism one step father, and notice Calvin, and a multitude since, who were unwilling to acknowledge their dependence on the Mother of Harlots, for their authority in this matter; and therefore with great ingenuity have discovered infant baptism, as a gospel ordinance, or the right of infants to it, in the law of Moses.

Indeed they have supposed that this doctrine is implied in a number of passages of the New-Testament. Yet, I believe, none who practice it, are willing to venture this New-Testament ordinance upon New-Testament evidence.

Here you see that *tradition* is the foundation for infant baptism; *error*, the belief that *baptism washes away original sin*, the nurse of its tender age; the church of Rome, the confirmer and strong defender of it; and the long since repealed ceremonial law of Moses, the evidence for it.

You see, the introduction of infant baptism was tradition. Upon this foundation hath it manifestly rested ever since. All the ingenious arguments of learned and pious men, can, in fact, add no strength to its first foundation. The first we hear of it is, it was placed upon tradition, and there it hath rested, or been standing uneasily, ever since.

6. ONLY ONE EARLY POST-APOSTOLIC SOURCE FOR INFANT BAPTISM

Besides, this *tradition*, as well as the practice which followed, is doubtless the offspring of error, and man's invention. At best we have but one witness for it, in the mouth of whom nothing can be established. Origen says, "The church hath an *order* from the Apostles." Still we have but witness.

7. THE "CHURCH FATHERS" DID NOT MAKE ANY PRETENSION OF USING SCRIPTURE TO SUPPORT INFANT BAPTISM, BASING THEIR ARGUMENTS SOLELY ON TRADITION

Moreover, the very expressions of the Pedobaptists show that they were from the beginning opposed by the Baptists. Irenaeus says, "We have a tradition." Origen says, "We have an order." The Council of Carthage say, "Infants ought not to be *prohibited* from baptism." Augustine saith, "Let none so much as whisper any other doctrine in your ears."—Does not every syllable indicate the dispute which the Baptists had with the inventers and supporters of this anti-evangelical principle and practice?

It is worthy of a moment's consideration, that not one of the most ancient fathers makes the least pretension that infant baptism is supported by so much as one passage in either the Old-Testament or the New; and they mention no authority but *tradition*, and an *order* from the Apostles, &c. which, at best, are very uncertain things.

MERRILL'S REPUDIATION OF TRADITION AS HIS BASIS FOR BAPTISM

Whoever can fix their faith, continue their practice, and venture their responsibility on such a traditionary foundation, I cannot.

Upon this foundation for our practice, have both we and our fathers ventured to oppose the Baptists, with greater or less degrees of virulence; whilst, by our tradition, we have greatly injured the ordinance of Christ, if not, in this instance, made void the law of God.

MERRILL'S STRAIGHT FORWARD CONCLUSION AS TO WHY INFANT BAPTISM WAS INTRODUCED

In fine [finality], was not infant baptism first introduced to escape the offence of the cross? Is it not, with many, unknowingly continued for the same end? It bringeth the church to its former state as under the law.

"If I yet preach *circumcision*, why do I yet suffer persecution? Then is the offence of the cross ceased," *Gal. 5:11*.

SERMON VII
CHRIST'S MINISTERS HAVE THE
AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO
TEACH AND PRACTICE ONLY WHAT
CHRIST COMMANDED, WITH A PLEA FOR
CHURCH MEMBERS TO ACKNOWLEDGE
AND OBEY THE TRUTH, EVEN WHEN IT
CONTRADICTS RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY
PLUS
SEVEN PROMISES OF CHRIST TO MINISTERS
WHO FAITHFULLY PRACTICE HIS
ORDINANCES AND ELEVEN FINAL
APPLICATIONS OF THE SEVEN SERMONS

Matthew 28:19-20.

"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen".

I have already set before you the principal part of what I intended under the two first propositions in my text. What remains is to bring forward Christ's command to all his ministering servants to teach all nations, or those who should be disciplined among them, to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them.

And then lastly His comforting and strengthening promise, which is, "And, lo, I with you always, even unto the end of the world."

A.

CHRIST'S MINISTERS HAVE THE AUTHORITY AND
RESPONSIBILITY TO TEACH AND PRACTICE ONLY WHAT HE
COMMANDED

To these propositions, your serious, Christian attention is requested. The first is Christ's command to the ministers of his gospel to teach all nations, or those who should be disciplined among them, to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them.

Here you see the extensiveness of my orders received, and which I must carefully observe, would I be obedient unto the Heavenly Teacher, who came from God.

1. CHRIST DELETED THE CEREMONIAL LAW FROM THE NEW COVENANT

[Ed Note: In this paragraph, Merrill confuses Israel and the church. He was not aware of the clear dispensational distinction between these two divinely instituted entities.]

Christ Jesus, when personally on earth, gave a new edition of his own and his Father's mind and will. In this new edition, he abrogated or left out, many ceremonies of the old as being no longer useful. Under the old edition, the church was in its childhood, and therefore under such tutors and governors as were not needed in her riper years.

In this new edition, Christ hath pointed out what is to be preserved of the old. The sum of the moral law and the prophets, were to continue in force. These are, indeed, in the very nature of things, binding on accountable creatures.

But when Christ, the anointed and expected Messiah, was come, then all those rites, sacrifices and typical institutions of the ceremonial law, which were, together, as a school-master to lead the observer to Christ, were disannulled, being no longer of use.

You see what ministers have authority to teach for both doctrine and practice. It is what Christ hath commanded them, and nothing which is contrary from it.

2. DANIEL MERRILL'S FAITHFULNESS UP TO THIS POINT IN FULFILLING THE DIVINELY MANDATED RESPONSIBILITIES CHRIST GAVE HIM, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF BAPTISM DUE TO HIS IGNORANCE. HIS FIDELITY IN TEACHING THIS TRUTH UPON COMPREHENSION OF THIS DOCTRINE.

In time past I have taught you the precepts of Christ, somewhat largely. As I have taught them, so you have, as is believed, received them to the saving of your souls. The ordinance of the supper I have taught in is simplicity, and so have you received it. I have also been informed, that Jesus Christ appointed baptism, as an ordinance to be observed in his church. But what that ordinance was, and who were the subjects of it, you have not been particularly told, till of late. Nor had I, till a short time since, a clear understanding of either.

I, no doubt, ought to have known them before; but till I did, I could not teach them to you. When I came to the knowledge of them, it was no longer in my power to be faithful to Christ, and refuse to teach them. In the simplicity of my heart have I taught you what is baptism, and who are to be baptized.

Whether these things be, or be not, agreeable to my former notions of them, is nothing to the point. One thing I am settled in, I have, of late, taught them to you, as Christ hath commanded me.

Not only was it my duty to teach you these things, but I am commanded to teach you to observe them: For then are you Christ's disciples, when you do all things whatsoever he hath commanded you.

To observe these things, is like obedient children to receive instruction, and then to search the scriptures, that you may know how these things are. It belongs to me to teach you to observe these things till you understand them, and then to observe them in your practice.

B.

A PLEA TO HIS CONGREGATION TO RECEIVE AND PRACTICE THE TRUTH UPON EXAMINATION

Would you walk in all the statutes and ordinances of the Lord blameless, you must observe these things till you understand them.

You and I have been unreasonably prejudiced against light and truth in these matters. If I do not misjudge, the Lord hath, in answer to prayer, afforded me the needed light and knowledge upon the subject. It was not in a day, nor in a month, after my prejudices received a shock, and my mind partial conviction, that I obtained satisfaction.

1. THE CONGREGATION'S RESPONSIBILITY TO LEARN THE TRUTH ABOUT N. T. BAPTISM

Nor can I expect that you will, all of you, possess such a ready mind, as to give up your long, and almost inveterate prejudices, and receive the light at once. It is by little and little, that anti-christian errors must be destroyed from the church, and from your hearts, as well as from mine.

You may except to find me ready, at any time, and at all times, to afford you every instruction, and to answer any objection which may occur to your candid minds. You should have your Bible always nigh you, and possess continually a prayerful, teachable spirit. Be determined to hearken to none but Christ, and to be obedient to all his commands.

Be careful to avoid all bitterness and evil speaking. Wisdom will not swell with strife; nor will the wrath of man work the righteousness of God.

2. THE CONGREGATION'S RESPONSIBILITY TO OBSERVE AND PRACTICE N. T. BAPTISM AFTER ACCEPTING THIS TRUTH

It belongs to me to teach you to observe the ordinance of baptism, and the proper subjects, in your practice. You must understand these things before you can acceptably practice them. Some of you, no doubt, sufficiently understand them to proceed to practice.

But I have not thought it duty to hasten your practice, or to lead you by example, lest the minds of others should be injured. It is a time to weaken prejudices, and not to increase them. Wisdom dwells with prudence. Many of your minds, as well as mine, are, with pleasing expectation, looking forward to the time, when we may, with nighly or quite all our brethren with us, keep the ordinances of the gospel, as Christ hath commanded us.

When you shall understand these things, happy will you be if you practice them; for all gospel obedience gives pleasure in the practice. As Moses had much to do in Egypt, before God said unto him, "Speak unto the people that they go forward," so, my brethren, I may have much to do before things shall be in readiness, and before the Lord shall bid me speak, saying unto you, go forward. But, if the Lord will, I would live to see that day.

After Israel went forward, and were baptized under Moses in the cloud, and in the sea, they had a tedious wilderness to pass; so it may be with us. But, should we observe the pillar of cloud and of fire, we shall come to the promised land; and it may be, with much safety and speed should we hearken to the good counsel of Joshua.

3. THE CONGREGATION'S RESPONSIBILITY TO BE OBEDIENT TO CHRIST'S DIVINE AUTHORITY WHEN HUMAN RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY CONTRADICTS CHRIST.

You know, my brethren, as it is my duty to teach you to observe all things whatsoever Christ hath commanded me, so it is your duty to receive instruction, and be obedient. Your obedience is not to be rendered to me, but to Jesus Christ, and to the word of his testimony.

It will doubtless occur to your minds, Whom shall we hear? One minister teaches us one thing, and another teaches differently. You are to hear no man any father than he shall teach you as the man Christ Jesus hath commanded him.

Ministers have no authority, any farther than they receive it from him. He hath given them no power to teach, but what he hath commanded. When they transcribe out of the old into the new edition of God's word and will, and tell us that the rite and covenant of circumcision are to explain to us the observance of a New-Testament ordinance, we are not obliged to believe them, unless they point us to the place where Christ hath so commanded.

You are to obey them who have the rule over you. But even Paul was not to be followed any farther than he followed Christ. So it ought to be with you, in hearkening to what your teachers say.

Ministers are but men, and they have proved themselves to be so, by changing the ordinance of baptism into quite a different thing, and by administering their new rite to subjects to whom Jesus Christ never commanded it.

It surely is a surprising thing, and not to be accounted for, but from the relics of human depravity, that so many good men should, unknowingly, do and teach things which are quite aside from what Christ hath commanded them.

It is too late for you, my hearers, to cloak yourselves under what great and good men have said; for the truth of the Lord hath already been told you. Had I not come and spoken to you this word of Christ, you would not have had sin; but now have you no cloak for disobedience.

C.

CHRIST'S PROMISE OF HIS PERSONAL PRESENCE TO MINISTERS AS THEY TEACH AND PRACTICE THE N. T. ORDINANCES

1. CHRIST'S PRESENCE WHILE HE WAS ON EARTH

We now come to consider Christ's comforting and strengthening promise to his ministering servants: which is, "And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Christ Jesus hath been with his ministers; and he will be in preparing them for their office.

He was personally with his first gospel heralds, for the space of three years, or more; after this he left them for a short time; in this short interval they passed a severe trial. He was with them again, at times, for forty days.

2. CHRIST'S PRESENCE DURING THE APOSTOLIC AGE

Soon after this he sent his Spirit upon them, and filled them with it to a remarkable degree. Then they were prepared for their office. They speedily filled it remarkably, and the effect was wonderful. Three thousand were converted in a day.

3. CHRIST'S PRESENCE TODAY: HIS PROMISES

a. CHRIST'S PROMISE TO HIS MINISTERS TO PREPARE THEM FOR SERVICE

Christ is as really, though not so apparently, with all his gospel messengers, in preparing them to go forth into his harvest. Those, who have not Christ with them, to prepare them for their office, are but as wolves in sheep's clothing, when they go forth into the ministry. They preach for *filthy lucre*, and frequently have their *reward*. It is too often the case, that those, whom Christ hath prepared, are obliged to go into the field, or make tents for their support, whilst such as run, not being sent, swim in luxury.

b. CHRIST'S PROMISE TO HIS MINISTERS THAT HE WILL BRING ALL DIVINE THINGS TO THEIR REMEMBRANCE

Jesus Christ will be with his ministers in bringing divine things to their remembrance. It is the Lord's Spirit which causeth divine truth to occur to the minds of his servants. Truths, which have been forgotten for months, and it may be for years, or passages which before were understood, may be, and not unfrequently are, fresh and plain in the minds of his servants, for their comfort, and for the comfort and instruction of others, or for the comfort and edification of both.

c. CHRIST'S PROMISE TO HIS MINISTERS THAT HE WILL GIVE THEM WISDOM, FORTITUDE AND FAITHFULNESS

Christ will be with his ministers in affording them wisdom, fortitude, and faithfulness. The entrance of his word giveth light. He maketh light their paths, and ordereth all their steps. He maketh their feet like hinds' feet, and causeth them to be swifter than the eagle, stronger than lions, wise as serpents, and harmless as doves, With what wisdom did Stephen speak! With what fortitude did Peter, Paul, and a thousand others, address their auditories! With what wisdom hath he made his servants to speak! With what fortitude to bear, with what faithfulness to endure, for his name's sake!

How remarkably hath it been thus, in times of persecution! And when will you find a time, when they that are born after the flesh do not persecute those who are born after the Spirit!

How often is it the case, when ministers, like Paul, wax bold, and testify that Jesus is the Christ, and what are his words and institutions, that they are persecuted, openly or more secretly!

d. CHRIST'S PROMISE TO HIS MINISTERS THAT HE WILL SUPPORT THEM WHEN THEY SUFFER FOR HIS SAKE

Christ is and will be with his ministering servants whilst they are reproached and suffering for his name and truth's sake.

He says to them all, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." When Christ's ministers are reviled and suffer for his sake, his truth and Spirit bear their spirits up. He gives them to believe and know, that though they weep now, they shall soon rejoice; that their light afflictions, which are but for a moment, are preparing them for, and working out for them, a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

e. CHRIST'S PROMISE TO HIS MINISTERS OF ASSURANCE OF VICTORY OVER HIS ENEMIES

Christ Jesus will be with his faithful ministers in giving them to see their desire upon his enemies his appears to be particularly implied in my text. They are commanded to go and disciple all nations. Their desire is to see disciples multiplied. They go forth, Christ goes forth with them. Many of Christ's enemies submit to his yoke, which is easy, and to his burden, which is light. In this are they gratified, and their desire on them is accomplished.

f. CHRIST'S PROMISE TO HIS MINISTERS IN ASSISTING THEM TO DEFEND AND EXPLAIN THE GOSPEL

Christ is with his ministers in explaining and defending his truth. How did Peter, Paul, and others, in the first ages of Christianity, explain and vindicate the truth, to the confounding of both Jews and Gentiles! Whenever, in ages since, he hath spoken the word, great hath been the company, or force, of those who have published, explained and defended it. Martin Luther, John Calvin, and a number more in the reformation, were like flames of fire: nothing could stop them from publishing, explaining and defending the truths of the Savior, for he was with them.

CHRIST'S PROMISED ASSISTANCE TO HIS MINISTERS DOES NOT INCLUDE THE SUPPORT OF ERROR

You will ask, how is it that Christ is with his ministers, when they contradict one the other, and themselves too? [*Answer*] It is not said, that Christ is with his ministers in explaining and

defending error. Error is human: truth is divine. When ministers undertake to support error, they go without Christ's blessing and presence in this their labor.

Hence it is that they are so contradictory and inconsistent; and are obliged to wrest the scriptures from their plain and easy sense, to support a beloved prejudice. But when they take up for truth, plain scripture supports them, and they have plain and pleasant work, and their subjects supported with ease, as you have seen whilst attending to the several truths in my text.

GOOD MEN, SOMETIMES DECEIVED, MAY INCORRECTLY MIX TRUTH AND ERROR

Besides, it may be the case, that some very good men may mix truth and error, the commands of God and their own traditions, together; and, whilst practicing accordingly, they may enjoy a comfortable frame of mind, and hence conclude that their beloved compound is all from heaven.

This may be illustrated by the following example. Mr. S. finds it to be a truth that his infant offspring, as well as every thing else, should be devoutly given to God. He hath received and holds a tradition from the fathers, that his infants should be baptized. He publicly gives them to the Lord, and solemnly promises to instruct them in the way of truth and duty.

He, at the same time hath the ordinance administered to them, or administers it himself. During the whole transaction he possesses much comfort in his mind. His consequence is, the whole matter is according to truth, just as God would have it. Is not this going a little too much by sense, and not quite enough by scripture? Does it not contain a *spice* of enthusiasm? Would not the good man have had the same mental satisfaction had he possessed the same spirituality, and yet had omitted that part which is enjoined by tradition only?

g. CHRIST'S PROMISE TO HIS MINISTERS INCLUDES HIS PRESENCE AS DIVINE COMFORTER IN TRIALS

Lastly, the great Captain of Salvation is with his ministers, to teach, lead and comfort them, in all their trials, in all their straits. Whosoever will leave them, he will not. Though he, the Great High Priest of our profession, when suffering for his people's sins, was left alone—all forsook him; yet, whenever his friends are afflicted, he kindly calls, "Lo, I am with you."

This hath been the stay of good men in all ages, in all circumstances. Those who have wandered about in sheep skins and goat-skins, who have been afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy, have found their refuge here. There is nothing like this to support the feeble, distressed soul.

When godly ministers have been obliged to leave their people, yes, and their families, and sometimes their native country, for the truth's sake, this hath sustained them—Christ was with them.

President Edwards, for a noble attempt at partial reformation, was constrained to flee his beloved charge; but Christ was, no doubt, with him. Should I, for laying the axe at the root of the tree, be obliged to leave you, though, for the present I see no particular reason to apprehend such an event, yet I trust this will be my hiding place—Jesus, who will be with me.

D.

SOME PERTINENT APPLICATIONS BASED ON THE SEVEN SERMONS

From what hath been said in the preceding discourses, it appears that the two sides of the controversy between the Baptists and the Pedobaptists stand thus.

1. THE COMMON STANCE BY BOTH SIDES REGARDING THE DOCTRINES OF GRACE AND THE CONGREGATIONAL ORDER OF CHURCH POLITY

Before I state the two sides of the controversy, it is but reasonable that I define those whom it respects. By the Baptists, on one side, I mean the regular Calvinistic Baptists. By the Pedobaptists on the other, I know intend the Calvinistic Congregationalists among them. I give this definition that I may be clearly understood.

You see both sides are Calvinists, that is, they are agreed in what are styled the doctrines of grace. They are both of the congregational order, as it respects the government of the churches.

*[Ed Note: Daniel Merrill was what we might call today a "moderate" Calvinist. He definitely was **not** a hyper-calvinist. Like his close friend, Isaac Case, Merrill maintained a passionate evangelistic spirit all during his ministry, even in his pre-Baptist Congregational denominational years. From lengthy research (hundreds of pages!!) on Merrill's life, this editor unhesitatingly verifies Merrill's evangelistic zeal for souls.]

2. THE CLEAR DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES

Now for the controversy—and it is this:

a. BAPTISTS ADHERE TO IMMERSION ONLY, WHILE PEDOBAPTISTS ACCEPT SPRINKLING AS VALID BAPTISM.

The Baptists hold immersion only to be baptism. The Pedobaptists hold that sprinkling may be substituted for immersion, and may answer just as well.

The Baptists hold that the scriptures know nothing of a Christian ordinance of baptism for unbelievers and infidels. The Pedobaptists hold that, if a great man, who hath a thousand slaves, should become a disciple, then all his household are to be counted disciples, and are to be baptized.

b. BAPTISTS TEACH BELIEVERS BAPTISM ONLY AND CHURCH MEMBERSHIP SOLELY FOR BELIEVING DISCIPLES, WHILE PEDOBAPTISTS ACCEPT BELIEVERS AND UNBELIEVERS BOTH FOR BAPTISM AND CHURCH MEMBERSHIP.

The Baptists hold that the church of the New-Testament is composed of visible or professed saints. The consistent Pedobaptists hold, that this great man, his thousand slaves, together with his wife and children, all belong to the gospel church, though he only be a believer in Christ.

c. BAPTISTS ADHERE TO SAINTS ONLY POLICY AT THE LORD'S TABLE, WHILE PEDOBAPTISTS ACCEPT ALL TO THIS ORDINANCE IF THEY ARE PART OF A FAMILY COVENANTAL RELATIONSHIP.

The Baptists hold that none have a right to partake of the Lord's Supper but those who are his friends. The consistent Pedobaptists hold, that all the adults in this great man's household, if they be not guilty of gross immorality, have a right to come.

d. BAPTISTS CITE NEW TESTAMENT AUTHORITY FOR THEIR IMMERSION PRACTICE, WHILE PEDOBAPTISTS USE CONVENIENCE, TRADITION, AND THE ABOLISHED OLD TESTAMENT COVENANT OF CIRCUMCISION AS THEIR AUTHORIZATION.

The Baptists plead New-Testament authority for the defense of their principles and practice, where they differ from their brethren of the Pedobaptists. The Pedobaptists in support of their sentiments plead convenience, and the covenant and rite of circumcision, which were decaying, waxing old, and ready to vanish away, more than 1700 years ago.

The Baptists bring nighly threescore texts of scripture, which are plainly and fully to their point in favor of immersion. The Pedobaptists mention three or four texts, which, at most, are but very doubtfully in their favor; and, when rightly understood, appear fully against them.

What advantage, my brethren, have the Pedobaptists over the Baptists? And with what crime or error, in this matter do they stand convicted?

3. INFANT BAPTISM AND PEDOBAPTISM [SPRINKLING] ARE NOT COMMANDED BY CHRIST.

It appears that gospel ministers have no authority to teach Christians, that their children and servants should be baptized, because Abraham's were circumcised. Christ hath no where commanded them to teach thus. **Christ hath no where commanded them to teach infant baptism at all, or baptism upon the faith of another;** much less, that they are to be baptized because Abraham's were circumcised.

4. GODLY PEDOBAPTISTS ARE INCONSISTENT IN THEIR PRACTICE OF THE ORDINANCES.

It appears, that many of the pious and learned clergy of New-England have made some noble and promising advances towards truth in this matter; yet in this they are inconsistent with themselves.

They will receive none to the communion, but such as profess faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, as well as repentance for sin; and they will administer baptism to the children of no other. Here, in two instances, they refuse to follow the law of circumcision.

One, in refusing to admit to the supper, impenitent, though civil, baptized persons. The other, in not admitting to baptism the children of all those who have been baptized. This is consistent with truth so far as it goes; but inconsistent with the notion that the subjects of baptism are to be determined from the subjects of circumcision.

These good men, so long as they possess their present light, must come over to the true Baptist ground, or submit to the imputation of inconsistency. I wish them to come over. For myself, I expect to, though my carnal nature hates the name of a Baptist as much as theirs does. But my better judgment tells me, that the Baptists are on the gospel ground.

5. GODLY PEDOBAPTISTS WHO ARE WILLING TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE TRUTH SHOULD CONSIDER BECOMING BAPTISTS.

It is a matter of lamentation that pious and learned ministers have not a little more self-denial; then they might be consistent with themselves, and with truth too. Could I be with them, and ask them this plain question, Do you not find a little backwardness from searching critically into the primitive meaning and practice of baptism? I fear they would answer with some reluctance.

To me, I confess, it appears an hard case, that the Baptists should suffer so much reproach, merely on account of their sentiments, when many of our best old divines have given them the ground, and confessed that their sentiments, as to the mode, are from heaven, and ours from convenience.

Our opposition to them, on account of the subjects, appears but little better, being but poorly supported by scripture: they having the plain word, and full current of all the prophets from Moses to Malachi, so far as they have spoken of the gospel church, together with the New-Testament in *their* favor; whilst for us, in this particular, nothing better can be alleged than the antiquated rite of circumcision.

If the Baptists be right, why not join them, and suffer small inconveniences? If wrong, why not prove them so?

It is pitiful that great and good men should be dallying with inconclusive arguments, when the time is long since come, that the *highway* of holiness should be so *plain*, that *wayfaring men*, though fools, should not err therein.

6. THE FAILURE TO ACKNOWLEDGE CHRIST'S AUTHORITY ON THIS MATTER IS THE REASON FOR DIVISION AMONG PEDOBAPTIST MINISTERS ON THIS ORDINANCE.

We see why good men have been so divided among themselves, as to infant baptism. The reason is they go without Christ in this matter. He is not divided.

Some baptize all. Others will baptize only the children in the households of communicants. Some baptize upon the half-way covenant. Some will baptize all who are under age. Again, others will baptize all under seven. Others still will baptize upon the good promises of godfathers and godmothers.

You will observe I use the word baptize in a sense which I believe to be improper, but I would not offend you with a word, when my meaning may be understood. But what propriety is there in all this inconsistency about the subjects of baptism? Does not the matter look as though there was no rule to go by, or as though none understood what it was?

7. THE MAJOR REASON WHY PEDOBAPTISTS WILL NOT ACKNOWLEDGE AND ACCEPT THE TRUTH IS PREJUDICE ON THEIR PART.

We see why good men, when writing or speaking of baptism, are left to speak untruths.

It is doubtless because they will follow their own prejudices, and not the truth. Error hath divided them, and Christ is not with them in what they say. Some good men, not many, dare assert, in opposition to the Baptists, that there is not a word about immersion for baptism, in all the Bible.

For *laymen* to say thus, is *presumption*, and for men of *learning* to make the assertion, is *almost unpardonable*. For they know, or ought to know, that the word to baptize, is not once mentioned in all the Bible but immersion is mentioned, unless they mean to play upon the word; and then it is a truth, when *baptizo* is mentioned immersion is, if they will give it its plain, literal English.

If the Baptists have the plain, literal and unequivocal sense of the scripture in their favor, is it not enough that they are despised and persecuted by the wicked of every class and not helped by any; but must we add to their affliction, by falsehood or equivocation? O prejudice! what wilt thou not do, even in a saint!

Besides, our good brethren, who are so warm against the Baptists, and will not allow them a word for their mode, do not agree together to inform us what the mode should be. One tells us, it is sprinkling, another says, pouring is the mode, a third contends for washing the face, a fourth is for putting water on the back of the neck, as the Swiss are said to do; whilst others affirm, that all these are right.

Now, suppose the Baptists are wrong, who shall we say are in the right, or is there no right in this business? Does not all this look just as it would were there an error at the bottom? Hath the great Teacher who came from God, left matters thus at loose ends? Does the Bible thus differ, whilst pointing out the mode? No. Its language is pure and determinate.

8. INFANT SPRINKLING IS NOT A GENUINE CHRISTIAN ORDINANCE. IT IS A DEVICE OF MEN BASED ON TRADITION.

It appears, that, in infant sprinkling for baptism, the intent of the institution is lost, and becomes no Christian ordinance at all. Both the thing itself and the subjects of it are changed. It is quite a different thing from what the Institutor hath appointed. Neither this mode nor these subjects are known in the institution, nor in any passage of the Bible, where baptism is mentioned.

This mode is of man's device, and the subjects of it have, at best, but a traditional right. For good men to do thus, whilst they think it consistent with the truth, appears to be a sin of ignorance; but if any do thus, while they know what the scriptures enjoin, their practice deserves a harder name.

9. IMMERSION IS THE ONLY SCRIPTURAL METHOD OF BAPTISM

It appears that dipping, immersion, or burying in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is baptism. No man of real piety and solid learning ever doubted it. Whereas, sprinkling hath been doubted by many, denied continually by a large class of Christians, and been proved by none to have been ever appointed as the Christian ordinance of baptism.

10. CHRIST MADE NO EXEMPTIONS FOR PEDOBAPTISM

We see, that every plea which hath been made, for a general or partial neglect of the scripture mode of baptism, is an indirect though unintentional charge of negligence, or want of benevolence, or of foresight, in the Divine Institutor. Let every man of candor and common sense examine this matter.

Did not the Lord, who made our northern climes, know how cold they are?—Did he know them to be too cold for his disciples who might live in them, to be separated from the world by being visibly buried and raised again to join his kingdom?

Why then did he not mention an exception in our favor, and not leave us to suffer this inconvenience, or be in perpetual uncertainty and continual dispute, to defend our, at best, but doubtful practice? Did he not perfectly know all the *compelling necessities* which Cyprian and others would, in their erring judgments, find to break over the bounds of the baptismal institution?

Why then did he make no provision for these extreme cases? By doing this, he would have saved the Pedobaptists a world of anxiety, contention and censure. The fact appears to be, that our Lord intended, that the way of admission into his kingdom should be uniform, and that those who would not submit to it, should suffer the inconvenience of darkness, error and strife.

11. DANIEL MERRILL ADMITS HIS MISTAKE IN PUBLICLY OPPOSING BAPTISTS IN THE PAST FOR THEIR BIBLICAL STAND.

From what hath been said in the preceding discourses, is not the following a fair and undeniable conclusion? That I and other Pedobaptist ministers, so far as we have spoken a word against the Baptists, and especially that those, who have publicly warned their people to avoid the Baptists and flee from them, as from a dividing and dangerous heresy, have in this matter acted the part of the old Scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites—who would not go into the kingdom of God themselves, and those who were entering, they hindered.

I by no means suppose that all who have done thus, are indeed hypocrites, save in this particular. No reasonable doubt can be entertained, but many of them are learned, pious, and very useful men; men, whom the Lord hath greatly honoured as labourers, in gathering in the harvest of souls.

Many of these have been, in measure, bold, zealous and faithful, like Peter; yet when they dissemble or teach and practice contrary from the truth, they are to be blamed; yes, they are, in this instance, worthy to be rebuked.

It would, indeed, be very injudicious in me to contend that all which the Baptists have said and done is justifiable. It would be equally injudicious to justify myself, or my brethren, where we have both said and done things contrary from the church and name of Jesus of Nazareth. It is time for both ministers and people to look to this matter, lest the Lord send leanness into our souls.

12. IMMERSION IS A PICTURE OF THE BELIEVER'S FUTURE DEATH, BURIAL AND RESURRECTION.

From a review of the whole subject, the following inference appears natural, and at the same time worthy of much consideration. The divinely constituted method by which any of the fallen race are to enter the kingdom of heaven below, remarkably sets to our view the way by which we are to commence perfect members of the kingdom of heaven above. Our obedience to the former is a practical declaration of our faith in the latter.

In joining Christ's kingdom on earth, we professedly die unto sin, go down to the grave, are buried, and rise, as from the dead. To join the kingdom of glory, we must actually experience what is but shadowed forth in baptism. We must die, be buried, or return to the dust, and rise from the dead.

How exactly doth our entrance into the church militant shadow forth our hoped for entrance into the church triumphant! It also appears that Christ hath directed, that the subjects of the one should be professedly, what the subjects of the other shall be actually, all saints.

A CHURCH OBSERVING THE ORDINANCES AS CHRIST COMMANDED IS A BEAUTIFUL PICTURE OF THE HEAVENLY JERUSALEM

How beautiful doth the church appear so far as she observes the commands of her Lord, as to the members which she admits, and the manner of receiving them! She thus resembles Jerusalem, which is above, which is the mother of us all, if we be Christians. May the Lord direct our hearts into the love of the truth.

In the conclusion of the whole, it becomes us to add, to the truths delivered, what Christ Jesus added to my text: AMEN.

END OF THE SERMONS.