

STUDY X

THE BAPTISM OF THE NEW CREATION

Baptism in the Second Century--Sponsors in Baptism--Baptismal Ceremonies of the Church of Rome--Infant Baptism, Why Introduced--Scripture Testimony on Baptism--"Disciple" View--"Baptist" View--The True View--Baptism into Christ's Death--"By One Spirit We are All Baptized into One Body"--The Baptism of Fire--Symbolical Baptism in Water--Is Symbolic Baptism Necessary?--The Proper Symbol--Who May Administer It--The Form of Words--Repetition of the Symbol--"Baptized for the Dead."

CHRISTIAN people are a unit in understanding that the New Testament teaches baptism, although there is a great diversity and confusion of thought respecting its mode and significance.

The great falling away from the faith, alluded to by the apostles in the New Testament, had gained such headway by the second century that very superstitious views respecting baptism had gained control in the nominal church by that time. Water baptism was supposed not only to bring the subject into relationship with God by canceling past sins, but also to bring to him certain graces or favors from God as a member of the Church of Christ which could not otherwise be secured. Hence, at that early day, not only did believers seek baptism for themselves, but also for their children; and because infants could neither believe nor enter into covenant promises for themselves, an arrangement was made by which other than the parents might become sponsors for such children--"spiritual parents." They solemnly promised that the children should believe in the Lord and walk in his ways, and obligated themselves to see to their religious training. These were called godfathers and godmothers.

Both the teachers and the taught of that period progressed rapidly to formalism and elaborations of the symbols and of their meaning. Special fonts for baptismal purposes

were built outside the churches in the third century.

They consisted of a private room which connected with an outside porch, the latter being open to the public, in whose presence the baptismal vows were taken, after which the subject was baptized in the font privately. The officiating minister exorcised the candidate, to cast out devils, blowing in his face three puffs of breath, as representing the Father, the Son and the holy Spirit. The water in which the baptism took place was consecrated by an elaborate formula, constituting it sacred water, a part of the formula being exorcism or casting out of evil spirits from the water. The candidate was stripped of clothing, as representing the complete putting off of the old man, and was baptized three times, once in the name of the Father, once in the name of the Son, and once in the name of the holy Spirit. All this was done outside the Church, to intimate that the candidate was not yet a member of the Church and could not be a member of it until, by this procedure, he was inducted. After the baptism service, the candidate for membership wore white clothing until the following Sunday. Later on, the separation of the baptistry from the Church ceased, and the baptismal fonts were built in the churches.

The Roman and Greek Catholics still maintain to a considerable degree the elaborate ceremonial of the third century, with slight modifications suitable to our day. The following are the baptismal ceremonies of the Church of Rome, though not all of universal application:

"(1) The child is held without the Church, to signify an actual exclusion from heaven, which is symbolized by the Church.

"(2) The priest blows three times in the face of the child, signifying thereby that the devil can be displaced only by the Spirit of God.

"(3) The sign of the cross is made on the forehead and bosom of the child.

"(4) The priest, having exorcised the salt, puts it into the mouth of the infant, signifying by it that wisdom which shall preserve him from corruption.

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"(5) The child is exorcised.

"(6) The priest touches his mouth and ears with saliva, pronouncing the word *ephphatha*.

"(7) The child is unclothed, signifying the laying aside of the old man.

"(8) He is presented by the sponsors, who represent the

Church.

"(9) The renunciation of the devil and his works is made.

"(10) He is anointed with oil.

"(11) The profession of faith is made.

"(12) He is questioned whether he will be baptized.

"(13) The name of some saint is given to him, who shall be his example and protector.

"(14) He is dipped thrice, or water is poured thrice upon his head.

"(15) He receives the kiss of peace.

"(16) He is anointed on the head, to show that by baptism he becomes a king and a priest.

"(17) He receives the lighted taper, to mark that he has become a child of light.

"(18) He is folded in the alb (a white robe), to show his baptismal purity." Elliott's *Delineation of Romanism*, Vol. I, p. 240. See also Roman Catholic Catechism, p. 252.

The foregoing perversions of baptism were held for over 1200 years before the organization of the various Protestant denominations of today. Doubtless there were some of the Lord's people who saw matters in a somewhat clearer light, but we may reasonably say that they were extremely few, and that practically no record of them and of their divergence of view comes down to us through the pages of history. It is not surprising that Protestants of the 15th and 16th centuries, having inherited these traditions and participated in them, would be considerably under their influence, and that while divesting themselves of much of the extreme ceremony they maintained the same general views and customs. Even today otherwise intelligent people have a superstitious fear respecting what might be the everlasting future of their children dying in infancy without

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having been baptized--hence, without having received remission of sins, and without having been inducted into membership in the Church. In harmony with these superstitions, we find that although every effort is made in all denominations to keep all power, privilege and authority in the hands of the clergy and out of the hands of the laity, nevertheless, it is very generally admitted that in extreme cases, where an infant is not expected to live, and where the services of a clergyman cannot be secured in time, any person may perform a baptism service--the thought being that no risk is to be taken in respect to the child's eternal welfare. The privilege of the laity under such circumstances is

clearly recognized even in the Roman and Greek Catholic churches; and in the rubric of the Church of England in the time of Edward VI the matter was ordered thus: "Pastors and curates shall often admonish the people that without great cause and necessity they baptize not children at home in their houses; and when *great need shall compel them so to do* that then they minister it."

We quote the following explanation of Baptism from the authorized Roman Catholic Catechism (F248):

"The first and most necessary sacrament is baptism"; "because before baptism no other sacrament can be received"; and "because without baptism no one can be saved." "In baptism original sin and all sins committed before baptism are forgiven: the temporal as well as the eternal punishment is remitted by baptism." "In baptism we are not only cleansed from all sin, but are also transformed, in a spiritual manner, made holy, children of God, and heirs of heaven."

The Lutheran Church holds to a very similar statement on this subject.

The Church of England, though with a slightly varied ceremony, attaches the same significance to infant baptism. The following extracts from the Book of Common Prayer show this:

"Sanctify this water to the mystical washing away of sin; and grant that this child, now to be baptized therein, may receive the fullness of thy grace, and ever remain in the number of thy faithful and elect children."

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"We receive this child into the congregation of Christ's flock; and do sign him with the sign of the Cross."

"Seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that this child is regenerate and grafted into the body of Christ's Church, let us give thanks unto Almighty God for these benefits."

"We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this infant with thy holy Spirit."

The Presbyterian view is less immoderate. The Westminster Confession, Art. 28, says: "Baptism is a sacrament ...a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, of his ingrafting into Christ, of regeneration, of remission of sins," etc. It declares it to be applicable to infant children one or both of whose parents are Christians, but not to other infants. It adds, "Although it be a great sin to condemn or neglect this ordinance, yet grace and salvation are not so inseparably

annexed unto it as that no person can be regenerated or saved without it, or that all that are baptized are undoubtedly regenerated."

Attaching *less importance* to baptism, Presbyterian rules permit none but ministers to perform the service, and by its ministers laying stress upon the importance of baptism, and comparatively few knowing of the last quoted clause, it follows that Presbyterians as well as others fear the consequences of their infants dying unbaptized.

Methodists, and the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, and most modern institutions, accept this last stated, moderated view of the importance of infant baptism.

As illustrating this matter, an anecdote is told of a certain doctor who was called late at night to attend a dying infant. He arrived just a moment in advance of a clergyman, sent for at the same time. It being evident that the physician could do nothing further for the child, he at once stepped aside, while the minister hastily took a bowl of water, sprinkled a few drops in the face of the child, saying, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, the Son and the holy Spirit." The child a moment or two after expired, and as the doctor and the clergyman left the house together the

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former remarked to the latter, "You arrived just in the nick of time; two minutes more and you would have been too late. May I ask what kind of shoes you wear?" "Congress gaiters," responded the clergyman. "Ah, how fortunate!" said the doctor. "Had you worn laced boots you would not have been in time, and think what disaster that would have meant for the child!"

True, many of the more enlightened Christian people would deny any such false, superstitious thought as that God would hand over an unbaptized infant to devils, eternally to torment it, or do anything else to its detriment. Nevertheless, many of these same people manifest great concern if by any means one of their children should die without this ceremony; and some of the more illiterate certainly have a most positive belief in the necessity of the rite and a most torturing fear of the consequences if it is omitted--so strong is the influence coming down to us from the centuries of false beliefs--"the Dark Ages."

Evidences that these wrong views of the nature, necessity and efficacy of baptism had developed as early as the second century, may be found in Hagenbach's *History of*

Doctrines, p. 72. Later, and in the time of Constantine, and supported by Tertullian (*De Bapt.*, c. 18) came the view that baptism, having such a magical power to cleanse from *previous*, but not from subsequent, sins, it should be delayed until as near the hour of death as possible. Still later, "extreme unction" became the solace of the dying, and the effort was made to get all as early as possible into the Church. It was "St. Augustine" who advanced the doctrine, "No salvation out of the Church"; then, as a consequence, came the teaching that infants would be "lost" unless made members of the Church, and from that time and that theory dates the general baptism of infants. The spirit of Churchianity, from the very first, has been to stop at nothing which would add to its influence and numbers. The character and government of our Creator have thus been besmirched and the testimony of his Word made void, and

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true Christianity, the "wheat," injured by this prolific sowing of "tares" by the Adversary.

Infant Baptism Repudiated by Some

Amongst those who recognize that baptism is enjoined upon believers, and that one person cannot believe for another, infant baptism is repudiated as being unscriptural. Moreover, the same people generally hold that nothing constitutes the baptism commanded by our Lord and the apostles except an immersion in water. These call attention to the fact that the Greek word signifying baptism, *baptizo*, has the significance of immerse or cover or plunge or completely make wet, and that wholly different words are used in the Greek when sprinkling or pouring or raining are referred to. These believers in immersion in water generally practice one immersion, backward, in the name of the Father, the Son and the holy Spirit, though a few practice it face forward three times, once in the name of the Father, once in the name of the Son, and once in the name of the holy Spirit. The explanation of the latter form is that Christ bowed his head forward when he died, and that, hence, his followers should be immersed in the likeness of his death, face-forward. It does not seem to occur to these Christian friends that Christ was not buried face-downward, and that the Father and the holy Spirit neither died nor were buried at all and that therefore, such symbolizations are wholly inconsistent, and that the significance of the words "*in the*

name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy Spirit" would properly be--*by the authority of* the Father and of the Son and of the holy Spirit--that the Father, the Son and the holy Spirit concur in enjoining the baptism of believers.

Of those who practice one immersion backward, there are two large denominations, viz., "Baptists" and "Disciples," who, nevertheless, perform the service with very different sentiments respecting its significance and the results. The views of the "Disciples," otherwise calling themselves "Christians" (and frequently, without their consent,

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designated as "Campbellites"), is that baptism (immersion in water) is *for the remission of sins*, and that such as have not been immersed in water are yet in their sins, "children of wrath." This view of the subject cuts off the great mass of humanity except infants (whose original sin they seem to ignore) and even professed Christians of nearly all denominations --Congregationalists, Methodists, Presbyterians, United Presbyterians, Lutherans, Episcopalians, Roman Catholics, Greek Catholics, etc.--would thus be marked as sinners, unjustified before God and, therefore, exposed to the *wrath of God*, in whatever way that expression shall be understood; and by nearly all, including the "Disciples," it is understood to mean an eternity of torture.

This is a hard position to take, not in respect to the world only, but in respect to the mass of Christian professors, and we do not wonder that our "Disciple" friends generally avoid pressing the question to so extreme a statement, although the logic of the proposition is evident to them, as to all others who will give it consideration. We cannot accept this to be a correct view of baptism--to us it is neither Scriptural nor reasonable. We cannot believe that the Lord has made the eternal welfare of our race dependent upon their knowledge of, and obedience to, any such institution. Nevertheless, our "Disciple" friends fortify themselves with certain texts of Scripture which are not to be overlooked; viz., John's preaching to the Jews for repentance and *remission of sins*; the preaching of the apostles at Pentecost, to the Jews, to believe and be baptized *for remission of their sins*, and to call upon the name of the Lord, *washing away their sins*. (**Matt. 3:6; John 4:1,2; Acts 2:38,41**) We will consider these scriptures in due time, and see how and why they are applicable to Jews only, and never applicable to Gentiles, and that when certain Gentiles of the Church of Ephesus confessed

that they had been baptized with the baptism of John--unto repentance and remission of sins--the Apostle Paul commanded them to be baptized again in the name of the Lord Jesus. *Acts 19:3-5*

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Our Baptist friends, while no less strenuous in their advocacy of immersion in water as the only baptism, set up a totally different claim respecting its efficacy. They deny that it is for the remission of sins, which they claim can be experienced only through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Redeemer. They hold, however, that baptism is the *door* into the Church, and that only those who are immersed really enter the Church, and that others should not expect nor be granted the privileges and blessings belonging to the Church, either in the present life or in the life to come. In harmony with this thought, Baptists in general decline to welcome to the Communion Table any not immersed in water, saying that the Communion Table is not for the world, but only for *the Church*, and that none are in the Church except those who have passed through the *door* of water baptism. The few Baptist churches which in recent years have relaxed this rule have done so in contravention of their theory. In illustration of this subject we quote from a recent article by J. T. Lloyd in the *Religious Herald*. He says:

"Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost--nothing else is [baptism]. Baptist churches are the only Christian churches in existence. Pedobaptists [child-baptizers] have no right to the Lord's Supper. Whenever they partake of the Lord's Supper they partake unworthily, and eat and drink damnation to themselves."

If the Baptist theory be the correct one, it follows that all members of other denominations of professed Christians who have not been immersed in water have deceived themselves in thinking that in any sense of the word they belong to the Church of Christ. Because, say our Baptist friends, immersion is the *door* into the Church; whoever has not been immersed is not *in* and not *of* the Church of Christ, which is the body of Christ. We do not wonder that our Baptist friends, and especially those of the highest standard of heart and intellect, hesitate to press upon the public these, the only logical conclusions of their belief. To do so would be to bring down upon them the indignation and

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contumely of many whom they are bound to respect as Christians, notwithstanding their theory to the contrary. But what would it mean if this Baptist theory were true? We answer that according to all the different creeds of Christendom it would mean that only immersed persons would be saved, and that all the remainder, of all denominations, and the world outside of all denominations, would be lost--for is it not the theory of all the creeds that only the Church is to be saved, and that all others are hastening to destruction or eternal torment or some other awful future--the destiny to which is fixed at death?

We are bound to dissent from all of the foregoing as imperfect human theories, whose inconsistencies are clearly manifest. The mere statement of them carries instant conviction of their erroneousness to every intelligent and unprejudiced mind. We cannot admit that either the Disciple denomination or the Baptist denomination, or both of these, constitute the Church of the living God, whose names are written in heaven, to the inclusion of all their immersed memberships, and to the exclusion of all the unimmersed of other denominations. We cannot admit that, when the Son of Man sowed the good seed of the Gospel in the field, that the "wheat" was all brought under Baptist fencing, and that the "tares" were all outside. Nor can we even admit that all the "wheat" is to be found amongst those immersed in water, and all the "tares" as well, so that the other denominations would be excluded from the Lord's parable of the wheat and the tares. (*Matt. 13*) We claim that all these conflicting theories are wrong--disapproved of God. We claim that all sects and denominations are contrary to the divine institution--one Head, one Body, one Faith, one Baptism. We are not claiming that the Lord's Church, the New Creation, has many members, but admit that it is in all a "little flock."

We must include our Baptist friends and our Disciple friends with our Presbyterian and Methodist and Lutheran and Episcopal and Roman Catholic friends, as being a part of the one general Christendom, otherwise in the Scriptures

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termed "Babylon." The Son of Man and his faithful followers sowed the good seed, which has brought forth fruitage throughout Christendom, which may be considered the wheat-field of this Gospel age. The Adversary has sown "tares" so prolifically that the "wheat" is well-nigh choked, and in some respects the field might more properly be

termed a tare-field than a wheat-field. But now, at length, according to the Lord's promise, the "harvest" of this Gospel age having come, he is sending forth his reapers to gather his "wheat"--every grain of it--into his garner; and it is manifest that he is finding these grains of true "wheat," not all in the Baptist and Disciple denominations, but also amongst the Presbyterians, Methodists, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Congregationalists, Roman Catholics, and others.

It is in harmony with this that the message has gone forth to the Lord's people everywhere throughout Babylon: "Babylon the Great is fallen [divine sentence has passed upon her systems; they are rejected of the Lord];...come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." *Rev. 18:2,4*

This being true, it is very evident that the Baptists and Disciples, as well as others, have made very serious mistakes in respect to what baptism is, and in respect to the blessings and privileges it confers. We have briefly reviewed the whole situation up to the present time, to the intent that it may be manifested to all that there is something radically wrong in respect to all the various theories now prevalent on the subject of baptism and that we may all, therefore, be the better prepared to go reverently and prayerfully back of all human traditions and theories to the Word of the Lord, through his inspired apostles on this subject, which confessedly is an important one--a divine institution. It is only after we see clearly the confusion involved in all of the various theories of Christendom that we are thoroughly prepared to appreciate the simplicity of the divine message on this subject.

The Scripture Testimony on Baptism

The Jewish ritual contained various formulas respecting

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the cleansing of vessels and washing and sprinkling of unclean persons, etc., but nothing respecting baptism (*baptizo*, immersion) such as John preached in the end of the Jewish age. John's baptism was for Jews only, who were already recognized as typically cleansed by the Atonement-day sin offerings. To these John's baptism signified repentance from recognized sin, violations of the Law Covenant, and a typical cleansing from them--a return to a condition of righteousness of heart or desire. Jews thus repenting of sin and symbolically cleansed, or washed, were counted as restored to a condition of harmony with God, previously enjoyed

under their Law Covenant. The motive back of John's preaching and baptizing was a preparation of the people for the Kingdom of God and for a revelation of Messiah, which John's preaching declared to be imminent, and for which the people would need to be in a condition of heart-readiness if they would receive an appropriate blessing. Every Jew under the Law Covenant was counted a member of the house of Moses: "They were all baptized unto Moses in the sea and in the cloud." (**1 Cor. 10:2**) The house of Moses was a house of servants, as it is written, "Moses was faithful over all his house *as a servant*." (**Heb. 3:5**) Under the divine arrangement, whoever would be faithful as a member of the typical Israel or *house of servants* under Moses, the Mediator of the typical or Law Covenant, would thus be in such a condition of readiness of heart that when the antitypical Moses, the Messiah, Christ, appeared, they would be ready to receive him as the antitypical Moses. As they were baptized into Moses in the sea and in the cloud, the acceptance of Christ as instead of Moses would imply that they were in Christ as members of his body, under him as their head, and, through association with him, ministers of the New Covenant, of which the complete, glorified Christ, head and body, will be the Mediator.

Hence, John did not baptize his believers into Christ, but merely unto repentance, bringing them back to a condition of harmony with Moses, etc., in which condition, as natural branches in the olive tree (**Rom. 11:16-21**) they would not

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need ingrafting into Christ, for Christ would to them take the place of Moses, who for the time merely typified Christ. Let it be remembered, too, that this, called "John's baptism" and said to be unto repentance and remission of sins, and "washing away of sin," was not applicable to any except Jews--because Gentiles, not being baptized into Moses, and not being of the typical house of servants at any time, could not by repentance of sin come *back to* a condition which they had never occupied. Gentiles who believed into Christ must, therefore, be inducted into his house of sons in a different manner. They, as the Apostle explains, were the wild olive branches, "by nature children of wrath," strangers, aliens, foreigners from the commonwealth of Israel. No amount of repentance and reformation would make these strangers and aliens members of

the typical house of servants, to whom alone would come the privilege of passing by faith in Christ from the house of servants into the antitypical house of sons. If others would become branches in the olive tree (Christ), whose root was the Abrahamic promise (*Gal. 3:16,29*), they must be *ingrafted* into the places left vacant by the breaking off of the "natural branches" of the original olive tree--the house of servants, whose hearts were not in a proper condition to accept the Messiah, and who therefore, could not be accepted of him as members of his house of sons. "He came unto his own [people, Israel], and his own [as a people] received him not; but to as many as received him, to them gave he liberty [privilege] to become the sons of God, even to as many as believe on his name; who were begotten, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God"--and who thus became members of the New Creation--spiritually.

John 1:12

Typical Israel forsook Egypt (symbolical of the world) to follow the leadings of Moses; and when they came to the great test or trial at the Red Sea, which would have meant their destruction, except for God's intervention through Moses, they were all typically baptized into Moses in the sea and in the cloud--the sea on either hand, the cloud above them--and became his house, or family, represented

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by him as their head. They emerged from the sea devoted to Moses, pledged to follow and obey him. They were still further pledged to him as the Mediator of the Law Covenant at Mount Sinai, and all of their hopes were bound up in him who declared--"A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you from amongst your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear." (*Deut. 18:15,18; Acts 3:22*) To every "Israelite indeed," already thus consecrated and bound to Moses even unto death, and with all their hopes of life anchored in him, it was but a small remove to accept Christ in his stead, and as his antitype; and to understand that their pledges under the Law to Moses were now transferred by divine arrangement to Christ, the surety of the New Covenant which they engaged to serve. **2 Cor. 3:6**

With the Gentiles the matter was altogether different, and their acceptance of Christ would properly signify all that was covenanted by the Jew to Moses and subsequently transferred to Christ. It should not surprise us, therefore, to find the Scriptures teaching a very much wider and deeper meaning to baptism as applied to those believers who were

not Jews, not under the Law, not in Moses, and not, therefore, transferred from Moses to Christ. To these baptism meant all the radical change that is pictured by the Apostle Paul (**Rom. 11**) by the ingrafting of the wild olive branches into the good olive tree. It meant a complete transformation.

Baptism into Christ's Death

"Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ 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.

*"For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." **Rom. 6:3-5***

We, who are by nature Gentiles, cannot do better than accept this very complete explanation of the true baptism addressed by the Apostle Paul to the believers at Rome--many, if not all, of whom had been Gentiles, "children of

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wrath." In three verses here the Apostle deals most thoroughly with the subject of baptism as it applies to us. These verses are very generally used to prove all the various doctrines of baptism, but quoted especially by our brethren who recognize baptism as signifying immersion in water. Let it be clearly noticed, however, that the Apostle makes not one word of reference to water baptism. Water baptism is merely a symbol, or picture of the real baptism; and the Apostle, in these verses explains, from various standpoints, the true, the essential baptism, without which no one can be considered a member of the body, or Church of Christ, while all who receive this baptism, of whatever name or place, color or sex, are to be counted as members of the *Ecclesia*, members of the New Creation.

The Apostle is addressing those who are already members of Christ. He says: "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ"--we pause here to notice that he does not say, So many of us as were sprinkled with water, nor, So many of us as were immersed in water, but, "So many of us as were baptized [immersed] *into Jesus Christ*." What is it to be immersed into Jesus Christ? Surely he here is carrying out the same thought that he elaborates in **1 Cor. 12:27**: "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members

in particular." How do we get into the body of Christ? The Apostle answers that we were baptized into it, and, hence, are now counted as members of our Lord, members under him as our Head, members of "the Church which is his body."

But let us inquire particularly what was the process by which we came into membership in Christ Jesus. The Apostle answers the question in his next statement, "So many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were *baptized into his death*." Not a word about our being baptized into him by being baptized into water. No, no! How evident it is that if we were baptized a thousand times in water it would not bring us into membership in the body of Christ! But, accepting the Apostle's statement, we realize that our union with Christ, our membership in his Church or *Ecclesia*,

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whose names are written in heaven, dated from the time that we were *baptized into his death*. But, when and how were we baptized into the Lord's death? We answer that this baptism into death with the Lord, this overwhelming, or burial of ourselves, our flesh, which resulted in our incorporation by him as members of his body, as New Creatures, took place at the moment when we made the full surrender of our wills to him--consecrating our all, to follow and obey him, even unto death.

The *will* represents the entire person, and all that he possesses. The will has the control of the body, hands, feet, eyes and mouth and brain. It has the control, too, of the pocket, the bank account, the real estate. It controls our time, our talent, our influence. There is not a thing of value that we possess which does not properly come under the control of the will; and, hence, when we surrender our wills to the Lord, or, as the Scriptures sometimes represent it, our "hearts," we give him our all, and this burial of our human will into the will of Christ is our death as human beings. "Ye are dead; and your life is hid with Christ in God." (*Col. 3:3*) This death, this burial, is our baptism into his death. Henceforth, from the divine standpoint, we are not to count ourselves as human beings, of human nature, of the earth, earthy, and as having earthly aims, objects and hopes, but as New Creatures in Christ Jesus.

The instant of this burial or immersion of our wills into the will of Christ is followed by our begetting to newness of life--to a new nature. As our Lord consecrated his human nature unto death, in the doing of the Father's will, and yet

did not remain in death, but was raised from the dead to a newness of nature, so we who thus in consecration become "*dead with him*," sharing in his consecration, are not left in a death state, but may instantly rise through faith to a realization of our kinship to the Lord as New Creatures. Thus the Apostle declares: "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of Christ dwell in you." (*Rom. 8:9*) To the world all this is a "hidden mystery."* They do

*Vol. I, Chap. v.

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not appreciate our faith-justification in the Father's sight, but regard us as other men, who are yet in their sins. Likewise, they see no reason why we should sacrifice or consecrate our wills to the Lord--to be dead as human beings, that we may have a share with him as New Creatures. Neither do they see our consecration and its acceptance, nor appreciate our figurative resurrection to newness of life, newness of hopes, newness of ambitions, newness of relationship to God through Christ. We trust, indeed, that they may see some fruitage in our lives, but we cannot hope that it will be such fruitage as will to them appear to be good or wise or profitable under present conditions. "The world knoweth us not [as New Creatures] because it knew him not." *1 John 3:1*

In all this believers are but following the footsteps of Jesus--taking up their cross to follow him. Being holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from the sinner-race, he needed not to wait for any sacrifice for sins, for he "knew no sin"--but immediately on reaching the age of manhood under the Law (thirty years) he hastened to make a complete consecration of himself, a full sacrifice of all his earthly interests, hopes, ambitions and desires--that he might do the Father's will only. The language of his heart, as he came to John at Jordan, was prophetically foretold, "Lo I come--in the volume of the book it is written of me--to do thy will, O God. I delight to do thy will, O my God; thy law is written in my heart." (*Psa. 40:7,8; Heb. 10:7*) Our Lord, thus consecrating himself to the Father's will, realized that his outward baptism symbolized the surrender of his earthly life and nature, already immersed, or buried, into the Father's will--even unto death. His water immersion was merely a symbolical representation of the baptism, or burial of his will, which had preceded it. From this standpoint his baptism was full of meaning to him, though not to John, who

greatly marveled that he who "knew no sin" should be baptized, whereas the baptism of John was a baptism only for transgressors against the Law Covenant--for the remission of sins.

None but our Lord Jesus himself understood fully why it

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thus "behooved" him to fulfil all righteousness. None but he realized that while such an immersion (figurative cleansing from sin) was not necessary for him, as though he were a sinner, yet it behooved him who was the prospective Head of the prospective body, to set an example in himself that would be appropriate as a lesson full of meaning to all of his followers--not only to those "body" members which were of the house of Israel after the flesh, but to those members also who were still aliens and strangers and foreigners. It behooved him to symbolize the full consecration of his will and all that he had, even unto death, that we, coming after, might follow in his steps.

That our Lord did not receive the water immersion at the hands of John as the real immersion, but merely as its figure, or illustration, can be readily demonstrated. In evidence mark his words about the time of the last Supper. "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished!" (*Luke 12:50*) Here our Lord shows that his baptism was not the water baptism, but the death baptism--baptism into death, in harmony with the divine arrangement--as man's redemption price, or sin-offering.

Having consecrated himself to this death-baptism at the earliest possible moment, when he attained thirty years of age, and having during the three and a half years of his ministry carefully carried out the provisions of that consecration --"dying daily," pouring out his soul unto death--using up his life, his energy, his strength, in the service of the Father, in the service of his followers and, in a large sense, in the service of his enemies. Finally, realizing himself near the close of this death-baptism, when it would be fully accomplished, and feeling the weights, the trials, the difficulties, growing heavier and heavier each moment, and having not a sympathizer--"Of the people there were none with him"--not one who understood the circumstances and conditions, and who could share his grief by offer of sympathy, encouragement or consolation--then longing for the end of the trial he exclaimed, "How am I straitened [in difficulty]

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till it [my death-baptism] be accomplished!" (**Luke 12:50**)
 His baptism was fulfilled very shortly after, when he died,
 crying--"It is finished!"

The whole world is dying, and not merely the Lord and the Church, his body; but the world does not participate in Christ's death, as does the Church, his body. There is a great difference. The whole world is dead with father Adam under his sentence or curse; but our Lord Jesus was not of the world, not one of those who died in Adam. We have already seen that his life was holy and separate from that of all sinners, notwithstanding his earthly mother*--that he was not under condemnation. Why, then, did he die? The Scriptures answer that he "died for *our sins*"--that his death was a sacrificial one. And so it is with the Church, his body, baptized into him by baptism into *his death*--participants with him in his sacrificial death. By nature children of Adam, "children of wrath, even as others," they are first *justified* out of Adamic death *unto life*, through faith in our Lord Jesus and his redemptive work; and the very object of that justification to life out of Adamic condemnation to death, is that they may have this privilege of being baptized into Jesus Christ (made members of his body, his *Ecclesia*) by being baptized into his death--by sharing death with him as joint-sacrificers. Ah! What a wide difference there is between being dead in Adam, and being dead in Christ!

This mystery of our relationship to Christ in sacrifice, in death-baptism now, and the resulting relationship and union with him in the glory that is to follow, is incomprehensible to the world. It should, however, be appreciated by the Lord's faithful, and is asseverated repeatedly in the Scriptures. "If we suffer with him, we shall reign with him"; "if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him." We are "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, *if so be* that we suffer with him [if we experience death-baptism with him as his body members] that we may be also glorified together." **2 Tim. 2:12; Rom. 6:8; 8:17**

 *Vol. V, Chap. iv.

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In the fourth verse of the text we are examining, the Apostle repeats the same thought from another standpoint, saying--"Therefore are we buried with him by baptism into

death." Again no suggestion of water baptism, but a most positive statement of death-baptism, our consecration unto death. Proceeding, the Apostle carries forward the picture, stating the wherefore or reason of our baptism into Christ's death, saying, "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." Only indirectly does the Apostle here refer to our share in the First Resurrection, when we shall share the glory of our Lord in his Kingdom: he refers chiefly to the present life. All who make full consecration of their lives to the Lord, to be dead with him, to be joint-sacrificers with him in the service of the Truth, are to reckon themselves while living in the world as being separate and distinct from others around them. They covenant to die to earthly things which so engross others, and may, therefore, use them only as servants to the New Creation. New Creatures become alive through the Redeemer to heavenly things and prospects, which the world around us see not, understand not. In harmony with this our lives in the world should be new, distinct, separate from those of others about us; because we are animated with the new spirit, the new hopes, the new aims, the heavenly.

Coming to the fifth verse, the Apostle still makes not the slightest reference to water baptism, although some, at first, might think otherwise of his words: "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." If this being planted together in the likeness of his death be understood to mean water baptism, it would be laying more stress upon water baptism than any teacher in the world would be willing to admit. What is it that as Christians we most earnestly hope for? Is it not that we may share in the Lord's resurrection, the First Resurrection? The Apostle expressed this as the grand ideal and hope before his mind, saying--"That I might know him and the power of *his resurrection* [as a member

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of his body, his Church], and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death--if by any means I might attain unto *the resurrection of the dead*."

(**Phil. 3:10,11**) Now to understand **Romans 6:5** to mean that a share in Christ's resurrection would be the sure result of an immersion in water would be to make this passage contradict every other passage, and to outrage reason. Why should a planting, or burial, in water result in a share in the First Resurrection? We are safe in assuming that thousands

have been planted, or buried, or immersed, in water who will never share in the First Resurrection--the Christ Resurrection.

But when we understand this verse, in harmony with the two preceding it, to refer to baptism *into death*, to planting *in death*, in the likeness of *Christ's death*, then all is plain, all is reasonable. Having been called of the Lord to be joint-heirs with his Son, and to suffer with him and to be dead with him, to live with him and to reign with him, how sure we may feel that if we are faithful to this call, if we are planted or buried into his death, like as he was buried into death--as faithful soldiers of God and servants of the Truth--we shall eventually get the full reward which God promises to such, viz., a share in the First Resurrection--to glory, honor and immortality.

Baptism into death is the real baptism for the Church, as it was the real baptism for our Lord; water baptism is only the symbol, or picture of it to us, as it was to him. This is conclusively shown by our Lord's words to two of his disciples, James and John, who requested that they might have his promise that eventually they should sit with him, the one on his right hand and the other on his left hand in the Kingdom. Our Lord's answer to them was, "Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to be baptized with the baptism that I am [being] baptized with?" Their avowal of their willingness to share, not only his ignominy but also his baptism into death, our Lord approvingly answers, "Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with." (*Mark 10:35-39*)

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Whoever of his called ones are willing at heart for these experiences, the Lord will grant them the privilege--and also his assistance. Such shall indeed be immersed into Christ's death, and, as a consequence, have a share with him in the First Resurrection and in the Kingdom glories appertaining thereto. That our Lord here made no reference to water baptism is evident; for these two disciples had been with him from the beginning of his ministry, and as his representatives had been baptizing multitudes in water, "unto repentance and remission of sins"--John's baptism. (*John 3:22,23; 4:1,2; Mark 1:4*) Our Lord's inquiry respecting their willingness for a share in his baptism was not misunderstood by the apostles. They had no thought that he wished them to be baptized again in water; they understood well that it was the baptism of their wills into his will

and the Father's will, and accordingly their participation with him in his sacrifice--dying daily, laying down their lives for the brethren, to the finish, unto death actual.

"By One Spirit We Are All Baptized into One Body"
--1 Cor. 12:12,13--

Let no one misunderstand the Apostle, when referring to our baptism into death with our Lord--"into his death"--to mean the baptism of the holy Spirit. Death and the holy Spirit are distinctly separate, and the two baptisms are distinct and separate. The baptism into death is an individual matter, in which each who would become a member of the body of Christ must individually consecrate and sacrifice his will. Subsequently, his sacrifice accepted, the Lord by his Spirit assists each to lay down his life in the service of the Truth and for the brethren--even unto death. The baptism of the holy Spirit was one baptism for the entire Church. It took place in the upper room on the day of Pentecost, and has needed no repetition, because it has not ceased to abide with the Church from then until now. A repetition of some of the outward manifestations was given in the case of Cornelius; but merely as an evidence to Peter and to all the Jewish believers, and to Cornelius and all Gentile believers

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since, that God makes no distinction or discrimination as between Jews and Gentiles. The Pentecostal immersion was accomplished, we are told, by the filling of the upper room with the holy Spirit, so that the 120 brethren present "were all immersed in the holy Spirit," the apostles receiving, additionally, a symbol of divine favor in the appearance as of cloven tongues of fire upon their heads.

This anointing with the holy Spirit corresponded to the anointing of Israel's high priests and kings with the holy anointing oil. The oil was poured upon the head and ran down over the body. The antitype of this pouring upon the head was the impartation of the holy Spirit to our Lord at the time of his consecration at thirty years of age, when the Father gave him the spirit "without measure." (*John 3:34*) When Pentecost was fully come, and our glorified Head had appeared in the presence of the Father, and made propitiation for the sins of his people, he was permitted to "shed forth this," the Pentecostal holy Spirit immersing his Church; thus signifying their acceptance by him and by the

Father, as members of his *Ecclesia*, his body--members of the New Creation. His Church, his body, has since continued, and the holy Spirit has continued in and upon it; and as each additional member is added to the Church, which is his body, each becomes a participant in the one baptism of the Spirit which pertains to and pervades the body, the Church.

The text under consideration links this Pentecostal baptism of the Spirit with our individual baptism into death, and shows us the relationship of the two. It is as justified men that we are baptized into death; it is as members of the New Creation that we are anointed of the holy Spirit and constituted members of the *Ecclesia*, the body of Christ. As already seen, we must first be justified out of Adamic sin and death, by faith in our Redeemer, before our *sacrifice could be accepted* and we be counted "dead with him"--with our Lord, our Head. So, likewise, we must first make this consecration, or *sacrifice*, of our justified selves, and be accepted as members of the New Creation, before the dying

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processes begin which will, by the Lord's grace, result in our complete *baptism into death*, in the likeness of our Lord's baptism into death, and thus insure a share in his "First Resurrection."

This is in accord with what we have already seen; viz., that it is not our justification that constitutes us New Creatures--members of the body of Christ--but our baptism into death with him as the Apostle says, "As the body is one, and hath many members...so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body...and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." **1 Cor. 12:12,13**

This Gospel age is the "acceptable year of the Lord," during which he has been willing to *accept* the sacrifices of believers, their full consecration unto death. Each sacrificer thus responding to the Call of the age (**Rom. 12:1**) has at once been accepted to a place, a membership in the "Church of the First-born, whose names are written in heaven." But this acceptance, as we have seen, does not conclude the matter: it is required of all consecrators that they shall "die daily"--that is, that their attitude of entire consecration shall be continued daily until they too can finally declare, "It is finished." It is required by the consecration that this perseverance in sacrificing and well-doing shall be continued patiently and faithfully, and that the end, with us as with our Lord and Head, shall be literal death. As it is written: "I have said, Ye are gods [*elohim*--

mighty ones] all of you sons of the Highest--yet ye shall die like men, ye shall fall like one of the princes"--not like Prince Adam, convicts; but like Prince Jesus--participants in his death. (*Psa. 82:6,7*) This faithfulness, this daily dying is requisite to our making our calling and election sure; and it is to such as faithfully walk in the footsteps of the Lord that he promises the glory, honor and immortality reserved for the faithful overcomers who shall constitute the "Very Elect" members of the New Creation. Our Lord's words are, "Be thou faithful unto *death*, and I will give thee a crown of life." (*Rev. 2:10*) We see, then, that it is with the Church as it was with her Lord and Head--that the consecration

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brings the first-fruits of the Spirit, faithfulness daily continues the blessing of the Spirit, with increasing joys and fruits, while the faithful finishing of the covenant in actual death is essential to the receiving of the full inheritance --a share in the First Resurrection and its glories and honors. *Eph. 1:12-14; Rom. 8:16,17*

The Baptism of Fire

We have already at considerable length* called attention to the statement of John the Baptist, made to the Jews respecting Jesus, "He shall baptize you with the holy Spirit and with fire," (*Matt. 3:11*)--thus pointing out the Pentecostal blessing upon faithful Israelites and the fire of God's anger, "wrath to the uttermost" (*1 Thess. 2:16*), that came upon the remainder of that nation. The baptism of fire is not a blessing, nor is it intelligently that Christian people sometimes pray for it. As there was such a baptism of fire in the end of the Jewish age upon the "chaff" of that nation, so our Lord indicates there will be in the end of this age a similar "fire" upon the "tare" class of Christendom--a baptism of fire, of trouble, which will be appalling; "a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation." *Dan. 12:1*

The Symbolical Baptism in Water

We have already called attention to the various water baptisms in vogue amongst Christian people, and almost universally misunderstood by them to be the real baptism; we have shown how false and inconsistent are the tests which are based upon these water baptisms, which cannot affect the heart, and which at very most are symbols, but

not seen to be symbols by their advocates, because they do not clearly discern the real *baptism into death* with Christ. How simple and yet how accurate becomes this test of real baptism, as respects the Church of Christ--the "body," the *Ecclesia*, whose names are written in heaven--not depending

*Vol. V, Chap. ix.

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upon earthly enrollment! This true baptism is, indeed, the door into the true Church, for no one can be admitted or enrolled as a member of the Church, the body of Christ, and have their names written in heaven as such, except first he have experienced this baptism of his will, of his heart, into *death with Christ*, and has thus been inducted into membership in his Church, which is "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." (*Col. 1:24*) Ah, yes! Such believers, making such consecration, such baptism into death with the Lord, must all be true "wheat"--not one of these is a "tare." The water door may let in "tares" as well as "wheat" into the Baptist Church; but the baptism into death as a door will admit only the wheat class into the true Church, because none others will care to come under the conditions, though some may imitate them in a measure, as the "tares" are imitations of "wheat."

From this standpoint it will be observed that there may be members of the true Church--baptized into Jesus Christ, by being baptized into his death--amongst Presbyterians, Methodists, Lutherans, Episcopalians, Congregationalists, Roman Catholics, etc., as well as amongst Disciples and Baptists. On the other hand, undoubtedly the great majority in all denominations (including Disciples and Baptists immersed into water) have neither part nor lot in the body of Christ, the true *Ecclesia*, because of not having come through the *real door* into the *real Church*, by the *real baptism* into "his death." This proposition is incontrovertible.

Having thus laid all the stress, as the Apostle does, upon the true baptism, we turn to the symbol of it, the water baptism, and inquire, first, Is the symbol proper or necessary to those who have the real baptism? Second, If so, which is the proper symbol?

Is the Symbolic Baptism Necessary?

The testimony of the Lord and the apostles clearly indicates the propriety of the symbolical or water baptism,

because not only they themselves were baptized with water, but taught water baptism in respect to others--not Jews

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only, but also Gentile converts. We have already shown that our Lord Jesus' baptism was separate and distinct from that of John's baptism to the Jews in general--that it was not unto repentance for remission of sins--that John did not understand the matter; and that our Lord, in thus instituting a symbol of his own death, did not attempt to explain what John and others of that time could not have understood, because the holy Spirit was not yet given, for Jesus had not yet accomplished his sacrifice for our sins, nor been glorified so as to present the sacrifice on our behalf. We note the commission given by our Lord to the apostles, and to us through them, as recorded in *Matt. 28:19,20*: "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name [by the authority] of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit." This commission has applied to this entire Gospel age, and under it all ministers of the Truth today labor. The Lord did not here refer to the Pentecostal baptism of the Spirit, because it was not in the power of the apostles thus to baptize anyone. The Lord himself, and he alone, had this authority and retained it. It was, however, granted to the apostles, and to all the faithful teachers of the Lord's Word, to instruct people respecting the grace of God in Christ--respecting their justification, and respecting their sanctification, or consecration, or baptism into death with Christ, if they would be partakers of his new nature and coming glory. And the baptizing included also the symbolical, or water baptism, which was to be the outward sign by which the inward or heart-consecration of the believer would be made known to his fellows, even as our Lord himself first made the heart-consecration to the Father, and then symbolized it in water.

That the inspired apostles so understood their commission and ours is evident from all their teachings. They first taught the people respecting the grace of God in the work of redemption, encouraging them to believe unto justification of life. They thus urged upon them a full consecration of heart, saying, "I beseech *you, brethren* [no longer sinners, but tentatively justified through faith in Christ, and, hence,

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designated members of the "household of faith," or "brethren"], by the mercies of God [a share of which you have already received in your justification], that ye present your bodies living sacrifices, holy [justified], acceptable to God, your reasonable service." This was the invitation to consecrate, or sacrifice, or be "*baptized into his death*." So many as heard the word gladly, in the proper condition of heart, appreciatively, were baptized--not only really baptized in their consecration vow, but also symbolically baptized in water, as an outward testimony of this.

Notice the following testimonies that baptism was the custom of all the apostles--not merely with the Jews, but also with the Gentiles. We read of the people of Samaria, "When they believed Philip...they were baptized, both men and women [not children]." (*Acts 8:12*) The Ethiopian eunuch converted by the preaching of Philip was also baptized in water. (*Acts 8:35-38*) After Peter had preached to Cornelius and his household, "The holy Spirit fell on all them that *heard* [appreciated] the word [no infants, therefore], ...and he commanded them to be baptized." (*Acts 10:44-48*) Again we read, "Many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized." (*Acts 18:8*) Again we read, "Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, one that worshiped God, heard us; whose heart the Lord opened to give heed unto the things spoken by Paul....She was baptized and her household." (*Acts 16:14,15*) The Philippian jailer, when he had believed, was baptized by Paul and Silas in the prison. (*Acts 16:33*) Again, we read, "I baptized also the household of Stephanus." *1 Cor. 1:16*

True, the Apostle in this last case mentions how few he had baptized, but this, undoubtedly, was because of his thorn in the flesh, his imperfect eyesight; and the few whom he baptized probably received this service at his hands because no one else suitable to perform it was conveniently at hand. He thanked God that he baptized so few; but this does not imply that he had changed his mind in respect to the propriety either of the real baptism or of its symbol; but in view of the fact that a dispute had arisen in the Church--

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a sectarian or factious spirit leading some to say, "I am of Paul," others, "I am of Apollos," others, "I am of Peter," etc. --the Apostle was glad that he could say he had baptized very few of them himself, lest any of them might have been led to claim that he had been making personal disciples, baptizing them in his own name, instead of making disciples

for Christ, and baptizing them into the name of Christ.

In the light of these plain declarations of Scripture respecting the precepts and practice of the Lord and the apostles, it would be a bold man indeed who would declare that symbolical or water baptism is not taught in the Scriptures; or that it was taught as applicable only to the Jews; or that it was intended only as an introductory work. On the contrary, it has been both taught and practiced from the beginning of the age to the present time, even though with varying forms and ceremonies, and with more or less incorrect conception of its meaning, confounding the symbol and losing sight of the real baptism. It is surely with good reason that all Christian people respect water baptism as of divine institution. If any are still inclined to controvert this question, we have no quarrel with them, but believe that if such an one is honest and has performed in his heart the true baptism of his will into the will of the Lord--if he has become dead to self, and to the world, and alive toward God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, God will reveal even this matter also unto him in due season. *Phil. 3:15*

Meantime, we shall rejoice with such that they have found the real baptism, and become participators in it, and we congratulate them upon the truth that it is far better to see and enjoy the real baptism while blind to the symbol, than it would be to see the symbol and be blind to the reality. In view of this, however strongly we favor the symbolical baptism, we could not base Christian fellowship upon it, but only upon the real baptism into death with Christ. All, therefore, who confess the Lord as their Redeemer, and confess a full consecration of heart and life to him, we accept as brethren in Christ Jesus, members of the *Ecclesia*, whose names are written in heaven--New Creatures

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in Christ, whether by birth Jews or Gentiles, bond or free, male or female, baptized with water or not baptized with water.

On the other hand, let it not be forgotten that every item of knowledge brings not only an increase of privilege and joy, but also an increase of responsibility. Whoever, therefore, comes to see the beauty and authority of the water symbol, comes at the same time to another test respecting the *deadness* of his will--respecting his real baptism into death with his Lord. A failure to obey as to the symbol under these circumstances, it will readily be seen, would mean a withdrawal of the sacrifice, and thus a failure to make the

calling and election sure.

The Proper Symbol of Baptism

We will not attempt a discussion of the multitudinous pros and cons as between sprinkling, pouring and immersion --as to which was the original apostolic mode of performing symbolical baptism. We will suggest, however, that no infant could possibly be in the condition of mind and heart which would permit it to make a consecration or baptism of its will into the will of Christ, so as to become dead with him to self and to the world. We will insist further, that the symbolical baptism *could not* be performed prior to the real baptism, with any validity; because symbolical baptism is intended to be merely the outward expression or confession of what has already transpired between our hearts, our wills, and the Lord in secret.

These things being true, it follows that the great majority of Christian people have never had symbolical or water baptism, since they could receive it only after intelligently making their consecration vow. The immersion of adults prior *to consecration* would be no more efficacious than an ordinary bath, no more of a symbolic baptism than the sprinkling of an unconsecrated infant. It behooves all, therefore, to inquire earnestly which is the true water baptism, the true symbol, designed by our Lord, and to obey it promptly. And every consecrated heart, "dead indeed" to

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self-will and worldly opinion, will be on the alert to know and to do the will of the Lord in this as in every other matter. Such alertness is implied in the expression, "Alive toward God through Jesus Christ our Lord." ***Rom. 6:11***

Suppose that the confusion on the subject of the mode of baptism were so complete, and the testimony respecting the procedure of the early Church so confused, that we had nothing whatever to guide us in determining whether the apostolic mode of water baptism was by sprinkling or pouring or immersing, we are now in a place where, seeing clearly what constitutes the real baptism, it is possible for us to see clearly what would and what would not constitute symbols or pictures of it. Scrutinizing every form practiced, one only seems at all to *picture* death and burial with Christ. We fail to see any symbol of death to the world and self, and with Christ, in many or few drops of water upon the forehead, or in a pailful of water poured over the person. If

there is any symbolical likeness of death in either of these we are unable to perceive it. But when we come to consider immersion we see at a glance a wonderful, a striking, a remarkable, a fitting illustration of all that is implied in the real baptism to death. Not only does the Greek word *baptizo* signify submergence, covering, burying, overwhelming, but the whole procedure connected with one immersion backward into the water in the name of Christ is a most striking picture of a burial, fitting in every particular. The administrator in the symbol represents our Lord. As the candidate goes to him so in our hearts we go to the Lord for baptism. Confessing that we cannot of ourselves become dead to self and to the world, we give ourselves into the hands of the Lord, asking him to accept the will for the deed, and requesting that, our wills being given up, *he will bury us into his death*--that he will cause such experiences, disciplines, assistances and chastisements, as will best enable us to carry out our covenant of consecration. When the candidate has given up his will, the administrator gently lets him down into the water, and while he is thus on his back, helpless in the water, he furnishes a complete illustration of our

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powerlessness to assist ourselves while in death; and as the administrator raises him to his feet again we see in picture just what our Lord has promised us--to raise us up from the dead in due time by his own power. We make no attempt to constrain the consciences of others who differ with us; but it seems to us evident from the fitness of this symbol that its author was the Lord. Who else could have arranged so complete a picture or symbol of the entire matter?

Whoever has already performed the real baptism--whoever has already given himself into the hands of Christ, to become dead with him, buried in the likeness of his death, and then sees the beauty of this symbolic picture, must, we believe, feel an intense desire to fulfil it in his own case. The language of his heart must surely be, "I delight to do thy will, O my God!"

What advantages will accrue from obedience to this symbol? We answer that the advantage does not accrue on the fulfilment of any one part of our consecration vow, but will only be ours if we seek to fulfil all the requirements, first and last--everything included in the full surrender of our wills to the Lord's will, and a full endeavor to walk in his steps. But while the full advantage will accrue at the end of the journey, in the First Resurrection, and its glory, honor and

immortality, there is a measure of advantage to be enjoyed even now. The satisfaction of mind, the peace of heart, the fact that, like our Lord, we have endeavored to "fulfil all righteousness"--these contribute to that peace of God which flows like a river, regularly and steadily and forcefully, through the lives of those who are his--the peace of God that passeth all understanding, in our hearts.

The Apostle's testimony is, that there is "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all." (*Eph. 4:4-6*) It follows that as there is only one proper baptism so there can be but one proper symbol to it; and Christian people in general are agreed that immersion in water corresponds most closely to the meaning of the Scriptural language. As illustrations of this agreement, note the following comments from persons who, though probably really baptized

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into Christ's death, had become confused so that they did not know how to identify its water symbol, and concluded that it is immaterial.

Some Testimonies to the Point

John Calvin, Presbyterian, says: "The very word '*baptizo*' signifies to immerse. It is certain that immersion was the practice of the primitive Church." *Institutes*, Bk. IV, Chap. xv, p. 19

Dr. Macknight, Presbyterian: "In baptism the baptized person is buried under the water." "Christ submitted to be baptized; that is, to be buried under water."

Dr. Philip Schaff, Presbyterian: "Immersion, and not sprinkling, was unquestionably the original, normal form. This is shown by the very meaning of the Greek words *baptizo*, *baptisma*, *baptismos*." *Hist. of Apostolic Church*, p. 568

In a later publication (1885) he writes further on these "comparisons," that they "are all in favor of immersion, rather than sprinkling, as is fully admitted by the best exegetes, Catholic and Protestant, English and German." *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, pp. 55,56

Martin Luther, Lutheran: "Baptism is a Greek word, and may be translated '*immersion*.'" "I would have those who are to be baptized to be altogether dipped into the water." *Luther's Works*, Vol. I, p. 336

John Wesley, Methodist: "'Buried with him by baptism' --alluding to the ancient method of immersion."

Wall, Episcopalian: "Immersion was in all probability the way in which our blessed Savior, and for certain was the most usual and ordinary way by which the ancient Christians did receive their baptism." *Hist. Infant Baptism*, Vol. I, p. 571, Oxford, 1862

Dean Stanley, Episcopalian: "For the first thirteen centuries the almost universal practice of Baptism was that of which we read in the New Testament, and which is the very meaning of the word 'baptize'--that those who were baptized were plunged, submerged, immersed into the water." *Christian Institutions*, p. 17

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Brenner, Roman Catholic: "Thirteen hundred years was baptism generally and regularly an immersion of the person under water." *Historical Exhibition of the Administration of Baptism*, p. 306

"The whole person was immersed in water." *Kitto's Encyclopedia*

"Baptism, that is, to dip, or immersion." *Encyclopedia Americana*

"Baptism was originally administered by immersion." *Brande's Encyclopedia*

"Baptism means immersion." *Smith's Bible Dictionary*

"Baptizo, to dip in or under water." *Liddell and Scott's Greek Lexicon*

"To immerse; to sink." *Robinson's Greek Lexicon*

"To immerse, submerge, sink." *Greenfield's Lexicon*

Who May Administer Water Baptism

Since all of the consecrated, all baptized into Christ's death, constitute the "Royal Priesthood," and members of the anointed body of the Lord, it follows that they not only are commissioned by **Matt. 28:19** to teach the people, and thus to lead them to the baptism, or burial of their wills into the Lord, but would be equally commissioned to perform for them the symbol of this consecration, the water baptism. And, further, if no such consecrated person could be found convenient for the service of the symbol, we can conceive of no sound objection that could be raised to its performance by an unconsecrated believer, or even by a worldly person, an unbeliever; because the real contract is between the Lord and the individual consecrating himself; and as the water baptism is not the real one, but merely a picture, so the administrator is not the Lord, but merely a

man, and whether a good or a bad man he would act merely as a representative for the convenience and service of the immersed one. Nevertheless, there is a general fitness and order which it is well to observe in this as in all matters pertaining to the *Ecclesia*: this would indicate that the most proper persons for such service would be the chosen elders.

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The Form of Words

No particular form of words for this service is set before us in the Scriptures, and all can readily see that the words are of secondary importance--that the baptism might be equally valid if no words at all were used; because, as previously stated, the real contract is between the baptized one and the Lord, and the *act* of water baptism is the open confession of it. It is not, therefore, a question of what the administrator may believe or disbelieve, say or omit to say, but of what is the thought and intention of the heart of the one thus symbolically baptized. Nevertheless, basing our judgment upon the words of the Lord, in *Matt. 28:19*, and the words of the Apostle in *Rom. 6:3*, we recommend as a simple form of sound words for the occasion these:

"Brother John [or other Christian name], in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, by this authority, I baptize thee into Christ."

Repetition of the Symbol

Because the true meaning of baptism has been so long lost sight of, we have many inquiries from those who have already been immersed in water, respecting the validity of their water baptism, and whether or not it would be proper to repeat the symbol. Our reply is that the symbol needs no repetition; but since it would have no meaning whatever, and no virtue whatever, any more than any other bath or dip in water, unless it *followed* the full consecration unto death, each must decide for himself whether or not he has obeyed this witnessing. But if the water baptism followed consecration, or baptism into death, it would not be necessary to repeat it--even though knowledge on the subject was deficient.

Baptism for the Dead

"Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all?" 1 Cor. 15:29

A misapprehension of the Apostle's meaning in the above words led, during the "Dark Ages," to substitutionary baptism:

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Christian people, whose friends had died without baptism, were baptized for them representatively. Correct views of what constitutes the real baptism quickly show us the inconsistency of such procedure. One person could no more consecrate himself for another person than he could transfer either his natural or his spiritual life to another person. This misapprehension of the Apostle's words, however, has led to confusion in the minds of many, who fail to recognize how great a falling away took place shortly after the death of the apostles, and how wild and unreasonable were many of the theories and customs then introduced.

The Apostle's topic was the resurrection of the dead, and he is here sustaining and elaborating that doctrine. Evidently assaults had been made upon the faith of the Church at Corinth respecting the resurrection of the dead. As a part of his argument, in the verse under consideration, he calls the attention of the Church to the fact that they had all been baptized, and that their baptism signified or symbolized death, as we have seen just foregoing. He then, by way of showing them the inconsistency of the new position, inquires wherein would be the wisdom or value of such a consecration to death, as their baptism suggested, if the new theory that the dead rise not at all were true. They had consecrated themselves to be members, to die one with the other, and one for the other in fellowship with Christ, and thus to be dead with him, and as members of his body, members of the great atonement sacrifice *on behalf of the dead world*, because they hoped in the promised resurrection.

The Apostle's argument is that the whole Christian position stands or falls together. If there is no resurrection of the dead, then those who are fallen asleep in Christ are perished, as well as the remainder of the world; and if such be the case, and there is no future hope either for the Church, or for the world through the Church, why should we consecrate our lives unto death? We are baptized into death with Christ, baptized for the dead, to the intent that we may by and by be associated with him as the Life-giver of the world--the Seed of Abraham.