

Immersion Essential to Christian Baptism

Dr. John A. Broadus: Chapter 1. The Question at Issue.

The object set before us is to maintain the proposition, that Immersion in water is essential to Christian Baptism.

The point here involved is not by any means the most important of those upon which Baptists differ with many of their fellow Christians. The questions: Who ought to be baptized? and, What does baptism signify and effect? appear to us, so far as it is proper to assign degrees in matters of divine ordinance, to be of far greater consequence.

To insist on the Scriptural act of baptism is a necessary consequence of a great fundamental principle, which was once held by Baptists almost alone, but which many of our brethren of other connections are now coming to share-the exclusive authority of Scripture. We do not say simply the authority, nor the paramount authority, but the exclusive authority of Scripture. Baptism is performed at all, simply because the Scriptures direct us to perform it; therefore we feel bound to inquire what it is that they direct, and to do that. We cannot acknowledge any other authority. The opinions and practices of eminent Christians in past ages, yea, of our own best friends, our pastors, our parents, must not be regarded, except in so far as they may help us to determine what is taught on the subject in the Scriptures.

And it is not an inquiry as to the mere manner of performing a duty. The popular phrase, "mode of baptism," seems to us to beg the question. The real question is, What is baptism? Compare the case of the Lord's Supper. No Protestant insists strongly on any particular mode of observing the Lord's Supper. We may have our preference, and may recommend it - as sitting around a table, kneeling around a railing, sitting in the pews, etc., - yet we do not insist. But when the Romanist gives only the bread to the laity, reserving the cup for the priests, all Protestants cry out. The Romanist might say, "Why, does not the bread really represent the great fact that Christ gave himself for us? Does not the body include the blood? May we not get all that is essential to the ordinance in taking the bread alone?" We - all who are commonly called Protestants - answer two things: First, to take the wine also, makes a more complete and expressive representation. Second, our Lord told us to eat bread and drink wine in remembrance of him; what right have we to alter that which he appointed, is if we knew better than he?

Now just the same ground do Baptists take as to baptism. They do not insist strongly on the mere manner and circumstances of its administration. Thus, it is a mere question of taste and convenience whether it shall be performed in a stream or a baptistery. Dr. Judson preferred to baptize face foremost. Even the practice of trine immersion, which was once very common, and still exists in some quarters, while it is in our judgment unwarrantable and improper, may be considered a matter of no great importance. The question is, not what is the most appropriate manner of performing baptism, but what is the act to be performed. And when any think proper to alter this act, we object most earnestly, and for the same two reasons as in the other case. First, the act enjoined gives a more complete and expressive

representation of those things which baptism denotes; in fact, without it the representation is grievously defective. Second, our Lord told us to baptize; what right have we to alter his appointment? He did not tell us to recline at a table as he was doing, and take bread and wine, but he told us to take bread and wine; and we do not insist on the reclining: we insist on the bread and wine. He did not tell us to be baptized in the Jordan, or in a river, as he was, but he told us to be baptized; and we do not insist on the Jordan, or any river, or any other mere circumstance, but we insist on the baptizing.

Chapter 2. The Teaching of Scripture.

What, then, do the Scriptures teach as to the action which constitutes baptism? Everyone should try to decide this question for himself. It is the duty of Christian people to settle every religious question, if possible, by their own personal examination of Scripture. Luther contended for the right of private judgment; is there not a corresponding duty of private judgment?

A plain man of average intelligence has become a believer in Christ, and knows that he ought to be baptized. He knows, also, that there is a difference among Christians around him as to what is baptism - that three different actions are called baptism. He takes up his New Testament, to read in his own tongue, and to see if, as a matter of private judgment, he can determine what constitutes the baptism which his dear Saviour enjoined? What does he find? The word baptize is only borrowed into the English language, and for him does not determine anything, being used, he knows, by different persons in different senses. And he is not acquainted with Greek.

But he finds the record of our Lord's own baptism; that it was in the river Jordan; that after his baptism he came up out of the water. Does some one feel like interrupting me here to say that, literally, it is "came up from the water" (Matt. 3:16)? I answer, that is true in Matthew; but in Mark, according to the correct Greek text, it is "out of" (Mark 1:10). And in Matthew, while the word "from" does not itself show that he had been in the water, it does not at all show that he had not; and the connection makes it so plain that he had, that the versions of Tyndale, Cranmer, Geneva, and King James all render "out of." The expression is like "Let me cast out the mote from thine eye," and the statement in Tobit that "a fish leaped up from the river and wished to devour the lad." So our friend is not misled by his English Bible as to this expression.

He finds also that when John, after long baptizing in the Jordan, left it for another place, he went to Aenon, "because there was much water there" (John 3:23). In reading Acts, he finds that when Philip was about to baptize the eunuch they went down into the water (Acts 8:38-9), and after the baptism they came up out of the water. In reading Romans 6:4, he finds the apostle likening baptism to a burial, and arguing that believers must not and cannot continue in sin that grace may abound, seeing that their very baptism, at the beginning of their Christian course, had reference to the death of Christ, and they were buried with Christ by baptism unto death, in order that, as Christ was raised from the dead, even so they also might live a new life.

Now, what can this man conclude but one thing? Pardon a homely story. The summer after the battle of Gettysburg I was preaching in a brigade at the camp below Orange Court House, during the great and blessed revival in Lee's army. Many

soldiers were finding Christian hope. After I had preached one day in an old church near the camp, a Presbyterian chaplain arose, called up several soldiers, and proceeded to "baptize" them, as he termed it, from a little bowl of water. When the services were about to close, a Baptist chaplain invited the congregation to go, after dismissal, to a baptistery which had been prepared at the foot of the hill, where the ordinance of baptism would be administered. He handed me his Bible as we went down the hill, asking me to read some passages and pray. I read the account of the baptism of Jesus, the commission in which he enjoins baptism, the account of Philip and the eunuch, and the passage in Romans, and then many soldiers were baptized.

As the crowd went away, a soldier said to the chaplain: "I tell you what, parson; this that you did down here was a great deal more like them Scriptures than what they did up yonder." Can anybody wonder that he thought so? Would not this be the general verdict of plain men, if they would just look on and consider? And the soldier of my story, though he had been sprinkled in infancy, never rested till he was baptized "like them Scriptures." If any one should say that this was but an ignorant man, I will add that an Episcopal gentleman of high position and culture once said to me: "Anybody can see that immersion is baptism, and I grant that it takes a good deal of argument and explanation to show that something else is baptism too."

Now remember that the Bible is a book for the people - given in order that the people may read, and learn, and judge for themselves. We who are called Protestants all contend for this; we are not afraid the people will be misled if they humbly and prayerfully search the Scriptures. It follows that the obvious teachings of Scripture - the ideas which lie plainly on its surface, so as to commend themselves to ordinary readers - are, to say the least, extremely apt to be what Scripture was meant to teach. We all insist much on this principle as regards the divinity of our Lord and the fact that he died to save us. So, here; the plain teaching of the English New Testament, to a plain man, who comes to it for information on this subject, will be that baptism is not a sprinkling or pouring, but an immersion.

Chapter 3. A Correct Translation.

Does someone think our friend's translation has misled him on this subject? That would be strange, for the translation certainly was not made by Baptists. The translation he reads, our cherished Bible, was made by Episcopalians, members of the Church of England. And what we Baptists ask of everybody is, Do read your own Bible, with your own eyes, and earnestly and prayerfully try to find out this matter, and all such matters, for yourself. But it is asserted that here the plain and obvious meaning of our English Bible is not the true meaning. That would seem matter of deep regret. Is it so that an honest inquirer, who has sense but not erudition, will be led astray on such a point by the common English version of the Scriptures that we all read. Still, it is insisted that our inquiring friend must not trust his own judgment of the meaning of his own Bible - he must ask scholars what the original means. For the sake of the argument, we consent that he shall do so.

This word baptize is said to be borrowed from the Greek baptizo, which is said to be the word invariably used where our version has baptize - what does that Greek word mean?

Well, whom shall we ask in our friend's behalf? It is a question of scholarship. Therefore we ought to ask those who are unquestionably able and leading scholars.

And they ought to be, as nearly as possible, disinterested in regard to the matter in hand. Such are the conditions required when we refer any matter whatever to the decision of others.

Now as to the meaning of this Greek word, I will just consult, in our friend's behalf, the three most recent standard lexicons, one of classical and two of New Testament Greek, which are acknowledged by all scholars as scholarly, scientific, and eminently authoritative. They are first, Liddell and Scott's Lexicon of the Greek Language in general, prepared by two scholars of the Church of England; second, Grimm's edition of Wilke's Lexicon of New Testament Greek, published in Germany, and translated by Thayer, a Congregationalist scholar in this country; third, Cremer's Biblico-Theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek, published in Germany and translated in England.

Liddell and Scott say (sixth edition), baptizo, "to put in or under water" (seventh edition, "to dip in or under water"). And they go on to explain various secondary and metaphorical uses as derived from this, e.g., to sink a ship, a man soaked in wine, over head and ears in debt, drowned with questions. They do not recognize or hint at any other meaning.

Grimm's Wilke translates it, (1) "to dip repeatedly, to immerse, submerge;" then, (2) "to wash by immersing or submerging, to bathe, to cleanse with water," adducing as examples Mark 7:4, and the cases of Naaman and Judith; (3) figuratively, "to overwhelm," as with debts, misfortunes, etc. So much he gives as to the general use of the word. In the New Testament rite, he says, it denotes "an immersion in water, intended as a sign of sins washed away, and received by those who wished to be admitted to the benefits of the Messianic reign." Grimm gives no hint of its meaning anything else.

Thayer simply refers to some works as giving passages from "the Fathers" in regard to "the mode, ministrant, subjects, etc., of the rite"; viz., as practiced by Christians of the early centuries, but makes no addition as to the meaning of the Greek word or its use in the New Testament.

Cremer gives as the general meaning, "immerse, submerge," and says that, in the peculiar New Testament and Christian use, the word "denotes immersion, submersion, for a religious purpose."

Such is the rendering of this word by the three most recent lexicons of acknowledged scientific value; the three which any competent scholar, if asked to recommend lexicons to a student of New Testament Greek, would be sure to name.

I might add that the two German commentators on the New Testament, who are the foremost of the century as to full and accurate scholarship, Fritzsche and Meyer, furnish like testimony as to the meaning of the word.

But why, it may be asked, do some Greek lexicons, besides the renderings "immerse", "put in or under water," etc., give the meaning "pour", "drench", etc.? The classical lexicons which give this meaning base it on such expressions as I have mentioned, viz., baptized with wine, sleep, misfortunes, debts, etc. Now in these cases (all figurative, you will observe) some such other sense would be possible, perhaps appropriate - the idea then being that wine, debts, etc., are poured over one

so that he is drenched with them - but certainly it is not necessary. This is shown by Liddell and Scott, who explain all such uses as derived from the primary sense of "put in or under water," comparing such English expressions as soaked in wine, over head and ears in debt, etc.; and we may add, immersed in business, in study, sleep, debt, troubles.

Now an important general principle is here involved, a principle indispensable to all reliable interpretation of language, namely, this: We are not at liberty to assign to a word a new meaning, quite different from its primary and established meaning, until we find some passage which absolutely requires it. Examples in which such a new and different meaning would be possible, or even appropriate, or even most natural, will not justify our assigning it as long as the established meaning will suit even tolerably well. Only when the common meaning is impossible or utterly unsuitable is it proper to give a new and very different meaning. Unless this principle be followed, interpretation of language, I repeat, becomes utterly uncertain and unreliable.

Now it cannot be said that the notion of immersed in debts, etc., is an unnatural or unsuitable image. To say that the other conception of having debts poured over one would also fit, is nothing to the point. We must, of course, hold on to the common and recognized sense so long as that will answer. It will thus appear that the classical lexicons in question have no right to give such a meaning as "pour," because it differs widely from the established and familiar use of the word, and the examples they cite do not require, and therefore do not warrant, any such meaning. As to the lexicons of New Testament Greek, which claim that some passages in the Bible justify the meaning, "pour," I shall speak afterward. Such, then, is the testimony of the leading lexicons.

To this I need add but one fact, namely, the practice of the Greek Church. Their rule is, and always has been, to immerse. I myself saw a child thus baptized in a Greek church at Scanderoon, or Alexandretta, at the northeast corner of the Mediterranean. An educated Athenian, belonging to the Greek Church, in conversing with me laughed to scorn the idea that their Greek word baptizo can mean sprinkling or pouring. Now the Greek is not really a dead language; scholars in Germany, England, and America are every day seeing this fact more clearly, and recognizing more fully its importance.

I remember when at Athens, a Scottish gentleman who had spent most of his life in Greece and had given very close attention to the language, told me of his own accord that, although a Presbyterian, he thought the Baptists were quite right about the meaning of the word baptizo; and he hunted up a book, in modern Greek, on natural philosophy, in which I found the word repeatedly employed. The Greeks usually leave this as the sacred word and take other terms for common actions. But this writer, in describing the mode of determining specific gravity, explained that we first weigh a body in air, and then immerse it in water and weigh it thus, being suspended by a cord; and this action of immersion he constantly and naturally describes by "baptize."

There has been published in this country a copious and valuable lexicon of Greek usage in the Roman and Byzantine periods, from B.C. 140 to A.D. 1000, by Professor Sophocles, of Harvard College, who was himself a Greek, long resident in America. He defines baptizo as meaning to dip, to immerse, to sink, and then gives a great variety of uses, all explained as having this same force, e.g, soaked in liquor

(intoxicated), sunk in ignorance, bathed in tears, he plunged the sword into his own neck; then, derivatively, to bathe. And as to the New Testament use, he says expressly: "There is no evidence that Luke, and Paul, and the other writers of the New Testament put upon this verb meanings not recognized by the Greeks."

This, then, is the practice of the Greek Church and this the testimony of the living Greeks who belong to it. The word involved is to them not foreign, but their own word. And one of their constant complaints against the Latin Church - the Church of Rome - is that this has altered the ceremony of baptism. A modern Greek scholar has said: "The Church of the West commits an abuse of words and of ideas in practicing baptism by aspersion, the mere statement of which is in itself a ridiculous contradiction."

Soon after the taking of Constantinople, five centuries ago, as we learn from Dr. Döllinger (*Kirche und Kirchen*, p. 188) and others, a council of Greek patriarchs agreed, not that they would practice pouring or sprinkling, but that they would recognize it in the West as valid baptism. They were almost ruined, in danger of being utterly swallowed up by the conquering Turks, and wanted to make friends with the Latin Christians. But at a later period the Greek patriarchs retracted this. It is still observed in Russia, but those to whom Greek was the native language could not stand it. They said that instead of a baptismos the Latin Church practiced a mere rantismos - instead of an immersion, a mere sprinkling. To a man who spoke Greek every day this was "a ridiculous contradiction."

Such, then, is the evidence which may be given our unlearned friend from scholars, the lexicons, and the living Greeks concerning their own word. Much more might be added in the way of confirmation, but he would probably say: "Well, it is plain that I can trust my English Bible. What these great scholars say - none of them Baptists - and what the living Greeks say and do accords exactly with the impression I got from my own Bible; and so the evidence is enough; I care for no more." He, for his part, might stop there, being concerned only to determine his own conduct. But I have another and a different task to perform.

Chapter 4. The Defence of Sprinkling.

In the face of such facts as have been stated, on what ground do any Christian people defend the practice of sprinkling for baptism? Well, some of them have really never known the facts, or never stopped to think about them. But others, with the facts before them, still defend sprinkling. Respect for my fellow Christians requires that this matter be as carefully considered as the time will allow. Yet I can but briefly mention and rapidly discuss.

There are several distinct grounds which are relied on by different classes of persons.

I grant that New Testament baptism was immersion, some hold that "the church has authorized a change."

Yes; clinic baptism - baptism of a sick person in bed - began, as early as the third century, to be allowed by some ecclesiastics, e.g., Novatian. They poured water copiously around the dying or very sick man as he lay in bed. This practice arose from exaggerated notions of the importance of baptism. We should say, if the man was too ill to be baptized, it was not his duty; but they were afraid to let a man die

without baptism, and as real baptism was impracticable they proposed a substitute which, by copious pouring, would come as near it as possible. There were many disputes as to the lawfulness of this, but it came by degrees to be generally recognized as lawful.

As the centuries went on there was gradual progress. The more convenient substitute was preferred in other cases than illness, was further reduced to mere sprinkling, and became increasingly common. It was long withstood by Popes and Councils, but grew in popularity through the Dark Ages, until, in the thirteenth century, one thousand years after clinic pouring began, the Pope finally yielded, and authorized sprinkling in all cases.

So the Reformers found it. And, unfortunately for our modern Christianity, they did not insist on a change. Luther repeatedly said a change ought to be made, e.g., "Baptism is a Greek word, and may be translated immersion, as when we immerse something in water that it may be wholly covered. And, although it is almost wholly abolished (for they do not dip the whole children, but only pour a little water on them), they ought, nevertheless, to be wholly immersed, for that the etymology of the word seems to demand." Again, he says that baptism does not simply represent washing for sins, but "is rather a sign both of death and resurrection. Being moved by this reason, I would have those that are to be baptized to be altogether dipt into the water, as the word means, and the mystery signifies." So elsewhere (see Ingham's "Handbook of Baptism", p.89).

In like manner Calvin. In commenting on the baptism of the eunuch by Philip (Acts 8:38), he says: "'They descended into the water.' Here we perceive what was the rite of baptizing among the ancients, for they immersed the whole body into the water; now the custom has become established that the minister only sprinkles the body or the head. But so slight a difference of ceremony ought not to be esteemed by us so important that on account of it we should split the church or disturb it with quarrels. For the ceremony of baptism itself, indeed, inasmuch as it was handed down to us by Christ, we should a hundred times rather fight even to death than suffer it to be taken away from us. But when in the symbol of the water we have a testimony as well of our ablution as of our new life; when in water, as in a mirror, Christ represents to us his blood, that from it we may seek our purification; when he teaches that we are fashioned anew by his Spirit, that, being dead to sin, we may live to righteousness - it is certain that we lack nothing which pertains to the substance of baptism. Wherefore, from the beginning, the church has freely permitted herself, outside of this substance, to have rites a little dissimilar." ("Calvin on Acts", viii, 38). The ancients, in the time of Philip and the eunuch, practiced immersion; a different custom has now become established, the church allowing herself liberty.

The leaders of the Reformation in England attempted a return - not, indeed, to the full New Testament plan, but that of the Fathers in the third century. The rubric of the Church of England has always been, from the Reformation till now, "shall dip the child in the water, but if they certify that the child is weak, it shall suffice to pour water upon it." This is essentially the principle of the old clinic baptism. And this the Greek Church also tolerates as an exceptional practice.

But among the Reformers, on the Continent and in England, the custom of several centuries, with convenience, etc., triumphed over those attempts, and pouring - nay, even sprinkling - became the common practice.

In this sense, then, the church " has changed the act of baptism. On this ground the Roman Catholics stand - the church has changed it - so they always meet the complaints and censures of the Greek Church. And intelligent Romanists see exactly how the matter stands among us who are called Protestants. Thus the famous Dr. Döllinger says: "The fact that the Baptists are so numerous, or even the most numerous of all religious parties in North America, deserves all attention. They would, indeed, be yet more numerous were not Baptism, as well as the Lord's Supper, as to their sacramental significance, regarded in the Calvinistic world as something so subordinate that the inquiry after the original form appears to many as something indifferent, about which one need not much trouble himself. The Baptists are, however, in fact, from the Protestant standpoint, unassailable, since, for their demand for baptism by submersion, they have the clear Bible text, and the authority of the church and of her testimony is regarded by neither party." ("Kirche und Kirchen," s. 337.)

I may remark here, that on this subject the Baptists belong to the majority. It is often objected to us that we are an insignificant minority of the Christian world, and it is a point about which we are not greatly solicitous. But if anybody cares greatly for majorities in such a matter, let him observe that, in contending for immersion as necessary to the baptism taught in the New Testament, we have on our side the whole Greek Church, and the whole Roman Catholic Church, and a very large proportion of the Protestant world, particularly of the Protestant scholars.

To return. This is an intelligible position. New Testament baptism was immersion, but the church has changed it. Accordingly, in the Church of England, few scholars ever, for a moment, question that baptizo means immerse or that the New Testament baptism was immersion.

The church has changed it. Very satisfactory for a Romanist, but how can a Protestant rest on this? Chillingworth, the Church of England scholar, left a dictum which has grown famous: "The Bible, I say - the Bible only - is the religion of Protestants." Was this all a mistake?

Chapter 5. The Plea of Christian Liberty.

Christian liberty is the ground on which others proceed.

They say Christians may choose for themselves about mere outward forms; these make no difference if you have the essence of the thing. Yes, and so says the Quaker, more strongly still. What would you say to the Quaker? I asked this question of an esteemed friend, who is an Episcopal clergyman. The Quaker tells us the mere outward form of baptism is unnecessary; the essential thing is to have the baptism of the Spirit, and water baptism need not be observed at all. What would you say to him? "I would tell him the Scripture teaches us to baptize in water." Very well, I replied, and so it teaches us to baptize in water. If you have an outward ceremony at all, you have a form, and can you say that the form of a ceremony is of no importance? How will such an one answer the Quaker, except upon the Baptist principle?

The state of mind represented, the baptism of the Spirit, is of course the essential thing; without it, the outward ceremony is an empty form. But our Lord has appointed a form, a ceremony. We ought to observe this because he has appointed it; and plainly, therefore, ought to observe it as he appointed it. Either the Baptist ground or the Quaker ground.

"But suppose," one says, that immersion is impracticable or excessively inconvenient; there is not enough water, or it is too cold; why not substitute another use of water and attach the same meaning to it?"

Well, suppose you want to observe the Lord's Supper and there is no wine to be had - a thing much more likely to happen than that there should be no water, and which I once knew to happen in a country neighborhood - why not take some other beverage, and let that represent to us the same thing as wine? We should all unite in raising two objections. First, our Lord told us to eat bread and drink wine; if circumstances really prevent our doing that, let us do nothing, feeling that we are providentially hindered. Second, while any liquid, as water, might in some sort represent the blood of our dear Lord, yet it is obvious that wine much more clearly and strikingly represents it. Even if we did not perceive this, we ought to do just what he said; and much more when we do perceive it.

And so, if immersion be really impracticable, we should make the same two points. First, we must do what he told us or do nothing. What is really impracticable is not our duty. Second, while sprinkling with water may represent purification, yet even this part of the meaning of baptism is much more strikingly represented by immersion; while the other part, the idea of burial and resurrection, which the apostle twice connects with baptism, sprinkling does not represent at all. Even if we did not perceive that what he appointed is more expressive, we ought to do just what he said, and much more when we do perceive it. Either, then, what he told us to do, or nothing.

But someone is dying - shall we deny him the satisfaction of being baptized? Why not? How was it with the thief on the cross? Suppose the same dying man wants the Lord's Supper, and you have no wine?

Nay, my, friends, such pleas look like making too much of baptism. In this, as I said, began clinic baptism; and pray notice how the argument we are discussing - a favorite argument with some - just comes back to the same thing, attaching an unwarranted importance to baptism. If baptism or the Lord's Supper be providentially impracticable, as under certain circumstances may well be the case, surely there is nothing lost, and no guilt incurred, by failing to observe it.

Chapter 6. General Reasons Against Immersion.

Others, without going into an argument as to the teaching of Scripture, while neither admitting nor denying that it teaches what we claim, urge general reasons why they cannot believe that immersion is obligatory.

I. They will say, as before, that immersion is sometimes impracticable, and so it cannot be necessary to baptism. We answer, when baptism is impracticable it is not our duty; when it is practicable, let us practice it and not substitute something else.

2. But immersion is often really dangerous. What! a cold bath dangerous, taken promptly, when a person is sustained, too, by strong excitement, and its effects quickly removed? In a few cases of illness or extreme feebleness it might be dangerous, but then it is not our duty. There is, perhaps, nothing in this world which may not sometimes be dangerous.

3. Immersion is indecent. Will you allow a bit of personal experience? My boyhood was spent in one of the counties of Virginia, where Baptists were numerous. The country church to which the family belonged commonly repaired, for baptizing, to my father's mill-pond, which was a very convenient and a very pretty place. I always went to witness it with eager interest. I was, of course, like other boys, not too good to have noticed and laughed at anything indelicate. But when I grew up and went to the university, and a Presbyterian student one day said that he thought immersion was indecent, the idea was to me utterly novel; it had never, in all my life, entered my head. Such a notion is a mere prejudice of education. If you think baptism indecent, I should beg pardon for saying you have not been "well raised" in this respect. In many circumstances of life there may be personal exposure through bad arrangements, or awkwardness, or accident; as in alighting from a horse or a carriage, in passing a muddy street-crossing, in descending the steps of a church. What does that prove except that, wherever there is danger of exposure, we must take care to avoid it? If, in any of these cases, or in baptizing, there is great awkwardness or bad management, we condemn the managers. If there is merely accidental exposure when a lady alights from her carriage or when a lady is baptized, well-bred people will only feel regret and sympathy. Besides, what about sea-bathing? The very persons who oftenest complain of immersion as indecent are among those who most delight in sea-bathing.

4. So many good people have believed in sprinkling, and felt that they were blessed in receiving, administering, or witnessing it. This is with some a favorite argument. But consider: Transubstantiation has, from early centuries, been believed in by multitudes of deeply devout people, including such men as Thomas Kempis and Pascal. They have felt that they were blessed in worshiping the host as the very body of Christ. So, also, as to the worship of the Virgin Mary; many who were deeply devout have found in it great delight. Good people are not infallible. And God may, and doubtless does, bless people in holding opinions and observing practices that are not in themselves according to his will. This must be so to some extent - else who would be blessed? David was greatly blessed of God, and David was a polygamist.

Now, if it is true, to some extent, that he blesses those who have principles and practices which he does not approve, we cannot tell how far it may be carried, and must leave that to God. But one thing follows inevitably : that we must not take the fact of God's blessing a man, or an association of men, as proving that he approves all their doctrines and all their practices.

5. But sprinkling has not only been widely believed in and practiced by good people - it has been defended by many able and devout men, and after careful investigation. Very well, we may answer. You are a Methodist, or an Episcopalian; what do you think of the doctrine of Election, Reprobation, Limited Atonement? Yet you know that for ages these doctrines have been held and rejoiced in by many good Christians, and defended, after careful investigation, by some of the greatest intellects of the human race. Or you are a Calvinist; what do you think of the doctrine popularly

called "falling from grace"? Yet you know that it is held and defended by not a few of the most zealous, fervent, and useful Christians on earth.

But, it may be said, this is not a parallel case; these are doctrines. That makes no difference as to our argument. If grave errors as to doctrine exist, and have long existed, among persons very devout and often richly blessed of God, the same must certainly be true as to the less important matter of ceremonies - something may be quite erroneous, though held and earnestly defended by some good and wise men.

But take the case of Church Government. You are a Presbyterian, and do not believe that Episcopacy is Scriptural or expedient; yet how many pious people believe in it and live under it with joy and with religious growth and usefulness; and how many great men defend it after careful investigation, for example, in the Church of England? Or you are an Episcopalian; how many Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Lutherans there are in America, Scotland, England, France, Switzerland, Germany who are neglecters and opposers of Episcopacy, yet are devout, learned, honest?

What is the conclusion from all this? Why, that we are compelled to think for ourselves. We may err, as so many have done; but we must not be content, without the most earnest efforts, to escape errors that our circumstances will allow. I repeat, there is not only a right of private judgment, there is a duty of private judgment. Every man shall give account of himself unto God. And how can we square it with our consciences if we do not personally strive, in all possible ways, to find the truth in all things? There is here but one alternative. Either we have no right to be sure that anything is true, or we are bound to assure ourselves by personal inquiry. Either universal skepticism, or private judgment. One or the other position is inevitable. To believe all that all have said is to believe nothing that any have said. We must then choose between them, and decide for ourselves according to the evidence and our best judgment.

Chapter 7. Baptizo - Classical and Biblical.

But another class of persons endeavor to go deeper, not relying upon the opinions of others. They say, grant that the classical use of baptizo is as the lexicons mentioned teach, that it always means immerse, and kindred ideas; yet the Biblical use is very different, for in the Bible it certainly sometimes means sprinkle or pour. The attempt is made to show this from various passages; really, it seems that so many are tried because it is felt that none of them are exactly conclusive. I should be glad to go over all that have been thus appealed to, but time does not allow that, and I can only mention those which are most frequently relied on, or which seem most plausible.

I. It is said that, in the case of certain other words, such as pastor, bishop, elder, church, supper, the sacred use is frequently quite different from the classical use; and this is thought to afford a presumption that there is also a difference as to the word baptize. But most of these words have not changed their meaning to something quite different; there is only a figurative or novel application, while the ground idea remains the same. Thus the pastor is a shepherd (figuratively), the bishop is an overseer (spiritually), the church is an assembly (actual or ideal). So baptize is still an immersion, having only a special reference and meaning. The word "supper" has been much insisted on, as having a wholly different sense in the New Testament from its classical use. But when the Apostle Paul speaks of the Christians as coming

together to eat "the Lord's Supper," (I Cor. 11:20) it was a supper. We continue to apply the term "supper" when it is eaten at other times of the day, but Scripture does not so apply it. Besides, our Lord did not tell us to eat a supper, but to eat bread and drink wine. This is what we must do; and we make here no substitute, either for the elements (bread and wine) or for the action (eating and drinking). So the appeal to "supper" is quite inappropriate. The use of "elder," however, seems to be a case in point, for this word has changed its meaning. But the change is not in sacred, as distinguished from secular use. The application of the term "elder" to a person who is not old is found in classical Greek, as also in Latin and English. The Greek word *presbus*, an old man, is used in classical Greek to denote an honorable man, an ambassador, a senator. So with the Latin senator, and the English alderman. This, then, is not a case in which the word acquires an entirely different sense in sacred from what it had in classical use. And so all the examples cited break down, and this supposed analogy and consequent presumption, much relied on by some, amounts to just nothing.

2. There is the purification theory, put forward by Dr. Edward Beecher and others. In John 3:22-25, we are told that Jesus was baptizing (through his disciples); next, that John also was baptizing, for he was not yet cast into prison; and then it is added: "Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying." From this it is argued that the word baptize is synonymous with purify. Now baptizing was certainly a very striking form of purification. The fact that baptism was going on might very naturally lead to a discussion between some of John's disciples and "a Jew" (the correct text) about the general subject of purification and the relation of this to other purifications. Being a peculiar, remarkable, and novel purification, it was perfectly natural that baptism should lead to discussion of the general subject. But why in the world are we to say that the terms baptism and purification are synonymous, that baptism means nothing more definite than purification, and that any form of purification might be called a baptism? Suppose a murder has occurred, and leads some persons into discussion concerning death, are we to conclude that the terms murder and death are synonymous and that any form of death may be called a murder? Yet because the occurrence of baptism led to a discussion concerning purification, we are told that these terms are synonymous and that any form of purification is a baptism. Now upon this assumption rests Dr. Beecher's theory - a huge inverted pyramid resting upon a single point, and that point a mere assumption and one in itself unwarrantable and unreasonable.

3. But besides these more general considerations, various particular passages are urged as showing that the word baptizo in the New Testament is not always taken in the classical sense of immerse and kindred ideas.

(i) The river Jordan is mentioned. I learn that some years ago a clergyman in South Carolina stated that the Jordan is quite too small a stream to admit of immersion. It is more than two hundred miles long, and in all the region where the baptizing is described as performed is very hard to ford, even at the lowest water of summer. On the other hand, an estimable minister who died some time ago in Kentucky, stated in a sermon that he had been to the traditional place of our Lord's baptism, and that the bank is so steep and the current so swift and deep, and strong as to make immersion there impracticable. Now this honored gentleman perfectly knew that every spring, when the river is high as he saw it, in the week preceding Easter, there come four or five or seven or eight thousand pilgrims from all parts of the East, to this very place, the traditional place of our Lord's baptism, and there these

thousands - men, women, and children - do actually immerse themselves and one another in the river, not as baptism (for they have been immersed in infancy), but as a sacred bath at that holy spot. He knew as well as I do that this happens every spring at that very place, and yet it never occurred to him to connect that fact in his mind with his own timid notion that immersion would there be impracticable. I am satisfied he was a good man, and have no idea that he meant to deceive; but how strangely good men can sometimes manipulate their own minds. The traditional place is not particularly well suited to baptism when the river is high. As to the bank, it could be cut down and made perfectly convenient in an hour. But there are much better places higher up the Jordan toward the Sea of Galilee. I saw some which struck a practiced eye as admirably convenient and beautiful - and that may possibly have been one reason why John moved up the river, as he appears to have done.

(2) Much is said about the scarcity of water in Jerusalem rendering it unlikely that the three thousand, on the day of Pentecost, were immersed. This seems, to some unreflecting people, a very strong argument when they are told that around Jerusalem there is, in ordinary dry weather, no running stream whatever, except the little rivulet from the fountain of Siloam; that even the brook Kidron does not contain a drop of water except in the rainy season, and the city was supplied by aqueducts, pools, and cisterns. Accustomed to think, with the schoolboy, that it is a remarkable providence that great rivers so often flow by great cities, and having never studied the water arrangements of ancient Jerusalem, these persons very naturally say: "Why, certainly; in a city without a river, a city so scarce of water, they would not have spared enough for immersing three thousand men." But only think a moment. Even if we knew nothing of the methods by which Jerusalem was actually supplied, here was a city of say two hundred thousand as its ordinary population, besides several hundred thousand visitors for a week at a time, during the feasts - a great population, with all their wants, including the washing of their clothes, and a people who attached extraordinary importance to ceremonial purifications and to personal cleanliness - and you say that in this great city they could not spare water enough for baptizing three thousand persons?

Besides, Jerusalem was repeatedly besieged. During the siege by Titus a vast multitude from the country crowded the space within the walls, and were kept enclosed there from April to September. There was scarcity of food, but, in none of the great sieges, not even in this last, of which we have so minute an account in Josephus, is there a word said about the scarcity of water in the city. In the one apparent exception, it is the besiegers that suffered from a scarcity of water (Josephus, Ant., 13, 8, 2). It is plain that Jerusalem must have possessed remarkable arrangements of some kind, giving an immense supply of water. And examination has sufficiently disclosed the character of these arrangements, as various writers have shown. (See especially a tract by Dr. G. W. Samson, "On the Water Supply of Jerusalem." published by the American Baptist Publication Society.)

I will add, not as caring to lay any stress on it, that in observing the remains of the immense pool just outside of Jerusalem on the West, which Robinson identifies with the Lower Pool of Gihon, I was struck with its adaptation to baptism. The pool, six hundred feet long, was made by building two walls across the deep ravine, so as to retain the water brought down in the rainy season. The steep banks on either side present a succession of flat limestone ledges at various depths and often many feet wide, so that at whatever depth the water might be standing in the pool, there would be excellent standing room for a great number of persons, with the proper depth for

baptizing. As there was an abundance of drinking water in the city from the cisterns and aqueducts, this pool was probably used for watering cattle and perhaps for washing clothes, while the limestone sides and bottom would keep it always clear. Persons who have educated themselves to dislike immersion might fear to stand on these ledges and practice it, but the Jews of that day were accustomed to purificatory immersions, and would have no fear nor difficulty.

(3) The gospel according to Mark (7:1-5) tells us that it was the custom of the Jews to baptize (immerse) themselves when they came from the market, and to baptize (immerse) cups, couches, etc. It is said with great confidence that of course this cannot have been immersion. But did you ever notice that if you understand it as merely washing (as in our version) you make the latter part of the evangelist's statement feeble and almost meaningless?

Some Pharisees and scribes were watching Jesus and his followers, to find fault with them. And seeing some of his disciples eating bread without having washed their hands, they asked Jesus why his disciples did not walk in this matter according to the tradition of the elders. In narrating this the Evangelist Mark, who writes especially for Gentiles, pauses in the midst of the narrative to explain to his Greek and Roman readers that the Jews were very particular about this matter of washing the hands before eating, and washing them "with the fist," scrubbing one hand with the other, that is, washing very carefully - observing the tradition of the elders. In fact, he says, they do something more remarkable than this; when they come from the market - where some unclean person or thing may have touched some portion of their body - they do not eat till they have immersed themselves. And he adds that many other things they have received by tradition to hold, immersions of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels, and tables (or it should be "couches "). These practices were so wonderful, and gave such proof of the extreme scrupulosity of the Jews, that it is not strange the writer of the Gospel should have gone on to mention them, though nothing was necessary to explain his narrative but the first statement, that they did not eat without having washed their hands.

But if you say that the word baptizo, in the fourth verse, only means "wash," as the word does in verse second and verse third, then what was the use of adding verse fourth at all? If, according to verse third, they do not eat without having carefully washed their hands, what is the use of adding that when they come from the market they do not eat unless they have washed? This certainly must mean something different from washing their hands, and something much more remarkable, or it would have been a waste of words, a very empty tautology, first to tell us that they do not eat at all, under any circumstances, without having carefully washed their hands, and then to add that when they come from market they do not eat without having washed. One would suppose not, if they wash before eating even when they have not been to market. Perhaps some one says, the washing in verse fourth means purifying, they purify themselves when they come from market. Of course it means a purification, but the washing of verse third means a purification too. That of verse fourth must be a different and more thorough purification, something more than the careful washing of hands, or else you make the inspired evangelist talk nonsense.

And notice the further addition. He goes on to tell his Gentile readers that these singular and scrupulous Jews have many other traditional observances, as immersions of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels, and couches. Now if you say this

cannot have been immersion, but only washing in some other way, then why should the sacred writer have gone so far away from the immediate subject of his narrative merely to say that the Jews washed cups and pots? Most people do. And if it be said the point is that this was a ceremonial washing, a religious purification of the articles mentioned, we may answer that that would not seem remarkable to the Romans. They practiced numerous lustrations. A Roman shepherd would sprinkle his sheep with water once a year, accompanied by sacrifices, to preserve them from disease and other evils. Why should Mark go out of his way to inform Romans that the strange Jews made lustrations of cups and couches? But understand baptizo in its own proper sense, and all becomes plain and forcible. The Jews not only wash their hands carefully before eating, but when they come from market, where they know not what may have touched some part of their persons, they immerse themselves; and this suggests, and leads the evangelist to mention that they have many other like thorough and painstaking purifications enjoined upon them by their traditions, as immersion of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels, and couches. Thus the several facts of verse third and verse fourth rise as a climax, and we see the propriety of pausing to mention these various proofs of painstaking scrupulosity. (Compare Meyer on Mark. Some early documents show that this statement was regarded as wonderful, by changing "immerse themselves" to "sprinkle themselves," and by omitting "couches." if these Greek-speaking folks had enjoyed our modern lights, and known that baptizo itself may mean sprinkle, or anything you please, they would have felt no occasion for making such changes.)

But one says : "I cannot believe that they immersed beds; that is absurd." Well, the beds might mean pallets, consisting of several thicknesses of cloth quilted together - as when the paralytic was told to take up his bed and walk, or like the beds they give you now in some houses of Palestine. More probably, however, they mean the couches beside the table, on which the guests reclined to eat, as the subject of the whole connection is their observances about eating. Now suppose there has been contagious disease in one of our houses, that a person has died of small-pox, or even of typhoid fever, will any careful housewife think it too much to take the bed, on which he died, all to pieces - if, in fact, she does not burn it - and carefully cleanse every part of it? Well, if she would be thus anxious to avoid contagion in her household, the Jews were equally anxious to avoid ceremonial impurity, when, for example, some "unclean" person was found to have reclined on one of their couches. And if she would not shrink from such pains in order to effect a thorough cleansing, why should we pronounce it incredible that the scrupulous Jews would take equal pains to effect a thorough religious purification?

Grant that in such cases the law of Moses did not always require immersion of the unclean object or of the person. The evangelist is expressly speaking of the traditional observances, and the Jews had become so very scrupulous that the tradition often required more than the law did. So we find them still doing in the time of Maimonides (twelfth century), and he asserts that such was the real requirement of the law. "Whenever in the law," he says, "washing of the flesh or of the clothes is mentioned, it means nothing else than the dipping of the whole body in a laver; for if any man dip himself all over, except the tip of his little finger, he is still in his uncleanness."

"A bed that is wholly defiled, if a man dips it part by part, it is pure." (Quoted in Ingham's "Manual of Baptism," p. 373).

This last statement of his may relieve the extreme solicitude sometimes expressed as to how a bed could be immersed; and both statements show how scrupulous the Jews had become in employing the most thorough form of purification even where it was not required.

This also explains the conduct of Judith in the Jewish romance, who, living in a heathen tent and eating the food of the heathen, goes at midnight with her maid into a ravine and immerses herself, and returns "clean."

The church-Father, Epiphanius, born in Palestine, of Jewish parents, in the fourth century, describes, in his great work on Heresies, a party of Jews whom he calls Hemerobaptistae " Daily baptizers," whose doctrines, he says, are the same as those of the scribes and Pharisees. Their peculiarity is that "both spring and autumn, both winter and Summer, they baptize themselves every day, maintaining that a man cannot live unless he baptizes himself in water every single day, washing himself off and purifying himself from every fault." Epiphanius says this shows lack of faith; for if they had faith in yesterday's baptism they would not think it necessary to repeat it to-day. And he declares that if they keep sinning every day, thinking that the water will cleanse them, it is a vain hope; "for neither ocean, nor all the rivers and seas, perennial streams and fountains, and the whole rain-producing apparatus of nature combined, can remove sins when, namely, it is done not according to reason nor by the command of God. For repentance cleanses, and the one baptism through the naming of the mysteries." The same "Daily Baptizers " are mentioned in the so-called "Apostolical Constitutions " in a portion probably quite as late as Epiphanius.

(4) Another passage relied on by some is I Cor. 10: 1: "That our fathers were all under the cloud, and all went through the sea, and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." This, we are told, cannot be understood as an immersion. Certainly, not a literal immersion. What happened to them was only something like baptism; and it was certainly quite as much like immersion as it was like sprinkling or pouring, and most people would think a good deal more so. They left the shore, and going down into the bed of the sea, with the sea on either side and the cloud above, they were in a position somewhat resembling baptism. And as Christians publicly began to follow Christ by being baptized unto him, so it may be said that the Israelites began following Moses by being baptized unto him in the cloud and in the sea. Some persons actually tell us there was a sprinkling or pouring, because of the poetical expression in Psalms 77: 17: "The clouds poured out water." Do they really believe the Israelites were made to cross the Red Sea during a pouring rain and a terrific storm of thunder and lightning? The Psalmist alludes in verse sixteenth to the division of the Red Sea, but then pauses to speak of the general phenomena of storms. At least, so it is explained in the commentary of Addison Alexander, the learned Presbyterian Professor.

(5) One more passage may be mentioned, which some think quite conclusive against immersion, viz.: "baptized with the Holy Ghost." John the Baptist predicted that the mightier one who was coming would baptize with the Holy Spirit. Literally, it is "in the Holy Spirit," and this primary and common signification of the preposition ought certainly to be retained unless it can be shown to be inappropriate. And just before his ascension our Lord said: "Ye shall be baptized with (in) the Holy Spirit not many days hence." On the day of Pentecost this was fulfilled. "There came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing, mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them distributed tongues as of fire, and it sat on every

one of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit." And Peter, in defence and explanation of the speaking with tongues, says that this is that which was spoken through the prophet Joel, "I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh." ... Here a baptism with (in) the Spirit is promised, and the fulfillment is represented by a tongue-shaped flame of fire resting over the head of each person, and is afterwards described as a pouring out; therefore, we are told, there may be baptism without immersion.

Now if you contend that the symbol must be the same in the fulfillment as in the promise, pray notice that the Spirit is as truly represented by the sound which filled all the house, so that they were enveloped in it, as by the tongue-shaped flame over the head. But what is the sense of maintaining that when two symbols or images represent the same thing they must therefore be the same image or symbol? What was predicted as a baptism is afterwards described as a pouring. Well, if I say a man is bathed in pleasure, and presently speak of him as drinking from the cup of pleasure, would any one argue that the action of bathing is the same as drinking from a cup? Peter quotes the prophet as using the image of pouring, while our Lord had used the image of baptism; therefore pouring and baptism are the same thing. Christ is called a lamb, and is also called a shepherd; therefore a shepherd and a lamb are the same thing.

But some say it is absurd in itself to speak of immersion in the Holy Spirit. Why? You cannot conceive of this, and you can conceive of the Spirit as poured out. But both are of necessity figures. The Spirit was not literally poured out any more than men were literally immersed in the Spirit; and why is the one figure any harder to conceive than the other? Cannot you conceive of breath, wind (that is what the word Spirit, *pneuma*, means) as filling a space, and men immersed in it? Surely that is a perfectly conceivable figure. And does it not most strikingly represent the persons as completely brought under the influence of the Spirit, as encompassed, surrounded, pervaded by it? We are at present more familiar with the image of the Spirit as poured upon men, but how can one deny that the image of men as immersed in the breath of God is both conceivable and impressive?

Some other passages are occasionally brought forward as being supposed to yield an argument against immersion. I have mentioned those which are most relied on, and which look most plausible. And what do they amount to, when even cursorily examined? Remember, that it is necessary to find some case in which the word not only might, but must, have a different meaning. It is not enough to find passages in which some other idea would seem to you more appropriate, but to find one in which the established meaning of the word is quite impossible. If we abandon this great principle, all strict and sure interpretation of language comes to an end. And can it be said that the established meaning of baptizo, viz. : immerse, and kindred expressions is impossible because of the condition of the river Jordan, or the imagined scarcity of water at Jerusalem, or the immersion of cups and couches, or the baptism in the cloud and the sea, or the baptism in the Holy Spirit? You might prefer some other conception, but is the idea of immersion impossible in any of these cases? If not, it must stand.

Men who are determined to get rid of an unacceptable teaching can always raise some doubts as to the meaning of the plainest words. The Universalist works away at the word "everlasting," until some minds grow confused, and those who wish to agree with him are misled. The Unitarian insists that instead of "and the Word was

God," it might be translated "and God was the Word." The orthodox answer is that language is necessarily imperfect, and may sometimes be plausibly explained away by a skillful advocate. If God has mercifully given a revelation in human language, we should accept and follow its plain teachings, and not try to gather doubt around them, in order to escape conclusions which we do not fancy. And just this is what we say about the word baptize.

Chapter 8. Dr. Dale's Theory.

Before closing this long discussion, it is perhaps desirable to refer briefly to a new theory as to the act of baptism, put forward some years ago by Rev. Dr. Dale, a Presbyterian minister of Pennsylvania. In three volumes, and with great fullness of detail and elaborate ingenuity, he explains and defends his view, but the substance of his argument may be stated in comparatively few words.

As to the primary meaning of the word baptizo, Dr. Dale does not differ materially from Liddell and Scott. They say it means "to put in or under"; he says it is to put within, which he expresses by a manufactured word, "intuspose," compounded from the Latin, and signifying "put within." (Dr. Conant, in his treatise on "Baptizein," has also given nearly the same definition: "In its literal use it meant to put entirely into or under a liquid, or other penetrable substance, generally water, so that the object was wholly covered by the enclosing element.") This definition of Dale, and of Liddell and Scott, is doubtless more correct than that which has often been given, that the word primarily means "to dip frequently." But Dr. Dale goes on to insist that baptizo is always broadly different in its meaning from the simple word bapto, the basis on which it is formed; that bapto alone means to dip, and baptizo never signifies to dip, but only to put within, giving no intimation that the object is to be taken out again. (Does the word "dip" in itself denote that the object is to be taken out? It is connected with deep, as the German taufen (the word for baptize) is with tief, and the Greek bath, the root of bapto, is with bath in bathus which means deep. See Curtius, Griechische Etymologie, s. 416.)

Bapto, according to him, would put an object in water and quickly take it out - but baptizo would put it in, and so far as the meaning of the term is concerned, would leave it there. Suppose it were granted that this was true; then we should have Christ commanding us to put men within or under water, as a religious ceremony, and, because he does not expressly add that we are to take them out again, we should be bound, forsooth, to let them remain there. If any of my esteemed brethren of other denominations should take this view of the matter, and request me to "intuspose" them, to put them within the water, in the name of our Redeemer, it may be assumed that my common sense and humanity will cause me to take them out again, as their own common sense and prudence will then lead them to go off and change their garments without needing an express command in either respect.

If, then, Dr. Dale were right in maintaining such a broad and invariable difference between bapto and baptizo, and right in advancing to maintain, laboriously and amusingly, a similar invariable difference between the English "dip" and "immerse," and between the Latin tingo and mergo, all this would leave the practical duty the same. Let it be granted for the sake of argument, that dip and immerse are not only sometimes different, but always broadly different in the way maintained, still a command to immerse men in water would be practically plain enough for all who are trying to learn their duty. So the theory would all amount to nothing.

But such a broad and invariable difference between bapto and baptizo does not exist, any more than between the English words or the Latin words mentioned. Without discussing the numerous passages involved in this question, I merely mention a single one. Plutarch uses baptizo where he describes the soldiers of Alexander, on a riotous march, as by the roadside dipping (literally baptizing) with cups from huge wine-jars and mixing-bowls, and drinking to one another. Liddell and Scott say it here means to draw wine from bowls in cups, and add "of course, by dipping them." This is the obvious meaning, which no one can well mistake; and Dr. Dale's attempt to explain it away is simply amusing. Here, then, we have baptizo used precisely where Dr. Dale's theory would call for bapto. And there are numerous other cases, not always so obvious, but equally real.

It is a common tendency in language, that a strengthened form of a word shall gradually take the place of the weaker. From bapto, to dip, came the verbal adjective bapto, dipped; and from this verbal adjective, by means of the termination-izo was formed bapt-izo, which we may clumsily describe as primarily meaning to dip, to cause to be dipped, or to bring into a dipped condition, and may well enough render by put in, or under, or within. Being thus a stronger word, it is frequently used where the simple bapto would be less appropriate or less forcible. But by the tendency I have mentioned, the stronger word gradually came to be preferred to the weaker, with no substantial difference of meaning. The same thing has happened, still more completely, with the words signifying to sprinkle. From raino, to sprinkle, came rantos, sprinkled; and upon this verbal adjective was formed rant-izo, which would thus mean to cause to be sprinkled, or to bring into a sprinkled condition. But in this case there is never any practical difference in meaning between the simple and the derived form. In the classics we find only the simple raino; in later Greek writers and the Septuagint, both this and the stronger rantizo; in the New Testament, only rantizo; in modern Greek, both; and nowhere is any practical difference discernible.

There are other examples of the same sort. E.g., phantazomai, airtizo. The frequentative sense of some verbs, as hriptazo, kuptazo, is probably derivative from the causative or active sense described above. Another derivation would be the intensive sense, where the termination is frequently appended, not to the stem of the verbal adjective, but to the simple verb root, as in aiteo, "ask"; airtizo, "beg"; herpo, "crawl"; herpuzo, "creep." Curtius gives some indirect support to this view (Griech. Etym., S. 553-55), but the terminations in -izo have never been thoroughly studied.

While bapto and baptizo did not (like raino and rantizo) become identical in meaning, but each has uses of its own, yet the stronger word came to be frequently employed in substantially the same sense as the weaker, seeing that the natural and common way of bringing a thing into a dipped condition is to dip it.

Thus far, then, Dr. Dale has made no important addition to our knowledge of the primary meaning of baptizo. He deserves the credit of having brought out that meaning more clearly than others, though he has not perceived its connection with the etymology. His attempt to establish a broad and invariable difference in meaning between it and the simple form bapto is a mistake, and even if he were right, it would make no practical difference as to the duty enjoined by baptizo. His elaborate efforts to show that Baptist writers, of different generations and countries, have

differed in their views as to the mere theory of the word, prove nothing as to the real question at issue.

But Dr. Dale now takes an additional step which is novel and surprising. In the first place, he confounds the literal and figurative uses of the term in question, and substantially claims that in the literal use it can have no more definite sense than it has in the figurative - a process destructive of all exact interpretation. He then attempts to show that the word is used in three different senses: first, intusposition without influence, as when a stone is intusposed in water; second, intusposition with influence, as when a man is intusposed in water, and not being taken out - is drowned; third, influence without intusposition, so that whatever controllingly influences a thing may be said to baptize it. This last can only be called a figment of Dr. Dale's fancy. By the same sort of process I could reduce to a nebulous condition the meaning of any word whatever. Anything which controllingly influences as to change its condition, may be described as baptizing that object. Thus if I should set fire to this piece of paper and change it to ashes, I should be baptizing it. If I hang a man, or stab him, or poison him, or corrupt his morals, I baptize him. This fanciful notion he attempts to support by a mass of painstaking, but utterly wild interpretation, such as can only excite one's astonishment.

And the grand result of the whole discussion is, if possible, still more wonderful. Beginning with the position that baptize means immerse, he ends by maintaining that immersion is not baptism. This surpasses the jugglers. Here is the word baptize meaning immerse, or, if you prefer it, intuspose; now a few passes of logical and philological sleight of hand, and behold ! immersion, or intusposition, is not baptism at all. If you feel inclined to say the force of absurdity could no further go, be not too fast, for Dr. Dale, apparently fascinated by his fancies, has in his most recent production practiced an utter reductio ad absurdum upon his own theory.

Our blessed Lord speaks of his dreadful sufferings as a baptism, and also speaks of them as drinking a cup; and Dr. Dale deliberately infers that drinking a cup is baptism. I cannot hold this up to the sheer ridicule it deserves, because the subject is too sacred.

(In noticing one of Dr. Dale's volumes on its appearance, the present writer predicted that in twenty years the work would be forgotten, and it seems to be coming true.)

Chapter 9. Christian Union.

I have thus endeavored to show that the plain teaching of our English Bible, supported by the highest authorities as to Greek scholarship and by the testimony and practice of the living Greeks, cannot be set aside either by the authority of "the church," the opinions of eminent individuals, or our own notions of convenience, nor yet by the attempts to establish a sacred, as quite different from the classical, sense of the term involved, nor by the strange and wild notions of a recent writer.

And now this protracted discussion shall close with a single remark, I have spoken long and earnestly of a controverted question - one of those which divide Christians. But I am a rejoicing believer in Christian Union. It is too common to speak of this as having no actual existence; to speak dolefully of our Lord's prayer, "That they all may be one," as not at all fulfilled. Certainly it is not completely fulfilled in the

present state of things; but it is fulfilled as really, and in as high a degree, as the prayer which precedes it, "Sanctify them through thy truth." Christ's people are by no means completely sanctified; yet they are sanctified; and though not completely one, yet they are one. All who are truly his are one in him. Not only those belonging to what we call evangelical denominations, but many Romanists, for there are doubtless lovers of Christ among them, as there have been in past ages; and many of the Greek Church; and perhaps some Universalists and Unitarians; and Quakers, who reject all water baptism; and some who, from mistaken views, neglect to make any profession of faith, or as the phrase is, do not join any church; whoever and wherever they may be, though many of their opinions be erroneous and their practices wrong, yet if they are truly Christ's people they are truly one in him.

Let nothing prevent us from clinging to this great fact and rejoicing in the thought of Christian unity. But assuredly it is desirable - eminently, unspeakably desirable - to have more of union, both in spirit and in organization. We who believe in the Bible ought to be standing together against the bold and arrogant infidelity which is coming in like a flood; we ought to be laboring together. Now such completer union, of spirit and of organization, is possible only on Scriptural grounds; only by taking the Bible as our sole authority, and the Bible as being a book for the people, in its plain meaning. All Christians, except the Quakers, make baptism a condition of church membership. And for the sake of a more complete and efficient Christian union, we urge upon our fellow Christians as the plain teaching of God's word, that there is no baptism where there is not an immersion.

I close with the Apostle's benediction, "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity" (Eph. 6:24).