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**OUTWARD RITES AND INWARD GRACES NOT
IDENTICAL AND INSEPARABLE.**

ROMANS 2:28,29. *For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.*

MAN is a complex being, possessing both corporeal and spiritual nature. Hence God, in his divine communications, treats him according to this compound character, employing his senses to assist his faith. Natural objects, so familiar to sense, are adopted as appropriate representatives by which moral instruction is conveyed. As there is a close intimacy and familiar correspondence between the interior and the exterior man, therefore, the great head of the Church hath appointed significant signs and emblems, in the rites and ceremonies of his moral kingdom, for the express intention to make the *visible*, a true symbol of the *invisible*. 'So that SENSE and FAITH, from their close alliance in man's present state, forming the *amalgam* of mind and matter, are unitedly employed in the things of religion, to train up a fit subject for the interior world of blessedness and glory.'

But man, as a religious creature, is so prone to a superstitious reliance on outward ceremonies, that the Jews seem early and too generally to have mistaken the real nature of circumcision, though set forth by Moses and the prophets with a degree of plainness that could not be misunderstood. Hence, they built upon it as capable *in itself* of making them really God's people. Even some of the Hebrew converts to christianity, who should have known better, insisted upon the impossibility of being saved without circumcision, saying: "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." To counteract this false sentiment, was evidently the design of the apostle. In prosecution of that design, he shows that ancient circumcision, though it had an important meaning, ought now to be laid aside, because the end of it was answered: that in christians that meaning was accomplished, because they were virtually 'circum-

cised, with the circumcision not made with hands.' The phrase 'not made with hands,' of frequent occurrence in the New Testament, always denotes the spiritual reality of something adumbrated. And by the phrase 'the circumcision of Christ,' is to be understood the christian rite of baptism which was instituted by him in the room of circumcision, and which could not, in the nature of the case, communicate, but only represent and require the renunciation and burial of the old man of sin, and a new life of faith in Christ.

It is made quite plain from the text, that circumcision was a rite by which a change 'of the heart,' a change 'in the spirit,' was the thing signified. But to infer that an external rite, however significant, introduces the subject of it into a spiritual and saving relation to God, was an error into which not only the ancient Jews had very generally fallen, but from which many professing christians, at the present time, are not free. It is here clearly taught, that persons being circumcised in the flesh, was no proof of their being circumcised in the spirit. And we may conclusively argue with the apostle, from the analogy of Divine dispensations, that 'He is not a (Christian) which is one outwardly; neither is that (baptism) which is outward in the flesh: but he is a (Christian,) which is one inwardly; and (baptism) is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.' That this is the true spirit and meaning of the text, we have no doubt. No other correct interpretation can be given it. It meets the approbation of sound expositors generally. We shall attempt to establish the following proposition:—

That no external rite or ceremony can of *itself* avail any thing to salvation.

In pursuance of this design, we shall adopt the following plan:—*First*, External and internal circumcision under the Legal Dispensation, answer to baptism and regeneration under the Gospel Dispensation. *Secondly*, That as a Jew may be outwardly circumcised in the flesh, *without* being inwardly circumcised in the heart; so a Christian may be outwardly baptized with water, *without* being inwardly regenerated by the Holy Spirit.

I. External and internal circumcision under the Legal Dispensation, answer to baptism and regeneration under the Gospel Dispensation.

That circumcision, which was outward in the flesh, did shadow out regeneration, or what the prophets called *circumcision of heart*, is fully evinced by the scriptures of both Testaments. This correspondence is clearly established by the following scriptural phraseology: 'Circumcise the foreskin of your *heart*;'—'If then their uncircumcised *hearts* be humbled;'—'And the Lord thy God will circumcise thy *heart*, and the *heart* of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God

with all thy heart;—‘And all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in heart;—‘Ye have brought into my sanctuary strangers, uncircumcised in heart;—‘Ye stiff-necked, and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost.’ The following passage makes the matter clearer still. ‘For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a *new creature*,’ or *new creation*. Here, circumcision and regeneration, or the new creation, are placed antithetically, or in contrast, the one over against the other; and, *comparatively*, the one is nothing, when weighed in the opposite scale with the other. Now, if outward circumcision did not symbolize inward regeneration, can you see any fitness or adaptation in the usage of these terms in the corresponsive relation they sustain to each other? If circumcision had no emblematic relation to the *new creation*, why are they here employed by the Holy Spirit in such studied, designed, contrast? The intention surely cannot be mistaken. Take another scriptural evidence of a similar character. ‘For we are **THE CIRCUMCISION**, which worship God *in the Spirit*, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.’ Here, the apostle calls real christians, whether Jews or Gentiles, *the circumcision*, meaning in a spiritual sense the *circumcised*; the noun being used for a participle, and the *abstract*, as elsewhere, put for the *concrete*. But they were not circumcised *outwardly*, i. e. ‘outward in the flesh.’ In this sense they were uncircumcised; but in another sense, they were evidently represented as circumcised. There is no other principle on which these two can be reconciled, without adopting christian baptism as the christian circumcision spiritually,—that they are substantially the same ecclesiastical seal, differing in *form* only,—and that external baptism is the *sigillistical* successor and substitute of outward circumcision long since abolished.

Once more, and the evidence is complete. The passage about to be cited is very important. Col. 2:10—12. “And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein ye are also risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.” The sum of this passage is this: *First*, That persons interested in Christ, have a complete acceptance in him. *Secondly*, That those who are so interested, have a complete substitute, both internal and external, for the circumcision which was abolished. They had *internally* that which the external circumcision represented, and which is called ‘circumcision made without hands:’ that is, the circumcision of the heart by the Holy Spirit. And they had *externally* the ordinance of baptism, called ‘the circumcision of Christ,’ or the christian circumcision; an ordinance appointed by

Christ in the place of circumcision. We find, *Thirdly*, That baptism, the external substitute for circumcision, required of them conformity to Christ in whom they were complete: and, *Fourthly*, That this new life, which was both signified and required by baptism, was actually entered upon by faith—through faith of the operation of God.'

Let any unbiased lover of biblical literature, critically examine the above passage collaterally with our text, and with his eye upon the analogy of the two dispensations, and we are greatly deceived if he does not discover that, 'as the Christian Church is but the completion and perfection of the Levitical; the same ordinances which had been established in the one, were transferred in spirit, if not absolutely in letter, to the other. Hence, the Lord's Supper having succeeded to the place of the Passover, analogy requires us to conclude that baptism has succeeded to the place of circumcision.' Both are alike *symbols* of regeneration: but neither of them is regeneration *itself*. Both are, evidently, two outward sacramental signs of exactly the same import, differing only in their *external forms*. The forms only have changed, the faith remains the same. In this point of view they are manifestly, effectively, and identically the very same under different forms. And being signs of the same spiritual grace, they must to all effective purposes, be mutually the same with each other: so that 'water seals the blessing now, that once was sealed with blood.' The appointment of different signs to represent the same thing, presents no difficulty. A sign is altogether an arbitrary affair with God. And had it pleased him to adumbrate, or symbolize regeneration by a hundred different signs, they would all represent the same thing, and therefore constitute but a single sacrament. A few additional remarks in this place, will finish this branch of our subject.

If baptism under the Gospel, has taken the place of circumcision under the Law, as we think is clearly established, then the manifest *identity* of circumcision and baptism, seems abundantly to determine the question of infant baptism. But God has decided the question in the matter of circumcision; and no argument against infant baptism, derived from the want of knowledge, or of active faith on the part of children, can be raised that will not be equally cogent against infant circumcision. If it be denied that baptism has come in the place of circumcision, then it may be inquired, what did? If circumcision was once the initiatory rite, and an *essential* to the visible recognition of membership in the 'Congregation of the Lord,' by what rite *now* is ecclesiastical membership recognized? Let circumcision under the Law look forward for its *successor* under the Gospel, and let baptism under the Gospel look back for its *predecessor* under the Law, and if they do look each other right in the face, and answer to

each other's call, then in vain do we look for correspondence, analogy, and harmony, in Divine dispensations.

If it be objected, that baptism is not a substitute for circumcision because it embraces both sexes, whereas circumcision was applied only to one; it may be replied, that this fact is of no consequence as to the argument, because females in that, as in many other cases, were evidently considered as represented by the other sex, and virtually included with them. This is manifest from the special direction God gave to Moses respecting the Passover, that 'no *uncircumcised* person shall eat thereof:' and yet each household, including both sexes, 'according to the number of the souls,' was required to participate in this service. But there is another consideration touching this matter, which may to some at first appear novel, but which, in our estimation, is of no small importance. Why was circumcision divinely restricted to *one sex* at all? And then why, by the same divine authority, appended, exclusively, or specially, to one *particular* part of the human body? As all God's institutions have a wise and appropriate significancy, so has this. When rightly understood, it will appear that no other member of the human body, whether of male or female, could express, appropriately and intelligently, the thing signified. The rudiments of our corporeal nature are, strictly speaking, *paternal*. For so the apostle says respecting Levi: 'He was yet *in the loins of his father* when Melchisedeck met him.' Human posterity is in the loins of *the paternal* ancestry. So does the word of God ascribe the active propagation of our species to the paternal agency,—'Abraham *begat* Isaac, and Isaac *begat* Jacob.' In close and inseparable alliance, somehow or other, with this human propagation, we find an *innate, inherent, corrupt, and totally degenerate nature*.—'Behold, I was *shapen in iniquity*; and *in sin* did my mother conceive me.'—'The imagination of *man's heart is evil from his youth*.'—'Foolishness is *bound in the heart of a child*.' Here is found, so early, the *uncircumcised* heart, the radical change of which can only be effected by 'the circumcision made without hands,' which is very strikingly and *significantly* indicated by 'the circumcision which is outward in the flesh.' *Feminine* circumcision, even could it have been literally and conveniently performed, would have answered no instructive purpose—it would not have responded to the divine intention. But Christ, the 'minister of circumcision,' having come, and having abolished all bloody and painful rites, he has so simplified the rites and enlarged the privileges of his visible kingdom, that now his 'yoke is easy, and his burden is light.' By milder institutions, but no less significant, he now proves his people's love. Circumcision and Passover have departed, and given place to Christian Baptism and the Dominical Supper, which recognize no distinctions among their pious applicants, for having put on Christ, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free,

there is neither **MALE** NOR **FEMALE**: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." We proceed to show,

II. That a Jew may be outwardly circumcised in the flesh, *without* being inwardly circumcised in the heart; so a Christian may be outwardly baptized with water, *without* being inwardly regenerated by the Holy Spirit.

This proposition admits of subdivision. We shall take up the first branch.

1. A Jew may be outwardly circumcised in the flesh, without being inwardly circumcised in the heart.

This will occupy but a moment. The terms *Jew* and *circumcision* have a more important signification, than those who 'sat in Moses' seat' were accustomed to teach. The real meaning of Jew, is, a confessor of Jehovah, a member of the true church of God. Such, in reality, they alone were, who worshipped God in spirit and in truth: 'for God is a spirit,'—'and seeketh such to worship him.' No matter how great attachment or zeal, the mere outward and worldly professors of the true religion, might discover for the name of a Jew, we read, 'They say they are Jews, and are not, but are of the synagogue of Satan.' Agreeably to this representation, circumcision, as we have shown, is expressly applied in scripture to signify a change wrought in the heart by the Spirit of God.—'And the Lord thy God will circumcise *thine heart*, to love the Lord thy God with all *thine heart*.' A real character and inward change of heart, were in fact signified by the terms Jew and circumcision.—The proof of the genuineness of which, the apostle tells us in our text, was not ascertainable by human approbation in accrediting the outward sign of profession, but by the approbation of God, who saw and prepared the heart. Not every member of the Jewish commonwealth, therefore, who had submitted to the outward rite of circumcision, answered to these appellations in their true spiritual meaning, or was entitled to those privileges which might be pointed out from scripture as belonging to the persons who bore them. Hence, one of these circumcised Jews, and a Pharisee, who came to Jesus by night, with a sincere desire to be taught the truth, was astonished above measure at the solemn assertion that 'a man must be born again.' Well had it been for many christian teachers, and professors too, had this been the last instance of palpable ignorance, or want of an experimental knowledge of the new birth or spiritual regeneration, without the real experience of which—whether its sacramental sign be 'the circumcision of the flesh,' or 'the baptism of water'—no one can be either a spiritual worshipper, or a true member of his Church.

The inspired author of our text, in his usually clear and powerful

manner, has shown that outward circumcision is nothing without a corresponding inward circumcision of the heart. And he has shown with equal force, that the one may subsist without the other. In pursuance of this design, he introduces two Jews, whom he places in studied contrast—the one who has received the outward sign of circumcision *only*, over against the other, who has not only received the same external sign, but has likewise experienced the inward circumcision of the heart. The apostle's argument most palpably requires this exhibition of the two examples, otherwise there is no contrast between them. But if the first Jew has received nothing more than the 'circumcision which is outward in the flesh,' and therefore liable to be classed with the 'stiff-necked and uncircumcised *in heart and ears*, who do always resist the Holy Ghost,' then it is at once established, that this outward sign under the Law was not *inseparably* connected with, or accompanied by, the inward thing signified, i. e. the spiritual circumcision, which it so significantly symbolized. But as we have seen that circumcision under the one dispensation, answers to baptism under the other dispensation, then, according to the analogy of Divine dispensations, the conclusion is legitimately clear and forcible, that, if circumcision under the former did not necessarily confer regeneration, neither does baptism under the latter. Which brings us to the second branch of our general proposition.

2. A Christian may be outwardly baptized with water, without being inwardly baptized by the Holy Spirit.

Many well meaning, but uninformed persons, may be ready to conclude that this is unnecessary labor—an undertaking wholly gratuitous. They cannot even anticipate its denial, much less its refutation, by any sober, intelligent, common-sense christian. They conclude, very naturally, that the proposition is in accordance with scripture, with analogy, with established facts, with reason, and common sense. Yet, strange as it may appear, there are not a few at the present time, who seem to believe that there is some mysterious efficacy in the mechanical observance of certain religious ordinances. Especially do some, both teachers and professors of christianity, attach as much importance and efficacy to outward baptism now, as ever the ancient Jews did to the 'circumcision that was outward in the flesh.' *These* taught, 'except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.' *Those* re-echo the same sentiment, only in a little different dress, and declare, 'except ye be baptized ye cannot be saved.' That this is no idle charge, will appear from the following instances. The deluded, superstitious Papist teaches, that "baptism brings to the soul sanctifying grace—washes away the guilt of original and actual sin—gives a new and spiritual

birth—makes us christians—entitles us to actual grace—preserves the sanctity gotten at baptism, and gives a right to eternal happiness.”* The high-toned Episcopalian declares, that baptism ‘washes away the guilt of former sin and imparts the Holy Ghost,’—‘conveys the supernatural assistance of the Spirit of God,’—‘confers justification,’—‘not only washes away the guilt of all former sins, both original and actual, and procures acceptance with God, but also communicates a portion of divine grace,’—‘was invariably the instrument, or external form, by which justification was conveyed,’—‘to all persons by the holy mystery of baptism duly initiated to christianity . . . : the grace of God’s Holy Spirit certainly is bestowed,’—‘those who are baptized are immediately translated from the curse of Adam to the grace of Christ; the original guilt which they brought into the world is mystically washed away; and they receive forgiveness of actual sins which they may themselves have committed; they become reconciled to God, partakers of the Holy Ghost, and heirs of eternal happiness.’† And last, though not least, ‘in his own conceit,’ is the self-styled, arrogant Reformer,‡ like Daniel’s ‘little horn,’ having ‘a mouth speaking great things.’ He has, by his wonderful sagacity, and transcendent wisdom, recently discovered that, ‘under the government of the Lord Jesus, there is an institution for the forgiveness of sins, like there was no institution since the world began.’ He avers, that ‘The Apostle Peter . . . taught them, (the Jews) that they were not forgiven their sins by faith, but by an act of faith, by a believing immersion into the Lord Jesus;’—that ‘Christian Immersion . . . is inseparably connected with the remission of sins;’—that ‘Remission of sins cannot, in this life, be received or enjoyed previous to immersion;’—that ‘It is not our faith in God’s promise of remission, but our going down into the water that obtains the remission of sins;’—that ‘Immersion’ . . . is ‘essential to immediate pardon and acceptance;’—that ‘Regeneration and Immersion are two names for the same thing;’—that ‘Conversion, Regeneration, and Immersion, are terms all descriptive of the same thing;’ that ‘Regeneration is the act of being born; hence its connection ALWAYS with water;’—that ‘Immersion saves us, by cleansing . . . the conscience from its guilt;’—that ‘In Immersion a person is purged from all his former sins;’—and that ‘When the baptized believer rises from out of the water, is born of water, enters the world a second time, he enters it as INNOCENT, as CLEAN, as UNSPOTTED as an ANGEL.’

These kindred theories of this triumvirate of Bishops, indicate plainly, the same origin. All bearing the same family likeness, with a trifling difference only in provincial dialect, yet it may

* Bishop Hays.

† Bishop Tomline.

‡ A. Campbell, Bishop of Bethany.

well be said of each, surely thou art of the mother of harlots, 'for thy speech bewrayeth thee.' And so far from the modern Reformer's being entitled to a *Patent Right* for his New Discovery, that his Babylonian brother, and his Episcopal kinsman, were, by patrimonial inheritance, in full possession and enjoyment of it long before either he, or his father before him, had existence. But whether ancient or modern—whether from Rome or from Bethany, such vague theories—such vain absurdities—such 'moon-struck reveries,' as the potency of baptismal water to cleanse the conscience, and the *inseparable* connection between outward baptism and inward regeneration, and the like, need only the refulgent light of God's word, with a little sober reason and common sense, to dissipate them in a moment. Let us examine this theory a little.

1. *It is contrary to Scripture.* The spiritual purification of the soul is positively ascribed to the blood of Christ, and the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit; the one as the *procuring* cause, the other as the *efficient* agent. It cannot, therefore, for one moment, be attributed to the *physical act* of immersion, in any mode whatever. The language of scripture is very plain and decided. 'The blood of Jesus Christ *cleanseth* us from all sin.'—'Unto him that loved us, and *washed us from our sins in his own blood.*' The white-attired Saints that John saw, 'have *washed* their robes, and made them white *in the blood of the Lamb.*' The divine *agent* in the work of internal purification is plainly identified. 'That which is born of *the Spirit*, is spirit.'—'No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but *by the Holy Ghost.*' 'Not by might, nor by power, but *by my Spirit*, saith the Lord of hosts.' The saints are 'Elect . . . through sanctification of *the Spirit,*'—'chosen to salvation, through sanctification of *the Spirit.*'—'It is *the Spirit* that quickeneth,'—'hath quickened us together with Christ.' This is but a small specimen out of a great number which might be multiplied to an indefinite length. But brief and pointed selection is our object, and not enumeration.

This subject will present itself to great advantage in another form. It is well known to be a scriptural usage of great frequency, to ascribe salvation, *synecdochically*—i. e. taking a part for the whole, or conversely, the whole for a part—sometimes to faith—to repentance—to conversion—to regeneration, and to love; but to the *rite* of baptism, or the *mode* of that rite, or any other *costume* of religion—never. A few instances may suffice. In the following passages, salvation is ascribed to faith, or believing:—'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt *be saved;*'—'He that *believeth* on the Son hath *everlasting life;*'—'By him all that *believe* are *justified;*'—'Through his name who-

soever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins;’—‘Being justified by faith, we have peace with God.’ Let us next see the inseparable connection between repentance and remission of sins. ‘Repent . . . that your sins may be blotted out;’—‘It behoved Christ to suffer . . . that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations;’—‘Him hath God exalted . . . to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins;’ ‘Repent therefore . . . if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee;’—‘If thy brother . . . repent, forgive him.’ This sentiment being fully established, the opposing theory, of course, falls to the ground.

But do not some passages seem to justify the opposing sentiment? Do they not appear to establish the inseparability between baptism and remission of sins, or salvation? Not if ‘the scripture cannot be broken:’—not unless it palpably contradicts the point just now so plainly and so forcibly established. If the book be divine, it does not contradict itself. If it did, it were no record from God. A very brief attention to some of the passages relied on by modern reformation to support its baseless fabric, is all we can afford within our short limits.

John 3:5. ‘Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.’ It is maintained from these words, ‘that a birth from water is immediately associated with a birth from the Spirit; that a birth from both one and the other is represented, as being a necessary qualification for the kingdom of Heaven; and that an inseparable union of the two may thence plainly be inferred.’ This does not follow from the text. That the emphasis is to be laid on *the Spirit* and not on *water*, is evident from what Christ immediately and guardedly subjoins in the next verse: ‘*That which is born of the Spirit, is spirit.*’ There is nothing here said about water; the mention of it is entirely dropped, and the agency of the Spirit alone insisted upon. To ‘be born of water,’ is to be baptized, as emblematic of purification. And to ‘enter’ legally and visibly as a member of the terrestrial, professional, or temporal kingdom of grace, a man must be ritually, professionally, or externally purified by baptismal water. But to enter into the celestial, ultimate or eternal kingdom of glory, he must be internally, or actually sanctified, regenerated, by the Spirit of God. By the phrase, ‘born of water,’ we understand that, in a figurative sense, we are brought into a new state of things—into a new state of relative existence, to Christ and his Church, new privileges and obligations, new associations and services. To infer from this text that the external rite of baptism introduces the subject of it into a spiritual and saving relation, is to adopt the old error of the Jews respecting circumcision.

Mark 16:16. 'He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned.' Here are two propositions: in the first, FAITH and BAPTISM are *both* specified: in the second, UNBELIEF *alone* is specified; and respecting the *omission* of baptism, not a word is said. The form of the two propositions are studiously varied. Christ does not say, *He that believeth not and is NOT BAPTIZED, shall be damned.* But why the omission, if baptism have such an important place in the christian scale—if it have such an inseparable conjunction with regeneration that the one cannot subsist distinct from the other? Why this marked difference in the form of the two propositions? As we may be sure that Christ neither *says* nor *omits* any thing without ample reason, who so adventurous as to affirm that the *omission* of baptism in the second proposition was merely *accidental*? We infer from our Lord's studiously varied phraseology, that he intended to indicate a radical difference between *faith* and *baptism*, in regard to their importance; that the one is *essential* to salvation, but that the other is *not essential* to it. If the two were indissolubly united, then the one would be just as essential to salvation as the other; and so no one could enter into Heaven without baptism: in other words, he that is *not baptized*, quite as much as he that *believeth not*, must be damned. 'But our Lord makes' no such assertion: so far from it, even while in the very act of enjoining the baptismal rite, even while associating its due reception with faith itself, he industriously refrains from annexing the penalty of damnation to the omission of baptism; thus tacitly insinuating, that regeneration, which he himself peremptorily declares to be *essential* to salvation, may exist without the external symbolic ordinance.'

Another text in general requisition for the same purpose, is Acts 2:38. 'Then Peter said unto them, repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins,' &c. The use which the *perverters* of this passage make, is to convey the idea to the ignorant multitude, that they must be baptized as an *essential* to the *obtaining* remission of sins. The preposition *for*, (εἰς) connected with '*remission*' they interpret to mean, *Conducive to—In hope of—In expectation of* the remission of sins. Whereas, the proper meaning is, they were to be baptized *for* i. e. *Because of—In consequence of—In consideration of*, the remission of sins received in consequence of repentance. By a simple collocation, or easy transposition of the words, they will read thus: 'Repent — for the remission of sins, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ.' This shows that remission of sins is in *consequence* of repentance, and baptism is urged *as a suitable mode of testifying* that repentance; because an instituted rite of entering into a new visible

relation to Christ, the true Messiah. This expresses the very same sentiment already established by other passages, shewing the inseparable connection between repentance and remission; and also harmonizes the apostle Peter with himself on another occasion, shortly after, where he preaches the same encouraging truth without the mention of baptism at all: '*Repent . . . that your sins may be blotted out.*' Acts 3:19.

It is further contended that Acts 22:16. is clear proof of the indissoluble connection of baptism and remission of sins—'*Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins.*' But has it not been positively proved that our sins are cleansed, or washed away, in the blood of Christ? How then can this same effect be attributed to the baptism of water? The words, however, teach no such sentiment. By one of the most common figures in rhetoric, the *sign* and the *thing signified* are conversely and indifferently used in our ordinary forms of speech. Here is one at hand, just to fit the case before us: David when he prays, '*Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean,*' figuratively ascribes to the *sign* what evidently belonged to the thing signified. So this is doubtless the meaning of Ananias' address to Saul:—'*Arise,*' or, literally, *stand up*, or, *standing again*, (*ανασταξ*) '*and be baptized,*' in testimony of your faith in Christ, and as a sign, or token, of being cleansed from the guilt and defilement of your sins, by the pardoning grace of God, and the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit.

Again: Titus 3:5. '*According to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.*' Great reliance is placed on this text to show that baptism and regeneration are terms of equal force, and therefore denote the same thing. This, however, is far from being the truth. The phrase *λουτρον*, *washing*, has reference either to the *fluid* with which the rite of baptism is administered; or the *action* by which it is performed; or the *vessel* containing the fluid. Let us suppose the latter, as being most agreeable to the general usage of the Greek language. The term *laver*, according to the ablest philologists, is the proper translation. Of the *laver* and its use, we have an account in Ex. 30:18—21. It was '*for Aaron and his sons*'—not to *immerse* or *bathe* their bodies *in*, but to—'*wash their hands and feet THEREAT.*' Let, then, '*the washing of regeneration,*' which is evidently figurative, have reference to the rite of baptism; what more can it prove, *than* that baptism is emblematic of purification by the Holy Spirit. '*It is the external profession of those intentions of the renewing of the Holy Spirit, mentioned in connection with it, is the prime mover and promoter; the outward and visible sign, of which the actuating principle is the inward and spiritual grace.*' But there is another

view of this passage, which is very plausible, if not the real one. 'It is well known that the conjunction (*καί*) is often used exegetically for *even*, or *namely*; and the nature of the subject requires it to be taken in this connection: since we cannot admit, without affronting the general tenor of the scripture, that God, according to his mercy, saves us by baptism—or that an external rite is an essential part of our salvation—or that the spiritual renovation is an immediate effect of it.' With this exegetical view of the text it will read thus: 'According to his mercy he saved us by *the washing of regeneration*, **EVEN** (*καί*) *the renewing of the Holy Ghost*.' The renewing of the Holy Ghost belongs to the scriptural birth, both in its *origin* and *progress*. This spiritual birth is allusively expressed by the periphrasis, '*the washing of regeneration*.' But whether the term (*καί*) be used in a *connective* or an *explanatory* way, it does not follow that baptism, a mere external rite, and a physical act too, is instrumental to our salvation.

Once more, and we have done with this investigation. 1 Pet. 3:21. 'The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth now save us,' &c. Does this attribute to the mere *water* a cleansing potency? That were a vain superstition, against which, Peter carefully and expressly warns us. As if aware that some might pervert his meaning, and form the erroneous conclusion of *water* baptism effecting our salvation, he particularly cautions us against such an inference. He tells us expressly, that it is not the *outward* baptism,—'not the putting away the filth of the flesh,'—that doth *save us*, but something internal and spiritual, which he says is 'the answer of a good conscience towards God;' the same that Paul describes, 'having our *hearts sprinkled* from an evil conscience.' We here see plainly in what light the outward form of baptism was considered. It was *a washing of the flesh*—an outward sign of an inward spiritual grace; the saving effect of which is attributed not to the washing—not to the external rite—not to the outward *profession*, but having 'a good conscience towards God,' the resurrection of Christ being the *basis* both of christian hope, and a sincere baptismal confession.

One word here respecting *Immersion*, which makes such a figure on the armor of one of the Babylonian fraternity. It is a term that no one has ever yet seen in the Bible. It is from the Latin word *immersio*, with the letter *n* added, to make it *English*. It has no word in the New Testament of which it is the *exclusive* translation. It is not the proper *mode* of baptism, because it does not correctly represent the intention, or convey the proper instruction intended by that ordinance, which is spiritual *purification* by the *effusion—outpouring—or shedding forth*, of

the Spirit's influences. All on whom the *Spirit was poured out*, are most explicitly affirmed to have been *BAPTIZED with the Spirit*. There is no doubt of this. So the promise in Acts 1:5. βαπτισθησθε, 'ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost,' was accomplished—not by *immersion*, but by *effusion*,—'he hath shed forth, ἐξέχεε, this which ye now see and hear.' So likewise, 'On the Gentiles was *poured out*, ἐκχεύεται, the gift of the Holy Ghost,' which is the same as to 'be baptized with the Holy Ghost,' and 'the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he (ἐξέχεεν) shed on us abundantly.' Clearly, then, the *βαπτισμα*, *baptism*, is accomplished by *effusion*, and *not* by immersion. Set your foot at this point, and you may bid defiance to all opposition. As baptism is a figure of regeneration, and like all scriptural emblems of the work of the Holy Spirit, which is always spoken of as administered from above, never from beneath, so ought the ordinance to be administered to its recipient in an *erect posture*. Thus did Saul of Tarsus,—'He arose, (ἀναστὰς) and was baptized.' The word in its proper meaning is, 'To stand again, to rise from a sitting, or recumbent posture.' It is so translated in the following passages: Mark 14:60. Acts 1:15, 5:34, 11:28, and 13:19. The disciples too, on Pentecost, were baptized with the Spirit's baptism, in an *erect posture*—in 'the house where they were sitting.' In short, we are assured from competent authority, that 'there is no absolute certainty from usage, that the word βαπτίζω, when applied to designate the *rite of baptism*, means of course to *immerse* or *plunge*.* The term βαπτω is never employed when this rite is designated. But βαπτίζω and its derivatives are exclusively employed, where the *rite of baptism is to be designated* in any form whatever, and in this case, βαπτω seems to be purposely, as well as habitually excluded.* Paul, in treating of Levitical ablutions mentions the 'divers washings,' διαφορῶν βαπτισμῶν, properly, *different sorts of baptisms*; and tells us plainly, that *sprinkling* was the mode of one of these baptisms: 'Moses ... took the blood of calves and of goats, with water ... and *sprinkled* ... all the people,' Heb. 9:10,19. It is further declared by the able authority just referred to, that 'we find no example among all the Levitical washings, or ablutions, where *immersion* is required.* Baptism administered by *pouring*, *sprinkling*, or *effusion*, is therefore, not only the correct mode, but is likewise more convenient, more decent, more significant, and more expressive, than immersion.

We scarcely have room to notice a few more objectionable features of the Babylonian theory.

2. *It is contrary to the practice of the primitive Church.* It is a plain fact, that appears on the face of the christian history, and

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pervades the whole spirit and design of the christian dispensation, that adult converts were required to believe that Jesus is the Christ before they were baptized; and the apostles consequently baptized them as regenerated persons; for as believers they were born of God; as it is written, 'He that *believeth* that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God,' and therefore, is regenerated, according to the plain testimony of scripture.

3. *This scheme is contradicted by indubitable facts both ancient and modern.* Witness the cases, on the one hand, of Judas and Simon Magus, of Ananias and Sapphira, of Hymenius and Philetus, of Phygellus and Hermogenes, and thousands of others, from that time to the present, both dipt and sprinkled, who never experienced the inward grace signified by their baptism. On the other hand, witness the cases of 'the man sick of the palsy,' the woman 'that was a sinner,' the centurion Cornelius, the devout Lydia, the Ethiopian Eunuch, Zaccheus, and Saul of Tarsus—all these were regenerated, and their sins remitted, *before* baptism. Consequently baptism and regeneration are not inseparable. The penitent malefactor on the cross went to Heaven without baptism, having no opportunity before his death to obtain it. And such, doubtless, has been the condition of thousands since, who were regenerated and taken there under similar circumstances. Indeed, let the theory be carried out to its legitimate length, both negatively and positively, and it sends millions of hypocrites to Heaven on the ground of their baptism, while it equally brings down inevitable damnation upon hundreds of millions, because they died unbaptized. A scheme fraught with such mischief ought not to find patrons among sensible men.

4. *It is repugnant to analogy and common sense.* The Levitical Church and the Gospel Church are the same in substance, differing only in forms, or emblematic rites and ceremonies. Had the former her two classes of emblematic rites, the one denoting *purification* and the other the emblem of *atonement*? So has the latter, in more simple, but not less significant form. She has her Christian Baptism and Dominical Supper, emblematic of the same things, i. e. purification and atonement. But as the former could not *of themselves*, 'make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience,' so neither can the latter. The analogy is the same in both cases. A scheme, therefore, so at war with rational analogy, with observed facts, with primitive christian usage, with scripture testimony, and with common sense, making a *physical act*, as water baptism is, to be a certain medium of a *spiritual effect*, is about as congruous as to imagine that a substance is the immediate effect of a shadow,

and not only liable to the charge of folly, but also the derision of infidels, and ought, therefore, to be as strenuously exploded as a mere unauthorized human speculation, which rests not on a more solid basis than the unscriptural and unintelligible dogmas of transubstantiation and consubstantiation.

The author "appended no practical remarks or inferences—supposing it already too long" for our pages.—Ed.