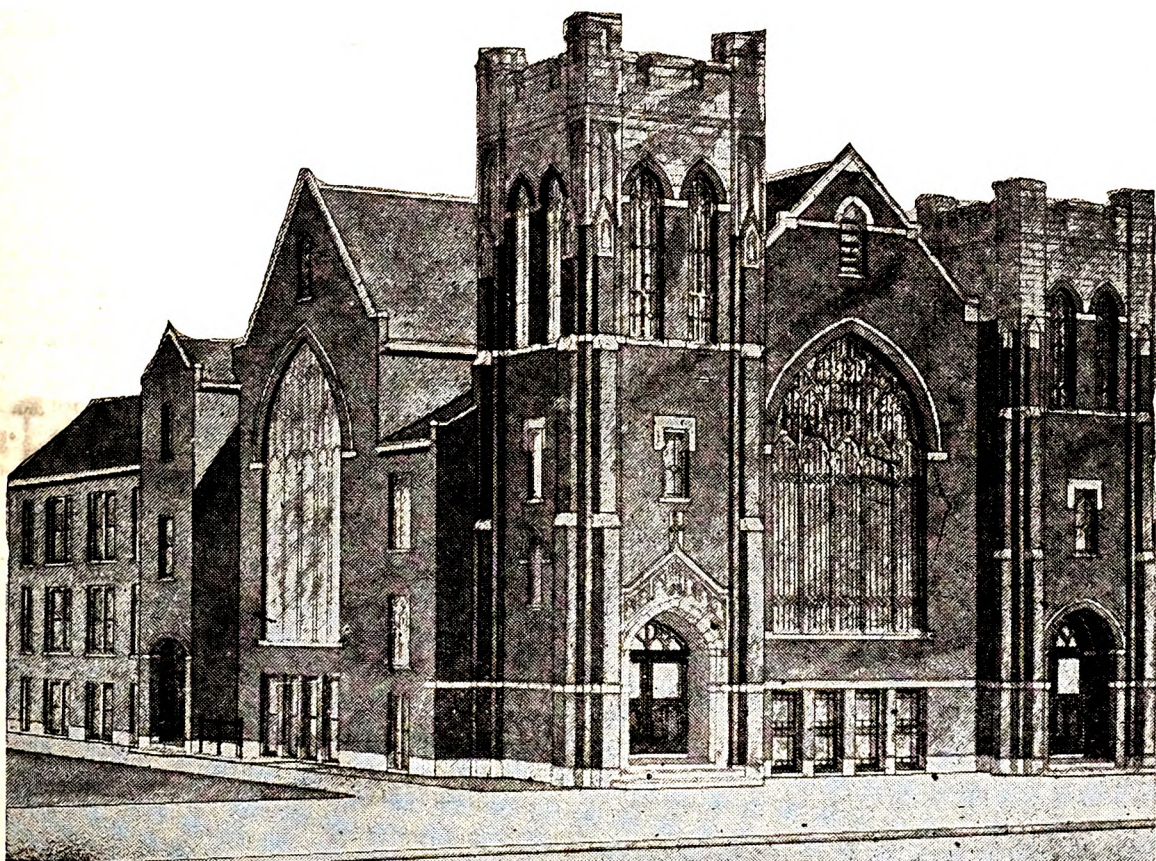


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THE BAPTISM OF REPENTANCE FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS.

The great question in all the dispensations has been how to get rid of the guilt of sin. How is forgiveness to be secured? On what condition may God's pardon be obtained? Under all the varying theories and teachings and developments of doctrine it has been plain that, in some way, the guilt of sin must be gotten rid of, and its power over the life must be broken, if one is to be clear of its evil effects.

In an age of marked and distressing formalism John the Baptist came to the Jewish people calling them to repentance. They were told that a changed attitude and a changed heart were absolutely demanded. John the Baptist, looking forward to Christ's perfect work and preaching a preparatory offer and demand, emphasized repentance as Christ and his apostles afterwards emphasized faith. John's repentance embraced and included faith, as Paul's faith embraced and included repentance. Upon this condition God would pardon freely.

John the Baptist had the message which demanded the forsaking of sin in faith that God would forgive sin. Those who confessed their sins and repented sincerely had the promise of remission or forgiveness of sin. They were then to be baptized. The baptism was not for forgiveness or remission of sins. Repentance was the one condition of forgiveness, just as faith in Jesus Christ is the one condition now. John's baptism was not the condition of forgiveness, but it was the sign and seal of their repentance.

It is one of the stupendous errors to imagine that the baptism of John or of Christ was for salvation. People were not told to be baptized in order to be forgiven or saved, but to be baptized because they had accepted forgiveness and salvation. It is a befogged and bewildered mind which thinks that there was a "baptism of repentance" which, in some way, was to formally and mechanically secure the "remission of sins." This is juvenile reading. This is infantile misconstruction of language. The meaning is very different. There was "repentance for the remission of sins," and there was a baptism which was to be the privilege and duty of those who had so repented and had been forgiven.

There have been, and there still are, some who have thought of baptism in our Christian dispensation as a means for salvation. Baptism is a duty and a privilege, but it does not save. Faith in Christ, and faith alone, is the condition of salvation. When one believes and is saved he has the privilege of baptism, but he is baptized because he is saved, not because baptism is to help save him. Believing parents have their infant children bap-

tized not in order that the baptism may save them, but because of their covenant faith in Christ that they are safe in him as their covenant Savior.

Baptism is only a sign or seal. It does not effect saving results. It did not under John. It does not in the Christian dispensation. Where Peter, in Acts 2: 38, laid down the condition of salvation, and told the people that they were to "repent (and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ), for the remission of sins," we are to understand, according to the parenthesis, which we place there ourselves, as a commentary, that it was repentance and faith which were to save. Baptism was, of course, to be accepted as a privilege and duty, and on no account to be neglected, but baptism was to be the sign and seal of the repentance and faith and not, itself, the condition of salvation.

It is this that Christ gives us in Mark 16: 16, where he says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned," whether he has been baptized or not. It is the faith that is absolutely essential. Without it a thousand baptisms will not avail. Believe, and then, of course, be baptized as an act of loving confession, and one is saved; believe not, and, no matter what may be done formally, there is no salvation.

John's offer and condition was "repentance for the remission of sins," and there was a baptism or mode of confession to be a sign or seal of it. The full and complete offer of the Gospel, as Christ our perfect Savior is presented as the object of faith, is, as Paul told the jailer: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." So there is a baptism, or mode of confession, to be a sign or seal of this saving faith, and Paul told the jailer of this, after he was saved, and baptized him. Let baptism have proper honor. But let us accept it not as being saving itself, but as a seal of the covenant and faith in Jesus Christ who saves and saves completely.

SATAN THE DECEIVER.

If Satan were to come to men and women saying, "I am your enemy; I hate you; I wish to debase and destroy you and sink you to the depths of perdition; here is some wickedness in which I wish you to engage because it is vicious and vile and wicked and hateful to God," he would disgust and alienate and frighten them away from him, and away from wickedness, and into the ways of right doing. But he is much too wise to be candid and truth-telling. He conceals his real nature from them. He pretends to be good and respectable. He claims that his ways are right. He insists that he is abused. He

of New York City was located for open-air evangelistic work on Wall Street, near Broad, on the north side, which is right next to the spot where Washington was inaugurated President of the United States. It is good to know that the Gospel is still preached faithfully on Wall Street. Visitors to New York will miss one of the best of the sights if they do not stop to listen to the evangelists who preach to the throngs every day except the Sabbath on Wall Street.

There is another sight that the visitor is likely to miss if he is not alert, and that is the Museum of Natural History at the corner of Seventy-seventh Street and Columbus Avenue. One could spend a whole day there and then not have seen half of the exhibits. The admission is free. The Morgan Library, on East Thirty-sixth Street, is another place of great interest. We announce with great pleasure that old China Town, which has been the center of so much misery and sin, is about to be abolished, as was the one-time awful Five Points. It is safe to walk alone, in the daytime at least, through all the East-side districts that were once filled with rowdies and worse. The encroachments of business and the improvements in tenement houses have had much to do with the improvement, but the chief source of good has been the Gospel Mission, which is always busy in seeking the salvation of the lost.

ARKANSAS LETTER.

BY REV. C. E. HAYES, D.D.

Interest and real enthusiasm concerning the coming Church Efficiency Convention to be held at Hot Springs, Ark., Oct. 28th to Nov. 1st, are to be found all over the South and Southwest district, comprising eight synods. This will be the first convention of our Church ever held in this district, and it promises to be largely attended. Not less than two thousand Presbyterians will come together in this convention to discuss ways and means for carrying on the great work of the denomination in this section of the Church. It is proposed to bring at least five hundred delegates from the 127 churches of Arkansas to the convention. Pastors and church officials are laying plans for the largest attendance possible. Nothing has so interested our people as has the calling of this convention, for the consideration of the work in this section of the Church. Each of the eight synods is busy, and, no doubt, when the convention is called to order the attendance will be found larger than many had planned for. Let all come who can. Hot Springs is a city of hotels and boarding houses. There will be no trouble to find ample entertainment and at rates to suit any and all. Maps and charts from each synod are being prepared. Statistics and other matter will be presented showing the work of our Church in the South and Southwest and the great need of our Church in developing this large and rapidly-growing country. The Moderator of the General Assembly, Rev. Dr. J. Ross Stevenson, will be in attendance at the convention, and many others speakers of national standing. The convention will be held in the Eastman Hotel. The auditorium of this hotel has a seating capacity of 3,500. Hotel and railroad rates have been secured. For further information address Dr. J. M. Patterson, Wright Building, St. Louis, Mo.

Arkansas is in the midst of a great peach harvest. The great Highlands orchard in Pike County shipped out 784 car loads from its five-thousand-acre tract. The apple harvest will be large. Cotton and corn never looked better. This State will come nearer feeding herself this year than ever in her history. There is an abundance of all kinds of fruit, grain, hay, rice and potatoes.

Rev. T. E. McSpadden has entered upon the work of his pastorate at Rogers, with promising outlook. A union meeting of all the churches is now in progress. Rev. Dr. R. T. Phillips, pastor at Springdale, has his work well organized and new members are being received into the church at almost every service. Rev. Dr. H. W. Steen, pastor at Bentonville, will

not take a vacation this year, but will remain with his work, holding regular services. The church is in a healthy condition.

Rev. Dr. M. L. Gillespie, pastor at Fayetteville, is spending his vacation, with his two daughters, among friends and relatives in Indiana. Rev. Dr. G. A. Wilson, pastor at Gravette, solemnized the marriage of his daughter, Mary, recently, to a prosperous young business man of Clarksville. The work of the Gravette Church is in splendid condition. Rev. J. E. Robinson, pastor at Clarksville, had the misfortune recently to sprain and dislocate his ankle, and as a result of this accident he has not been able to work for several weeks. The outlook for the Arkansas Cumberland College at Clarksville is the best it has been for years. There will be a large attendance, from the present outlook.

Rev. W. A. Overton has resigned the work at Mammoth Spring and is open for engagement elsewhere. I would be pleased to correspond with two or three young ministers who would like real home mission work. Rev. W. T. Hail, of Texas, is now conducting a series of meetings at Paris. He will also conduct a series of meetings at Cove when through at Paris. A number of revival meetings are being held in different parts of the synod and many professions and accessions to the churches are being reported.

Hot Springs, Ark.

AMONG THE WHITE MOUNTAINS.

BY REV. S. J. FISHER, D.D.

As we journey northward through the vale of the Connecticut we do not wonder that three hundred years ago the English immigrants left the unattractive lands of the coast, and, journeying westward, were delighted to find such fertile lands and pleasing valleys. So many a village arose which is still existent, and with an hereditary family life, for though the more active and ambitious of the younger generations sought richer and more promising regions West and South, some remained. Then, too, the many little streams and rivers offered a cheap water power, and so New England became a universal manufactory along the smaller lines and a hive of industry. But never have they lost their ideals of education, or sense of its value, and north of Springfield as we ride along we traverse a region honored by the presence of Smith and Mount Holyoke and Amherst Colleges, and the schools of Northfield and Mount Hermon. But to some of us there is a great interest in the historical incidents, and not far away from our course is the town where a monument tells the awful story of the killing of a captain and eighty of the most promising young men of the region by the Indians, a blow comparatively more disastrous to the new communities than is the taking of a hundred thousand in our modern wars. And not far away is Hadley, with its mysterious tale of the twelve years' hiding of the regicides, Goff and Whalley, who here found refuge from a wicked Parliament subservient to the second Charles. They and their associates in the execution of Charles the First gave England her greatest independence of the tyranny of monarchy and broke the charm of "the divinity which doth hedge a king."

Still journeying northward we reach, in the upper portion of New Hampshire and near the boundary of Vermont, the junction whence we turn eastward and find the White Mountains encircling us. It is the region of smooth, admirable roads, of a multitude of hotels and large boarding houses, placed often where lovely views are obtained, and always where the air is sweet, full of the odors of the pine and balsam and hemlock, and where many a rivulet rushes across its pebbly bed. It is a region untouched by the smoky mill and factory, given up to summer recreation and the comfort of the hay-fever victims, and the presence of the golfer and tennis player is everywhere seen as you ride in the motor car from hostelry to hostelry, through shady lanes or over well-tarred roads. There is a remarkable natural beauty in the whole countryside as you see it from these more public and well-traveled roads; but

New England is still the country of "the abandoned farm," and everywhere you can find the signs of a despairing effort for livelihood, men vanquished in their attempts to till this unresponsive and recalcitrant soil. They have failed, and finding no purchasers for their barren domain, they have gone like sailors from a rudderless and dismantled vessel. It is a rocky soil. Huge blocks of stone emerge from or lie disconnected on many a pasture and hillside, and only strength and toil and money can remove them. With energy many of the smaller ones, small only relatively, are gathered from the fields and used to form an enduring wall. Some of these walls are built with great accuracy, and I have seen many five feet high and four wide, and some as broad as high, as if designed by the Irishman who said if his wall was turned over by the wind it would be as high as before! On one of the finer estates, the summer home of a Pennsylvanian, I was shown walls five feet broad, and one, built from the stones of a now useful pasture, five feet high and nine feet broad! These wealthier owners, tempted by the almost universal desire and secret hope of trying farming, are gradually increasing in number, and purchasing these unproductive fields, not only make them arable and beautiful, but, by their expenditures and employment given and example furnished, create a hopeful and industrious neighborhood, and induce a wider neatness and taste, and a more frequent use of paint on cottage and barn. No beauties of nature, no sublimity of scenery, ever makes the native dwellers broad-minded or ambitious; and when to these difficulties of the soil are added the rigors of a long and snowy winter the natural zeal is lessened as surely in such conditions as in the sweltering South. Many, however, are learning that this New England region is one of the finest for certain fruits, if proper care is taken, and that far from barren it may be a land of fine orchards, as well as of tobacco fields, or, as in Maine, of abundant potatoes.

Why these mountains, rising purple or gray, or of dark green, are called the White, while across the boundary river the range is the Green Mountains, I can not say, unless it is that sometimes, in September, this Presidential range is covered with snow in a night. But they are not lofty enough to rise above the verdure line, Mount Washington being about 6,300 feet, and the forests cover their sides in velvety softness from a distance, except where some great scar shows where ice or thunderbolt have torn loose the rocks and sent them rushing valeward in destruction. The great number of pine and other evergreen trees, the larch and hemlock and fir, give a special beauty to these steep sloping sides, while, in the valleys, the elms arch gracefully over the fields or along the roads. Some valleys are very broad, giving broad and far-reaching views of distant mountains, as where the Ammonoosuc River runs from its source beside Mount Washington past the settlements of Maplewood, Bethlehem, Littleton and Lisbon to join the Connecticut. Not so awe-inspiring as the Alps, these scenes are just as beautiful and as gratifying in their rich loveliness. Other vales are very narrow, mere notches between the mountains, and your road, hemmed in by the forest on one side and a little clear, rapid brook on the other, has the sunshine for only a portion of the day. As if Nature in these solitudes, and under the spell of the ages, had her moments of fancy and imagination, she shows on different mountain heights two profiles, one the famous Profile and the other the Indian Head, which are as clear cut and distinct and satisfactory as if carved by a Thorwaldsen. The Indian Head has the distinct facial characteristics of the Indian, and the arching nose, the repressed mouth and chin of silence, and the forehead, as if beneath it there looked out the mysterious, unabashed and searching eyes. Strange memorial, cut by the lightning and the tempest, of these dwellers in these forests, long before Columbus steered on and on, perhaps before Caesar lay stabbed to death, and perhaps before Socrates discoursed on immortality ere the poison did its work. As some one has called them, they are "the race of the wandering foot, the restless eye and the unsatisfied heart."