

No Forgiveness for Those Who Continue in Wilful Disobedience

18. What remains for those who continue to sin after knowing the truth?

“If we sin wilfully after that we have received a knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.” Heb. 10:26, 27.

NOTE.—There is but one sacrifice which will atone for sin, and that is the blood of Christ. But Christ’s blood atones only for those sins of which we repent. Those who continue to sin wilfully after having a knowledge of the truth can look forward to but one thing, and that is the wrath of God. By refusing to repent and walk in the light, they thereby separate themselves from the communion of his church, and the blood of Christ does not atone for their sins.

In view of these facts, it is evident that the way that leads to life is narrow and straight, and that while many seek to enter in, yet there are but few who are really walking in it: therefore our Saviour bids us, “strive to enter in at the strait gate.” Luke 13:24; Matt. 7:13, 14.

Yes, dear reader, it will take whole-souled consecration to God on our part to gain the eternal world. We must turn our backs upon everything that is in opposition to Christ. This may cost us friends and things which are highly esteemed by the world, and even life itself; but we had better lose these transient things than separate from Christ, and thereby lose the joys of the eternal world. To those who tremble before the powers of darkness, the Lord says: “Fear not thou, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee: yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.” Isa. 41:10.



CHAPTER XXIV.

Baptism

1. What great commission did Christ give to the church?

“He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” Mark 16:15.

2. What was the church to teach the world?

“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.” Matt. 28:20.

3. What ordinance is to be administered to those who believe?

“Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” Matt. 28:19. “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” Mark 16:16.

NOTE.—Baptism is an ordinance which Christ has commanded his church to administer to all believers.

Subjects for Baptism

4. What experience is necessary before one can be a fit subject for baptism?

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.” Acts 2:38. Again: “And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.” Acts 8:37.

NOTE.—The meaning of the ordinance of baptism forbids it should be received by any except those who have met certain conditions. First, the candidate must believe the gospel. Second, he must give evidence of his faith by repenting of and forsaking his sins. See Matt. 3:7-10. Third, it is an ordinance to be obeyed or fulfilled by the candidate. This excludes all, as proper subjects for baptism, who cannot believe, repent, and obey.

This, of course, excludes infants, for the reason that they cannot meet the conditions necessary. Infant baptism is not taught in the Bible; and when parents have their infants baptized, they thereby either take from their children the liberty to obey God when they reach the years of accountability, or else force them to ignore the act of their parents by being re-baptized.

Why should people desire to baptize their infants? What is its meaning? What is its virtue? Some have even gone so far as to teach that infants who die without baptism will be lost; but we ask why? What evil have they done? Not only this, but when and where has God ever said that baptism was the saviour of infants? How can it be thought that a few words of ceremony with a little water sprinkled on the

head of an infant would make God show it any favor that he would not show an equally good child who had not been baptized? Let all parents understand that baptism is an ordinance to be obeyed by the candidate, and that none are subjects except those who believe and repent.

Significance of Baptism

5. Why is baptism administered to the repentant sinner?

“Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.” Acts 2:38. Again: “Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.” Acts 22:16.

NOTE.—Baptism is a very significant ordinance, and when properly understood speaks volumes to the repentant sinner. Instead of dreading the ceremony, he will say, as did the eunuch to Philip, “See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?” and when once baptized, he will be filled with joy in contemplating the glorious realities pledged to him in this sacred ordinance.

The above texts show that baptism is intimately connected with the remission of sins; and hence must be an ordinance of absolution. We will now consider in what sense it is an ordinance of absolution by determining its meaning.

6. What is the gospel by which we are saved?

“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, . . . by which also ye are saved, . . . unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.” 1 Cor. 15:1-4.

NOTE.—The death, burial, and resurrection of Christ embody the whole gospel. We are saved, not by faith in his death and burial alone, but we must also believe that he rose again. Our resurrection from the dead depends entirely upon Christ's resurrection. "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." 1 Cor. 15:17, 18.

It takes the whole gospel to save us. Faith in the gospel brings justification to the repentant sinner. But justification from sin cannot be had except by death. "For he that is dead is freed [justified] from sin." Rom. 6:7. Therefore saving faith in the gospel brings death to the believer — death to the world and sin. Rom. 6:11.

7. How do we become dead to the world?

"I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Gal. 2:20.

NOTE.—We die to the world by crucifixion with Christ. In the person of Christ as our substitute, we die for our sins. In our own person we die to sin. The one brings to us justification, the other regeneration. The one gives freedom from the condemnation of sin, the other, freedom from the life of sin; for "how shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?" When Christ died, he was buried. And inasmuch as we are crucified with Christ, and become thereby freed from sin, we also should be honored with a burial.

8. How are we buried?

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even

so we also should walk in newness of life." Rom. 6:3, 4. Again, "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him." Col. 2:12.



NOTE.—Baptism is emblematic of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. And inasmuch as Christ died for our sins, and we are baptized into his death, we therefore conclude that baptism is an ordinance signifying absolution from sin by means of death; and to the believer it constitutes a

pledge of all that God has promised in the gospel. On the part of God it is a public testimony witnessing in the name of the Trinity, the believer's absolution from sin through his faith in the death and resurrection of Christ. On the part of the candidate, it testifies of his unity with Christ by crucifixion to the world, and of a resurrection with Christ to a new life.

The Mode of Baptism

The fact that we are buried with Christ by baptism, and also risen with him in baptism, shows clearly that water baptism is an act requiring a burial and a resurrection. The words "baptize" and "baptism" as used in our common versions are not translated, but simply transferred with the English form of expression from the original Greek words, *baptizo* and *baptismos*. These words have shades of meaning which are determined by the connection in which they are used. All standard Greek lexicographers define them as meaning "to plunge," "to immerse," "to overwhelm." These facts, connected with the fact that the administration of water baptism requires a "burial and resurrection," show most conclusively that immersion is the proper mode. We will now cite examples showing that those who received the rite in the early church were immersed.

9. Where did John baptize the people?

"Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan." Matt. 3:5, 6.

10. Where did Christ go to be baptized?

"Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John to be baptized of him." Verse 13.

11. After Jesus had been baptized in Jordan, what did he do?

"And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water." Verse 16.

NOTE.—John baptized the people in Jordan. If the word "baptized" were translated, there would be no question as to the mode. The following are verses 6 and 16 translated from the original Greek by Wilson, as given in the Emphatic Diaglott: "And were immersed by him in the river Jordan." "And Jesus, being immersed, went up from the water," etc. The very fact that Christ had to come up out of the water after baptism, shows that in order to be baptized he had to go down into the water.

12. What was necessary in order for Philip to baptize the eunuch?

"He commanded the chariot to stand still; and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing." Acts 8:38, 39.

NOTE.—That the eunuch's baptism was a burial or immersion in water, is clearly proved by the steps taken by both Philip and the eunuch before and after its administration. If Philip did not immerse the eunuch, then why did he take him down into the water? The Emphatic Diaglott renders it thus: "And as they were going on the road, they came to a certain water; and the eunuch said, Behold, water! what hinders my being immersed? . . . And they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he immersed him." Verses 36-38. This rendering expresses the exact truth. The word does not mean "to sprinkle," or "pour;" this is not

baptism, and never has been. These are simply papal innovations, and should be given no recognition by those who desire to obey God.

Trine Immersion

The mode of trine immersion, or three baptisms, is adopted by many, and deserves a passing notice. It is claimed that the commission to baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, requires three actions, or one baptism for each of the Trinity. But that this is a wrong conception of the matter is readily proved. First, the commission to preach the gospel, and to baptize all believers for the remission of sins, is given by the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. They are the source of authority empowering the church to preach and baptize: consequently when baptism is administered, it is done in the name of the Trinity. It is the same as the transaction of any matter of business for a firm of three: the agent simply makes one transaction in the name of the three individuals who empower him to transact their business. Paul says, there is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism," or immersion. Eph. 4:5. To say that it takes three dippings to make one baptism, only creates confusion. Granting this to be so, however, to baptize a candidate in the name of the Father would require three dips; then to baptize him in the name of the Son would require three more dippings; then would follow three more in the name of the Holy Ghost; thus making nine immersions in all. If this is not a correct conclusion, then it must be admitted that it does not require three immersions to administer the ordinance of baptism.

To fulfil the commission to baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, does not require three actions any more than it would be necessary for Christ to come three times in order to come in his own glory, and in his Father's glory, and in the glory of the holy angels

(see Luke 9:26), or for one to enter into the kingdom and sit down three times to fulfil Matt. 8:11.

The very fact that baptism is a burial and a resurrection in the likeness of Christ's burial and resurrection, proves that it is single immersion; for Christ had but one burial and resurrection. In Rom. 6:5 we read: "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." The planting refers to the mode of baptism, and it is to be in the likeness of his death and resurrection. This is true of single immersion, and none other; and no other mode is hinted at in all the Bible.

