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BAPTISM.

Ritual applications of water to purify persons and things were common among the Jews, and these purifications were called *baptisms*, βαπτισμοί, in the idiom employed in the New Testament. The epistle to the Hebrews refers to these *various baptisms*, διαφόροις βαπτισμοῖς,¹⁾ and St. Mark speaks of the Pharisees and their habit of *baptizing themselves*²⁾ before eating, and of their *baptisms of cups, and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables*.³⁾ Of such applications of water the Mosaic law said: *This is the law, when a man dieth in a tent: all that come into the tent, and all that is in the tent, shall be unclean seven days. And every open vessel which hath no covering bound upon it, is unclean. And whosoever toucheth one that is slain with a sword in the open fields, or a dead body, or a bone of a man, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days. And for an unclean person they shall take of the ashes of the burnt heifer of purification for sin, and running water shall be put thereto in a vessel: and a clean person shall take hyssop and dip it in the water, and sprinkle it upon the tent, and upon all the vessels, and upon*

1) Hebr. 9, 10.

2) εὐν μὴ βαπτίσωνται.

3) βαπτισμοῦς ποτηρίων καὶ ξεστῶν καὶ χαλκίων καὶ κλινῶν.

the persons that were there, and upon him that touched a bone, or one slain, or one dead, or a grave: and the clean person shall sprinkle upon the unclean on the third day, and on the seventh day: and on the seventh day he shall purify himself, and wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and shall be clean at even.¹⁾ And of the purification of the Levites we read: *Thus shalt thou do unto them, to cleanse them: Sprinkle water of purifying upon them, and let them shave all their flesh, and let them wash their clothes, and so make themselves clean.*²⁾ Such, then, were the βαπτισμοί practiced from the days of Moses among the people to whom Christ came in the fulness of time. They were διάφοροι βαπτισμοί, various baptisms, not only because of the variety of objects thus to be purified, but also inasmuch as the purifying water was applied in various ways, by sprinkling, washing, and bathing.

These various baptisms, as all the rites of the Mosaic ceremonial, were symbolic in their nature, emblematic of the spiritual cleansing of the hearts and souls of men defiled with sin. Hereof the prophet says: *Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.*³⁾

But the rites of the old covenant were not only emblematic as they represented what pertained to the soul and to spiritual life by visible and material things applied to the body and other material objects; they were also types and shadows of things to come under a new dispensation, and the waters of purifying sprinkled and poured upon the defiled children of the old covenant found their various anti-types when the fulness of the time was come. Then it was fulfilled what the prophet had spoken: *It shall come to pass*

1) Numb. 19, 14—19.

2) Numb. 8, 7.

3) Ezek. 36, 25 f.

afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh.¹⁾ Of this outpouring of the Spirit the first preacher of the new covenant spoke, saying: *He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall BAPTIZE you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.*²⁾ And, furthermore, the preacher who spoke these words was John the Baptist.³⁾ His baptism, too, though he baptized with water, was a baptism of a higher order than the various baptisms which the Jews had practiced and still practiced according to law and tradition. John's baptism also was a rite of purification and, like the baptism of Jesus and his disciples, was looked upon as such by the Jews, among whom these baptisms occasioned a controversy *περὶ καθαρισμοῦ*.⁴⁾ John the Baptist also baptized with water.⁵⁾ But his baptism was not according to the Mosaic law, or to Jewish traditions, but pursuant to a special commission, a word of God, *ῥῆμα θεοῦ*, which came to him at a certain time, the fifteenth year of Tiberius,⁶⁾ and by which he was sent to baptize with water.⁷⁾ In compliance with this word of divine command and commission, *he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.*⁸⁾ That is to say, he publicly and by divine authority exhorted his hearers to be baptized with water, saying unto the people that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus,⁹⁾ and, by such baptism, to be converted and to receive the remission of sins. And *when they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus,*¹⁰⁾ *confessing their sins,*¹¹⁾

1) Joel 2, 28. Cf. Acts 2, 16. 17.

2) Matt. 3, 11.

3) Matt. 3, 1; 11, 12. al.

4) John 3, 25 ff., coll. vv. 22 f. and *ὄνν*, v. 25, which indicates a nexus of cause and effect.

5) John 1, 31. Matt. 3, 11. Mark 1, 8. Luke 3, 16.

6) Luke 3, 1 f.

7) John 1, 33.

8) Luke 3, 3, coll. v. 2. Mark 1, 4.

9) Acts 19, 4.

10) Acts 19, 5.

11) Mark 1, 5.

and receiving the remission of their sins. That this was not the traditional baptism practiced by the Jews, but a new rite of a higher order, was apparent to the ritualists of those days, the Pharisees of Jerusalem, by whose order the question was put to John: *Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?*¹⁾ Among the *διάφοροι βαπτισμοί* with which they had previously been familiar there was no baptism for the remission of sins, no sacramental washing of water with the word whereby sinners might be sanctified and cleansed from spiritual defilement as by a means of divine grace which, to be valid and efficacious, must have been instituted by divine authority, inasmuch as God only can forgive sins.²⁾

The precise manner in which the application of the baptismal water was performed by John the Baptist does not appear from the description given in the gospels. It is certain, however, that *βαπτίζειν* in the mouth of the *Baptist* cannot *vi vocis* mean to immerse, when he says: *I indeed BAPTIZE you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall BAPTIZE you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.* For when this word was fulfilled, it was at the same time a fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel, *I will POUR OUT my spirit upon all flesh*, and not by an immersion in a flood of fire, but by a distribution of fiery tongues upon the disciples were they baptized with fire.³⁾ Of this fulfillment of the prophecy and of the prediction of the Baptist we hear Peter say, *Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth, ἐξέχεεν, poured out, this which ye now see and hear.*⁴⁾ In all this there is nowhere an immersion, but everywhere an outpouring or sprinkling in what must be looked upon as answering to the *βαπτίζεσθαι* with

1) John 1, 25.

2) Mark 2, 7. Luke 5, 21.

3) Acts 2, 3.

4) Acts 2, 33.

the Spirit and with fire predicted by St. John. Hence his own βαπτίζειν is so far from being, in his own mind, immersion or submersion in water, that, if anything at all concerning his mode of applying the baptismal water can be collected from his words and the gospel narratives, it is that he baptized by pouring or sprinkling water upon the persons whom he baptized. The gospels say that he baptized ἐν τῷ Ἰορδάνῃ,¹⁾ εἰς τὸν Ἰορδάνην,²⁾ ὕδατι,³⁾ and ἐν ὕδατι.⁴⁾ All these expressions do not necessitate the assumption of immersion. The number of applicants for baptism being very great,⁵⁾ and water being plentiful,⁶⁾ the most decorous, expeditious, and cleanly way of administering the sacred rite may have been this, that John stood in the river, ἐν τῷ Ἰορδάνῃ, the people, one by one, came near him, also in the river, and the Baptist, lifting water from the river, poured it upon the person before him, so that the water with which he baptized (ὕδατι or ἐν ὕδατι) would run back into the river, εἰς τὸν Ἰορδάνην, as the water lifted from the baptismal font and poured upon the head of a child held over the font runs again into the font whence it was taken. After baptism, the person thus baptized, though not immersed in or submerged under the water, would "come out of the water," in which he had stood making room for others to be baptized in like manner.⁷⁾

When Jesus had entered upon his public ministry with his disciples, they, too, baptized,⁸⁾ and their baptism did not supersede that of John, but was practiced at the same time. A controversy about purifying to which these baptisms gave rise afforded an occasion for John to point out to his disciples the nature of Christ's person and office and

1) Mark 1, 5.

2) Mark 1, 9.

3) Mark 1, 8.

4) Matt. 3, 11. John 1, 26. 31. 33., where ἐν is used with the instrumental dative.

5) Matt. 3, 5 f.

6) John 3, 23.

7) Mark 1, 10: ἀναβαίνων ἐκ τοῦ ὕδατος. Cf. Matt. 3, 16.

8) John 3, 22; 4, 1 f.

the propriety and validity of the baptism performed by his authority.¹⁾ Baptism was looked upon as a mark of discipleship²⁾ and was inculcated, even in those days, by Christ himself, as a means of regeneration whereby those who were thus born of water and of the Spirit should enter into the kingdom of God.³⁾ And, lest this means of grace should be looked upon as peculiar and restricted to the period of Christ's visible ministry on earth and to the land and people of Israel, Jesus, before his ascension into heaven, charged his disciples, saying: *All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and disciple all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.*⁴⁾

By this solemn charge, Baptism was, as by divine authority, ordained as a permanent institution whereby, to the end of time and among all nations, men should be made or confirmed disciples of Christ, members of his church, enjoying his gracious and mighty presence unto the end of the world. Here we have all the essentials of the sacrament. As such it is an *act* described by the transitive verb, βαπτίζειν. This word was not then and there first coined or adopted for sacred use, but had its established *usus loquendi* in the religious language of the day. Βαπτίζειν and its derivatives, βαπτισμός, βάπτισμα, and βαπτιστής, occur 122 times in the New Testament, and in not one instance in the sense in which βαπτίζειν is used by the secular writers, but in every instance βαπτίζειν, βαπτισμός, or βάπτισμα, designates a ritual or religious act, and βαπτιστής is never a bathhouse keeper, a laundryman, or a dyer, but invariably the Baptist. Besides, βάπτισμα, βαπτισμός, and βαπτιστής, the nouns, are unknown to secular Greek; they are peculiar to the literature to which the scriptural uses of the verb, βαπτίζειν, are pe-

1) John 3, 25 ff.

3) John 3, 5.

2) John 4, 1.

4) Matt. 28, 18—20.

cular, and were never used in another sense. It is, therefore, an exegetical outrage to force upon these words a meaning construed from their remote etymology, as from the root βαφ, or taken from the classical secular authors. It is a violation of a general rule of interpretation to translate βαπτίζεν by *to immerse*, a meaning which that verb never has in New Testament Greek, or βάπτισμα and βαπτισμός by *immersion*, a sense which those nouns never have anywhere. That the Jewish baptisms were largely performed by sprinkling or pouring has already been shown. It may be added here, that the ceremonial washing before meals, which was not done by plunging the whole body into a tank, but by pouring water over the hands, is called βαπτίζεσθαι, Mark 7, 4 and Luke 11, 38. Nor can a single case be quoted where, in apostolic days, Christian baptism was administered by immersion. On the other hand, there are instances recorded where immersion was excluded by the circumstances of the case or by the terms of the narrative. Thus in the very first case recorded, when the three thousand were baptized in one day, the day of Pentecost, at Jerusalem, where was the river or pool in the city or its environments in which three thousand men, women, and children might have been immersed, even if the magistrates and the mob would have permitted such use of public reservoirs to the followers of the Nazarene whom, a few weeks ago, they had delivered up to be crucified? When Cornelius and his household were to be baptized, Peter said: *Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized?*¹⁾ In another instance, the question was: *Τί κωλύει με βαπτισθῆναι; What doth hinder me to be baptized?*²⁾ There the speaker and his companion were approaching the water. Here the object of κωλύειν is not the person to be baptized, but the water,³⁾ which is not to be hindered from being brought to where it was to be used, and Peter's rhetorical question is

1) Acts 10, 47.

2) Acts 8, 36.

3) τὸ ὕδωρ κωλύσαι δυνατὰί τις;

evidently but a more emphatical form of ordering water to be brought in without delay, in order that these people might be baptized where they were, not by immersion, but by sprinkling or pouring. The eunuch, whose baptism has already been touched upon, was on his way through a desert country, where water was, and is to this day, scanty, the water-courses being few and low in their beds. That Philip and the eunuch *went down into the water*¹⁾ and, after the baptism, *came up out of the water*,²⁾ is so far from establishing an instance of baptism by immersion, that it rather describes the simplest way in which the two might get into position to permit Philip to lift water with his hand even from a low and shallow brook or pool and pour it upon the eunuch's head. This would hold good even if in this case immersion had not, because of the scantiness of water, been impossible, but also if the "water" had been the Mediterranean, with volume enough to drown an army. Thus, that John the Baptist should seek a place where *there was much water*³⁾ appears reasonable also under the assumption that he baptized by infusion or aspersion, when we consider the immense multitudes who came to John for baptism,⁴⁾ and who, while they sojourned with him, would be in need of water for drink where a constant supply was also needed for baptism. In short, while there is not one instance of baptism in the time of Christ and his apostles, the baptism of John not excepted, recorded in such a way that immersion *must* be assumed, we have the records of various instances in which immersion cannot reasonably be assumed, and it is probable that baptism by immersion was never practiced in apostolic days.

On the other hand, it cannot be doubted that the visible element prescribed for the act of Baptism by Christ's ordinance is *water*, and that the charge, Matt. 28, 19, was so

1) Acts 8, 38: κατέβησαν ἀμφότεροι εἰς τὸ ὕδωρ.

2) Acts 8, 39: ἀνέβησαν ἐκ τοῦ ὕδατος.

3) John 3, 23.

4) Matt. 3, 5 f.

understood by the apostles and the primeval church.¹⁾ The word, βαπτίζεν, in its historical signification, and where no other element is expressly named, means baptism with water. Saint Paul, too, describes the sacrament whereby the church of Christ is sanctified and cleansed as *the washing of WATER by the word.*²⁾ As the *water* of the flood saved Noah and his household, so the baptismal *water* is said to save us.³⁾ And thus, according to Christ's ordinance and the doctrine of the apostles, baptism has been and is to this day performed by the application of *water*.

But the sacred act which constitutes sacramental Baptism comprises more than a mere application of water. St. Paul describes Baptism as τὸ λουτρὸν τοῦ ὕδατος ἐν ῥήματι, *the washing of the water with word.*⁴⁾ That he speaks of a particular washing is indicated by the article before λουτρῶ in the text, and the only washing to which his description answers is Baptism. By τοῦ ὕδατος it is described as a washing of water, water not used as a drink, but applied externally. But this water is ἐν ῥήματι, *together with or accompanied by word.* The preposition ἐν is here as elsewhere⁵⁾ employed to indicate concomitance, introducing that with which the water is bound up or intimately connected. The omission of the article before ἐν ῥήματι is no reason why this phrase should be referred to ἀγάσῃ, and not to τοῦ ὕδατος, but brings the attribute into closer connection with the noun it qualifies or describes, both together being descriptive of a fixed quantity conceived and known as such.⁶⁾ The words, τῶ λουτρῶ τοῦ ὕδατος ἐν ῥήματι, describe a certain institution known to Paul and his readers, in which the water, τὸ ὕδωρ, as the prescribed element, is statedly con-

1) Acts 10, 47; 8, 38.

2) Eph. 5, 26.

3) 1 Pet. 3, 20 f. δι' ὕδατος, ὃ καὶ ἡμᾶς ἀντίτυπον νῦν σώζει βάπτισμα.

4) Eph. 5, 26.

5) 2 Cor. 10, 14. Rom. 15, 29. Luke 14, 31. Eph. 4, 4.

6) Cf. Rom. 9, 3: τῶν συγγενῶν μου κατὰ σάρκα. Col. 1, 8: τὴν ἡμῶν ἀγάπην ἐν πνεύματι. 1 Cor. 10, 18: τὸν Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ σάρκα.

nected with *ῥῆμα*, *word*. There is one institution, and one only, with which this description tallies, and that perfectly. This is Baptism. Here we have water as the prescribed element, τὸ ὕδωρ, and *ῥῆμα*, the word of divine institution whereby this water, in its prescribed use as a washing or baptizing, λουτρόν, is constituted a sacrament, a means whereby men are made disciples of Christ,¹⁾ sanctified and cleansed by Him who has redeemed them, giving himself as a ransom for all.²⁾ It was by virtue of the *ῥῆμα θεοῦ* that the Baptism of John was βάπτισμα μετανοίας εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν.³⁾ It is by virtue of Christ's *ῥῆμα*, his word of institution, that Christian Baptism is a sacrament, a means of making disciples of Christ among all nations.⁴⁾ According to this word, Baptism is to be for all times administered *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*. He does not say τὰ ὀνόματα, *the names*, but τὸ ὄνομα, *the name*; for by *the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost*, the one true God is named, one undivided and indivisible Being, but in three distinct Persons. As such, God has revealed himself and made himself known to us. As such he would be our God and make us his children, not the children of an unknown god, but of the God who is known and confessed as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, and the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of the Father and of the Son. Not εἰς τὸ ὄνομα Παύλου,⁵⁾ not εἰς τὸν Μωϋσῆν,⁶⁾ not "in relation to" any man, or to what any man may be to us, but εἰς Χριστόν,⁷⁾ εἰς Χριστόν Ἰησοῦν,⁸⁾ or, more explicitly, εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ,⁹⁾ are we baptized, (so that by Baptism we enter into relation to him, into a most intimate union with him, so that, having been *baptized into Christ*, we have put

1) Matt. 28, 19: μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη βαπτίσαντες αὐτούς.

2) Eph. 5, 25 f.

3) Luke 3, 2 f.

4) Matt. 28, 19.

5) 1 Cor. 1, 13; cf. v. 15.

6) 1 Cor. 10, 2.

7) Gal. 3, 27.

8) Rom. 6, 3.

9) Acts 8, 16.

on Christ.¹⁾ By Baptism *we were baptized into Christ's death,*²⁾ so that his death became our death, even to participation in his burial.³⁾ But whence this power and efficacy of Baptism? From Christ's word of institution, which makes this act a sacrament, a means of divine grace whereby we are baptized unto the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, so that, by this *λουτρὸν τοῦ ὕδατος ἐν ῥήματι*, we are *sanctified*, entering into a holy relation to and union with that God who has revealed himself as the Triune God, the God of our salvation.) Where this word is discarded, there is no sacrament. And the *word* is what the sounds or characters *say*. Hence all Unitarians, though they use the sounds of the words of institution, have no valid baptism, since, having discarded the true meaning of the words of institution, they do not *say* what Christ *said* when he ordained, and would have us say when we administer, the sacrament. Neither is there Baptism, a sacrament, where no water is used. For Baptism is *λουτρὸν τοῦ ὕδατος ἐν ῥήματι*, *washing of WATER in conjunction with the word.*

When Christ instituted Baptism as a permanent ordinance in the church, he also stated upon whom this sacrament should be administered. The "various baptisms" of the Jews were performed on persons and things, tents and tables and cups and pots.⁴⁾ Christian Baptism is to be administered to persons only. Such is the will of Christ, who said to his disciples: *Go ye and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them.*⁵⁾ Nations are made up of living men, women, and children. The dead are not members of a nation. No census enumerates the dead. Neither can the dead be made disciples. But every census enumerates the children. And children are not to be excluded from discipleship. When the apostles rebuked those who brought chil-

1) Gal. 3, 27.

2) Rom. 6, 3: *εἰς τὸν θάνατον αὐτοῦ ἐβαπτίσθημεν.*

3) Rom. 6, 4: *συνετάφημεν αὐτῷ διὰ τοῦ βαπτίσματος εἰς τὸν θάνατον.*

4) Mark 7, 4.

5) Matt. 28, 19.

dren to Jesus, *he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.*¹⁾ Peter not only exhorted his pentecostal hearers: *Be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins,*²⁾ promising them that thus they should *receive the gift of the Holy Ghost;*³⁾ but also stated the reason, saying: *For the promise is unto you and to your children.*⁴⁾ As the Old Testament sacrament of circumcision was not withheld from children, so Baptism, whereby, as by the circumcision of Christ, we are to receive the putting off of the body of sins of the flesh,⁵⁾ must not be denied to the children, who, as they are *born flesh of the flesh*, shall also be *born of water and of the Spirit*, in order that they, too, may *enter into the kingdom of God.*⁶⁾ Hence, when the apostles baptized Lydia and her household,⁷⁾ the prisonkeeper of Philippi and all his,⁸⁾ the household of Stephanas,⁹⁾ they simply carried out the will of Christ who had charged them to baptize all nations as they made men disciples of Christ.

The charge of the Master, however, also clearly indicates that Baptism is not to be administered indiscriminately to children and adults, to all the members of all the nations who may or may not apply, offer themselves or be offered, for baptism. The finite verb is not βαπτίζετε, but μαθητεύσατε. The business enjoined upon the church is not primarily to baptize, but to disciple, the nations. This was properly the task allotted, the purpose to be achieved. For the accomplishment of this end Baptism should be a way or means, another means being named by the participle διδάσκοντες in coordination with the participle βαπτίζαντες, the object being in both cases, αὐτούς, those among all nations who were made disciples of Christ. By baptizing and teaching, the work of discipling is to be carried on and out in all lands and at all

1) Mark 10, 14.

4) Acts 2, 39.

7) Acts 16, 15.

2) Acts 2, 38.

5) Col. 2, 11-12.

8) Acts 16, 33.

3) Ibid.

6) John 3, 5. 6.

9) 1 Cor. 1, 16.

times to the end of the world. But there is nothing in the charge, either expressed or implied, to say that under all circumstances and in all cases the one means should be employed first, and the other, last. The Master does not say, "First baptizing them and thereafter teaching them, make them disciples." That βαπτίσαντες stands first and διδάσκοντες second does not indicate that baptizing must always be practiced first and teaching afterwards, any more than the arrangement of the participles εἰδώς and ἀγαπήσας, John 13, 1, or of the participles in the words ἐν τῷ ἤδη ἐπάρας τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτοῦ, ἐπάρχων ἐν βασάνοις, ὄρᾳ τὸν Ἀβραάμ,¹⁾ or of the participles οὖσα . . . παθοῦσα . . . δαπανήσασα . . . ὠφελήθεῖσα,²⁾ would indicate that Jesus first knew that he should depart, and thereupon loved his disciples, or that the rich man first lifted up his eyes and then was in torment, or that a certain woman had a disease twelve years, then, afterward, suffered many things of many physicians, thereupon spent all that she had, and, last of all, was nothing bettered. But what Christ does say is that both should be done, baptizing and teaching, each at its proper time, according to the circumstances. Thus the pentecostal hearers at Jerusalem were first taught and, *having gladly received the word, were baptized.*³⁾ The eunuch was first taught and, having made a confession of his faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was also baptized.⁴⁾ Peter baptized Cornelius,⁵⁾ Philip baptized the Samaritans,⁶⁾ Paul baptized Lydia⁷⁾ and the keeper of the prison,⁸⁾ having first taught them the way of salvation, and judging them to be faithful to the Lord. This is the proper practice of the church as to adult baptism to this day. On the other hand, it is equally proper and in conformity with the instruction of Christ that those members of all nations who cannot yet be taught should not, for that reason, be excluded from discipleship, but be disciplined by

1) Luke 16, 23.

2) Mark 5, 25.

3) Acts 2, 41.

4) Acts 8, 35—38.

5) Acts 10, 34—48.

6) Acts 8, 12 f.

7) Acts 16, 14 f.

8) Acts 16, 32 f.

being first baptized into the covenant of grace and afterwards, in due time, taught the way of life and led to make profession of their faith. Being in need of regeneration, they are to be born again by the only means of regeneration applicable to them, and having become children of God and subjects in his kingdom of grace by baptism, they are to be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord according to Christ's commandment: *μαθητεύσατε . . . βαπτίσαντες . . . διδάσκοντες*, the charge according to which, as Origen says, *Ecclesia ab apostolis traditionem suscepit, etiam parvulis baptismum dare.*¹⁾

The question *how* and *upon whom* Baptism should be administered is, thus, fully and clearly answered by the narrative and words of the institution of this sacrament. So is the question *who* should baptize. The commission is: *Μαθητεύσατε . . . βαπτίσαντες . . . διδάσκοντες*. They whose task it is to disciple all nations, they who, in discipling the nations, should teach, are also commissioned to baptize. The charge is to the *disciples* of Christ.²⁾ The task of *μαθητεύειν* is committed to those who are themselves *μαθηταί*. The *eleven* disciples are mentioned in the narrative.³⁾ But the commission is not to them only; it is to be in force to the end of the world, and until then, he, the Master, will be with those who disciple the nations, baptizing and teaching them.⁴⁾ The commission was given to the disciples who were then with Christ, and to all disciples with and after them. Not to the apostles as such and to their successors; for as apostles they had no successors, with whom Christ might abide to the end of the world. They are not called *ἀπόστολοι* in the narrative, but *μαθηταί*, and as such the Master charges them to baptize and to teach and thus to disciple the nations. And the whole number of the disciples of Christ is *the Church*. Every Christian congregation and every member of such congregation has the power to bap-

1) *Ad Rom. V, 6.*

3) *Ibid.*

2) *Matt. 28, 16 ff.*

4) *Matt. 28, 20.*

tize, and baptism performed by them according to Christ's institution is valid. But *let all things be done decently and in order.*¹⁾ Baptism being a solemn act whereby one becomes or is publicly stamped a member of the church, it is meet and right that the organs through whom the church also performs its duty of teaching, of preaching the gospel, the ministers of the church, should perform this act and be responsible to the church for its proper performance. But where the emergency will not permit what should be the rule, a parent, mindful of his discipleship and spiritual priesthood, will disciple his child, baptizing it according to Christ's ordinance.

And here, again, it is worthy of note that the divine commission is: "Disciple all nations, baptizing them, . . . teaching them." The church which neglects the baptism of its children or suffers it to be neglected is *pro tanto* disobedient to a plain commandment of the Lord. But the church which fails or refuses to make ample provision that the lambs of the flock who were baptized in its midst or by its ministers may also be *taught* as soon and as long as they are capable of Christian instruction, is also *pro tanto* neglectful of a solemn duty imposed upon it by the Master in the same sacred charge which enjoins upon it the duty of baptizing those whom Christ has redeemed that they should be his own in time and eternity, "to live under him and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness." Such provision having been duly made, the church must also hold the parents of its children to make proper use of the opportunities provided for the Christian training of the lambs of Christ, and the sponsors are to serve as additional and supplementary sureties to the congregation that those whose baptism they witnessed shall also be taught. As a public and solemn testimonial of the faithful performance of this duty incumbent on the church, the rite of con-

1) 1 Cor. 14, 40.

firmation with a public examination of the catechumens and profession of their faith and true discipleship is, therefore, highly appropriate.

While, however, it is just as truly the duty of the church to teach as it is to baptize, and the two functions must, so to say, go hand in hand, the one must not be looked upon as a complement of the other. It is not by previous or subsequent teaching that Baptism becomes a sacrament, an efficacious means of grace. Baptism is a distinct and complete institution in itself, a sacred act which must not be confounded or identified with any other act. Baptism is the act of applying water to a living human person in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. When this act has been performed, Baptism is complete, the sacrament has been administered. As such it has its own efficacy. It is itself a means of salvation, whereby the benefits of Christ's redemption are conferred upon and appropriated to the individual sinner. This, too, appears from the words of Christ. When he says, *μαθητεύσατε βαπτίσαντες . . . διδάσκοντες*, baptism as well as teaching is inculcated as a way and means of discipling the nations. But *μαθητεύεσθαι* is not a mere outward enlisting for Christ, but a thorough inward change, a turning from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God.¹⁾ Christ describes it as *being born again*,²⁾ and says that this new birth is *of water and the Spirit*.³⁾ In like manner St. Paul speaks of Baptism as *the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost*.⁴⁾ As the washing of regeneration it is a means whereby we are saved, as Paul says: *Ἐσωσεν ἡμᾶς διὰ λουτροῦ παλιγγενεσίας*.⁵⁾ It is *διὰ*, *through*, *by means of*, the regenerating washing of water in conjunction with the word, that God, as by his own means, whereby he exerts his mercy towards us,⁶⁾ *has saved us*. Thus also St. Peter says ex-

1) Acts 26, 18.

2) John 3, 3.

3) John 3, 5.

4) Tit. 3, 5.

5) Ibid.

6) Ibid: *κατὰ τὸ αὐτοῦ ἔλεος*, *according to his own mercy*.

plicity that *baptism doth also now save us.*¹⁾ And this is not salvation without Christ. By baptism we enter into union with Christ; having been *baptized into Christ* we have *put on Christ,*²⁾ and thus and thereby we are *all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.*³⁾ By baptism, the benefits of Christ's redemption become ours in actual possession and enjoyment. *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.*⁴⁾ Christ's death and burial, his vicarious atonement, is appropriated to us in baptism. When Christ had died for our sins, he was justified from sin,⁵⁾ *our sin, all our sin.* Hence, having become partakers of his death by baptism, we are also justified from sin, *our sin, all our sin.* Thus had Paul himself obtained the benefit of Christ's death, having been exhorted, *Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins.*⁶⁾ The same blessing came to those who were discipled into membership with the pentecostal church, and to whom Peter said: *Be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS.*⁷⁾ It is God himself who by this means confers upon us this blessing. Such was Christ's purpose when he loved the church and gave himself for it, *that he might SANCTIFY and CLEANSE it with the washing of water by the word.*⁸⁾ When GOD *saved us by the washing of regeneration,* it was his intended purpose (*ἵνα*), *that being JUSTIFIED by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*⁹⁾ This is the blessing of Baptism, which is *not the putting away of the filth of the flesh,* but *συνειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς ἐπερώτημα εἰς θεόν.*¹⁰⁾ In legal parlance *ἐπερώτημα* is a *compact,* and *ἐπερώτημα*

1) 1 Pet. 3, 21.

2) Gal. 3, 27.

3) Gal. 3, 26.

4) Rom. 6, 3 f.

5) Rom. 6, 7: *δεδικαιώται ἀπὸ τῆς ἀμαρτίας.* Cf. v. 10.

6) Acts 22, 16.

7) Acts 2, 38.

8) Eph. 5, 25 f.

9) Tit. 3, 5—7.

10) 1 Pet. 3, 21.

εἰς θεόν is a compact with God. Sin is an insurrection against God, a separation from God.¹⁾ In Christ God has reconciled the world unto himself and by his ambassadors invites us to *be reconciled to God.*²⁾ This subjective reconciliation, the application of the benefit of Christ's expiatory sacrifice, to the individual sinner, is effected by baptism, whereby peace is reestablished between the sinner and God, a compact or covenant of grace, the purport of which is *συνείδησις ἀγαθή, a good conscience*, all sin and guilt which defiled and troubled our conscience being washed away or stricken from our account in view, not of *the works of righteousness which we have done,*³⁾ but of the work and righteousness of our substitute and advocate. Thus it is that *baptism saves us by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, σώζει βάπτισμα . . . δι' ἀναστάσεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.*⁴⁾ The resurrection of Christ the Mediator was a public and solemn proclamation of the sufficiency of his atoning sacrifice,⁵⁾ a general justification of all the world, and as the baptismal water is made to tinge a particular, individual sinner redeemed by the blood of Christ, so the righteousness of Christ and the forgiveness of sins is applied and appropriated to that same particular, individual sinner, for whose justification Christ was raised from the dead.⁶⁾ Thus, by virtue of the resurrection of Christ, is the covenant of grace between that sinner and the Triune God established and sealed by baptism in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

That Baptism is also a seal of the covenant of grace is evident from the nature of the sacrament and the promise therewith connected. In the act of baptism, water, a material substance, is applied to a human body, the material part of our nature. This alone and in itself would have no

1) Is. 59, 2.

2) 2 Cor. 5, 19 f.

3) Tit. 3, 5.

4) 1 Pet. 3, 21.

5) THEOL. QUARTERLY, vol. III, pp. 150 f.

6) Rom. 4, 25.

spiritual significance or effect. It might remove filth from the flesh, but not the stains of sin from a guilty soul. It might serve as a symbol of spiritual cleansing; but a symbol as such is not a means of grace. Baptism is. Being divinely ordained and bound up with a divine promise, it carries with it the assurance that the promise will be fulfilled. This promise is recorded by St. Mark when he writes: *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.*¹⁾ There is no contradiction between Matthew and Mark, but, as in many other instances, the narrative of the one evangelist completes that of the other. Both record the charge to go forth and preach the gospel among all nations, Matthew in the words: *Πορευθέντες μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη... διδάσκοντες αὐτούς...*, Mark in the words: *Πορευθέντες εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἅπαντα, κηρύξατε τὸ εὐαγγέλιον πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει.* Both evangelists, also, testify to the institution of Baptism. Matthew explicitly gives the commandment, *μαθητεύσατε... βαπτίσαντες*, the promise being implied in *μαθητεύσαντες*, which indicates that such as shall be baptized shall be thereby made disciples of Christ, *delivered from the power of darkness and translated to the kingdom of God's dear Son,*²⁾ *and thus made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.*³⁾ Mark explicitly records the promise, *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved*, the commandment to baptize being implied in the passive form, *ὁ βαπτισθεὶς*, which, like every other passive verb, implies the performance of the act expressed by the corresponding active form. This promise is itself a divine assurance of salvation to all believers. But being, as it is in Christ's commission to his church, bound up with the ordinance of Baptism, it is assurance made doubly sure to those to whom this sacrament is administered, that, believing, they shall be saved. Baptism is thus of the nature of

1) Mark 16, 15 f.

2) Col. 1, 13.

3) Col. 1, 12.

a seal. The true value of a seal is not in the material of which it is made, nor in the artistic beauty of its design. A charter with a seal of gold annexed without authority is a sheet of paper or parchment without any validity or value as a charter, though both the writing and the seal be veritable works of art. But the seal of the government, though stamped in paper, wax, or lead, is a token of authenticity, proving that the document is valid, and what is granted or conveyed according to the statements and declarations of the charter or deed is truly and actually granted or conveyed, and that the government will protect and defend the particular covenant made under its seal. In like manner, Baptism, though its material element be water only, is a pledge of divine assurance that the covenant of grace established under the washing of water in conjunction with the word is a true and valid covenant, and that forgiveness of sins, life and salvation, promised and conveyed under such seal is actually, reliably and securely conferred upon him who holds and claims it by virtue of the act and covenant so sealed by divine ordinance and authority. Abraham believed God.¹⁾ He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in the faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.²⁾ And to render his assurance doubly sure, *he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised.*³⁾ If Abraham had undergone circumcision as a measure devised by himself or any other man, he could not have derived therefrom any assurance of his justification. But being of divine ordinance and bound up with divine promises, the sacrament of circumcision was a seal of a covenant of grace made under such seal. And we, who are baptized according to Christ's ordinance, have

1) Rom. 4, 1.

2) Rom. 4, 20—22.

3) Rom. 4, 11.

also received the sign of Baptism, a seal of the blessings chartered to us by the promise: *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.*¹⁾

It is in full keeping with this significance of Baptism that it is administered to any one person once only. There is no instruction which prescribes its repetition; there is no instance recorded in the Scriptures of repeated baptism. Not even those whom John had baptized were rebaptized by the apostles. Being a seal of God's covenant with us, it is not invalidated by any unfaithfulness on our part, but remains a firm pledge of God's unchanging grace, to which we may in all confidence return when we have gone astray. Though man may fall also from baptismal grace, God will not recede from his promise, nor deny the seal under which his covenant was made. *The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.*²⁾

It is, furthermore, evident from the nature of Baptism as a means of divine grace and a seal of God's promise, that the validity of the sacrament does not depend on the faith or unbelief of the person by whom it is administered. It is a pledge of God's faithful performance of his promise, not a pledge of the minister's faith. It does not seal a covenant between the minister and the person baptized by him any more than a charter establishes a compact between the person named in the document and the clerk who happens to affix the seal. The sacrament is not what man might make it, but what God has made it, and wherever it is administered, it is by virtue of Christ's ordinance and promise what, without these, no man's faith could make it.

For the same reason, the faith of the recipient, also, contributes nothing toward the validity or efficacy of Baptism. Faith is the acceptance of what God gives,³⁾ and is

1) Mark 16, 16.

2) Is. 54, 10.

3) John 1, 12, 16; 17, 8. Acts 10, 43; 26, 18. Col. 2, 6.

itself a gift of God.¹⁾ Baptism is *the washing of regeneration*,²⁾ and regeneration is essentially the bestowal of faith.³⁾ By this means God engenders faith, as in the hearts of infants, who are thereby made children of God by faith in Christ Jesus;⁴⁾ or, where faith has already been engendered by the word of the Gospel, it is, by this seal of God's covenant with the believer, strengthened and confirmed. Being an act whereby God would assure us of his grace, it is Gospel, and its efficacy is that of the Gospel both as to its collative and its operative power. By baptism we are saved,⁵⁾ and salvation is in no wise of ourselves, but solely and wholly the work and gift of God, by whose grace we are saved.⁶⁾

But while our faith contributes nothing toward the efficacy or effect of baptism, yet we are not saved without faith. *He that believeth not shall be damned*, says Christ.⁷⁾ Though a man may be saved without baptism, he cannot be saved without faith. When Christ says, *Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God*,⁸⁾ he describes the kind of change which a man, born of the flesh, must undergo to become meet and fit for the kingdom of God, not a physical, but a spiritual regeneration, not a new birth from his mother's womb, as Nicodemus surmised,⁹⁾ but a birth by the means of divine grace, as by baptism, the washing of regeneration,¹⁰⁾ or by the word of the Gospel,¹¹⁾ the word of truth,¹²⁾ the incorruptible seed, whereby we are born again.¹³⁾ But whichever may have been the means of our regeneration, Baptism, or the Word of the Gospel, or both, this new birth was, according to its *ratio formalis*, the bestowal of faith, and the spiritual blessings, especially the forgiveness of sins, offered by such

1) Acts 11, 17. Hebr. 12, 2. Col. 2, 12.

2) Tit. 3, 5.

3) John 1, 12. 13. 1 John 5, 1. Gal. 3, 26.

4) Gal. 3, 26 f.

5) 1 Pet. 3, 21. Tit. 3, 5—7.

6) Eph. 2, 8—10. Tit. 3, 5.

7) Mark 16, 16.

8) John 3, 5.

9) John 3, 4.

10) Tit. 3, 5.

11) 1 Cor. 4, 15.

12) James 1, 18.

13) 1 Pet. 1, 23.

means of grace, can only be accepted and received by faith. Salvation by baptism, then, is salvation by faith, by baptism which offers, by faith which accepts, salvation as a gift of God.

This is true in infants as well as in adults. Both are saved by faith. *Without faith it is impossible to please God.*¹⁾ *We are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.*²⁾ The little children, *παιδιά*,³⁾ who were brought to Jesus were young infants, *βρέφη*, babes,⁴⁾ and he blessed them and declared that of such is the kingdom of God.⁵⁾ And of *παιδιά*, little children, he speaks as of *these little ones which believe in me*, *τῶν μικρῶν τούτων τῶν πιστευόντων εἰς ἐμέ.*⁶⁾ How the faith of these little ones may be constituted, we do not know. But we know that Baptism is the washing of regeneration; that the new birth of water and the Spirit can make the children of the flesh meet for the kingdom of God; that it is not the will of our Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish,⁷⁾ and that of such is the kingdom of God; that they are capable of baptism and of faith, and that he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; and hence we baptize them and trust that God will by this means make them his children by faith and heirs of salvation.

On the other hand, we also know that the grace of God as offered in the means of grace can be rejected by obstinate resistance to the power of the Holy Ghost exerted by such means of grace. This is true also of baptism and baptismal grace. Man may refuse to be baptized and thus in open disobedience to the will of Christ despise the grace of God which would by means of this sacrament work in him the fruits of the spirit, the renewal of the Holy Ghost,⁸⁾ the assurance of the remission of sins,⁹⁾ and newness of life.¹⁰⁾

1) Hebr. 11, 6.

2) Gal. 3, 26.

3) Matt. 19, 13. Mark 10, 13.

4) Luke 18, 15.

5) Matt. 19, 14. Mark 10, 14. 16. Luke 18, 16 f.

6) Matt. 18, 2. 6.

7) Matt. 18, 14.

8) Tit. 3, 5.

9) Acts 2, 38. Luke 3, 3. 1 Pet. 3, 21.

10) Rom. 6, 4.

Such was the conduct of the Pharisees and lawyers who rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of John.¹⁾ And even where the word of the Gospel had brought about a spiritual quickening, such persistent contempt of Baptism would be incompatible with a continued state of grace. Or a man may permit himself to be baptized, but obstinately resist the quickening and renovating power of God exerted through the sacrament as well as through the word of the Gospel, and thus frustrate the good and gracious will of God. Thus, baptism sought or obtained for filthy lucre's sake, though in itself an efficacious means of regenerating and saving grace, fails of the intended effect because of the perverse will of man, which either prevents or expels and extinguishes the first sparks of living faith, as in the case of Simon the sorcerer, to whom Peter said: *Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter; for thy heart is not right in the sight of God.*²⁾ Yet if a man had been baptized in unbelief, but afterwards repented and believed, all the assurance of the grace and peace of God given by the sacrament, and all the blessings intended for God's children by such means, would be his, since he had now accepted in faith what God had earnestly offered in Baptism, an offer which had never been revoked or withdrawn. In like manner, those who have fallen from baptismal grace should know that God's promises remain unshaken. *He is not a man, that he should repent.*³⁾ The baptismal covenant may be cast away by man, and such abandonment of divine grace is spiritual death, which will terminate in eternal death, unless the state of grace be renewed by man's return to the covenant of grace. It is false comfort to say, once a child of God by baptism, always a child of God. But it is true comfort to say with Paul: *What if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?*⁴⁾ *If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself.*⁵⁾

A. G.

1) Luke 7, 30.

2) Acts 8, 21; coll. v. 13 ff.

3) 1 Sam. 15, 29.

4) Rom. 3, 3.

5) 2 Tim. 2, 13.