

CHAPTER IV.  
ORDINANCES OF A CHURCH.

This title is not used to convey the idea that a church has the right to institute ordinances. No such right exists. The Lord Jesus is head of the church – Lawgiver of the Gospel dispensation. He is the only Institutor of ordinances. Apostles had no discretion in the matter. They could only teach the baptized disciples “to observe all things” commanded by Christ. His will was to them, as to his followers now, the supreme law. It was optional with him to institute many ordinances or few. It was his pleasure to appoint only two, namely, Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. These appointments of Christ are church ordinances in the sense that they pertain to his churches – not to the world; and are committed to the care of his churches, whom he holds responsible for their preservation in their original purity and integrity. There are some Baptists who hesitate to call baptism a church ordinance. They prefer to call it a “gospel ordinance,” or a “ministerial ordinance.” It is a gospel ordinance, and in one sense it is a ministerial ordinance. That is to say, it is administered by ministers of the gospel. But ministers derive their authority to preach and administer the ordinances *from Christ, through his churches*. Who recognizes the right of any man to preach or baptize, if unsustained by church authority? In this view of the matter baptism is evidently a church ordinance, and our Fathers in their Confession of 1689, refer to baptism and the Lord’s Supper as Christ’s ordinances “to be continued in his church to the end of the world.”

I. OF BAPTISM.

In answer to the oft-repeated question, What is Baptism? it may be said, Baptism is the immersion in water, by a proper administrator, of a believer in Christ, in the name of the Father,

and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Immersion is so exclusively the baptismal act, that without it there is no baptism; a believer in Christ is so exclusively the subject of baptism, that without such a subject there is no baptism. In these two statements all Baptists will agree. As to a proper administrator there may be some difference of opinion. By a proper administrator, in the foregoing definition, is meant a person who has received from a church authority to baptize. While the validity of an ordinance is not affected by every irregularity in its administration, it does seem incredible that baptism should be valid in the absence of the church authority referred to. What other authority is there? Will any one say, the authority of Christ? The supreme authority is undoubtedly his; but does he confer on men the right to baptize, *through his churches, or, independently of his churches?* One of these views must be taken, and he who takes the latter will have to set aside the order of the gospel. But it does not comport with the plan of this little work to elaborate this point.

1. ACT OF BAPTISM. – That immersion alone is the baptismal act may be shown by the following considerations:

1. *Greek Lexicons give immerse, dip, or plunge, as the primary and ordinary meaning of baptizo.*

Here it is proper to state that *baptizo* and *baptisma* are, in the Common Version of the Scripture, *Anglicized*, but not translated. By this it is only meant that their termination is made to correspond with the termination of English words. In *baptizo* the final letter is changed into *e*, and in *baptisma* the last letter is dropped altogether. To make this matter of *Anglicism* plain, it is only necessary to say, that if *rantizo* had been subjected to the same treatment by King James' translators which *baptizo* received at their hands, we would have *rantize* in the New Testament, wherever we now have *sprinkle*. King James virtually forbade the translation of *baptize* and *baptism*. This has been sometimes denied, but it is susceptible of conclusive proof. The King's

third instruction to his translators reads thus: “The old *ecclesiastical words* to be kept, as the word *church* not to be translated *congregation*.” It is absurd to say that this rule had exclusive reference to the term “church;” for this term is manifestly given as a specimen of “old ecclesiastical words.” And why should plurality of idea be conveyed by the phrase “ecclesiastical words,” if the rule had respect to only *one word*? The question then is: Are *baptism* and *baptize* “old ecclesiastical words? They were *words* when the Bible was translated, or they would not be found in it. They had been used by church historians, and by writers on ecclesiastical law, and were therefore *ecclesiastical*. They had been in use a long time, and were consequently *old*. They were “old ecclesiastical words.” Such words the King commanded “to be kept” – “not translated.” It is worthy of remark, too, that the Bishop of London, at the King’s instance, wrote to the translators, reminding them that his majesty “wished his *third* and *fourth* rule to be specifically observed.” (Lewis’ History of Translations, p. 319.) This circumstance must have called special attention to the rule under consideration. In view of these facts it may surely be said, that the translators knew what were “old ecclesiastical words.” Let their testimony then be adduced. In their “Preface to the Reader,” they say they had “on the one side, avoided the scrupulosity of the Puritans, who left the *old ecclesiastical words*, and betook them to other, as when they put *washing* for *baptism*, and *congregation* for *church*; and on the other hand had shunned the obscurity of the Papists.” Is not this enough? Here there is not only an admission that baptism was an old ecclesiastical word, but this admission is made by the translators themselves – made most cheerfully – for it was made in condemnation of the Puritans, and in commendation of themselves.

The King’s fourth rule was this: “When any word hath divers significance, *that* to be kept which hath been most commonly used by the most eminent Fathers, being agreeable to the

propriety of the place and the analogy of faith.” *Baptizo* is not a word of divers significations; but if it was, the King’s translators, if they had rendered it at all, would have been compelled by the fourth rule to render it immerse; for every man of ordinary intelligence knows it was “most commonly used” in this sense “by the most eminent Fathers.” But it will be perceived that the King’s *third* rule renders inoperative the *fourth*, so far as old ecclesiastical words are concerned. Whether such words have one meaning or a thousand meanings, they are “to be kept” – “not translated.” The translators were not at liberty to refer to the signification immemorially attacked by the Greeks to *baptizo* – a signification which received the cordial endorsement of “the most eminent Fathers.” They might have examined the endorsement if the royal decree had not said, “*hitherto, but no farther,*” – “the old ecclesiastical words to be kept.”

Some Baptist authors have expressed themselves as if King James had a special antipathy to immersion, and forbade the translation of *baptizo* and *baptism* with a view to encourage *sprinkling*, which had been introduced from Geneva into Scotland in the reign of Elizabeth, and was in the early part of the seventeenth century making its way into England. There is no historical evidence that the King was opposed to immersion; but he was bitterly opposed to the “Genevan Version” of the Bible, in which *baptism* was rendering *washing*. Most probably his dislike of this version led him to give his *third* rule. The Genevan Version was made by exiles from Scotland, who, during the reign of “Bloody Mary,” fled to Geneva and became acquainted with John Calvin.

The fact that *baptizo* is an *Anglicised*, and not a translated word, makes an appeal to Greek Lexicons necessary in ascertaining its meaning. Lexicons do not constitute the *ultimate* authority, but their testimony is valuable. There is a remarkable unanimity among them in representing immerse, or its equivalent as the primary and ordinary meaning of the word. On

this point Professor Stuart (long distinguished as the glory of the Andover Theological Seminary, Mass.) shall speak. In his treatise on the “Mode of Baptism,” p. 14, he says, “*Bapto* and *baptizo* mean to *dip, plunge, or immerge*, into any thing liquid. All lexicographers and critics of any note are agreed in this.” This quotation is made to supersede the necessity of giving the meaning or *baptizo* as furnished by the large number of Greek lexicons. Professor Stuart’s statements will be received.

2. *Distinguished Pedobaptist Theologians concede that baptizo means to immerse.*

John Calvin in his Institutes (Vol. 2, p. 491, Edition of “Presbyterian Board of Publication.”) says, “But whether the person who is baptized be wholly immersed, and whether thrice or once, or whether water be only poured or sprinkled upon him, is of no importance; churches ought to be left at liberty, in this respect, to act according to the difference of countries. The very word, *baptize*, however, signifies to immerse; and it is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient church.”

Dr. George Campbell, a distinguished Presbyterian of Scotland, in his “Notes” on Matt. iii. 2, says, “The word *baptizein*” (infinitive mode, present tense of *baptizo*) “both in sacred authors and in classical, signifies *to dip, to plunge, to immerse*, and was rendered by Tertullian, the oldest of the Latin Fathers, *tingere*, the term used for dyeing cloth, which was by immersion. It is always construed suitably to this meaning.”

Dr. Chalmers in his Lectures on Romans (Lecture XXX. on Chap. vi. 3-7,) says: “The original meaning of the word baptism, is immersion, and though we regard it as a point of indifferency, whether the ordinances so named be performed in this way or by sprinkling – yet we doubt not that the prevalent style of the administration in the Apostle’s days, was by an actual submerging of the whole body under water. We advert to this for the purpose of throwing light

on the analogy that is instituted in these verses. Jesus Christ, by death, underwent this sort of baptism – even immersion under the surface of the ground, whence he soon emerged again by his resurrection. We, by being baptized into his death, are conceived to have made a similar translation.”

This is a specimen of the concessions of learned Pedobaptists in regard to the meaning of *baptizo*. These concessions are of great value; for it may be said, in the language of another: “This testimony of theirs, to me, is worth a thousand others; seeing it comes from such as, in my opinion, *are evidently interested to speak quite otherwise.*”

### *3. The classical usage of baptizo establishes the position that immersion is the baptismal act.*

It has been already stated that lexicons are not the ultimate authority in settling the meaning of words. Lexicographers are dependent on the sense in which words are used, to ascertain their meaning. But it is not impossible for them to mistake that sense. If they do, there is an appeal from their definition to the *usus loquendi*, which is the ultimate authority. It is well to go back to the ultimate authority. Want of room forbids the insertion of extracts from classical Greek authors; but it will be sufficient to refer to the treatise of Professor Stuart on the “Mode of Baptism.” The reader will see that the learned Professor in proving that *baptizo* means immerse, gives the word as used by Pindar, Heraclides Ponticus, Plutarch, Lucian, Hippocrates, Strabo, Josephus, etc. Dr. Conant has investigated the meaning of *baptizo* more exhaustively than any man, living or dead. No use is made of his work, because Pedobaptist testimony is preferred. *Seven hundred years* intervened between the birth of Pindar and the death of Lucian. During those seven centuries usage shows that *baptizo* meant to immerse. Most of the classic Greek writers lived before baptism was instituted, and, consequently knew nothing of immersion as a religious ordinance. Those who lived after its institution cared nothing for it. There was no

controversy as to the meaning of *baptize*, during the classic period of Grecian history. There was no motive, therefore, that could so operate on Greek writers as to induce them to use the word in any but its authorized meaning. That meaning was most obviously to immerse.

It is said by some that though *baptizo* in classic Greek means *immerse*, it has a different meaning in the New Testament. Let them prove it. On them is the burden of proof, and they will find it a burden they cannot manage. Let every man who takes this view answer this question: Could the New Testament writers, *as honest men*, use *baptizo* in a new sense without notifying their readers of the fact? It is certain they could not, and equally certain that no such notification was given.

1. *The design of Baptism furnishes a conclusive argument in favor of immersion.*

There is in baptism a representation of the burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Paul says: "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we were 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 should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." Rom. vi. 3-5. "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him, though the faith of the operation of God who hath raised him from the dead." Col. ii. 12. Peter says, "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." 1 Pet. iii. 21.

It is clear from these passages that baptism has a commemorative reference to the burial and resurrection of Christ. The two ordinances of the gospel symbolically proclaim the three great facts of the gospel. These facts, as Paul teaches, (1 Cor. xv. 3, 4,) are that Christ died, was

buried, and rose again. The Lord's Supper commemorates the first fact. At his table the disciples of Christ are solemnly reminded that their Redeemer submitted to the agonies of death. They weep over him as crucified – *dead*. In baptism they see him *buried* and *raised again*, just as they see him *dead* in the sacred Supper. Baptism is, therefore, a symbolic proclamation of two of the three prominent facts of the gospel – the burial and resurrection of Christ.

Baptism also expresses, in emblem, the believer's death to sin, and resurrection to newness of life. In "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," there is a spiritual death to sin, and a spiritual resurrection to newness of life. These two facts are emblematically set forth in baptism. Hence the absurdity of baptizing any who are not dead to sin. We are baptized into the death of Christ. We profess our reliance on his death for salvation, and we profess, also, that as he died *for* sin, we have died *to* sin. As burial is a palpable separation of the dead from the living, so baptism is a symbolic separation of those dead to sin from those living in sin. And as a resurrection from the dead indicates, an entrance into a new sphere of existence, so baptism in its similitude to a resurrection, denotes an entrance upon a new life. Hence Dr. Chalmers in the lecture already referred to says, that we "are conceived in the act of descending under the water of baptism, to have resigned an old life, and in the act of ascending, to emerge into a second or new life."

Baptism is likewise a symbol of purification. We read of the "washing of regeneration," and of having "our bodies washed with pure water." These forms of expression were most probably used to indicate the defiling nature of sin, from which we are really cleansed in the blood of Christ. Then baptism is the outward symbol of the inward washing. If any one should say the passages referred to will not bear this interpretation, be it so; but there is one passage that will bear it. "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling upon the name of the Lord,"

said Ananias to Saul of Tarsus. “Wash away thy sins.” How? Literally? No, but symbolically. The blood of Jesus really washes away sins. Hence the language – “and washed us from our sins in his own blood.” But the sins which the blood of Jesus has really washed away, are symbolically and formally washed away in baptism.

Once more: Baptism anticipates the believer’s resurrection from the dead. This we learn from 1 Cor. xv. 29: “Else what shall they do, who are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?” These questions are proposed in the midst of an argument on the resurrection of the dead. Some of the Corinthians, it seems, denied the doctrine of the resurrection, and yet it does not appear that they questioned the propriety of an observance of the ordinance of baptism. Paul virtually tells them, that baptism has an anticipative reference to the resurrection of the saints. It has this reference, because it has a commemorative reference to the resurrection of Christ. It anticipates because it commemorates. The reason is obvious. The resurrection of the Lord Jesus procures the resurrection of his followers and is an infallible pledge of it. The two resurrections are inseparable. Baptism, therefore, while it commemorates the resurrection of Christ, anticipates, of necessity, the resurrection of his followers.

Now, if these views of the design and symbolic import of baptism are correct, it follows inevitably that the immersion, in water, of a believer in Christ, is essential to baptism – so essential that there can be no baptism without it. If baptism represents the burial and resurrection of Christ, it must be immersion. If it sets forth in emblem the believer’s death to sin and resurrection to a new life, it must be immersion. If it in symbol washes away the sins which Christ has really washed away in his blood, still it must be immersion. And if it anticipates the resurrection, nothing but immersion justifies the anticipation. We are “buried by baptism” – that

is, by means of baptism. When the baptismal process takes place there is certainly a “burial.” The two are inseparable; and therefore, where there is no burial there is no baptism.

It had been our purpose to present a fifth consideration in favor of immersion, suggested by *the places selected for the administration of baptism, and the circumstances attending its administration, as referred to in the New Testament*; but the limits prescribed to this volume positively forbid.

2. SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM. – While the import of the word baptize indicates what is the baptismal act, it does not determine *who* are to be baptized. We must, therefore, look elsewhere than to the meaning of the word to ascertain who are scriptural subjects of baptism. And where shall we look? To the commission given by Christ to his apostles; for this commission is the supreme authority for the administration of baptism. Apart from it there is no authority to baptize. The circumstances connected with the giving of this commission were replete with interest. The Saviour had finished the work which he came down from heaven to accomplish. He had offered himself a sacrifice for sin. He had exhausted the cup of atoning sorrow. He had lain in the dark mansions of the grave. He had risen in triumph from the dead, and was about to ascend to the right hand of the Majesty on high. Invested with perfect mediatorial authority, he said to his apostles:

“All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach 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.” Matt. xxviii. 18-20. “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” Mark xvi. 15, 16. “Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and

remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”  
Luke xxiv. 46, 47.

Surely the language of this commission is plain. Matthew informs us that teaching, or making disciples (for the verb *matheteuo* which he uses means *make disciples*) is to precede baptism; Mark establishes the priority of faith to baptism; and Luke connects repentance and remission of sins with the execution of the commission. No man can, in obedience to this commission baptize an unbeliever, or an unconscious infant. The unbeliever is not a penitent disciple, and it is obviously impossible for the infant to repent and believe the gospel.

It may be laid down as a principle of common sense, which commends itself to every candid mind, that *a commission to do a thing authorizes only the doing of the thing specified*. The doing of all other things is virtually forbidden. There is a maxim of law, that *the expression of one thing is the exclusion of another*. (*Expressio unius est exclusion alterius*.) It must necessarily be so; for otherwise there could be no definiteness in contracts, and no precision in legislative enactments or judicial decrees. This maxim may be illustrated in a thousand ways. Numerous scriptural illustrations are at hand. For example: God commanded Noah to make an ark of *gopher-wood*. He assigns no reason why gopher-wood should be used. The command, however, is positive, and it forbids the use of every other kind of wood. Abraham was commanded to offer his son Isaac for a burnt offering. He was virtually forbidden to offer any other member of his family. Aye more, he could not offer an animal till the order was revoked by Him who gave it, and a second order was given, requiring the sacrifice of a ram in the place of Isaac. The institution of the Passover furnishes an illustration, or rather a combination of illustrations: A lamb was to be killed – not a heifer; it was to be of the first year – not of second or third; a male – not a female; without a blemish – not with a blemish; on the fourteenth day of

the month – not on some other day; the blood was to be applied to the door-posts and lintels – not elsewhere.

The Constitution of the United States supplies many illustrations, only two of which will be mentioned. It provides that “the President shall have power, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to make treaties, provided two –thirds of the Senators present concur.” Does any sane man believe the Supreme Court and the House of Representatives can make treaties? Or that the President without the Senate, or the Senate without the President, can make treaties? The Constitution in giving the treaty-making power to the President and Senate virtually forbids all others to make treaties.

Again, the Constitution says, “The President, Vice President, and all civil officers of the United States, shall be removed from office on impeachment for and conviction of treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors.” Here one method of removal from office is prescribed, and all other methods are prohibited. Every man understands this.

In application of the principle laid down and of the law maxim illustrated, it may be affirmed, that the commission of Christ, in enjoining the baptism of disciples, believers, prohibits, in effect, the baptism of all others. It will not do to say, we are not forbidden, in so many words, to baptize infants. The same may be said of unbelievers; aye, of horses, cattle, and bells.

It will be said by those who oppose the views of Baptists – for it has been said a thousand times – that if infants are not to be baptized because they cannot believe, they will not be saved because they cannot believe. If the salvation of infants depends on their faith, they cannot be saved. They are incapable of faith. They are doubtless saved through the mediation of Christ, but it is not by faith. Our opponents fail egregiously to accomplish their object in urging this

objection to our views. They must intend to make us admit the propriety of infant baptism, or force us to a denial of infant salvation. But we make neither the admission nor the denial. As soon as we say that infants are saved, not by faith, but without faith, their objection is demolished.

In considering the commission of Christ it is well to observe how it was understood and carried into effect in apostolic times. The first practical interpretation of it was given on the day of Pentecost. The gospel was preached; the people were pierced to the heart, and cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter replied, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you." No man will say that the command "Repent," is applicable to infants, and it is certain the same persons who were called on to *repent and be baptized*. The result of Peter's sermon is seen in the following words: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added to them about three thousand souls." The baptism was limited to those who gladly received Peter's words; and as infants were not of that number, to infer that they were baptized is utterly gratuitous. The Pentecostal administration of baptism shows that penitent believers were considered the only subjects of the ordinance.

Philip's labors in Samaria indicate his understanding of the great commission. He preached Christ to the people. What then? The people "believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ." What next? "They were baptized both men and women." Here again baptism was restricted to believers.

Was this rule deviated from among the Gentiles? Certainly not. When Peter preached to Cornelius and his dependents, there was a restriction of baptism to those who received the Holy Spirit; and when Paul preached in Corinth "many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized."

Thus it appears that among Gentiles, as well as Samaritans and Jews, baptism was preceded by faith in Christ. Thus it does appear that the commission was practically expounded in the same way both in Europe and Asia.

Nor do the household baptisms mentioned in the New Testament furnish any argument against the baptism of believers alone; for something is said of every household which could not be said of unconscious infants. For example, it is said of Cornelius (Acts x. 2), that he “feared God *with all his house*”; of the jailor, (Acts xvi. 32, 34,) that Paul and Silas having been released from prison, entered into her house, “and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them.” Doubtless “*the brethren*” were persons in Lydia’s employ who constituted her “household,” and were baptized as well as herself. Infants would not have been called *brethren*, nor referred to as *comforted*. The intimation in Acts xviii. 8, is that the family of Crispus was baptized, but it is said he “believed on the Lord *with all his house*.” Paul, as we learn from 1 Cor. i. 16, baptized the household of Stephanas, that it is the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints.” These are all the household baptisms mentioned in the New Testament, and we see in them no deviation from the commission of Christ, which requires *discipleship*, as prerequisite to baptism. On the other hand, they confirm the position, that believers alone are scriptural subjects of baptism.

The allusions to baptism in the apostolic epistles forbid the supposition that infants were baptized. Paul refers to the “baptized” as “dead to sin” – rising from the baptismal waters to “walk in newness of life” – as “putting on Christ,” – as “baptized for the dead,” or in belief of the resurrection. Peter defines baptism to be “the answer of a good conscience toward God.” This is a general definition which precludes the idea that baptism was, in apostolic times, administered to any except accountable agents. What conscience has a speechless infant? There is no

operation of conscience prior to accountability. Baptism, then, in its administration to infants, cannot be what Peter says it is.

Without enlarging on these topics, what is the conclusion of the whole matter? Clearly this: The commission of Christ, as understood and exemplified in the apostolic age, requires the baptism of believers, disciples; and the baptism of all others, whether adult unbelievers or unconscious infants, is utterly unwarranted. There is, as Paul himself has said, ONE BAPTISM. It is *one* in the action involved, and *one* in the subject of the action.

## II. THE LORD'S SUPPER.

What Paul says of the institution and design of the Lord's supper is the substance of what the Evangelists had recorded. These are his words: "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered to you. That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." 1 Cor. xi. 23-26.

From this inspired account of the origin of the Lord's supper it is plainly a commemorative institution. It commemorates chiefly and supremely the death of Christ. "Ye do show the Lord's *death*." We do not show the birth, or baptism, or burial, or resurrection, or ascension of our Redeemer, *but his death*. If ever the tragedy of Calvary should engross the thoughts of the Christian to the exclusion of every other topic, it is when he sits at the table of the Lord. Then the death of his Lord should monopolize all the power of memory.

Remember thee! Thy death, thy shame!

The griefs which thou didst bear!

O memory, leave no other name

But his recorded there.

Some will perhaps say, that in the Lord's supper we express our Christian fellowship for our fellow-communicants. This is done only in an indirect and incidental manner. Our communion, according to Paul, is the communion of the body and blood of Christ. It is a solemn celebration of his atoning death.

Baptists, with comparatively few exceptions, have ever considered baptism a pre-requisite to the Lord's table. They have so regarded it, because they have recognized its indispensableness to church membership. They have reasoned in this way: The Lord's supper is an ordinance to be observed exclusively by the members of a visible church of Christ. As the Lord's supper is a church ordinance it is not proper to administer it to persons in their individual capacity – for example, to the sick at their homes. The meeting of a *church* is indispensable to a scriptural observance of the solemn feast. None can be members of a visible church of Christ without baptism. Therefore, baptism is a pre-requisite to communion at the Lord's table. It will be seen from this statement of the case, that baptism is a prerequisite to the Lord's supper because it is a pre-requisite to church membership. Church membership is the chief condition anterior to communion at the Lord's table. Baptism is a condition precedent only in the sense that it precedes, and is essential to church membership. It would be well for Baptist to make this view more prominent. Let them not say less of baptism, but more of church membership. In Acts 2. 41 it is said, "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added to them about three thousand souls." The three thousand were no doubt added

to the church, “the hundred and twenty disciples,” mentioned in the preceding chapter; for in the last verse of the second chapter it is written, “And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” The adding in the two verses was the same in kind – that is, it was an adding to the church. It will be perceived that the *baptized* were added to the church, and that this was done before the “breaking of bread” – a phrase descriptive of the Lord’s supper. A refusal on the part of Baptists to commune with Pedobaptists grows out of the fact that the latter have ever been considered by the former as unbaptized, and consequently without a scriptural church membership.

Even the celebrated Robert Hall, who advocated the intercommunion of Baptists and Pedobaptists, with an eloquence and energy of argumentation rarely to be found in the annals of controversy, does not hesitate to express the opinion that Pedobaptists are unbaptized. He says:

“We certainly make no scruple of informing a Pedobaptist candidate that we consider him as unbaptized, and disdain all concealment upon the subject.” Again, “If we join with those whom we are obliged to consider as unbaptized, they unite with persons who, in their judgment, repeat an ordinance which ought not to be performed but once, nullify a Christian institute and deprive their children of the benefit of a salutary rite. (Hall’s Works, vol. I., pp. 455, 456.)

But while Mr. Hall considered Pedobaptists unbaptized, he insisted on their right as *unbaptized* persons to come to the Lord’s table. He did not admit baptism to be a pre-requisite to communion. Had he conceded this, a point almost universally conceded by Baptists and Pedobaptists, he would not have written his “Terms of Communion” at all.

To demolish all that Robert Hall ever wrote in favor of “Mixed Communion,” it is only necessary to show the scriptural priority of baptism to the Lord’s supper. And surely this is not difficult to do. That baptism was first instituted, is a significant fact. No one will deny that

John, the harbinger of Christ, baptized multitudes, and that Jesus through his disciples (John iv. 1, 2) baptized more than John, before the institution of the Lord's supper. It is morally certain that those present at its institution, the night of the betrayal, had been baptized. Jesus himself had been baptized, and it is too much for credulity itself to believe that he selected unbaptized persons as his apostles. Does the subsequence of the Lord's supper, in its original appointment, to baptism, mean nothing? But it was said by Mr. Hall, that "John's baptism was not Christian." It was gospel baptism. It was not an ordinance of the Mosaic economy. John certainly introduced the gospel dispensation. His preaching was "the beginning of the gospel" (Mark i. 1,) and "the law and the prophets were until John." (Luke xvi. 16.) If any one chooses to deny that his baptism was *Christian* because it is not so termed, the denial may be so enlarged as to embrace all the baptisms of the New Testament; for the epithet Christian is not applied to any of them.

But while firmly believing that John's was a gospel ministry and a gospel baptism, all this might be waived by Baptists, for argument's sake, and then they can show the unavoidable priority of baptism to communion. Let them go at once to Christ's last commission: "Go, teach all nations, baptizing them." Every scholar knows the Greek term translated "teach" means *disciple*, or *make disciples*. Disciples to Christ were to be made through the preaching and teaching of the apostles. This is plain. The discipling process was first, and then the baptismal act was to be performed. "Go, disciple all nations, baptizing them." Now, according to the commission, it is evident that the process of discipleship is to be so immediately followed by the administration of baptism, as to leave no room for an observance of the Lord's supper to intervene. Baptism is the first thing after a person is disciplined to Christ. It is the believer's first public duty. It is the first external manifestation of his internal piety. It is an open avowal of

allegiance to Christ. It is, therefore, inevitably prior to the Lord's supper, an observance of which is no doubt included in the expression: -- "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." The baptized disciples are to be taught to observe all things which he has commanded. Under the commission of Christ his ministers are not required to say any thing about the Lord's supper to the unbaptized. The baptized disciples are to be instructed. How then can the Lord's supper precede baptism, when the commission enjoins the mention of it only to the baptized?

But how did the apostles understand and carry into effect this commission? This is a question of capital importance in this discussion. On the day of Pentecost, Peter said to the convicted Jews, "Repent, and be baptized." The baptism was to succeed the repentance. There is no intimation that the Lord's supper was to come between. And it is added, that the baptized "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." The breaking of bread – the Lord's supper – was preceded by baptism. When Philip went down to Samaria and preached, the people believed, and "were baptized both men and women." The narrative plainly indicates that baptism, and not the Lord's supper, immediately followed the people's belief of what Philip preached. When the Ethiopian eunuch avowed his faith in Christ, Philip at once baptized him. There was no celebration of the Lord's supper before they left the chariot and "went down into the water." When Cornelius and his house received the Holy Spirit, Peter did not ask who can forbid the Lord's table to them, but, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized?" When Paul and Silas, at the hour of midnight, preached to the jailor and his family, and they believed, what was then done? Did they commune at the Lord's table? No, but he and all his were baptized immediately.

Thus does it appear that the apostles and primitive ministers understood the commission as enjoining baptism before the Lord's supper. They have left an instructive example, which we are not at liberty to disregard. In view of this example we may boldly affirm, that the whole tenor of the New Testament indicates the priority of baptism to communion. Nothing is plainer.

Pedobaptists concede the precedence of baptism in the Lord's Supper. Dr. Wall, in his "History of Infant Baptist, Part II., chap. ix.," expresses himself in strong terms as follows:

"No church ever gave the communion to any persons before they were baptized. Among all the absurdities that ever were held, none ever maintained that any persons should partake of the communion before they were baptized."

Dr. Doddridge, in his *Miscellaneous Works*, p. 510, remarks:

"It is certain that Christians in general have always been spoken of, by the most ancient Fathers, as baptized persons. And it is also certain that, as far as our knowledge of primitive antiquity extends, no unbaptized person received the Lord's supper."

Dr. Hibbard, a Methodist author of considerable distinction, in his work on "Christian Baptism," thus expresses himself:

"It is but just to remark, that in one principle the Baptist and the Pedobaptist churches agree. They both agree in rejecting from communion at the table of the Lord, and in denying the rights of church-fellowship to all who have not been baptized. Valid baptism they consider as essential to constitute visible church membership. This, also, we hold. The only question then that here divides us is, what is essential to valid baptism? The Baptists, in passing a sweeping sentence of disfranchisement upon all other Christian churches, have only acted upon a principle held in common with all other churches, viz.: that baptism is essential to church membership... Of course, they must be their own judges as to what baptism is. It is evident that, according to

our views, we can admit them to our communion; but with their views of baptism, it is equally evident, they can never reciprocate the courtesy; and the charge of *close communion* is no more applicable to the Baptists than to us; inasmuch as the question of church membership is determined by as liberal principles, as it is with any other Protestant churches – so far I mean, as the present subject is concerned, *i.e.* it is determined by valid baptism.” Hibbard’s “Christian Baptism.” pp. 171, 175.

This extract from Dr. Hibbard exhibits a spirit of controversial candor and fairness, not often witnessed in the discussion of the communion question. It explodes the charge of “Baptist bigotry and exclusiveness,” and establishes the fact that the point in dispute between Baptists and others is not about *close communion*, but *close baptism*. The controversy is supremely and intensely baptismal.

Every visible church of Christ may be considered a sacred inclosure, susceptible of entrance in but one way. In that inclosure is set the table of the Lord. And the Lord of the table has prescribed the terms of admittance into that inclosure. Those who have complied with the terms have entered in, are the guardians of the table. They must see to it that it is approached only in the way which the Lord of the inclosure and of the table has specified. If they are appealed to, to change the entrance way, or to make a new entrance, or to allow those without to make ways of entrance to suit themselves, they must say with strongest emphasis: “THERE IS ONE LAWGIVER” – “WE HAVE NO SUCH CUSTOM, NEITHER THE CHURCHES OF GOD.”

It will be said – for it has been said, no one knows how often – the table is the Lord’s. This all will concede. But how different are the reasonings based on this concession! Pedobaptists say, as it is the Lord’s table they have a right to approach it – that as it is not the

table of the Baptists, the Baptists ought not to place obstructions in the way of their approach. Baptists say, as it is the Lord's table, it must be approached in the way he directs – that his proprietorship of the table furnishes the reason of their course – that if it was their table they would have discretionary authority, whereas they now have none – that *they* do not place obstructions in the way of Pedobaptists, but that the Lord of the table has done it. This is a specimen of the logic employed by the two parties in the controversy. Which species of logic indicates greater loyalty to Christ, the reader may determine.